

1. LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
1.1	Formulate and adopt a comprehensive equality policy for the authority	The Council has an Equal Opportunities Policy that commits it to treat service users, job seekers and employees equally and fairly regardless of their colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, marital status, sexuality, disability, age or any other unjustifiable criterion. The policy was last updated in 1994	Review Equal Opportunities Policy and specific corporate statements e.g. on disability, and formulate comprehensive equality policy for Cabinet approval	October 2004
1.2	Ensure that written policies are in line with current equality legislation and the codes of practice issued by the Equal Opportunities, Racial Equality and Disability Discrimination Commissions	Many written policies will have been prepared taking into account relevant legislation at the time they were prepared. The Race Equality Scheme contains actions to review policies and functions. However, during the last 3 years there have been significant new legislation on equalities and there is a need to carry out a systematic review to cover all equality dimensions.	<p>Employment policies - The Human Resources Strategy contains a commitment to review and develop HR policies, procedures and local conditions of service that deliver improvements in diversity. A prioritised programme for the review of employment policies is being prepared</p> <p>Service Policies – the review of policies will be an ongoing process through service planning and review processes.</p> <p>The Corporate Equality Plan (see action 1.3) will set out a framework to ensure that this takes place systematically</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2004</p>

1. LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
1.3	Make a corporate commitment to developing a Corporate Equality Plan (CEP) indicating how equality policy will be implemented.	The Council does not have a CEP covering all aspects of equality	Prepare CEP for approval by Cabinet	Oct. 2004
1.4	Make a corporate commitment to carrying out a process of equality impact and needs/requirement assessments including those assessments of organisational and individual requirements required for compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)	<p>Race – Cabinet has approved the Race Equality Scheme that contains plans to carry out this work.</p> <p>Disability – an audit of services has been undertaken and action plan prepared.</p>	Review progress in relation to race and disability and assess actions that may be needed in other areas. Incorporate recommendations in CEP	Oct. 2004
1.5	Make a corporate commitment to a fair employment and equal pay policy	There is a commitment in the Human Resources Strategy to do this.	A pay policy is being drafted in consultation with the Trade Unions as the basis of responding to the national local government pay award for 2004	Aug 2004

1. LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
1.6	Make a corporate commitment to earmark specific resources for improving equality practice	The Council has established a formal Equalities Structure allocating the time of senior officers to lead the work. It has also agreed growth items of £95k in its 2004-05 revenue budget for staffing, training and other costs of equalities work; and £150k in capital to improve access	CEP to include arrangements to monitor and review resources needed for improving equality practice and where appropriate outcome to be fed into financial planning process	Oct. 2004
2. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
2.1	Corporate commitment to consult with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups on all aspects of equality policy	The Council has a consultation policy that contains a commitment to consulting widely and appropriately in all areas of its work and as an integral part of the operation of good local government.	This is an ongoing commitment and during 2004 consultation will take place on equality objectives and the CEP	Ongoing

2. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
2.2	Each department and service area to make a commitment to contribute to the consultation and scrutiny element of the CEP		Following consideration by the Cabinet this action plan will be shared with departments and service areas to enable them to make the necessary commitment to consultation and scrutiny in their service plans.	Ongoing
2.3	Make a corporate commitment to equality self assessment, scrutiny and audit	The approval of this action plan will be a key step in establishing a corporate commitment to equality self assessment, scrutiny and audit	The detailed arrangements for translating this commitment into practice will form part of the CEP	Oct 2004
2.4	Each department and service area to commit to engage in consultation with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups on service delivery	The commitment to consultation is the policy of the Council - all departments and service are required to work to it	Departments and service areas to ensure that evidence of this commitment is contained within their service plans and outcomes of consultation reported.	Ongoing
2.5	Make a corporate commitment to consult departments and service areas on equality objectives		The CEP will contain equality objectives. Departments and service areas will be consulted during the preparation of the CEP	Oct 2004

2. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
2.6	Each department and service area to commit to processes of equality self assessment, scrutiny and audit on its service delivery	The Race Equality Scheme commits departments and service areas to self assessment, scrutiny and audit.	Development of the approach in place in relation to race to other areas of equalities. Monitoring of this commitment through the Race Equality Scheme, Corporate Equality Plan and corporate performance management	Ongoing
2.7	Incorporate equality policy as a key theme within the Community Strategy drawn up by the local authority and its partners	The Local Strategic Partnership has commissioned two Citizens Juries (disabled people and ethnic minority communities). The outcome of these will inform the development of the Community Strategy	As part of review of Community Strategy this summer consideration will be given to how adequately equality is covered and any necessary amendments proposed	Sept 2004
2.8	Make commitment to establish mechanisms for responding to harassment on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality and religion or belief	The Council has a procedure for dealing with complaints about harassment and bullying at work. It identifies, but is not limited to the following grounds - race, ethnic origin or nationality, gender, sexuality, religious or political beliefs, disabilities, status as ex-offenders, age, marital status, real or suspected infection with AIDS/HIV, appearance.	Review the operation of the existing harassment policy, modifying if necessary, to take account of new requirements	Oct 2004

