

Meeting: **Scrutiny Commission**

Date/Time: **Wednesday, 5 June 2013 at 2.00 pm**

Location: **Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield**

Contact: **Mr. S. J. Weston (Tel: 0116 305 6226)**

Email: **sam.weston@leics.gov.uk**

Membership

Mr. S. J. Galton CC

Mrs. R. Camamile CC Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC Mr. P. G. Lewis CC
Mr. S. J. Hampson CC Mr. K. W. P. Lynch CC
Dr. S. Hill CC Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC
Mr. Max Hunt CC Mr. L. Spence CC

AGENDA

Item

Report by

1. Appointment of Chairman for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2014.

To note that Mr. S. J. Galton CC has been appointed Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission in accordance with Article 6.05 of the County Council's Constitution.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2014.
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March.
4. Question Time.
5. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

(Pages 5-8)



6. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.
7. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.
8. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.
9. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.
10. Leicestershire Supporting Families Programme - Update. Chief Executive (Pages 9 - 12)

The Chief Executive will deliver a presentation under this item.
11. Consultation on Proposed Changes to Home to School Transport and Concessionary Travel. Director of Environment and Transport (Pages 13 - 30)

A copy of the consultation documents is attached to the agenda for the Commission's consideration.
12. Equality Strategy 2013-2016 Chief Executive (Pages 31-91)
13. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled to take place on 5 July 2013 at 2.00pm.
14. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.

QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Members serving on Overview and Scrutiny have a key role in providing constructive yet robust challenge to proposals put forward by the Cabinet and Officers. One of the most important skills is the ability to extract information by means of questions so that it can help inform comments and recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny bodies.

Members clearly cannot be expected to be experts in every topic under scrutiny and nor is there an expectation that they so be. Asking questions of 'experts' can be difficult and intimidating but often posing questions from a lay perspective would allow members to obtain a better perspective and understanding of the issue at hand.

Set out below are some key questions members may consider asking when considering reports on particular issues. The list of questions is not intended as a comprehensive list but as a general guide. Depending on the issue under consideration there may be specific questions members may wish to ask.

Key Questions:

- Why are we doing this?
- Why do we have to offer this service?
- How does this fit in with the Council's priorities?
- Which of our key partners are involved? Do they share the objectives and is the service to be joined up?
- Who is providing this service and why have we chosen this approach? What other options were considered and why were these discarded?
- Who has been consulted and what has the response been? How, if at all, have their views been taken into account in this proposal?

If it is a new service:

- Who are the main beneficiaries of the service? (could be a particular group or an area)
- What difference will providing this service make to them – What will be different and how will we know if we have succeeded?
- How much will it cost and how is it to be funded?
- What are the risks to the successful delivery of the service?

If it is a reduction in an existing service:

- Which groups are affected? Is the impact greater on any particular group and, if so, which group and what plans do you have to help mitigate the impact?
- When are the proposals to be implemented and do you have any transitional arrangements for those who will no longer receive the service?
- What savings do you expect to generate and what was expected in the budget? Are there any redundancies?
- What are the risks of not delivering as intended? If this happens, what contingency measures have you in place?

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Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 27 March 2013.

PRESENT

Mr. S. J. Galton CC (in the Chair)

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC
Mrs. R. Camamile CC
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC
Mr. T. Gillard CC
Mr. G. A. Hart CC
Dr. S. Hill CC

Mr. D. Jennings CC
Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC
Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC
Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mr. P. C. Osborne CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

341. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

342. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

343. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

344. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

345. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

346. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

347. Presentation of Petitions.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

348. Draft Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2013/14.

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning the Draft Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2013/14. A copy of the report, marked 'B', is filed with these minutes. It was noted that the Plan would be submitted to the Cabinet on 9 April, prior to approval at the full County Council meeting, provisionally set for 26 June.

The Chief Executive reported that the Youth Offending Service had experienced a 6.4% reduction in funding during 2012/13 and a 6.1% reduction in 2013/14. With regard to the funds transferring to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), the Commissioner had indicated that he intended to treat the first half of 2013/14 as a "transition period", offering all current providers of community safety services funding for the first six months while he evaluated the services offered. The Youth Offending Service would be putting forward a robust case to the PCC to demonstrate it provided value for money.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were noted:

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) had carried out an inspection of the Service in February 2012 and found that it was performing to a level that required "moderate" improvement. A robust action plan had been produced and worked through to enable the Service to act on HMIP's recommendations;
- The Basic Skills Team had operated for 8 years, providing additional educational services to young people. This Service had now ceased and support was being provided to ensure that young people had transport and access to the services provided by alternative providers;
- The IMPACT Team would experience a £55,000 budget reduction in 2015/16. Every effort was being made to ensure that this would not impact the quality of the services offered. The majority of the reductions would be harnessed through a reduction in the number of areas the Team could work in;
- It was regrettable that the Service had not met its targets for putting young offenders in full-time education/training. Work was being carried out to re-assess how this area was measured, as it was felt that at present, the number of young offenders in full-time education or training was not being reflected accurately. In particular, it was felt that there should be some mention of apprenticeships, as full-time education was known not to suit all;
- At present, there was a lack of figures in the Plan which made assessing the value of percentage-based targets difficult to interpret. No justification had been given for lowering the nationally set target for getting 90% of young people in education, training or employment (referred to on page 6 of the Plan) to a locally set target of 80%. It was felt that it would be helpful to include the reasoning behind this change and how Leicestershire's local target compared with those of other local authorities. Officers acknowledged these points;

- The £39,000 of delegated funding from the PCC had helped to fund Substance Misuse Workers. Information had been passed on to the PCC explaining the value of this work and why it should be retained beyond 2013/14, though further research work would be carried out to assess the “social return” of this work through interviews with service users.

Members asked that the outcomes of the research work on the role carried out by Substance Misuse Workers and the business case for the retention of other funding transferred to the PCC be submitted to the Commission at the appropriate time.

RESOLVED:

That the comments now made be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 9 April.

349. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13.

The Commission considered a report of the Scrutiny Commissioners concerning the Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13. A copy of the report, marked ‘C’, is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13 be approved for submission to the full County Council at its meeting provisionally set for 26 June.

350. Item for Information: A City Deal for Leicester and Leicestershire.

The Commission considered a briefing note of the Chief Executive concerning the City Deal for Leicester and Leicestershire. A copy of the briefing note, marked ‘D’, is filed with these minutes.

There was some concern expressed at the possibility of powers for planning moving from district councils to a “combined authority”.

It was clear that the governance arrangements of the City Deal were in the very early stages and it was expected that more information would become clear soon. It would therefore be important to follow up on the progress of the City Deal following the May elections. The possibility of inviting a Wave 1 City Deal authority to a workshop session to learn of their experiences with the process was suggested as a possible way forward.

RESOLVED:

That the briefing paper be noted.

351. Date of next meeting.

It was NOTED that the next meeting of the Commission had provisionally been scheduled for 5 June at 2.00pm. The date might be subject to change due to the proximity of the County Council elections.

2.00 pm - 2.50 pm
27 March 2013

CHAIRMAN



SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 5 JUNE 2013

SUPPORTING LEICESTERSHIRE FAMILIES - UPDATE REPORT

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny with an update on the progress of the 'Supporting Leicestershire Families' Programme and service. A more detailed update will be provided via a presentation delivered on the day by Janet Gower-Johnson, Service Manager for the service and Mags Walsh, Programme Director for Community Budgets.

Background

2. Leicestershire's Programme was established in 2011 as one of the Coalition government's 16 Community Budgets under the name "Families with Complex Needs", with the dual aims of:
 - i) Improving outcomes for England's most complex families; and
 - ii) Reducing the public service/state costs in addressing the needs of these families.
3. Intensive Insight and Design phases were undertaken with a wide range of partners, resulting in the development of a new Family Model that would better meet the needs of these families, through a more cohesive and joined-up approach. The Family Model was approved by the Leicestershire Together Board, which confirmed its ambition to support as many of Leicestershire's identified 3300 families as resources enabled.
4. In December 2011, the Prime Minister outlined his ambition to 'turn around' the lives of 120,000 Troubled Families by the end of the Parliament, following a study highlighting their national cost to the public sector of an estimated £9 billion a year.
5. The Prime Minister created a new Troubled Families Unit (TFU), headed by Louise Casey CB in the Department for Communities and Local Government, to deliver this ambition, with a pooled budget from four government departments. Funding was made available in April 2012 to support local authorities to deliver this ambition using a combination of a grant and payment by results.
6. Leicestershire's new "Supporting Leicestershire Families" (SLF) Service, with a locality model operating in all seven district localities, commenced in April 2013, with a team of over 50 staff, led by its new Head of Service

Jane Moore. The Service is funded for a three year period from a pooled budget of £8.7m made up by contributions from the County Council, the TFU, the CCGs, all seven Districts, Probation, the Police and Job Centre Plus.

Schools Engagement

7. Work is taking place jointly with the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) around engaging schools in the SLF work. An event took place in Blaby on 8 May with representatives from Children's Centres, Police, Primary and Secondary Schools. Over 40 staff attended to hear presentations from SLF, Blaby District Council and CYPS. Participants were then asked to look at some scenarios and to consider how work can take place across the locality to support families. A report will be produced from the event and locality events will be held in the other 6 districts and Boroughs in the coming months.

National Update

8. As a result of the work undertaken to date in Leicestershire under the Supporting Leicestershire Families Programme, and their view of Leicestershire as 'leading' on this agenda, the Secretary of State and Director General for the Troubled Families Programme (Louise Casey CB) visited Leicestershire on Monday 13 May.
9. They were particularly interested in the Community Budget whole system approach taken to this cross-cutting theme, as well as the achievement of a significant partnership pooled budget, the family model and the partnership governance arrangements. They were also very keen to meet with some Leicestershire families who had received support under this family model and their family support workers.
10. Whilst the Minister and Louise Casey were very positive overall about Leicestershire's approach, ambition and scope, some 'challenge' was put to partners around the identification of:
 - Services that can reduce/cease as a result;
 - Opportunities to better integrate with wider partners – e.g. GPs;
 - Early savings indications.
11. As a result of the visit, there was a request for the SLF Programme to provide additional support to the Troubled Families Unit, in showing indicators of early benefits that could lead to savings.
12. The visit overall generated very positive local PR for Leicestershire.

Officers to Contact:

Mags Walsh, Programme Director, Community Budgets.

Tel: 0116 305 8213.

Email: mags.walsh@leics.gov.uk

Jane Moore, Head of Supporting Leicestershire Families and Safer Communities.

Tel: 0116 305 0030

Email: jane.moore@leics.gov.uk

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Consultation

on proposed changes to home to school transport



- Home to school transport for students at faith and voluntary aided schools
- Transport for students aged 16+
- Home to school transport for students who change address during their final year(s) of study.

Have your say

We want your views on the proposed changes. We're asking you to read our summary below, and then complete a feedback form.

For more information, get in touch – our contact details are on the last page.

We're listening



Budget pressures



We hope to save around



£1m

through changes to school transport in the next four years.

About home to school transport

Leicestershire County Council has a duty to ensure that every child in the county has access to a school place.

Most parents send their children to the school in their catchment area, or to the nearest school. We normally provide free transport for Primary School children who live two miles or more from their school and for Secondary School children who live three miles away or more.

For children from families on low income, the distance is two miles or more, whether the children are of primary or secondary school age. Families on low income are those in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit or where the child is eligible for free school meals.

Leicestershire County Council is continuing to face a number of challenges. The funding we receive from national Government is reducing. At the same time demand for services, such as care for older people and waste disposal, is expected to go up.

We also have to deal with the impact of a large number of schools locally moving to academy status and coming out of council control. Because the Government has transferred funding from the council's budget to support the new academies, we have to deal with this additional implication of losing further significant funding. All of this means we have to save more.

The County Council faces cuts in income over the next three years and needs to make around £79 million savings over the next four years.

We are now looking at how we can achieve additional savings. In making decisions, we must target our resources at those with the greatest need. We will be undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment on these proposals.

Your views

Last year we carried out a similar consultation on proposed changes to school transport but the policy was not changed.

We are now asking for your views again about the detail of the council's new proposals to make changes to the provision of transport. We hope to save around £1m through changes to school transport in the next four years.

16+ transport

The council is considering withdrawing the subsidy for students aged 16+ and no longer providing transport, or charging the full cost.

This change would not apply to students aged 16+ with special educational needs who will still be provided with subsidised transport.

Students who continue in full time education, which is more than about 16 hours per week, currently receive subsidised transport to their nearest or Transport Eligibility Area (TEA) school/college, if it is over three miles from their home.

Around 3,500 students currently contribute £240 per year towards their travel (this will rise to £252 for the 2013/14 academic year). The full cost of providing each seat is £425 per year. Leicestershire County Council currently pays a subsidy of £173 per student, per year. This costs us £605,000 per year.

Transport to faith and voluntary aided schools

The council is considering withdrawing the subsidy for transport to faith and voluntary aided schools and no longer providing transport, or charging the full cost.

For many years we have given help when children attend their nearest faith school on denominational grounds. Currently, transport for some pupils is subsidised and for others it is free.

Students currently contribute £240 per year towards their travel (this will rise to £252 for the 2013/14 academic year). The full cost of providing transport for each student is £640 per year. Leicestershire County Council currently pays a subsidy of £388 per student, per year for around 900 students. This costs us £350,000 per year.

Leicestershire County Council has a duty to take into account the wishes of parents on the grounds of religion or belief, but there is no duty to provide free or subsidised transport (except for children from qualifying low income families).

Students who change address during their final year(s) at school

The Council is considering withdrawing this facility. This would mean that, unless the move is beyond the parents' control, they would be responsible for travel arrangements from their new address.

Currently, if a pupil changes address Leicestershire County Council will continue to provide free transport from their new address to their existing school to minimise disruption for the pupil. The Council provides this for primary aged and high school aged children in their final year at school. For upper school and 16+ students who have moved after their first half-term we continue to provide transport assistance from their new address at any point during their final year(s).

Have your say

We would like to take into account the views of residents and partners in developing our final proposals.

Deadline for responses:
Sunday 30th June 2013.

To request a hard copy of the form:

Tel **0116 305 0002** or email
passengertransport@leics.gov.uk

What happens next?

Following the consultation period, responses to the survey will be considered by the Cabinet on 9th July 2013.

The outcomes of the consultation will be published on the website in July 2013.

We're listening



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Consultation on Proposed Changes to Transport

Budget pressures

Leicestershire County Council is continuing to face a number of challenges. The funding we receive from national Government is reducing. At the same time demand for services, such as care for older people and waste disposal, is expected to go up.

We also have to deal with the impact of a large number of schools locally moving to academy status and coming out of council control. Because the Government has transferred funding from the council's budget to support the new academies, we have to deal with this additional implication of losing further significant funding. All of this means we have to save more. The County Council faces cuts in income over the next three years and needs to make around £79 million savings over the next four years.

