

EQUALITIES SCHEME

**London Borough of Richmond
Upon Thames**

2007-2010

Third Draft

March 2007

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FOREWORD

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames positively welcomes and aims to support the growing diversity of the community we serve and the people we employ. Our diversity is our strength and we are committed to providing services to our many different communities, by a workforce that reflects the diversity of society.

We also acknowledge that we live in an unequal society in which many people face discrimination. The Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames believes that equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination are fundamental human rights. We actively oppose all forms of discrimination and are committed to the principle that no person shall face discrimination by being treated unfairly or being denied access to services or employment opportunities.

Equality and diversity are majority issues, which concern the whole community:

- Young people
- Older people
- Women and Men
- People from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds
- Faith groups
- Disabled people
- Lesbians and gay men, Bi Sexual and Transgender groups

We aim to be a borough which values the diversity of all its communities and enables all its residents to become full and active citizens, to feel safe, included, respected, valued and share a sense of belonging.

We will continue to make sure that all elected Members and employees of the Council are aware of our statutory duties to promote equality and we will take the lead within the Council in ensuring the continued and consistent implementation of the equalities agenda as outlined in the Council's Equalities Scheme and Equality Action Plans.

Serge Lourie, Leader of the Council

Gillian Norton, Chief Executive

INTRODUCTION

The Council's Equalities Scheme sets out the vision, framework and strategy, which the Council has to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equal opportunities for all people. Particular groups of people may experience disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion for a variety of reasons, relating to their race, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion or socio economic status. The Equalities Scheme and associated plan explain what we intend to do to improve fair and equal access to Council employment and Council services.

We produced a separate Disability Equality Action Plan (2006-2009) as part of the first edition of the Equalities Scheme, which was informed by feedback from local disabled people and groups representing disabled people in the borough. This is now incorporated into the Corporate Equality Action Plan in Appendix Five of this Scheme. Action on equality strands is clearly marked.

Between December 2006 and March 2007 we undertook a similar process of consultation and information gathering for Race and Gender. As part of the implementation of our Race Equality Scheme work, we have also undertaken consultations and research projects since 2003 on race equality. Actions arising out of this process are also incorporated in the Corporate Equality Action Plan (CEAP) as are plans to undertake further consultation and completion of commissioned research projects in specific areas. These will inform further equality objectives, updates and reviews of the CEAP.

This second edition of the Council's Equality Scheme replaces all previous schemes.

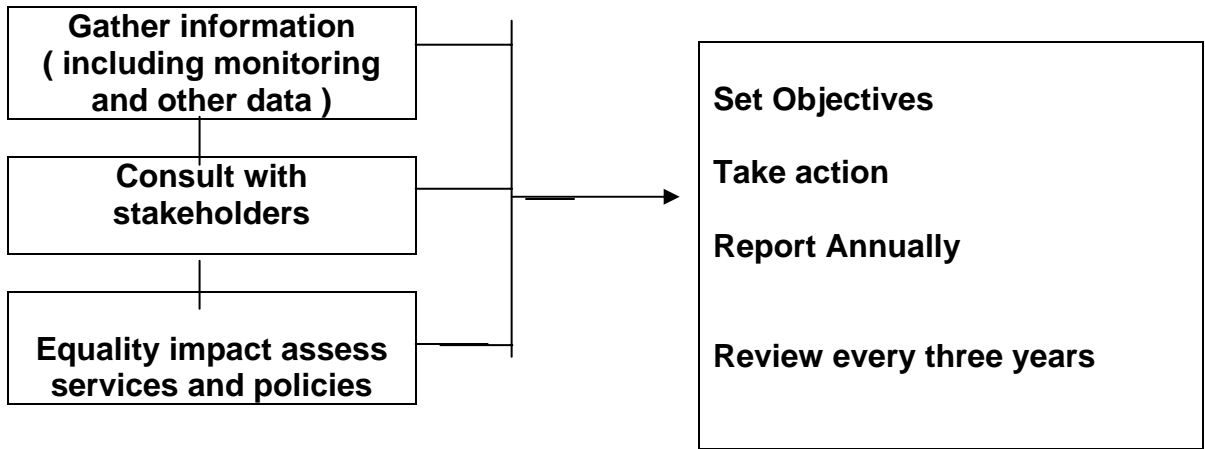
The Council aims to create a culture in which all staff will question and challenge assumptions about their services and reassess them on the basis of fairness and need. Action to achieve this aim is included in the Corporate Equality Action Plan. As part of this process the Council will:

- **INVOLVE AND CONSULT** with all stakeholders (including staff, users and community/voluntary groups)
- **COMPARE** with best practice models/standards in other authorities and agencies.
- **CHALLENGE** assumptions, particularly through involvement, consultation and comparison.
- **COMMUNICATE** findings and outcomes to all stakeholders

We will act in three-year action plan cycles of review, involvement, assessment, priorities and action. We cannot achieve everything at once, but we will report back each year about our progress on what we have achieved.