3. SERVICE DELIVERY AND CUSTOMER CARE				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
3.1	Departmental and service area commitment to a comprehensive equality policy appropriate to its service delivery	Departments and service areas are required to work to the Council's current Equal Opportunities Policy	Departments and service areas will be involved in the development of the comprehensive equality policy	Oct 2004
3.2	Departmental and service area to implement equality impact assessment and needs/requirements for its service delivery including those assessments of organisational and individual requirements required for compliance with the DDA	Departments and service areas are implementing actions on equality impact assessments contained in the Race Equality Scheme. A comprehensive ongoing programme of disability access audits is in place	The outcome of race equality impact assessments will be reported as part of the monitoring of the Race Equality Scheme. Consideration will be given to other monitoring and reporting requirements during the development of the CEP	Ongoing
3.3	Departmental and service area commitment to developing equal access to services plans element of the CEP and setting targets within each department and service area as part of their business plans	Guidance has been provided to departments on the inclusion of equality issues in their service plans for 2004-05	Departments will contribute to the development of the CEP and their plans to improve equality of access to services will then be reflected in their service plans for 2005-06 and future years	Ongoing

3. SERVICE DELIVERY AND CUSTOMER CARE				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
3.4	Departmental and service area commitment to equality action planning and equality target setting within all departments and service areas	There is not a systematic approach to equality action planning and target setting across all departments and service areas. One of the aims of working to achieve the levels of the equality standard is to ensure that the promotion of equality is a part of mainstream service planning and delivery.	Departmental and service area commitments to be included in the CEP and to be reflected in their service plans	Ongoing
3.5	Department and service area commitment to allocate specific resources for improving equality practice	All departments are represented by senior staff on the Equalities Board. Corporate and Departmental Human Resources Sections have senior staff advising on diversity and equality issues. Other specific resources include those allocated to support the PSA target on the employment of disabled people and the appointment of a Racist Incidents Monitoring Officer.	As part of preparation of CEP, conduct audit of staff and other resources that are either wholly or partly dedicated to improving equality practice in employment and service delivery	Oct 2004

4. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
4.1	Adopt recruitment procedures which use non discriminatory practice	The Council has recruitment procedures and practice guidance designed to be non-discriminatory.	JobCentre Plus is conducting an audit of recruitment policies. The outcome of this audit will be used to inform a prioritised programme of review of procedures including the establishment of monitoring arrangements	Ongoing
4.2	Commitment to an employment equality assessment of the Local Labour Market Area, workforce profiling and equal pay review	Work is in progress to establish a comprehensive workforce profile covering race, gender and disability.	As part of the preparation of the CEP the workforce information will be assessed annually against an analysis of the Local Labour Market Area linking to the national labour market survey and any other work programme of the LSEP	Oct 2004
4.3	Commitment to establish a fair and equal pay policy	There is a commitment in the Human Resources Strategy to do this.	A pay policy is being drafted in consultation with the Trade Unions as the basis of responding to the national local government pay award for 2004	Aug 2004

4. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
4.4	Commitment to developing an equal employment and pay element of the CEP incorporating the employment related issues from the Race Equality Scheme and including those assessments of organisational and individual requirements required for compliance with the DDA	See 4.3 above in relation to pay Race – employment monitoring information to be published in May 2004 Disability – the PSA target for the employment of disabled people includes an element on the Council's workforce	Building on work already taking place on race and disability the CEP will include an element on equal employment and pay	Oct 2004
4.5	Commitment to adopt procedures to ensure that publicity for vacancies does not unfairly restrict the range of applicants	The Human Resources Strategy contains a commitment to conduct research into the effectiveness of vacancy advertising in reaching ethnic minority communities	As part of CEP consider what other actions needed to ensure publicity for vacancies does not unfairly restrict the range of applicants from other groups	Oct 2004
4.6	Commitment to produce a standard range of application forms and job descriptions that are clear and explicit	The Council has a standard application form and guidance on job descriptions, but there is a need to review the extent to which these support to delivery of equality objectives	JobCentre Plus is to provide advice and guidance on the production of application forms and job descriptions and associated recruitment papers with the aim of ensuring that they are accessible to all potential applicants for employment with the Council	Sep 2004

4. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING				
No.	Aim	Current Position	Action	Time
4.7	Commitment to review personnel information system for monitoring suitability including underpinning the Council's statutory ethnic monitoring duties	The new HR information system is designed to provide the required monitoring information. The first full publication of employee monitoring information under Race Equality Scheme will be in May 2004	Further consideration to be given to how the HR information system is to be developed to cover other equality areas. Arrangements for collecting data to continue in the interim	Spring 2005
4.8	Commitment to make procedures consistent with employment Codes of Practice	Employment related procedures have been developed and amended over time in response to new legislative and policy requirements. The Human Resources Strategy contains a commitment to review and develop HR policies and procedures that deliver improvements in diversity.	A prioritised programme for the review of employment procedures is being prepared. One of its aims is to ensure that the procedures are consistent with employment Codes of Practice	Ongoing
4.9	Commitment to develop a programme for staff training in equality issues	The Human Resources Strategy contains a commitment to develop training on diversity issues and the Race Equality Scheme on race issues. The Council's revenue budget 2004-05 includes additional resources of £25k to support staff training on equality issues. Training programme in place on disability and employment.	Establish a framework for comprehensive, prioritised training programme on equality issues as part of the CEP, including commitments already made in Human Resources Strategy and Race Equality Scheme	Oct 2004