We are now looking at how we can achieve additional savings. In making decisions, we must target our resources at those with the greatest need. We will be undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment on these proposals.

Your views

Last year we carried out a similar consultation on proposed home to school transport changes but the policy was not changed. We are now asking for your views again about the detail of the council's new proposals to make changes to the provision of transport. We hope to save around £1m through changes to school transport in the next four years.

If you have any questions about this consultation please contact: 0116 305 0002 or email: passengertransport@leics.gov.uk

Age 16+ transport to colleges and sixth forms

What currently happens

Around 3,500 students currently contribute £240 per year (this will rise to £252 for the 2013/14 academic year) towards their travel. The full cost of providing each seat is about £425 per year. Leicestershire County Council therefore pays a subsidy of £173 per student, per year. This costs us about £605,000 per year.

What we propose

The council is considering withdrawing the subsidy for students aged 16+ and no

longer providing transport. This change would not apply to students aged 16 or over with special educational needs who attend a college or other further education establishment more than 3 miles away from their home for about 16 hours a week or more. Such students would continue to be entitled to subsidised travel.

Q1 Do you agree or disagree with the Council's proposal to remove the subsidy from post 16 transport to colleges and sixth forms?

		Neither			
Strongly		Agree nor		Strongly	
Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q2 Do you agree or disagree that if the subsidy is removed the transport service should remain available for those who wish to cover the full cost of the transport (approximately £425 per student per year)?

		Neither			
Strongly		Agree nor		Strongly	
Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The County Council could continue to provide subsidised transport to those who are currently in the first year of post 16 education, to enable them to continue to receive subsidised transport in the 2014/15 academic year.

Q3 Do you agree or disagree that, if the subsidy is withdrawn, we should continue to provide subsidised transport to those who are already receiving it to allow them to complete their second year of 16+ in the 2014/15 academic year?

		Neither			
Strongly		Agree nor		Strongly	
Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4 Please use the space below to let us know any other comments on our proposals for 16+ transport to colleges and sixth forms:



Transport to voluntary aided (denominational) schools

What currently happens

For many years we have given help when children attend their nearest faith school on denominational grounds. Currently, transport for some pupils is subsidised and for others it is free.

Students currently contribute £240 per year (this will rise to £252 for the 2013/14 academic year) towards their travel. The full cost of providing transport for each student is about £640 per year. Leicestershire County Council currently pays a subsidy of £388 per student, per year for around 900 students. This costs us

about £350,000 per year

What we propose

Leicestershire County Council has a duty to take into account the wishes of parents on the grounds of religion or belief, but there is no duty to provide free or subsidised transport. The council is considering withdrawing the subsidy for transport to faith and voluntary aided schools and no longer providing transport (except for children from qualifying low income families).

Q5 Do you agree or disagree with the Council's proposal to remove the subsidy from denominational transport?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6 Do you agree or disagree that if the subsidy is removed the transport service should remain available for those who wish to cover the full cost of the transport (approximately £640 per pupil per year)?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 Please use the space below to let us know any other comments on our proposals for transport to voluntary aided schools:

.....

About You

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice and that they meet the needs of all sections of the community.

We would be grateful if you would answer the questions below. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did. Information will be used to inform service development to ensure that what we are providing is fair and effective.

Q8 Are you male or female?

Male Female

Q9 What was your age on your last birthday?

.....

Q10 Are you a parent/carer of a child or young person?

Yes No

If yes, what are the ages of the children in your care? Please tick all applicable

- 0-4 5-10 11-15 16-18

Q11 Are you employed by a school in Leicestershire?

- Yes No

Q12 Are you a school governor?

- Yes No

Q13 Do you or your child(ren) make use of the home to school transport provided by Leicestershire County Council?

- Yes No

Q14 Are there any post 16 students in your household who currently use our transport to education?

- Yes No

Q15 Are there any children in your household who currently use our transport to voluntary aided (denominational) schools?

- Yes No

Q16 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?

- Yes No

Q17 What is your ethnic group? Please tick one box only

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| White | <input type="radio"/> | Black or Black British | <input type="radio"/> |
| Mixed Asian or Asian British | <input type="radio"/> | Other ethnic group | <input type="radio"/> |

Q18 What is your religion or belief?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| No religion | <input type="radio"/> | Hindu | <input type="radio"/> |
| Christian (no denomination) | <input type="radio"/> | Jewish | <input type="radio"/> |
| Roman Catholic | <input type="radio"/> | Muslim | <input type="radio"/> |
| Church of England/Anglican | <input type="radio"/> | Sikh | <input type="radio"/> |
| Christian (other denomination) | <input type="radio"/> | Any other religion or belief | <input type="radio"/> |
| Buddhist | <input type="radio"/> | | |

Q19 Sexual Orientation. Many people face discrimination because of their sexual orientation and for this reason we have decided to ask this monitoring question. You do not have to answer it but we would be grateful if you could tick the box next to the category which describes your sexual orientation:

- Bisexual Lesbian

Gay Other
Heterosexual /
Straight

Q20 In total, how many cars or vans are owned or available for use by members of your household?

None Three
One Four or more
Two Don't know

Q21 What is your postcode?

Q22 Are you an employee of Leicestershire County Council?

Yes No

Thank you for your time. Please click the button below to submit your response.

Please note that once you have clicked 'submit' it may take a few seconds for your information to be sent.

Please do not click 'submit' more than once.

Data Protection: Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the County Council and its partners, Leicestershire County Council will not share any personal information collected as part of this survey with its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the Council's records management and retention policy.

If you require the information contained in this questionnaire in an alternative version such as large print, Braille or help in understanding it in your language, please contact: 0116 305 0002 or email: passengertransport@leics.gov.uk

Submit



Consultation

on proposed changes to
concessionary travel

Have your say

We want your views on the proposed changes. We're asking you to read our summary below, and then complete a feedback form.

For more information, get in touch – our contact details are on the last page.

We're listening



Budget pressures



We will consider reducing expenditure on concessionary travel each year by



£270,000

Leicestershire County Council is facing a number of challenges. The funding we receive from national Government is reducing. At the same time demand for services, such as care for older people and waste disposal, is expected to go up.

We also have to deal with the impact of schools locally moving to academy status and coming out of council control. Because the Government will transfer funding from the council's budget to support the new academies, we have to deal with this additional implication of losing further significant funding. All of this means we have to save more.

We are now looking at how we can achieve additional savings. In making decisions, we must target our resources at those with the greatest need. We will be undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment on these proposals.

About concessionary travel

The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme entitles both qualifying older residents and disabled residents to free travel on local bus services between 9.30am and 11.00pm Monday to Friday and at any time at weekends and bank holidays.



Your views

Leicestershire County Council currently offers the following **additional** concessions:

Free travel for disabled people before 9.30am and after 11.00pm on Monday to Friday

Free travel after 11.00pm on Monday to Friday for older people.

Vouchers, worth £33 per year, for disabled people who cannot use conventional bus services and for older people who live over 800 metres from an hourly bus.

Half fare on Community Transport services (such as dial-a-ride and social car schemes).

Around 120,000 residents hold an older person's bus pass, and a further 8,500 hold a disabled person's bus pass.

The council is considering the withdrawal of these extra elements of the Leicestershire concessionary travel scheme.

Last year we carried out a consultation about withdrawing those parts of the concessionary travel scheme that we currently provide on a discretionary basis, over and above the minimum requirement to provide the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, but decided not to make any changes at that time.

Because of the increasingly difficult financial situation, we are now considering again whether we should discontinue the scheme's discretionary elements, to contribute to the council's overall saving requirements, and are asking for your views on these proposals. This would reduce expenditure on concessionary travel by £270,000 per year.



Have your say

We would like to take into account the views of residents and partners in developing our final proposals.

Deadline for responses:
Sunday 30th June 2013.

To request a hard copy of the form:

Tel **0116 305 0002** or email
passengertransport@leics.gov.uk

What happens next?

Following the consultation period, responses to the survey will be considered by the Cabinet on 9th July 2013.

The outcomes of the consultation will be published on the website in July 2013.

We're listening



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Consultation on proposed changes to concessionary travel

Budget pressures

The County Council faces cuts in income over the next three years and needs to make around £79million savings over the next four years. At the same time demand for services, such as care for older people and waste disposal, is expected to go up.

We also have to deal with the impact of schools locally moving to academy status and coming out of council control. Because the Government will transfer funding from the council's budget to support the new academies, we have to deal with this additional implication of losing further significant funding. All of this means we have to save more.

We are now looking at how we can achieve additional savings. In making decisions, we must target our resources at those with the greatest need. We will be undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment on these proposals.

Your views

Last year we carried out a consultation about withdrawing those parts of the concessionary travel scheme that we currently provide on a discretionary basis, over and above the minimum requirement to provide the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, but decided not to implement any changes at that time.

Because of the increasingly difficult financial situation, we are now considering again whether we should discontinue the scheme's discretionary elements, to contribute to the council's overall saving requirements, and are asking for your views on these proposals. This would reduce expenditure on concessionary travel by £270,000 per year.

If you have any questions about this consultation please contact 0116 305 0002 or e-mail passengertransport@leics.gov.uk

Concessionary Travel

The national concessionary travel scheme entitles both older people and disabled people to free travel on local bus services between 9.30am and 11.00pm Monday to Friday and at any time at weekends and bank holidays. In addition to the national scheme, the County Council provides a number of extra concessions. The council is considering the withdrawal of these extra elements of the Leicestershire concessionary travel scheme, which cost £270,000 per year.

Around 120,000 residents hold an older person's bus pass, and a further 8,500 hold a disabled person's bus pass.

Q1. Do you currently have a concessionary bus pass or use taxi vouchers?

- Yes
 No

Q2. If yes, which type of concession do you have? Please tick one box only.

- Bus pass for older people
 Bus pass for disabled people
 Taxi vouchers

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following extra elements of the

Leicestershire concessionary travel scheme should be withdrawn? (The amount currently being spent is shown in brackets against each service listed)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Withdrawal of half fare on community transport (£160,000)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Withdrawal of taxi vouchers for disabled people who cannot use conventional bus services and for older people who live over 800 metres from an hourly bus (£80,000)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Withdrawal of free bus travel for disabled people before 9.30 am Mondays to Fridays (£20,000)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Withdrawal of free bus travel for older people and for disabled people after 11 pm Mondays to Fridays (£10,000)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4. Please use the space below to let us know any comments about our proposals for discretionary concessionary travel provision:

About You

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice and that they meet the needs of all sections of the community.

We would be grateful if you would answer the questions below. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did. Information will be used to inform service development to ensure that what we are providing is fair and effective.

Q5. Are you male or female?

- Male
 Female

Q6. What was your age on your last birthday?

Q7. Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?

- Yes
 No

Q8. What is your ethnic group? Please tick one box only

- White
 Mixed
 Asian or Asian British
 Black or Black British
 Other ethnic group

Q9. What is your religion or belief?

- No religion
- Christian (no denomination)
- Roman Catholic
- Church of England/Anglican
- Christian (other denomination)
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Any other religion or belief

Q10. Sexual Orientation. Many people face discrimination because of their sexual orientation and for this reason we have decided to ask this monitoring question. You do not have to answer it but we would be grateful if you could tick the box next to the category which describes your sexual orientation:

- Bisexual
- Gay
- Heterosexual / Straight
- Lesbian
- Other

Q11. In total, how many cars or vans are owned or available for use by members of your household?

- None
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four or more
- Don't know

Q12. What is your postcode?

.....

Q13. Are you an employee of Leicestershire County Council?

- Yes
- No

Thank you for your time. Please click the button below to submit your response.

Please note that once you have clicked 'submit' it may take a few seconds for your information to be sent.

Please do not click 'submit' more than once.

Data Protection: Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the County Council and its partners. Leicestershire County Council will not share any personal information collected as part of this survey with its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the Council's records management and retention policy.

If you require the information contained in this questionnaire in an alternative version such as large print, Braille or help in understanding it in your language, please contact: 0116 305 0002 or email: passengertransport@leics.gov.uk



SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 5 JUNE 2013

EQUALITY STRATEGY 2013-2016

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Equality Strategy 2013-2016 for comment by the Scrutiny Commission. The Strategy provides a framework for the County Council's equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights activity, structured around the Council's ten priority equality objectives.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Equality Act received royal assent on 6 April 2010 but many of the provisions of the Act were brought into effect through the Public Sector Equality Duty in April 2011. The Act outlines three core duties which require public bodies to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. The County Council is required to produce an Equality Strategy to evidence how it is meeting its statutory duties regarding equality and diversity. Various equality strategies, schemes and plans have previously been approved by Cabinet. This revised Strategy builds upon each of these and also strengthens the County Council's approach to community cohesion and human rights. The current Strategy was approved by the full County Council in May 2010.

Background

4. The current Equality and Diversity Strategy was adopted by the County Council in 2010. It was agreed that the current Equality and Diversity Strategy would be reviewed every three years and refreshed to take account of any new (or significantly changed) equalities legislation and best practice.

5. Since the development of the current Strategy, the Equality Act 2010 and the associated Public Sector Equality Duty have been introduced and there is a need to evidence 'due regard' which means extending the Strategy to encompass and strengthen the County Council's approach to all of the 'protected characteristics' outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and strengthening our approach to Equality Impact Assessments. In addition, the Equality Framework requires authorities to work towards a much broader definition of equality and to provide a greater focus on achieving positive equality outcomes.
6. There is an ever increasing emphasis being placed on the Human Rights agenda and its links to equality and diversity. The expectation is that authorities make much more explicit what they are doing in relation to human rights and ensuring that people's human rights are being met. Some preliminary work has been done in relation to this agenda within the Authority (Adults and Communities, Legal Services) and there is clearly a need to properly analyse existing work and its proposed future direction. It is suggested that the most appropriate strategic way of doing this is to include human rights as a key component of the Equality Strategy and to strengthen links with the equality and diversity agenda in so doing.
7. The new draft Strategy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and the County Council's legislative requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), developments in relation to the contents of the previous Strategy and in the Authority's equality-related work over the course of the last three years. As such, the County Council's ten Priority Equality Objectives very much form the focus of the new draft Strategy and there is a greater focus on and consideration of community cohesion and human rights. The ten Objectives are listed on page 16 of Appendix A.
8. The Strategy has four sections:
 - **Introduction:** Definitions, past outcomes, recent quantitative information about the people of Leicestershire and the Council's workforce.
 - **The County Council's approach to Equality, Diversity, Community Cohesion and Human Rights:** Why equality is important is discussed, and the County Council's legal obligations and current corporate and operational structures are outlined. There is a specific focus on the ten Priority Equality Objectives, and a contextualising of the Strategy within the broader, strategic priorities of the Authority.
 - **Embedding equality, diversity and human rights in everything we do:** This section focuses on equality and employment monitoring, the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process, learning and development, procurement and

commissioning and engagement.

- **Conclusion, Case Studies and Appendices:** Appendix 1 is a summary of the refreshed Equality, Diversity and Community Action Plan. Appendix 2 is a number of case studies from across the Authority.
9. The new Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Action Plan 2013-2014 is to be used as supplementary information to the Strategy. This Action Plan has amalgamated what had previously been two separate operational pieces of work, the Single Equalities Action Plan (SEAP) and Community Cohesion Framework (CCF), in order to provide a greater focus upon community cohesion and the Priority Equality Objectives. The Action Plan is not currently subject to consultation.

Consultations

10. The ten week consultation period commenced on 7 March and ended on 16 May 2013. Appropriate engagement mechanisms were organised to involve a wide range of stakeholders, including employees and trades unions, the voluntary and community sector, and partner organisations to ensure the Strategy is relevant and meets stated needs.
11. A copy of the draft Strategy, a Plain English version, an Easy Read version and a questionnaire to use to make comments, were made available on the County Council's website and Intranet. Communication messages have been developed to encourage staff to participate in the consultation process.
12. Equality-focused organisations serving the county were sent copies of the draft Strategy and asked to contact the County Council if they were interested in attending a briefing to consider any issues in greater depth. Although briefing sessions were not arranged with individual organisations due to limited interest, telephone conversations have been held to talk through their comments on the draft Strategy.
13. We have received 10 completed questionnaires and 7 additional responses. To enable consideration of the Strategy in greater depth, briefing sessions were organised for Leicestershire Working Together (LWT), the Council's external scrutiny group, which consisted of members representing a range of community interest groups, and the County Council's three Workers Groups. A list of the responses is attached to this report at Appendix B.

Resource Implications

14. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on this report.

Timetable for Decision(s)

15. A final version of the Equality Strategy 2013-2016 will be considered by Cabinet on 9th July 2013. Any comments from the Scrutiny Commission on the draft Strategy will be reported to Cabinet at that meeting.
16. A detailed timetable for consultation/approval is set out in Appendix C to this report.

Conclusions

17. The draft Equality Strategy 2013-2016 provides a policy context for the County Council's activity around equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights. It sets out how the County Council will meet its legislative duty and the intention to develop equal and fair decision making processes, policies and services for all employees and residents.
18. It is important that the Authority's strong approach to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is maintained. Equality Impact Assessments are integral to this, adding value to the organisation and making the Authority resistant to legal challenge. Equality Impact Assessments are important in planning effective service delivery and in responding to community needs, and are particularly relevant in a period of financial austerity and significant service change.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet, 10 May 2010- Final Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Strategy

Report to County Council, 19 May 2010- Final Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Strategy

Report to Cabinet, 6 March 2013- Draft Equality Strategy 2013-2016

Circulation Under Local Issues Alert Procedure

19. None.

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List of Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Leicestershire County Council Equality Strategy 2013-2016.

Appendix B: List of Consultation Responses

Appendix C: Strategy Timetable

Appendix D: Draft Equality Impact Assessment

Relevant Impact Assessments

20. A draft Equality Impact Assessment of the Strategy has been completed as part of its development and is attached, for information, at Appendix D.

Equal Opportunities Implications

21. The purpose of the Equality Strategy 2013-2016 is to ensure that the County Council fulfils its general and specific duties under the various equalities legislation and meets the requirements to provide a consistent and coherent approach to achieving equality and diversity for each of the protected characteristics.

Partnership Working and Other Associated Issues

22. The County Council currently works with a number of partners across a variety of equality and diversity related activity. The Equality Strategy 2013-2016 will create opportunities to further develop partnership working around the equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights agenda.

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Equality Strategy 2013-2016

**Our strategy for progressing
equality, diversity, community
cohesion and human rights
within Leicestershire**

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Foreword

We are very pleased to introduce Leicestershire County Council's new **Equality Strategy** which sets out our commitment for progressing equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights within Leicestershire over the next three years. The Strategy outlines what we will do to make Leicestershire a place where people get along with each other and treat each other with dignity and respect in order to provide a strong foundation for cohesive and confident communities.

At Leicestershire County Council, we recognise that equality and diversity is a fundamental requirement in the delivery of the best services that meet the needs of individuals. We also recognise that it is essential to securing the employment of the best people. This Strategy shows how Leicestershire County Council will eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and how it will work towards promoting equal opportunities, eliminating harassment and promoting positive attitudes towards vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. To achieve this we will work towards removing barriers to opportunities and to narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged and others.

The Strategy covers inequality in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It also covers inequality caused by poor community cohesion, a lack of consideration of human rights, health, carers and socio-economic disadvantage and limited recognition of gypsies & travellers, plus asylum seekers and refugees as distinct groups that may also experience inequality and discrimination.

This new Strategy will focus on continuing to take forward the equalities agenda in order to improve outcomes for local people and bring about real and lasting change to people's lives.

Thank you to everyone who has helped us to develop this Strategy. We have talked with a wide range of stakeholders to hear their views on what we should be focusing our efforts on. We have used what you have told us to develop our priorities for action over the next few years.

Cllr

Council Leader

Cllr

Lead Member for Equalities



John Sinnott

Chief Executive

Section 1- Introduction

1.1 Welcome to the Strategy

Welcome to Leicestershire County Council's new Equality Strategy. This Strategy has been informed by lessons learnt through implementing our previous **Single Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Strategy** and our Priority Equality Objectives which were set in order to meet the requirements of the **Equality Act 2010**. It includes details of the progress that we have made to date, and sets out our priorities in relation to the nine protected characteristics. It also explains how we arrived at our priorities and includes details of intelligence gathered from consultation and involvement activities with stakeholders including staff, partner organisations, elected members and members of the public.

We believe promoting equality, diversity, human rights and community cohesion is right because it ensures fairness. If individuals are treated fairly, it is easier for people to live side by side and get on with each other. This Strategy outlines how we will encourage disadvantaged and vulnerable groups to participate more in public life and become involved in influencing the decisions and services that affect lives.

Details of the actions that we will be undertaking to tackle the issues that are most relevant to the protected groups are provided in the Action Plan, which accompanies this Strategy. This Action Plan includes the outcomes which we will be aiming to achieve, and details of who is responsible for delivering each action. A summary of the Action Plan is available at Appendix 1.

It is our view that everyone has a part to play - our citizens, our employees, our contractors - in making Leicestershire a place where people get along well with each other, where difference is valued and where everyone treats each other with fairness and respect.

As Chair of the Council's Equalities Board, I am looking forward to implementing this Strategy. Whilst I realise that we have much more to do to make equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights part of everything we do, I am confident that we will achieve this objective.

Please get in touch if you would like to comment on this Strategy or find out more about what we are doing to make equality a reality for all people in Leicestershire.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mick Connell." The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mick Connell

Director of Adults and Communities and Chair of the Equalities Board

1.2 Equality, Diversity, Community Cohesion and Human Rights-setting the scene

Traditionally, equality, community cohesion and human rights have been viewed separately but over recent years there is a greater link between the different elements. For example, the human rights vision of equality extends beyond discrimination to include fairness, dignity, respect and access to the basic rights that allow a person to take part in a democratic society. Our Equality Strategy is also working towards a vision that everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and that individuals have an equal chance to succeed. We have considered how we can effectively work towards challenging discrimination, upholding equality, promoting diversity, community cohesion and human rights and this Strategy demonstrates our strong commitment to progress this agenda.

The Strategy provides a clear and robust strategic sense of direction so our staff, partners and stakeholders know what to expect from us. The Equality Act 2010, including the associated Public Sector Equality Duty, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides us with a strong framework of protection for equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights. This is vital for ensuring that individuals and communities are protected from discrimination and abuse, and that there is fairness and equality of access for all.

The wide range of case studies showcased at Appendix B of this Strategy - such as supporting younger people at risk of homophobic bullying, providing support mechanisms for carers and promoting community cohesion between the settled and traveller communities - are just a few examples that highlight the importance of taking into consideration the needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds. These case studies also demonstrate the positive outcomes for our employees and service users, and show the importance of continuing to work towards embedding and adopting a joined up approach to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights.

Below we have provided some definitions of key terms to highlight what equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights really mean:

Equality

Equality does not mean treating everyone the same. In reality, it means treating everyone differently in order that all people are treated fairly and with respect. Equality of opportunity can be summarised in terms of equal access, equal treatment, and outcomes that meet the needs of the individual.

Diversity

Diversity is about recognising and valuing differences in their broadest sense. This means understanding how people's differences and similarities can be mobilised for the benefit of the individual, an organisation and society as a whole.

Human Rights

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world. Human rights are based on core principles such as dignity, fairness, equality, respect and autonomy. They are relevant to day-to-day life and protect people's freedom to control their own lives, effectively take part in decisions made by public authorities which impact upon their rights, and get fair and equal services from public authorities.

Community Cohesion

A cohesive community can be described as one in which strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances. Effective and lasting community cohesion involves a common vision, values and a sense of belonging for all communities, where the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated, respected and positively valued.

1.3 The culture of Leicestershire County Council

The leadership of the equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights agenda within the Council is strong. This is demonstrated by the visible commitment and involvement of the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) and political leadership in improving the Council's performance on equalities. The Cabinet Lead Member for Equalities also takes on a championing role at the political level and promotes the agenda at every opportunity.

We are committed to working towards enabling our residents to engage in the ongoing renewal of their communities and the welcoming of new arrivals to them. To build cohesive communities within Leicestershire, we are aware that we need to continue to work with residents to address some of the root causes of deprivation, such as economic inactivity, poverty, financial exclusion and skills development.

We are also working to increase awareness, recognition and respect for human rights, making them understood, more relevant and easier to apply in everyday life. The Authority is committed to helping everyone understand their rights and the shared responsibilities we all have to each other and to our community.

This strategy provides a framework to enable us to consider all our relevant activity in relation to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights, to plan future work and to help us to continue to make progress in all areas.

1.4 Positive outcomes as a result of our previous Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Strategy (2010-2013) and Community Cohesion Framework (2011-2013)

In March 2012, we successfully achieved the 'Excellent' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government. The self-assessment and the onsite visit by the Local Government Association was a positive learning experience and the outcomes of the peer assessment demonstrated that we were able to respond effectively to the needs of our community and our employees.

Below we have provided examples of some further successes and achievements:

- In January 2013, we were ranked 20th in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, making us one of the top 100 gay friendly employers.
- Our Black Workers Group (BWG), Disabled Workers Group (DWG) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Workers Group (LGBT WG) continue to meet on a regular basis and make a significant contribution to the equalities agenda.

- We have been nationally recognised for our proactive engagement and consultation with key community groups, e.g. Multi-Agency Travellers Unit.
- In March 2011, our Customer Service Centre achieved the Customer Service Excellence Award. The assessors recognised that we have an in-depth understanding of our customer groups and are committed to raising awareness about diversity.
- We use Pearl Linguistics as our provider of written and verbal interpretation services to ensure equal and fair access to our services.
- An equality and diversity communications plan is in place and a range of activities have been undertaken. Every year, we promote equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights by organising events around dates such as LGBT History Month, International Women's Day, World Mental Health Day, and Holocaust Memorial Day. This helps us to further understand both our staff and the residents of Leicestershire and to communicate key messages to our employees and other stakeholders.
- Events to celebrate cultural diversity, for example Diwali and Eid are held annually at libraries across Leicestershire.
- We have participated in events organised by the Centre for Social Relations at Coventry University, which have provided us with an opportunity to share best practice, discuss particular issues around cohesion and use the expertise of the Centre for Social Relations.
- Elected members have been actively involved in a number of interactive training sessions. The aim was to improve their performance in relation to leadership and commitment to the equalities agenda, and feedback received highlighted that the sessions were stimulating, challenging and informative.
- We have a regular process of engagement with all geographic communities through our 25 Community Forums. Through our participatory budgeting process, residents have put forward projects and voted on those to receive funding, including many projects aimed at meeting the needs of different groups.
- Our Community Cohesion Email Information Service provides community groups, workers and individuals with regular information about equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights, government initiatives, news stories, events, training and funding opportunities.
- Our Inter-Faith Forum has become a well established local faith forum, with regular and committed attendance from a range of faith/belief representatives, from across Leicester and Leicestershire. We have been recognised nationally by the Inter Faith Network for the UK for the excellent work undertaken in relation to inter faith initiatives.
- We have in place a significantly large programme of equality and diversity learning and development for employees.

- Our Children and Young People's Department developed a dedicated online resource to assist schools in promoting community cohesion in their curriculum and non-curriculum based learning activities.
- We continue to use a representative panels register as a means of facilitating more ethnically representative recruitment panels. We have a register of trained recruiters from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds that can be approached to support with the whole recruitment and selection process. Work is currently being undertaken to include disabled and LGBT workers.
- We are continuing to progress our Hate Incident Monitoring Project, which records hate incidents for all equality groups.
- We have a good reputation, both locally and regionally, for our work on the equality and diversity agenda, and continue to participate in the Leicester Shire Equalities Forum.
- In 2012, we worked with the British Deaf Association to organise a number of engagement events with the deaf and hard of hearing communities in Leicestershire. The aim was to explore the issues and barriers people from these communities experience when accessing council services.
- The 2012 Staff Survey results highlighted that 91% of respondents felt that the Council was committed to Equality and Diversity.
- We have revised and updated the "Welcome Pack" which supports new and migrant communities providing them with comprehensive information about settling in Leicestershire the services we provide.

1.5 About the people of Leicestershire

Leicestershire is an ethnically and culturally diverse county, benefiting greatly from close links with Leicester, one of the most culturally diverse cities in the UK. International migration has had, and will continue to have, an impact on both service provision/access and community cohesion across the county, as new arrival communities integrate into existing communities both within Leicestershire and Leicester.

In the 2011 Census, the population of the County was 650,489 (increased from 609,578 in 2001) . This represents an increase of 6.7% or a yearly average of 0.7%. The population can be broken down by equality group to provide us with a better understanding of the people within our communities.

Age

The age of our population is important when planning services so we can meet the needs of our community. In the 2011 Census, all age groups experienced population growth except for those aged 5-14, 30-39 and 50-54.

Older people in Leicestershire have had the largest increase in population size. The number of people aged over 65 has increased by 21% over the past ten years and those over 85 have increased by 39%.

The age group which has had the largest drop in numbers over the past ten years were those aged 30-34, which had a 23% decrease.

Overall, proportions vary by district. Charnwood borough has a higher proportion of working age residents and lower proportions of older people. Loughborough centre has a higher proportion of 16-29 year olds influenced by the numbers of university students in Higher Education.

We have 152,500 children and young people aged 0-19 representing 23.5% of the total population.

Disability

In Leicestershire, it is estimated that there are 45,811 (7.0%) people between the ages of 16-64 with a moderate or serious physical disability. This compares to 61,507 (9.4%) over 65.

Nationally it is estimated that 1 in 4 people will be affected by mental health issues at some time in their life. In Leicestershire this would equate to 162,625 out of 650,500 residents. Mental health issues can either be short or long term, the most common being mixed anxiety and depression.

There are currently 3,481 people who are registered with a sight loss and residing in Leicestershire and of these 1,959 people were aged 80+ and 869 people have dual sight and hearing loss. We are currently in the process of determining how many people residing in Leicestershire are registered with hearing loss. It is estimated that there are more people with a sight and hearing loss within Leicestershire who have not yet registered.

Across the County there are 744 people aged 18-64 with learning disabilities, who receive community based services and 403 people who receive permanent care. Of those people aged 65+ with learning disabilities, 46 receive community based services and 63 receive permanent care.

We have 2,793 children with Statements of Special Educational Needs. 1,018 of these children are supported in mainstream schools, with an additional 267 children supported in units attached to these schools.

Gender Reassignment

There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of those who identify as trans or transgender within Leicestershire or the UK as a whole. Gender identity is not incorporated into the Census or other official statistics. This is something we will look to address in more detail.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Within Leicestershire 275,502 people (51.7%) are married and 996 people (0.2%) are in a registered same-sex civil partnership. There is a relative equal balance of people who are married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership across all districts and boroughs within Leicestershire.

Race

578,432 people (89%) of the population identified themselves as 'White' and 11% of the population are from Black and Minority Ethnic groups making Leicestershire an ethnically and culturally diverse county. This compares to 54% of the population in Leicester who

identify as Black and Minority Ethnic. 17.7% of the population in Oadby & Wigston are Indian Asian which has risen from 11.4% in 2001 and compares to only 1% in Hinckley and Bosworth, North West Leicestershire and Melton.

1.9% of people in Leicestershire do not have English as their main language.

Religion & Belief (including no religion or belief)

Within Leicestershire there are a number of religions and beliefs followed by local people, which include Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan and Sikh faiths.

In the 2011 census 60% of Leicestershire residents stated that they are Christian, 3% are Hindu, 1% are Muslim, 1% are Sikh and 1% are all other religions. 27.1% of Leicestershire residents stated that they had no religion.

Sex (Gender)

There is an equal gender split between men and women in Leicestershire with 321,400 males (49.4%) and 329,100 females (50.6%). However, between 2001 and 2011 there were almost twice as many females as males for those aged 0-4. This is the only age gap where the difference between the sexes is as high. We will continue to monitor this emerging data to further plan future service delivery.

Sexual Orientation

There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population within Leicestershire or the UK as a whole. Sexuality is not incorporated into the Census or other official statistics; however it is acknowledged that approximately 6-10% of any population will be LGB. In Leicestershire this would equate to between 39,030 and 65,050 people.

Carers

Within Leicestershire 11% of people provide between 1-50 hours of unpaid care a week. This is slightly higher than the national average of 10% and is reflective of Leicestershire's ageing population. However, we recognise that care is provided for a variety of reasons, not just for older people, and that support is required for carers of all ages.

Gypsy and Traveller Community

In 2012, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) was undertaken across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Using baseline data from the 2007 GTAA, caravan count data and information provided by a number of local authorities, the estimation of the number of Gypsies and Travellers across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in 2012 was 588 families.

There are also a number of Gypsy and Traveller families that pass through Leicestershire. Over the past 15 years there has been an average of 78 encampments per year with an average of 4-5 families on each.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

There are no accurate statistics available regarding asylum seekers and recent refugees within Leicestershire or the UK as a whole. It is not incorporated into the census or other official statistics. This is something we will look to address in more detail.

1.6 LCC Workforce staff profile

Each year the Council produces information in relation to the make-up of its workforce. Whilst being a legal requirement, this information is also useful for workforce planning.

The information below reflects the make-up of our workforce from 2011/12, which includes our employees in schools. This is shown by equality group and provides us with a better understanding of the people who work within our organisation.

As of November 2012, LCC had a total workforce of **13,870**. Of these **7,429** employees are based in schools.

Age

The following is a breakdown of our workforce in terms of age group:

16-24 age group: **4.39%**

25-44 age group: **42.89%**

45-64 age group: **50.18%**

65 and over age group: **2.54%**

Disability

Within the workforce monitoring exercise **1.80%** of employees declared that they have a disability, **59.26%** declared they have no disability and **38.94%** of employees have not declared their disability status.

The percentage of disabled employees at Grade 13 or above is **0.25%**.

We intend to progress a campaign to further increase the percentage of employees disclosing their disability status.

Gender Reassignment

There are a small number of LCC employees who identify as trans or transgender. This number cannot be translated into a percentage figure but the information is used by the Council when analysing the make-up of its workforce.

Race

At LCC **5.54%** of employees are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds, **85.51%** employees are White British and **6.58%** of employees have not declared their race.

The percentage of BME employees at Grade 13 or above is **14.47%**.

Religion and Belief

We have the following information in relation to the religion and belief status of our employees:

Buddhist - **0.068%**, Christian - **11.06%**, Hindu - **0.73%**, Muslim - **0.40%**, Sikh - **0.28%**, Other Religion - **0.19%**, No Religion - **4.72%**, Prefers Not to State - **0.73%**, Unknown - **81.83%**

Sex (Gender)

Within our total workforce **80.39%** who are women and **19.61%** are male. Of our employees that are non- school based our workforce equates to **73.77%** female and **26.33%** male.

The percentage of women who are at Grade 13 or above within our organisation is **3.97%** compared to **3.69%** male.

Sexual Orientation

Within the workforce monitoring exercise **0.23%** of employees declared their sexual orientation as LGB, **10.61%** declared themselves as heterosexual and **89.16%** of employees have not declared their sexual orientation.

The percentage of LGB employees at Grade 13 or above is **0.029%**.

We intend to progress a campaign to further increase the percentage of employees declaring their sexual orientation.

Section 2- Our approach to Equality, Diversity, Community Cohesion & Human Rights

2.1 Why are equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights important to the Council?

As a Local Authority we have both a legal and moral duty to demonstrate fairness and equality to our citizens, our service users and our employees. We know that the population of Leicestershire is diverse and that people have very different backgrounds and life experiences. Therefore, we want to ensure that we provide a

range of services and facilities that meet the needs of local people and that, as an employer, we ensure fair recruitment and provide a work environment that is free from discrimination.

There is also a strong business case for investing in equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights. It will result in us designing and delivering services that people want to receive and can lead to greater employee productivity, creativity, innovation and flexibility. Additionally, this effective equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights activity will in turn create economic benefits that will positively impact upon all residents of Leicestershire.

2.2 Our legal obligations for investing in equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights

Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty are the main pieces of equalities legislation, which set out different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone. The Act covers nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment.

The Public Sector Equality Duty comprises a general duty which is supported by specific duties. The general duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Human Rights Act 1998

There are basic human rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998. As a Local Authority we strongly value these as everyone must have equal access to their human rights. Therefore, we will ensure that we consider opportunities to promote or protect any of the relevant human rights in our policies, practices, functions and procedures. We will also ensure that people are aware of human rights legislation and how they can use the law to help them address discrimination and unfairness.

A focus on human rights and key values, such as dignity and respect is positive, and can lead to more informed decisions. A human rights approach can be used as a valuable tool at a time of budget cuts, as the approach can help us make decisions that are rooted in consideration of vulnerable people.

The Act sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that individuals in the UK have access to. They include:

- Right to life
- Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment
- Right to liberty and security

- Freedom from slavery and forced labour
- Right to a fair trial
- No punishment without law
- Respect for your private and family life, home and correspondence
- Freedom of thought, belief and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly and association
- Right to marry and start a family
- Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms
- Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property
- Right to education
- Right to participate in free elections

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) came into force in the UK in 1992. The CRC is based on the rights of a child i.e. what a child needs to survive, grow, participate and fulfil their potential. It applies equally to every child, regardless of who they are, or where they are from. The CRC recognises the human rights of children, defined as any person under the age of 18 and it sets out in detail what every child needs to have for a safe, happy and fulfilled childhood. The Convention spells out a specific role for UNICEF, in its capacity as the UN body responsible for the rights of children and they are required to promote the effective implementation of the Convention and to encourage international cooperation for the benefit of children.

Community Cohesion

As previously mentioned, we have chosen to extend this Strategy to include community cohesion. Community cohesion embraces the third general duty to foster good relations in terms of its overall aim and rationale and more significantly we recognise that greater community cohesion creates a fairer and more equal society and vice versa.

Other Equality Areas

The Strategy will also cover other equality areas that are not specifically mentioned as individual protected characteristics, but nevertheless are equally significant in their own right and protected by law as this broad remit reflects our aspirations for a better Leicestershire. These include socio-economic status and groups such as carers and asylum seekers.

This Strategy and the associated Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Action Plan will help us as an Authority to meet the requirements of current and future equality and diversity-related legislation. Relevant information which demonstrates our compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is available on our website, thus providing people with information to scrutinise and challenge our performance on equality: http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/your_council/equality_and_diversity.htm

2.3 Corporate structures to progress equality and diversity

We have adopted the Equality Framework for Local Government as a tool to support us in meeting our legal obligations and to measure the progress we are making towards embedding excellent equality and diversity practice. We achieved the

'Excellent' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government in 2011 and will continue to use many of the outcomes of the assessment to further progress our work around equality and diversity to ensure all that we do can promote fairness and respect.

2.4 Our Priority Equality Objectives

In response to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, we have now adopted and published a set of ten Priority Equality Objectives which will underpin this Strategy, the Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Action Plan and principally guide equality and diversity practice across the Council over the next three years.

The Council's Corporate Equalities Board formally approved these Objectives and is leading their implementation.

In 2012, we undertook a consultation exercise with our staff, customers/service users and our partner agencies to ensure that these priority objectives were fit for purpose. These priority objectives pay equal regard to each of the 'protected characteristics'.

We have aligned our Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Action Plan to provide a framework for achieving these Priority Equality Objectives. Additionally, each of the Objectives has been allocated a strategic and operational lead to oversee progress against each of them. Regular updates will be provided to the Equalities Board for monitoring purposes and we will publish information on at least an annual basis to evidence our progress.

We will inform the public and staff about our progress through:

- An annual Equality, Diversity, Community Cohesion & Human Rights Report
- Our information and advice services
- Staff newsletter
- Leicestershire County Council website
- Media (including social media) for advertising and press releases
- Our Community Cohesion Email Information Service

The following ten Priority Equality Objectives will be developed and implemented over the next three years to ensure we promote and advance equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights as part of everything we do:

Objective 1: Understanding the employees of Leicestershire County Council (LCC) so that we can instigate actions that ensure fairness and equality of opportunity for all

Objective 2: Demonstrating equality in pay at Leicestershire County Council (LCC)

Objective 3: Ensuring that equality analysis is undertaken on all new and significantly changed policies, functions, procedures and services to mitigate adverse impact

Objective 4: Promoting equality and diversity at all levels within Leicestershire County Council

Objective 5: Reduce the number of hate incidents and increase levels of hate incident reporting across the County

Objective 6: Encourage and empower under-represented groups and individuals to participate – in society, their community and at work

Objective 7: Encouraging engagement and communication with people in the most appropriate and accessible ways

Objective 8: Enhance understanding of equality, diversity, human rights & community cohesion issues within all areas of Leicestershire County Council

Objective 9: Empower communities across Leicestershire to have and develop high levels of cohesion, tolerance and resilience

Objective 10: Strengthening and developing equalities bodies/structures and embedding equality and diversity within the Leicestershire Together integrated commissioning structure

Appendix 1 of this Strategy and our Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Action Plan provide detailed information about the specific work we will undertake to meet these Priority Equality Objectives.

2.5 Reporting and decision-making structures

The main responsibility for scrutiny of equalities work internally lies with the Council's Corporate Equalities Board, Corporate Management Team (CMT), Cabinet and Scrutiny Commission. Responsibility for scrutiny of equalities work externally sits with the Leicestershire Working Together Group (LWT) and a range of other groups made up of members of the public. We will produce an annual report on our progress in meeting the three general equality duties and the report will be submitted to these Boards and the Leicestershire Working Together Group.

Responsibility for equality issues has been assigned to a named **Cabinet Lead Member**.

The Council's **Corporate Management Team (CMT)** is ultimately responsible for our equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights policies and practices, including this Strategy, and will monitor progress and performance.

The **Corporate Equalities Board** provides the strategic direction for all equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights policies and practices and is accountable for any equality-related activities and initiatives that the Council undertakes. It is chaired by the Director of Adults and Communities and consists of the chairs from each of the Departmental Equalities Groups, representatives from our three workers groups and other relevant, appointed individuals.

A number of working groups also progress work on equality issues across the organisation:

Departmental Equalities Groups: These groups are responsible for ensuring effective and co-ordinated action across departments to achieve outcomes that reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity, and promote diversity. Each group is chaired by the departmental representative on the Corporate Equalities Board and includes representatives reflecting each service area within the

department and the three workers groups. Departmental Equalities Groups have a Terms of Reference which outlines the key roles and functions of the group.

Staff Workers Groups: Our employee support groups are the Black Workers' Group, the Disabled Workers Group and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Workers Group. All three groups play a pivotal role in shaping policies and employment initiatives whilst supporting and responding to issues raised by their members. They meet on a regular basis and make a significant contribution to the equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights agenda.

Equality and Diversity Task and Finish Groups: These groups support the Corporate Equalities Board with the delivery of key equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights related projects and ultimately deliver key targets set out in the Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Action Plan.

Equalities Forum: This is a group for staff who have either a professional/work-related responsibility around equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights, or an interest in equality related issues. Its remit is to share and discuss matters of interest/importance (including examples of good practice) with a view to identifying and highlighting specific issues which are felt necessary to be brought to the attention of the Council's Corporate Equalities Board.

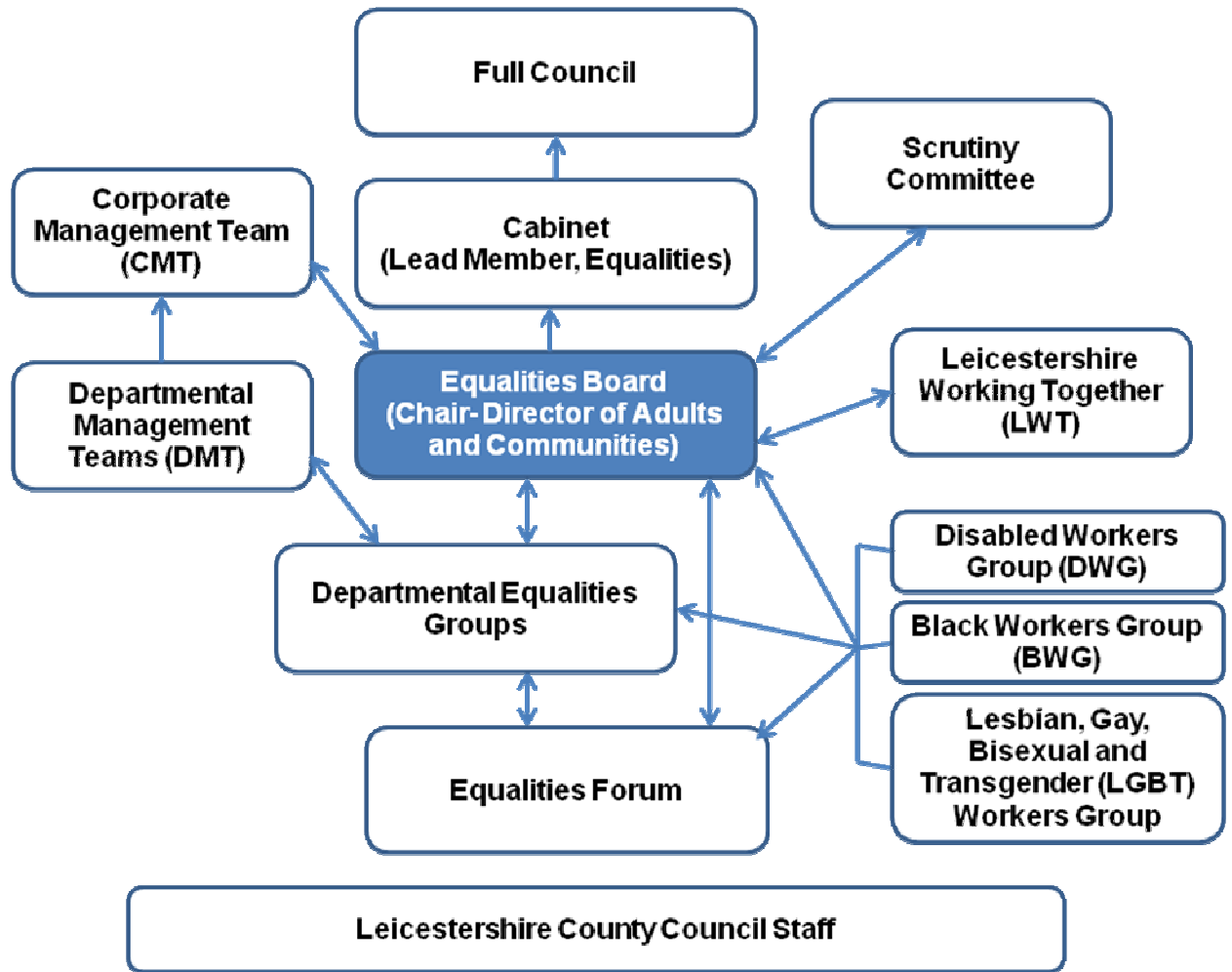
Leicestershire Working Together (LWT) Group:

The Leicestershire Working Together (LWT) Group aims to give Leicestershire communities the chance to influence and shape the work of Leicestershire Together and its partner agencies. By engaging with diverse communities in Leicestershire through the LWT Group, we hope to utilise people's experience, interests and expertise when considering any changes to services affecting them. The LWT Group therefore provides an 'equalities challenge' to the work of the Leicestershire Together partnership.

There are also **lots of other groups**, made up of both members of the public and employees, within the Council's structures who input into the way in which we design and deliver our services and scrutinise our equalities practice to ensure we continue to improve outcomes for local people and bring about real and lasting change to people's lives.

Equalities Reporting Structure

Below is a brief overview of our Equalities structures.



2.6 How does this strategy relate to the strategic priorities of the Council?

This Strategy cannot be delivered in isolation. In order to successfully embed equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights in all that we do and to continue to reduce levels of inequality across Leicestershire, this Strategy will link closely with other council policies, strategies and strategic priorities.

Performance Indicators

We have a number of performance indicators that are relevant to equality, diversity and community cohesion and this Strategy will help to achieve them.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The Council is currently experiencing significant financial challenges which will have an impact on the employment opportunities we can offer as well as the services we provide. However, we remain committed to our equality and diversity priorities and we ensure that we give proper consideration to the equality implications of all the decisions we make. The MTFS has been developed around a number of principles. These are to spend within the resources available, to maximise the contribution from efficiency savings, to be clear about priorities, to target scarce resources on those people and services with the greatest need and to provide value for money for Council taxpayers. The MTFS Strategy will be updated and rolled forward each year at the budget setting time.

A new Corporate Strategy for Leicestershire County Council is currently in development and will be launched later in 2013.

People Strategy

The People Strategy sets out its vision of creating a truly diverse workforce that reflects the communities of Leicestershire. The Strategy outlines how Leicestershire County Council will work with partners to plan, manage and develop the workforce in order to deliver our vision, values and priorities. The People Strategy encompasses the Council's aim to create a work environment that is free from discrimination and encourages every member of staff, whatever their role or background, to learn, develop and succeed.

Carers Strategy 2012-2015

Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Council's along with Local NHS Cluster Groups have worked together to develop a 3 year joint strategy for carers for 2012 – 2015. The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that carers of all ages are supported in their caring role in every area of life and that their contribution is clearly recognised.

The Strategy focuses on the following areas:

- Early Identification and Recognition of carers
- Realising and releasing carers potential
- Supporting a life outside the caring role
- Supporting carers to stay healthy and well
- High Quality Information & Advice – especially at the beginning of the caring role
- Ensuring marginalised groups have fair access to support

Two separate action plans have been written for Leicester City and Leicestershire & Rutland. They include, for example, the expansion of short breaks for both adults and young carers and improved information for carers.

Family Poverty Strategy

The aim is to eradicate child poverty in Leicestershire by 2020. It is considered that this will be best achieved through addressing family poverty. We will target support to help more vulnerable Leicestershire families through a number of measures, such as prevention and early intervention, integrated support and designing services in partnership with citizens and service users. There are strong links between this Strategy and the new Supporting Leicestershire's Families programme.

Departmental Business Plans

Equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights issues that need addressing at service level are included in Departmental Business Plans. These will be identified through the engagement and involvement of the local community, Equality Impact Assessments and national legislation and guidance.

2.7 Our approach to Partnership Working

Partnership working is a key element to progressing the equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights agenda across Leicestershire. There are a number of partnership structures and programmes of work that link to this Strategy and are complementary to it, including:

Leicestershire Together

Leicestershire Together is a partnership made up of Leicestershire's major public service budget holders (e.g. local councils, the police, NHS), the private sector and voluntary and community sector representatives. The partnership works to improve Leicestershire as a place and helps make people in Leicestershire feel included, richer, safer, better trained, healthier and happier.

The Leicestershire Together Board agreed on the following Principle and four strategic outcomes for the County:

Principle – A shift to Prevention and Early Intervention in order to maximise the impact of limited resources “spend now to save later”.

- A reduction in the number of “troubled families” (see the Supporting Leicestershire's Families information below) in Leicestershire
- Services designed to mitigate the impacts of an ageing population and enable older people to live independently for longer
- The growth of the Leicestershire economy
- A healthier population with increased life expectancy, and a reduction in health inequalities

A number of programmes will be delivered across the partnership to achieve each of these strategic outcomes, which are relevant to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights, and this Strategy will help to achieve them.

Stronger Communities Board

There are strong links between the Stronger Communities Board and this Strategy as this Board is responsible for progressing three of the Leicestershire Together strategic priorities which relate to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights, namely:

- Leicestershire is made up of stronger, thriving, integrated and cohesive communities which provide support for the most vulnerable and needy
- Everyone has opportunities to influence decisions that affect them and communities are empowered to play a role in service delivery
- Everyone can be involved in their community and there are more volunteering opportunities provided within and by the community

Safer Communities Board and the Multi-Agency Hate Incident Reduction Monitoring Strategy Action Plan

Leicestershire's Safer Communities Strategy Board was set up in 2008 to oversee delivery of safer communities in Leicestershire. The Board is responsible for the delivery of the Safer Communities objectives within Leicestershire with priorities to:

- Reduce re-offending, with a particular focus on earlier intervention with families with complex needs and those at risk of becoming families with complex needs
- Protect the most vulnerable in communities, particularly previous and repeat victims of crime
- Continue to reduce anti-social behaviour, particularly in those areas with the highest levels of incidents
- Increase public confidence, particularly user satisfaction with local crime and disorder services, especially in priority areas

Communities in Charge Programme

The Council has an ambition to put our ‘communities in charge’. This programme explores how best to move to a position where communities increasingly take charge of their own destiny, become more involved in decisions about the future of their community, and play a direct role in service delivery. The programme has six strands:

1. Communities Delivering Services
2. Encouraging and Supporting Volunteering
3. Supporting Councillors to be effective Community Leaders
4. Supporting a Diverse Provider Market
5. “Community Solutions” pilots
6. Helping Communities to Identify and Tackle Problems

Supporting Leicestershire Families Programme

This programme is a response to the Government’s challenge to support families that are in need. One aim of the programme is to change the current practice of family support being provided by workers located across a number of different services and operating to different systems. Integrating this approach will provide a streamlined, more efficient service for the families involved.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Leicestershire sets out to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults in Leicestershire and to reduce health inequalities in the county. The key priorities are (1) getting it right from childhood (2) managing the shift to early intervention and prevention; and (3) supporting the ageing population. The Strategy has two cross-cutting themes – tackling the wider determinants of health by influencing other Boards and improving mental health and wellbeing. The Health and Wellbeing Board intends to deliver action on each of these priorities over the life of the Strategy.

Leicester Shire Equalities Forum (LSEF)

We also have good working relationships with other public sector organisations in respect of the equalities agenda. The Council is a founding member of the Leicester Shire Equalities Forum (LSEF), which is a sub-regional working group of equalities-leads, primarily from the public sector organisations across Leicestershire. The Forum represents the strong ethos of partnership working in Leicestershire and promotes a shared vision for equalities across the sub-region. We recognise the need to continue to support this Forum and work more effectively in partnership with other agencies to tackle more persistent inequalities.

Section 3- Embedding equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights in everything we do

3.1 Equality analysis of our policies and procedures

As a Council, it is important that we consider all individuals when carrying out our day-to-day work. To ensure we do this, we must provide equality analysis for everything we do as a way of considering the effect on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010.

To identify everything that is relevant to the duty to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, we have produced an Assessment of Relevance which all departments within the Council use as part of their annual business planning. The

outcome of this exercise helps departments to prioritise areas for Equality Impact Assessment (see below) and to develop a three-year departmental timetable for their completion.

The most up-to-date list of our functions and assessment of these for their relevance to equalities is available on our website:

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/your_council/equality_and_diversity/equalities_assessment_relevance.htm

The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process

Undertaking equality analysis will enable us to have ‘due regard’ to promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination and fostering good relations. We need to be sure that what we do meets the needs of individuals in our communities. We need to be confident that the policies we develop do not disadvantage a particular group of people. We need to ensure that all of our services, in terms of their design and delivery, are fair and accessible to everyone and that there is equality of outcome for all.

We have developed a process that enables us to check everything that we do for its impact on equality and diversity and consider if what we are doing will be fully effective for all individuals and communities across Leicestershire. We have called this process an Equality Impact Assessment or EIA. The EIA process will help us to consider if there are any unintended consequences for each of the ‘protected characteristics’ of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, maternity and pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, as well as community cohesion.

An EIA will be carried out on:

- New functions, policies, procedures and services as they are developed;
- Significantly altered functions, policies, procedures and services; and
- Over time, on existing functions and policies.

We monitor the equality outcomes of our EIAs as part of our performance process and we embed these outcomes as part of our business and service planning process. Improvements in equality outcomes are delivered as a result of effective equality analysis across the Council.

We publish completed EIAs on our website:

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/your_council/equality_and_diversity/equality_impact_assessments.htm

3.2 Equality Monitoring Policy

Equality monitoring is good practice and enables us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It is a fundamental requirement of LCC’s Equality Impact Assessment and performance management processes. We need to collect equality monitoring data so we can understand our customers and design and deliver services that meet the needs of all. Equality monitoring also enables us to monitor the representativeness of our workforce.

We have developed an Equality Monitoring Policy which all departments within the County Council use as a mechanism to collect information for the protected

characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, in order to:

- Understand the make-up of our workforce;
- Understand the make-up of service users and differences in service take up; and
- (Where there are sufficient numbers to analyse) identify differences between groups in terms of satisfaction, perceptions, needs and service performance measures.

3.3 Employment Monitoring

We collect and publish information on our website about the profile of our workforce in terms of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation on an annual basis.

This includes an analysis of pay grades, starters and leavers, grievance, disciplinary, harassment and bullying, training applications and training received, employees on career grades and undergoing probationary periods. We also report on the profile of job applicants and their success rates.

The data collected is used to check whether any equality group is being disadvantaged by any of the Council's employment policies or procedures. If the data shows that this is the case, we take steps, such as designing and implementing relevant Positive Action measures, to address the issue.

Employment monitoring information and analysis is available on our website: http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/your_council/equality_and_diversity/equality_workforce_planning.htm

3.4 Equalities linked to employment policies

We have a wide range of policies in place for our staff and prospective employees. These policies support our staff and provide clear guidance to both staff and managers about what is expected of them and what they can expect from us as an employer.

We are pro-active in promoting and supporting diversity in the workforce. This includes:

- Eliminating bullying and harassment in the workplace
- Addressing discrimination within the workplace
- Supporting and working with staff networks on the equalities agenda
- Ensuring that under-represented minority groups are represented within senior positions across the organisation
- Ensuring equality in pay
- Supporting men and women in creating a flexible work-life balance.

Encompassing all of these policies is our Equalities Policy Statement which describes our commitment to equality of opportunity in employment and services.

The Equalities Policy Statement is available on our website:

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/jobs/jobs_equalities/jobs_equal-opportunities-policy-statement.htm

3.5 Equality and Diversity learning and development for staff and members

The Equality and Diversity Learning and Development Plan of the Council supports promoting equality, diversity, community cohesion and tackling discrimination.

It contains opportunities for learning and professional development for employees on the equality duties to ensure they are aware of the Council's, and their own, responsibilities.

The plan places a duty on all employees to undertake some form of learning and development in relation to promoting equality and valuing diversity.

Our Elected Members also take learning and development seriously and have actively engaged in equality and diversity training and activity. As well as having access to the courses developed for staff, they are able to engage in specific training courses and receive regular written briefings on equality through the Members Information Service.

Training is provided to everyone who has been, or is going to be, involved in conducting an EIA. This training has been designed, and is delivered, internally on a rolling basis throughout the year.

We evaluate the overall equality and diversity learning and development programme on a yearly basis and, if there is evidence to show that the training needs to be changed to address specific gaps or emerging issues, we take relevant action to ensure that this happens.

3.6 Consideration of equality and diversity in procurement and commissioning

The Sustainable Commissioning and Procurement Strategy 2013-16, aims to ensure that real long-term benefits from our commissioning and procurement activities are generated for the people of Leicestershire. We want to improve the quality of life for the people of Leicestershire and make Leicestershire the best possible place to live and work for everyone.

Ensuring that equality and diversity considerations are embedded into the procurement process, taking the opportunity to secure relevant wider community benefits, and making sure that our suppliers comply with employment law (as well as ensuring that their employees receive the right training and have the right skills to do their job) are all key priorities for the Council.

The Strategy confirms that:

- We will ensure that equality considerations are built into all stages of the procurement process

- We do business with suppliers who meet their obligations under equality legislation
- We will conduct Equality Impact Assessments for all our commissioning and procurement activities
- We will require suppliers to provide appropriate equality monitoring information
- Where appropriate, we will include social clauses as special conditions in terms of the performance of a contract
- We will consider ethical sourcing issues as part of our normal procurement practice
- We will continue to maintain the highest standards of safeguarding when commissioning services for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

3.7 Engaging and consulting with our communities

It is important that we engage and consult with our communities so that we understand our customers and can ensure that the services we design and deliver are appropriate and meet the needs of all.

We aim to encourage and empower under-represented groups and individuals to participate in society, their community and work and to also encourage under-represented groups to play an active role in the Council's decision making processes.

To ensure that we have effective methods of engagement and representation with a number of specified communities of place and interest, we have a commissioning contract with specific organisations which requires the following:

- To engage with community groups and 'hard to reach' groups
- To provide opportunities for specific local communities of interest to engage in policy and service planning to ensure that the development and delivery of services, strategies and policies reflects local needs
- To represent the target communities, where appropriate, on relevant and agreed LCC and partnership Boards and at meetings to ensure that their views are sought and heard
- To contribute to the planning, delivery and co-ordination of engagement activities and ensure consistency and quality
- To ensure there is relevant stakeholder participation in key engagement activities, through effective and timely promotion of these activities through a range of communication channels
- To be creative in engagement approaches, to ensure that 'seldom heard' and vulnerable people, and those with specific requirements can be involved
- To feedback on the outcomes of consultation and engagement to relevant networks in a timely and effective way
- To ensure equality of access to engagement, consultation and involvement for all in the target communities.

Section 4- Conclusion and Appendices

4.1 Conclusion

Whilst Leicestershire County Council is currently operating in a time of economic uncertainty we are committed to the implementation of this Strategy, the Priority Equality Objectives and the associated Equality and Community Cohesion Action Plan.

We recognise that the diversity of Leicestershire's communities is a huge asset that should be valued and that we face both opportunities and challenges as we try to build and support our communities.

This Strategy reinforces our responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure equality of opportunity for all sections of the community and our workforce. We are also committed to incorporating in our decision-making processes the values inherent in the Human Rights Act and the community cohesion agenda.

Our new Strategy recognises the need to continually build upon our previous achievements and review and improve our existing structures and practices. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination, harassment and disadvantage and to fostering good relations. We are also committed to achieving the highest standards in service delivery, decision-making and employment practice.

We have demonstrated continued commitment to ensure the equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights agenda receives appropriate and effective focus, particularly in a time of financial challenges and service reductions. Therefore we are confident in our ability to achieve our Priority Equality Objectives, which are the main focus of this Strategy, over the course of the next three years.

4.2 Appendix 1: Summary of Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Action Plan

Objective 1 - Understanding the employees of Leicestershire County Council (LCC) so that we can instigate actions that ensure fairness and equality of opportunity for all

This means that we need to understand the people who work for Leicestershire County Council. We can then take positive steps to make sure that everybody gets the same chances and is treated fairly.

We will:

- Assess the information we have about our staff so we can develop achievable targets to ensure that everyone is treated fairly.
- Develop targets that ensure fairness and equality of opportunity for all.
- Undertake specific work to address gaps in data / information about our staff and their needs / priorities.
- Continue to analyse and publish our workforce information on our website.
- Make better use of the data we have collected to inform Equality Impact Assessments and our decisions.
- Implement the actions identified in the Corporate and Workers Group Staff Survey Action Plans and continue to analyse and publish findings from our Staff Survey by protected characteristic.
- Review and re-launch the Representative Panels Register.

Objective 2 - Demonstrating equality in pay at Leicestershire County Council (LCC)

This means that we can show that everybody has the same chance of equal pay.

We will:

- Implement the 'Pay Policy 2012/13' to ensure we continue to demonstrate equality in pay.
- Conduct an Equal Pay Audit every three years.
- Continue to monitor and review equality in pay.
- Explore the opportunity to strengthen future Equal Pay Audits using the data we hold on a range of protected characteristics.

Objective 3 - Ensuring that equality analysis is undertaken on all new and significantly changed policies, functions, procedures and services to mitigate adverse impact

At Leicestershire County Council we undertake our equality analysis primarily through Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). We already have an approach to EIAs which is working well, but we would like to strengthen this approach further. This means that if we change the way we do something within the County Council we will look at how this affects all different groups. We can then try to stop changes from being unfair to anyone.

We will:

- Improve the quality and consistency of our approach to undertaking Equality Impact Assessments to affect and influence decision making.
- Undertake regular corporate monitoring and reporting of progress against all equality outcomes (service and corporate level).
- Develop an internal publicity campaign to promote the Equality Impact Assessment process.
- Develop an EIA form which is fit for purpose to use on partnership and strategic based policies / practices.
- Strengthen the Community Cohesion and Human Rights elements of the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and the EIA reporting form.
- Further develop the monitoring of EIAs and improvement plans to ensure they are embedded into business and service planning processes.
- Ensure all completed EIAs are published and the outcomes of EIAs are reported on in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Continue to provide training for staff undertaking Equality Impact Assessments.
- Strengthen the procedure by which EIAs are scrutinised and signed off.

- Strengthen consultation with key community groups, when relevant and via appropriate mechanisms, to ensure we speak to communities when changes will impact upon them. To include a range of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, not just the nine protected characteristics.

Objective 4 - Promoting equality and diversity at all levels within Leicestershire County Council

This means that we will make sure that everybody at Leicestershire County Council knows about equality and diversity.

We will:

- Continue to raise the profile of equality and diversity through a targeted positive communications campaign - including holding equality and diversity related events, incorporating an annual Equality and Diversity Week in November.
- Ensure any communications / promotional activity is relevant, proportionate and will have an impact.
- Continue to break down the results of the Staff Survey to show levels of commitment to the agenda.
- Ensure more robust monitoring of representative panels and attendance on equality & diversity related Learning & Development courses.
- Support the Cabinet Lead Member for equality and our political leaders.
- Ensure that managers and members know about and act effectively in relation to equality and diversity.
- Implement the Equality and Diversity Communications Plan, including website and intranet updates.
- Maintain multi-faith facilities at County Hall.

Objective 5 - Reduce the number of hate incidents and increase levels of hate incident reporting across the County

A hate incident is any incident where individuals are targeted because they are believed to be different. This may be motivated by: age, disability, gender identity, race, religion / belief or sexual orientation. An incident / offence may be physical, verbal or written. We will work towards reducing hate incidents and encouraging people to report if this does happen.

We will:

- Continue to promote the importance of reporting all hate incidents and increase the level of hate incident reporting across the County.
- Continue to provide support to local and national initiatives.
- Meet targets identified in the partnership Hate Incident Reduction Monitoring Strategy Action Plan.
- Incorporate Charnwood Hate Incident Action Project (CHIAP) into the Hate Incident Monitoring project.
- Identify gaps to re-focus the Hate Incident Monitoring Project e.g. target specific districts to communicate / publicise the project.
- Promote the Hate Incident Monitoring Project corporately across the wider Council e.g. by working with managers and utilising the Hate Incident e-learning module.
- Work closer with Workers Groups and create closer links with Equality & Diversity Week in November.
- Create greater links with the Leicester City Hate Incident Monitoring Project.
- Develop closer links between Hate and Anti- Social Behaviour (ASB) i.e. through call taker scripts to identify hate incidents, training and development etc.

Objective 6 - Encourage and empower under-represented groups and individuals to participate – in society, their community and at work

This means that we will help different people, especially those that don't have the chance to fully take part, to be more active in society, the community and at work.

We will:

- Continue to monitor and manage the Engagement and Representation Contract with the purpose of providing positive outcomes.
- Internally develop our staff Workers Groups and implement the Staff Survey and Workers Groups Action Plans.
- Support communities of interest and under-represented groups to play an active part in the Council's decision-making processes and in terms of engaging in political processes.
- Work closely with and provide training to elected members to enable them to support communities of interest and under-represented groups to play an active part in the Council's decision-making processes.
- Continue to develop Leicestershire Working Together in order to provide external scrutiny on our policies and practices.
- Provide support to specific communities when required / needed.
- Promote use of the Engagement, Involvement and Participation Strategy.
- Circulate information, including opportunities for engagement and capacity building.

Objective 7- Encouraging engagement and communication with people in the most appropriate and accessible ways

This means that we will talk and listen to people in the way that they find the easiest and best. We will help other people to do this.

We will:

- Mitigate the impact of moving to online and removing face to face services.
- Develop learning and development opportunities to train our staff in effective engagement and communication.
- Make all of our information more accessible.
- Raise awareness of our translation and interpretation, easy read and write services and sign language translation.
 - Look into Plain English usage within LCC
 - Investigate how we handle translation and access issues for small community groups
- Monitor and evaluate contracts for the organisations that are developing communication and representation on our behalf.
- Promote the Equality and Diversity Communications Plan.

Objective 8 - Enhance understanding of equality, diversity, human rights & community cohesion issues within all areas of Leicestershire County Council

This means that we will add to what people at Leicestershire County Council already know about equality, diversity and human rights and community cohesion issues.

We will:

- Specifically focus on further developing awareness around community cohesion and human rights.
- Make good use of up-to-date research, including understanding demographic movements to provide support to new arrivals.
- Promote further use of the Community Cohesion Toolkit.
- Provide information on equality and diversity related issues, including briefing notes, factsheets, email circulation newsletters, annual Interfaith and International Calendar.
- Address and counter myths and misconceptions.
- Ensure greater knowledge and practical use of human rights legislation and issues across all service delivery.
- Review the Equality and Diversity Learning and Development plan for staff and members on a regular basis and produce monitoring information showing numbers of attendees (and their evaluation of each course).
- Provide guidance and training for staff to identify potential human rights issues.

Objective 9 - Empower communities across Leicestershire to have and develop high levels of cohesion, tolerance and resilience

This means that we will help communities in Leicestershire to work together, understand and support different lifestyles and cultures and maintain and celebrate their way of life.

We will:

- Promote and provide support to shared activities, cross-cultural engagement and opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together for community celebration and in relation to particular work areas.
- Provide support to interfaith and faith engagement, including the Leicestershire Interfaith Forum.
- Develop systems to measure the impact of our community cohesion activity.
- Continue to monitor extremism and provide an advisory, support and guidance role in relation to situations etc.
- Develop and implement actions in our plan to further progress the community cohesion agenda.
- Continue to promote and develop our Community Forums to increase participation and enable all equality stakeholders / representatives of vulnerable and marginalised groups to challenge and scrutinise decision-making and progress.

Objective 10 - Strengthening and developing equalities bodies/structures and embedding equality and diversity within the Leicestershire Together integrated commissioning structure

This means that we will strengthen the people and groups who work with equality and diversity issues and the ways that they do this. We will also make sure that equality and diversity is part of the way that services are planned and delivered in Leicestershire.

We will:

- Ensure that there is a focus in the work of the Corporate Equalities Board on community cohesion and human rights.
- Ensure that equality and diversity is embedded as a key theme within the Leicestershire Together integrated commissioning structure (including Leicestershire Working Together and the LeicesterShire Equalities Forum).
- Support and help development of the Stronger Communities Board.
- Conduct a mapping exercise to identify what arrangements Leicestershire Together partners have in terms of equality & diversity bodies and structures.
- Identify ways to embed equality analysis across the Leicestershire Together partnership, including the commissioning hubs.
- Report to the Leicestershire Together Strategic Executive on the role and remit of the refreshed Leicestershire Working Together group.
- Report to each Commissioning hub on the revised role and remit of the LWT group.
- Support Leicestershire Working Together (LWT) members to participate in the Leicestershire Together “Challenge” Workshops.

4.3 Appendix 2: Case Studies

Case Study 1 - CYCLe

Our Youth Service workers support **CYCLe** - the County Youth Council for Leicestershire, and the UK Youth Parliament representatives (UKYP). CYCLe meets regularly to tackle issues that affect young people from across the County and to try and make effective changes.

Young people aged 11-19 represent other young people across the seven Borough and Districts by providing a route for them to have their say on issues that affect them. CYCLe aims to represent other targeted groups around Leicestershire, including young carers, Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET) young people, Young parents and hearing impaired young people. It also works with other forums such as the Children in Care Council, Traveller Forums, Disability Forum and many others.

CYCLe gets involved in diverse and creative projects including: Unheard Voices, peer research, consultations, debates, campaigns and senior member training. UK Youth Parliament representatives for Leicestershire are part of CYCLe and are elected by the young people they represent every two years. They take the voice from Leicestershire to regional and national levels.

Case Study 2 - Carers' Champion Network

The Council has set up and facilitated the Leicestershire Carers' Champion Network. The aim of the network is to raise the profile of the carers' agenda among health, social care and voluntary sector colleagues and to enable the sharing of good evidence based practice and support to staff to ensure the delivery of high quality, consistent standards of support to carers.

We also organise an annual 'Carers' Rights Day'. The theme for 2012 was 'Getting help in tough times'. Carers' Rights Day is all about getting information to carers, as it

is often the case that individuals struggle to find out about their rights as a carer and the support available to them.

The Council has also helped develop and procure a Pilot GP Health & Wellbeing Service in North West Leicestershire and Oadby & Wigston localities. The Service was launched in January 2013. The aim of the new service is to support, advise and provide information to carers within Primary Care, who have not as yet identified themselves as a carer or who as a carer require support and information to remain mentally, emotionally and physically well.

Case Study 3 - Aston Firs Caravan Site

Aston Firs Caravan Site is a residential site for Roma, Gypsy and Travellers in Leicestershire and is managed by Leicestershire County Council.

Each pitch agreement holder has a plot to live on and on each plot there are outbuildings in which to cook and bathe in. The buildings were in a bad state of repair by 2009 after more than 30 years of use. The residents of the site formed a Consultation Group to work with service providers and partner organisations to have the site refurbished. Their first meeting was in October 2009 and in March 2011, £1.6 million was granted to knock down the existing outbuildings and build new ones. The refurbishment of the site started in June 2012 and will take approximately 12 months to complete.

In the interim period the group also applied for funding to run:

- Summer open days on site with fun for the children, beauty treatments for Mums and service provider information tables
- Christmas parties with a disco and Mr. Chuckles clown for the children
- A search for work workshop
- A children's library run by the site office which is also a Report Hate Centre.

The Consultation Group still exists but do not hold regular meetings. Their experience and partnerships formed during 2009 - 2012 means that if there are any future campaigns the structure exists for them to resume effective consultation processes.

Case Study 4 - Mental Health First Aid Training

In 2012, the People Strategy Board committed the Council to delivering Mental Health First Aid training to managers and other staff members. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised training programme, which began in 2003 in Australia, and is now practiced in 16 countries.

MHFA is based on the same principles as First Aid for physical injuries. It teaches attendees the signs that someone may be becoming mentally unwell and trains them to give initial care and support until specialist medical treatment is accessed. MHFA

England has trained 24 members of staff to act as Instructors and deliver the two day training course to their colleagues.

The course enables attendees to spot the early signs of a mental health problem, guide someone towards the right support, feel confident helping someone experiencing a problem and reduce the stigma of mental health problems.

Case Study 5 - Multi Agency Traveller Unit

One area of best practiced highlighted by the LGA Peer Assessors was our Multi-Agency Travellers Unit. By drawing up an agency agreement between all the local authorities and other services, such as the police, Travelling Families Health Service, Housing-related Support and the Traveller Education Service, we have been able to coordinate a consistent approach to delivering services across the whole of the County and also Leicester City.

We have successfully led on the establishment of a multi-agency unit to act as a 'one-stop shop' for all Traveller-related issues, including complaints, access to services, advice and training. Pooling staff has enabled individuals to specialise in particular areas of work such as site management, planning, enforcement and community engagement, thereby improving the level of service given and at the same time saving money.

The Unit carries out effective engagement with the Gypsy and Traveller communities, as well as providing training for other services, and raising awareness within the wider public of Gypsy and Traveller issues, culture and lifestyle.

Case Study 6 - Multi-Faith Prayer and Contemplation Suite

We have developed a Multi-Faith Prayer and Contemplation Suite for our staff and visitors, which will enable religious or belief observance in the workplace. This is a neutral space which can be used by people of all faith groups, beliefs and for those whom religion has no particular significance in their lives.

As an organisation, we are committed to creating an environment that promotes respect, tolerance, mutual understanding and inter-faith dialogue. In 2011 and 2012, we organised a series of successful Faith and Belief seminars that were delivered by employees to their colleagues.

Case Study 7 - LGBT Awareness Training Events

The Youth Offending Service (YOS) ran two awareness training events in 2012 in conjunction with the Leicester LGBT Centre to enable staff to develop their awareness of LGBT issues. The first training session was for staff undertaking street work with young people involved in Anti-Social Behaviour. The training provided them with more confidence to address LGBT discrimination and to deal with issues such as homophobic comments. The YOS also ran a further event for all staff at a service meeting, to make sure that they too were well informed about LGBT issues. This was done as part of a regular training commitment to develop staff awareness of diversity issues.

Case Study 8 - Supporting Disabled People into work

Leicestershire County Council are working closely with Marks and Spencer, in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus and Remploy to ensure that the residents of the County have the opportunity to secure new employment opportunities in their state-of-the-art warehouse at Castle Donington. There will be over 750 jobs by the end of 2013 and Marks and Spencer are looking to offer 20% of these jobs to people who are disabled or have a health condition.

Marks & Spencer are committed to supporting disabled people and ensuring these individuals are an important part of the inclusive culture of the site. The company is aiming to make the Castle Donington site an inclusive and engaging place to work, where each person is valued as an individual.

The overall goal is to transform the lives of disabled people and those who experience complex barriers to work by providing sustainable employment opportunities.

Case Study 9 - Marriage and Civil Partnership Ceremonies

The County Council provides a service for couples wishing to marry or form a civil partnership. It also provides suitable venues where the ceremony can be performed and approves other premises across the County for these purposes. Couples have over sixty places to choose from for their 'special day' ranging from a Registration Service venue to a stately home or 'character' hotel.

Since the 2005 law change, over 300 civil partnerships ceremonies have been performed by the Service up until March 2012. There were on average 35 such ceremonies during each financial year between April 2009 and March 2012.

Case Study 10 - Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour on Public Transport

Our Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) has developed a policy to deal with anti-social behaviour on school transport, working in conjunction with schools. The leaflet is

available on our website and sets out what behaviour is covered under the policy and how it will be dealt with.

The Safer Travel Team (part of our PTU) has also developed a web resource for bus operators to deal with issues on passenger transport. This page contains online incident reporting tools, printable resources for drivers and schools, and details other services provided by the Safer Travel team, including talks for drivers and a regular newsletter on School Transport issues.

Case Study 11 - Improving Representation in Civic Affairs

We are ensuring that all our civic occasions and events are fully inclusive and representative of our diverse community.

Our County Service (an annual event) and the service planned for the Cathedral to mark Armed Forces Day will feature representatives of various faiths within the prayers.

We held a dedicated Chairman's Celebration and Awards Evening to celebrate equality and diversity during Equalities and Diversity Week.

We actively seek nominations from our black and minority ethnic communities for all Chairman's receptions and one of our two annual Chairman's dinners is for 'Community Leaders', including people from all faith groups and diverse communities. We also have a programme of schools sports celebration events, one of which is dedicated to inclusive sports.

Case Study 12 - Community Forums

There is a regular process of engagement with all geographic communities across Leicestershire through the 25 Community Forums which generally each meet 3 - 4 times per year.

A process of 'Community Forum Budgets' was undertaken within each of the 25 Community Forums covering the County. Residents put forward projects and voted on those to receive the money, including many projects aimed at meeting the needs of children and young people and a number aimed at facilities or equipment for those with disabilities.

There was a high level of satisfaction with the process and the fact that residents' views had determined the outcomes. A further round of Community Forum Budgets will take place through Community Forums in 2013.

Case Study 13 - Leicestershire Working Together Forum (LWT)

The Leicestershire Working Together Forum aims to give all Leicestershire communities the chance to influence and shape the work of Leicestershire Together and partner agencies.

By engaging with diverse communities in Leicestershire, we hope to utilise people's experience, interests and expertise when considering any changes to services affecting them.

To mention a few other specific achievements, the LWT Group: Invited the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire to discuss the draft Police and Crime Plan and put forward response to the draft Plan. The Group also recommended that the Commissioner attended specific focus group sessions with the Gypsy and Traveller community, and Asylum Seekers and Refugees and it has been agreed that the Commissioner will meet with these specific groups.

- * Provided feedback to the Council's Community Safety team on its Hate Crime Incidents Reporting Strategy, in particular the need to use culturally sensitive reporting centres.
- * Learnt about and had the opportunity to comment on the changes to the Health sector and the new Healthwatch body. This information was disseminated amongst their communities and organisations.
- * Group members received details of the Supporting Leicestershire Families programme and have advised on the make up of Locality Partnerships and Agencies to ensure relevant groups and organisations are involved.
- * Worked with officers at the County Council to ensure carers are included as a category in the new County Council Equality Monitoring guidance following recommendations made by the Group.

Case Study 14 - Inter-Faith Forum for Leicestershire

The Inter-Faith Forum for Leicestershire was launched in July 2008, as an initiative of the Leicestershire Together partnership.

Since its inception, the Forum has gone from strength to strength, and has become a very well established local faith forum, with regular and committed attendance from a range of faith/belief representatives, from across Leicester and Leicestershire. The distribution list for the Forum has grown to include over 150 individuals, with new members being continually added.

Meetings of the Inter Faith Forum take place quarterly. Forum meetings continue to be well attended, with a wide range of people attending each meeting. The meetings generally take the form of a themed 'seminar', usually with three different speakers, who will talk about the particular theme and its relationship to religion/faith, followed by questions from attendees, and further discussion and debate about the topic of discussion.

Since the Inter-Faith Forum was set up, and through its continued and sustained efforts, the County Council is now regarded as a local, as well as national leader, in terms of its role in supporting inter-faith work, and consulting with faith communities. The Inter-Faith Forum therefore remains highly active and aims to continue its successes, with a planned programme of meetings and events for the forthcoming year.

Case Study 15 - Community Cohesion in schools

In response to the Ofsted requirement for schools to ensure they are promoting community cohesion, both through their curriculum and non-curriculum based learning activities, the Council developed a dedicated online resource. This resource is based within the education section of the Council's website and information about this resource was circulated to all Leicestershire schools. It includes information on:

- Local sources of support and information – a list of local organisations and services to help schools develop their approach to community cohesion.
- National sources of support and information.
- Community cohesion frameworks, toolkits and resources, specifically designed for schools.
- Information about training, conferences and workshops related to supporting schools to promote community cohesion.

Case Study 16 - Leicestershire CareOnLine (LCOL)

The CareOnLine database provides a single source of information for older and disabled people and their carers. It is designed to be simple to use and provides information on social care, health, housing, leisure, and a wealth of other services. It was selected as a finalist in the eEurope Awards 2005, which recognise innovative initiatives in the areas of eGovernment within Europe. The judges commented that CareOnLine provided "An exceptionally complete catalogue of web-accessible services, with an emphasis on those with special significance for senior citizens".

The main areas where people have experienced benefits from the Leicestershire CareOnLine (LCOL) service are:

- Older People – e-mail contact with family abroad, lifelong learning; access to health, benefits and lifestyle information; online shopping and banking is growing in popularity among frail older people.
- Physical and sensory disabilities – assistive technology allows independent use of computers. Benefits are the same as for older people plus rehabilitation exercises using special software; help in adjusting to increased frailty such as sight degeneration – CareOnLine helps blind people learn to operate online shopping sites.
- Carers – information to assist the caring role; carers can communicate with friends and family and pursue their own interests without the need to leave the person they care for; transition assistance back into the community, once the caring role is finished can also be enhanced with new skills.
- Learning Disability/Mental Health – learning new skills and performing software exercises can help to improve concentration and improve self-esteem; specialist software has been issued to all ASCS Learning Disability Day Centres and computers installed in residential homes. LCOL collects service user comments for team improvement and senior management input.

Case Study 17 - GATE (Gypsy and Traveller Equality) Project

The GATE project was established following the emergence of draft local development plans across Leicestershire which included proposed Gypsy and Traveller sites and caused an enormous upsurge in negative press and public outcry based on long established myths and prejudicial views of the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

The aims of the project are:

- To examine the key issues within Leicestershire relating to Gypsies and Travellers.
- To train Gypsy and Traveller volunteers to speak to community groups and host events raising awareness of the issues to the wider public.
- The volunteers can also raise the profile of the Hate Incident Monitoring Project to the Gypsy and Traveller population, thereby increasing reporting and hopefully reducing hate incidents and crimes.

To date, the volunteers have tackled some of the myths and misconceptions surrounding Gypsies and Travellers, listened to the concerns of the settled community and have positively reduced some of the tension between other communities and themselves living in Leicester and Leicestershire. This has resulted in a more positive relationship with the settled community.

The Multi Agency Traveller Unit (MATU) have assisted GATE members to learn and understand how Local Authorities and the Police work to provide a multi agency approach to address issues surrounding Gypsies and Travellers in a fair and consistent manner.

One member, who had little education or experience in her school days, was inspired to take up options of Adult Learning and with the help of the Stride Training Centre, Leicester College, GATE and MATU she has gained education and experience and has developed greater self esteem. This has enabled her to progress onto a place at Nottingham University to study to be a Social Worker.

Case Study 18 - Gender Reassignment

The Corporate Equalities Team have been doing some specific engagement work with local members of trans communities with a view to ensuring that the authority is not only meeting our legal obligations but proactively working towards identifying key actions that could be implemented at a partnership level.

Using the first ever central Government action plan to advance transgender equality as a reference point, work is progressing well with awareness and confidence being raised and key stakeholders identified.

Case Study 19 - Responding to Customer Complaints

The corporate complaints procedure is designed to ensure that people are treated fairly and their human rights are respected. The following provides two examples of how this works in practice and how the issues raised were resolved.

Example 1 - Following a complaint from a learning disability service user's family about a decision to end night care, a meeting was held with the family and the decision rescinded. It was agreed that, in future, a meeting will always take place with the family concerned before any decision is taken to change care provision.

Example 2 - Following a complaint from a service user's family about a provider accepting instructions not to provide care services over the Christmas period from the service user who had known mental health care problems, revised procedures have been put in place to ensure that situation does not arise again.

Case Study 20 - Staff Survey

The Council has delivered a Staff Survey five times between 2006 and 2012. These have targeted non-school based staff and, on average, 33% of staff take part. Over this period a number of core questions have been maintained in order to build up a picture of change in staff attitudes over time.

As well as seeking staff perceptions across a range of issues the Survey also collects a wide range of demographic information, including that related to the protected characteristics, enabling the Council to undertake a range of analysis and explore variations in opinion by different groups of staff. One of our successes is that, since 2006, the number of people withholding their personal information has dropped significantly from an average of nearly 30% to just 5% last year.

The results last year were also very positive in relation to equality with 90.8% of staff believing 'the Council is committed to equal opportunities', and 85.5% saying that they are 'treated with fairness and respect at work'.

In terms of reporting, and in addition to a corporate analysis, a detailed action plan on equality and diversity issues has been produced by each of the Workers Groups in conjunction with Human Resources and was considered by the Council's Equalities Board in order to address some of the concerns and issues raised by staff.

Corporately, in previous years, the results have also been discussed at each of the Workers Group's annual conferences to feed into the corporate action planning process. Similarly, Departmental Equalities Groups have the opportunity to consider departmental findings.

Case Study 21 - Positive Action to Support Women

In 2010 we introduced a new positive action scheme aimed at tackling the gender imbalance of our workforce, particularly in terms of increasing the number of women in Grade 13 posts and above.

We have delivered the Springboard and Spring Forward women's development programmes on an annual basis and to date these programmes have been delivered to over 100 women in total. Each programme is delivered over 4 full days which include guest speakers that are all women working at senior levels within the Council. The programmes are aimed at providing an opportunity for participants to come together, build supportive networks and work through a programme of personal goal-setting, identifying personal or environmental barriers and developing strategies to overcome them.

Feedback from the courses has been overwhelmingly positive and all participants have identified that they found the intervention very useful and positive. As an example, a Spring Forward participant said the following:

"This course has been great at allowing me to do some self analysis and understand how I prevent myself from progressing. The tools provided have really helped me to understand how I can change, how I react and respond to situations and look to become more positive and outcome focused".

Case Study 22 - Loughborough Library, Learning and Community Opportunities Centre

The County Council has brought together services to Loughborough into a single refurbished site (formerly that of the library exclusively). The services are:

- The Library
- The Community Opportunities Service. This was formerly the day care facility situated at Marsh Road, Mountsorrel supporting people with disabilities
- Leicestershire's Adult Learning Service

The project has not only generated monetary savings but has provided more positive opportunities for all individuals and communities living within the Loughborough area. Features of the site include:

- Services to promote the independence of people with disabilities, including a state of the art interactive multi-sensory area. This includes improved access to universal services located in Loughborough centre, such as the library and nearby Charnwood Museum
- New adult learning facilities which will also be available for community hire
- A refurbished library. Loughborough is the busiest library in the County
- Improved access to local studies situated on the ground floor

- A “changing places” toilet for adults and children with disabilities

Case Study 23 - Hate Incident Monitoring Project annual Stop and Tell Campaigns

In 2012 the Stop and Tell campaign raised awareness of Mental Health issues. The www.leics.gov.uk/repothate link received 671 hits during the campaign period with the figures for the two months prior to the campaign were 271 and 252 hits showing a significant increase in hits on the web page during the campaign month. In 2013 the focus was to raise awareness amongst the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community. The aim of the campaign each year is to raise awareness of what constitutes a hate incident and raise awareness of how to report an incident.

Case Study 24 - Anti- Bullying in Leicestershire

In 2012 Leicestershire County Council worked with Leicester City and the police to re-launch a resource called ‘Throwing Stones’, this is now available online & is a resource that school staff can use with students to raise awareness and help prevent and tackle racist incidents and racist bullying (<http://www.throwingstones.org.uk/>). The County Council website also has advice sections on bullying based on Race, Special Educational Needs, Disability and Homophobia.

Additionally, Leicestershire Anti-Bullying team has signed up to be part of the Stonewall Education Champions programme, a scheme whereby local authorities work with Stonewall to establish ways in which they can address homophobic bullying and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all young people.

The Education Champions programme is designed to go hand in hand with the work already being done around anti-bullying. This includes work being done in partnership across the County and is not exclusive to the anti-bullying team.

We ensure that there is specific reference to homophobia and homophobic bullying throughout the advice that we provide to schools and have developed a new section on our website: <http://www.beyondbullying.com/homophobicbullying.html>.

Training on Homophobic Bullying has been delivered to secondary school staff in the spring term 2013 this term and a training session for primary school staff is currently being developed with the aim of delivering this in the summer term.

Equality Strategy 2013-2016: Consultation responses received**How can the Strategy be improved?**

	Suggested Actions
1	Include sensory disabilities, gypsy and traveller and asylum seeker information into the people profile
2	Change the estimate of mental health to 1 in 4 to reflect the national increase
3	Change the LCC workforce staff profile to reflect the workforce excluding school staff to create clearer links to our workforce equalities targets
4	Include information about gender reassignment in staff profile
5	Link this Strategy to the Equality Duty to showcase how you show due regard in your equalities practice
6	Amend the Equalities reporting structure to include Leicestershire Working Together and the Equalities Forum
7	Re- write Appendix 1 with less jargon
8	Broaden priority equality objective 8 to enhance understanding of equality to all residents in the County as well as the County Council
9	Needs to be some recognition of parent/carers of disabled children/young people and young carers as part of the Carers Strategy
10	Include bullying in the workplace
11	Ensure consultation and engagement is embedded fully throughout the Council, particularly with the deaf/ hard of hearing community
12	Focus on understanding the residents of the County Council and their equality needs
13	Reference the potential economic benefits from community cohesion and equalities activity
14	This must not be a paper exercise but a realistic one
15	Would benefit from the more pro active work that the Council is prepared to do
16	Strengthen information regarding Equality and Diversity training for employees
17	Endeavour to implement the Strategy fully without any bias
18	Refer to the financial constraints and/ or recognition of how this may impact on the implementation of the Strategy
19	Focus on the practical things that we are going to do to
20	Achievable action plan is the most important thing
21	Keep the new Strategy clear and concise
22	Ensure spelling, formatting and grammar is right

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Timetable for Strategy

Key milestones	Dates
Draft Strategy developed in consultation with key community groups	September- December 2012
Draft Strategy presented to Equalities Board for approval before consultation period	21 st January 2013
Draft Strategy presented to CMT for approval before consultation period	24 th January 2013
Draft Strategy presented to Cabinet for approval before consultation period	6 th February 2013
Three month consultation period	7th February- 18 th April 2013
Final Draft Strategy presented to Equalities Board for approval	20 th May 2013
Final Draft Strategy presented to CMT for approval	30th May 2013
Final Draft Strategy presented to Scrutiny Commission for approval	5 th June 2013
Final scheme presented to Cabinet with a summary of the Scrutiny Commission's comments	9 th July 2013
Approval by County Council	25 th September 2013

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Report

Appendix D

For further information on undertaking and completing an Equality Impact Assessment, please see the [guidance](#).

Name of policy/ procedure/ function/ service being assessed:	Equality Strategy 2013-2016
Department and Section:	Policy and Partnerships Team, Chief Executives
Name of lead officer and others completing this assessment:	Suzanne Kinder
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Date EIA assessment completed:	March 2013

Step 1: Defining the policy/ procedure/ function/ service

Using the information gathered within the Equality Questionnaire, you should begin this full EIA by defining and outlining its scope. The EIA should consider the impact or likely impact of the policy in relation to all areas of equality, diversity and human rights, as outlined in the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Strategy of Leicestershire County Council.

What are the main aims, purpose and objectives of the policy/ procedure/ function/ service? How will they be achieved?

The Equality Strategy 2013-2016 sets out how the Council will fulfil its commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights. The aim of the policy is to show how the Council is embedding, and is continuing to work towards achieving real equality and promoting diversity, community cohesion and human rights.

The Strategy fully sets out the Council's commitment to:

- 1) Providing fair and inclusive services and employment opportunities for everyone in Leicestershire
- 2) Developing and embedding Leicestershire County Council's ten Priority Equality Objectives
- 3) Having due regard to each of the nine 'protected characteristics' and promoting and embedding them in everything that we do
- 4) Eliminating unlawful discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between individuals and community groups
- 5) Promoting and celebrating diversity
- 6) Promoting community cohesion
- 7) Promoting human rights
- 8) Meeting its legislative requirements and achieving the highest level of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG)

The Strategy is the Council's key strategic document, driving equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights priorities across Leicestershire.

What are the main activities relating to this policy/ procedure/ function/ service and distinguish who is likely to benefit from these activities.

The Strategy includes a number of equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights objectives to achieve positive outcomes in both service design and delivery and in employment, for everyone in Leicestershire. It particularly focuses on Leicestershire County Council's ten Priority Equality Objectives and each of the nine protected characteristics, therefore a wide range of people will benefit from the positive outcomes achieved through this Strategy with the main beneficiaries being the citizens of Leicestershire, County Council employees and partners across other organisations.

What outcomes are expected?

The Strategy identifies real and achievable objectives for the Council which will enable it to fulfil its commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights. By achieving the objectives set out in the Strategy the Council will achieve positive outcomes for individuals and communities, in service design, delivery and employment.

The Strategy specifically relates to the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). This is to firstly ensure the Council meets its legislative duties and secondly, to enable the Council to further address issues that were raised through the EFLG peer review process which took place in March 2011. Ultimately the Strategy will ensure that existing practice is strengthened and further developed.

Step 2: Potential Impact

Use the table below to specify if any service users or staff who identify with any of the 'protected characteristics' below will be affected by the policy/ procedure/ service you are proposing (indicate all that apply) and describe why and what barriers these individuals or groups may face.

Who is affected and what barriers may these individuals or groups face?

Age	The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of age, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.
Disability	The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of Disability, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.
Gender Reassignment	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of gender reassignment particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>A potential barrier here is access to, and availability of relevant information. There is little local information on gender reassignment as the Council, and many other organisations, do not have a range of equality monitoring information to support this group.</p>

Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>As a new protected characteristic, the Strategy primarily focuses on embedding recognition of marriage and civil partnership and promoting this in all aspects of the Council's equality and diversity work. Therefore, this is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to this protected characteristic.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Race	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of race, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Religion or Belief	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of religion or belief, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Sex	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of sex, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of sexual orientation, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>A potential barrier here is access to, and availability of relevant information. There is little local information on sexual orientation as the Council, and many other organisations, do not have a range of equality monitoring information to support this group.</p>
Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights covers a variety of other groups such as; rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities and the specific actions are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities.</p>
Community Cohesion	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights also focus on community cohesion and fostering good community relations. Therefore, there is likely to be a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to community cohesion.</p>

Step 3: Data Collection & Evidence

In relation to your related findings in 'Step Two' are your presumptions on these barriers based on any existing research, data evidence or other information?

What evidence, research, data and other information do you have which will be relevant to this EIA?

What does this information / data tell you about each of the diverse groups?

Gained relevant evidence and research from:

- National and local research/ statistics
- National guidance on the Equality Act 2010 & the associated Public Sector Duties
- National guidance on the Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality & Human Rights Commission research and website
- Research from charities and community organisations on the 'protected characteristics'
- Leicestershire Working Together Group
- LCC Workers Groups

Both from national and local data, there is little local information on sexual orientation & gender reassignment. This may potentially create barriers for individual and the LGBT community as the Council, and many other organisations, do not have a range of equality monitoring information to support this group.

What further research, data or evidence may be required to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known affects of the policy?

Have you considered carrying out new data or research?

No further research is specifically required. However, ongoing evaluation of the Strategy will take place and specific work with groups and individuals from each of the 'protected characteristics' will continue to support the direction of the Strategy. This in turn may require further research to be developed.

Step 4: Consultation and Involvement

When considering how you to consult and involve people as part of the proposed policy/ procedure/ function/ service, it is important to think about the service users and staff who may be affected as part of the proposal.

Have you consulted on this policy/ procedure/ function or service?

Outline any consultation and the outcomes of the consultation in relation to this EIA.

Consultation on the Strategy was carried out via a number of mechanisms including electronically via the LCC webpage, at stakeholder events, partner meetings and staff forums.

Key to the development of the Strategy was consultation with, and the engagement and involvement of various equality groups. Working groups of a wide range of stakeholders, including members of the Council's employee groups and representatives of local voluntary and community organisations, were established. These included representatives from organisations supporting all of the 'protected characteristics'. These working groups played a fundamental role in the production of this Strategy and the identified priorities.

Consultation on the Draft Strategy will be carried out via a number of mechanisms including electronically, at stakeholder events, partner meetings and staff forums. Development of the consultation and the Strategy is overseen by the Equalities Board.

We have consulted with and will continue to engage specifically with diverse groups who have in the past felt 'under-represented' and/ or that have specific requirements or needs in relation to the delivery of this Strategy.

Responses generated through consultation were taken on board and incorporated into the final version of the Strategy.

Do any of the barriers you identified *actually* exist based on this consultation?

There is little local information on sexual orientation and gender reassignment as the Council, and many other organisations do not have a range of equality monitoring information to support this group. However, based on the consultation we have undertaken no actual barriers or potential adverse impacts have been identified as the Strategy itself aims to achieve equality and promote diversity, community cohesion and human rights for each of the nine 'protected characteristics'.

Step 5: Mitigating and assessing the impact

In relation to any research, data, consultation and information you have reviewed and/or carried out as part of this EIA, it is now essential to assess the impact of the policy/ procedure/ function/ service and distinguish whether a particular group could be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?

If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons.

The Strategy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to all of the protected characteristics, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.

N.B.

a) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.

b) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

What can be done to change the policy/ procedure/ function/ service to mitigate any adverse impact?

Consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary and how any unmet needs that you have identified can be addressed.

The Strategy is aimed at achieving fairer employment practices and more appropriate and accessible service design and delivery. However, it is recognised that positive outcomes are dependent upon the Strategy's effective implementation.

One of the main barriers to the effective implementation of the Strategy is cultural, behavioural and attitudinal. A range of training for employees and Elected Members and the provision of employment positive action measures are two ways of tackling this. Additionally, the promotion of positive messages and raising the profile of equalities and diversity across the authority, which are both identified as key areas for development in the Strategy, will also address this.

In terms of accessibility of the Strategy itself, it aims to be inclusive in the way it is accessed by the community and copies will be available, upon request, in Braille, large print and on tape. There will also be language interpretation, if needed, again upon request.

Step 6: Making a decision

Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy will meet Leicestershire County Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights.

It is our opinion that the Strategy will comply with Leicestershire County Council's responsibilities. It will further promote equal opportunities and achieve positive outcomes with the main beneficiaries being the citizens of Leicestershire, County Council employees and partners across other organisations.

Step 7: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy/ procedure/service change

How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the new policy/ procedure/ service change and what monitoring systems will you put in place to monitor this and to promote equality of opportunity and make positive improvements?

Progress against the Strategy will continually be monitored by the Policy & Partnerships Team and a report on the progress towards achieving the aims, objectives and targets within the Strategy will be produced annually. This will be reported to the Equalities Board, Cabinet and the relevant scrutiny body on an annual basis for monitoring and evaluation.

In terms of external scrutiny of the Strategy, the Leicestershire Working Together Group will monitor the Council's progress towards achieving equality and promoting diversity, community cohesion and human rights for each of the nine 'protected characteristics'.

In addition to this, equality and diversity forms a key part of the Council's Performance Management Framework and this will be used to also monitor progress against the Strategy.

How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes?

e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems.

The recommendations of this assessment will be built into the Strategy to ensure positive outcomes are achieved. New projects which will be developed as part of this Strategy will be developed in line with priorities outlined in this EIA and the annual reporting process will also take this into consideration.

Equality Improvement Plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from the Equality Impact Assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Objective	Action	Target	Officer Responsible	By when
Work towards achieving positive outcomes for all 'protected characteristics'	Revise the Council's Single Equality Action Plan	Equality Action Plan developed	Suzanne Kinder/ Julian Harrison	November 2013
Continue to ensure that monitoring of the Strategy is carried out on an annual basis and allows for monitoring of as many of the equality areas as is possible	Use the Equalities Board as a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the Strategy on an annual basis	Complete an annual review and publish findings in a report	Suzanne Kinder/ Julian Harrison	November 2014

1st Authorised Signature (EIA Lead):

Date:

2nd Authorised Signature (Member of DMT):

Date:

Once completed, please send a copy of this form to the Departmental Equalities Group for quality assurance. Once authorised, this Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Report will need to be published on our website. Please send a copy of this form to the Members Secretariat in the Chief Executives Department to louisa.jordan@leics.gov.uk.

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