The Council will seek to integrate equality in key mainstream areas of its work, so that it becomes part and parcel of what it is to plan and deliver excellent services for the communities who live, work and visit our borough.

Equality assessment and action planning framework



Impact Assessment of new and existing services, functions and policies (ongoing)

1. KEY DRIVERS

1.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF RICHMOND

The London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames is made up of many diverse communities. The demographics of the local population are as follows:

- Women make up 52% of people in the borough. Overall 66% of women of working age are employed as compared with 75.8% of men. Women head 40.6% of the borough's households and 7.5% of women provide some unpaid care compared to 5.9% of men.
- The percentage of Black and minority ethnic (BME) people in the borough was 9% at the last census (2001). 4% are from Asian backgrounds, and 2% from 'mixed' backgrounds. If the 'Irish' are included the overall figure is 12%. Other White backgrounds other than 'White British' constitute 9% of the population and include those from other European countries and countries such as the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The local Traveller community is made up mainly of Irish Travellers living on the site in Hampton. There are a number of English Traveller families housed in the borough. Higher numbers of people from BME backgrounds are unemployed (2.9%) in comparison with those from White backgrounds (1.8%). Unemployment is also higher among men (3.1%) than women (2.1%). Higher numbers of BME people live in social housing. The number of BME people in the borough varies with age groups; there is a greatest percentage of school age (17.5% in primary education and 21.1% in secondary education for all visible minority ethnic groups –that is to say excluding non British 'White'). There are 130 languages other than English spoken by children in Richmond schools. The college population includes 50% of BME students.
- Disabled people¹ make up 12.4 % of the borough's population (based on the 2001 census figures) of 172 335, or 21 346. They are spread fairly evenly across the wards. Just over 5 % (1 097) of disabled people live in communal or care homes.
- The borough has the lowest proportion of disabled people among London boroughs.
- The borough has the fifth smallest percentage of disabled people in England and Wales.
- Disability is strongly correlated with age in the borough where almost three quarters of disabled people are over the age of 50 (71.1%)
- 93.1% of disabled people in the borough are White and 6.9% from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. This is a slightly higher proportion compared to the overall distribution of the ethnic groups in the general population of the borough.
- Just over 6 000 disabled people of working age (18-64) in the borough are economically active, that is, either employed or seeking employment. This represents 5.6% of the economically active

¹ We have taken the 2001 Census definition of people with a limiting long-term illness (LLI) to be disabled people. This is a practice that the Audit Commission in recent guidance has identified as acceptable.

population in the borough. However, when we include the permanently sick or disabled population, this figure rises to 8.43% of the economically active population in the borough. The Census describes the permanently sick or disabled population, as those who are not eligible to work. However, the Audit Commission calculation asks us to include this group for the purposes of reporting on the BVPIs. The new proposed census categories for 2011 will hopefully enable us to produce more accurate information re: disability.

- Compared with disabled people of working age, this is an economic activity rate of 69 %.
- Disabled people are twice as likely as non disabled people to be unemployed. Disabled people in Richmond are more likely to be in social housing and almost three times more likely to live in households without a car or van than non disabled people. 56% of disabled people in the borough are women.
- 65.8% of people in the borough identify themselves as Christians, 2.3% as Muslims, 0.9% as Jewish, 0.7% as Sikh, 0.7% as Buddhist and 0.3% as Hindu (2001 census).
- 2001 Census data suggests that compared with Greater London boroughs, Richmond upon Thames has the eleventh highest proportion of people aged 65 or over, and the seventh highest of people aged 75 and over. The proportion of those aged 65 or over (13.7%) is in line with Outer London (13.8%) and marginally above that for Greater London as a whole (12.4%). However, the proportion of people aged 85 and over in the borough is one of the highest in London.

Further detailed information and charts can be found on the Council's Equality and Diversity web pages and appendix 7 of the Scheme.

1.2 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY VISION FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

We aim to be a borough which values the diversity of all its communities and enables all its residents to become full and active citizens; to feel safe, included, respected, valued and to share a sense of belonging.

We aim to be a borough where all have equality of access to appropriate and relevant services and which promotes equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all our communities.

Council's Strategic Priorities

The Borough Community Plan contains clear themes around tackling disadvantage, inequalities, improving access and participation. All public bodies involved in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) have the same statutory requirements under the three general duties to promote equality.

The LSP and other key partnerships will play a key role in promoting a borough where all feel safe, included, respected and valued.

The Community Plan, Local Area Agreements and the Council's Corporate Plan are key strategic areas for mainstreaming the requirements under the three general duties (race, disability and gender).

Key priorities of the Community Plan are:

- Priority 1: Tackling disadvantage and inequalities
- Priority 2: Being the greenest borough in London
- Priority 3: Being the safest London borough for all our communities
- Priority 4: Growing up in Richmond
- Priority 5: Creating a healthy and caring Richmond
- Priority 6: Creating a vibrant and prosperous Richmond
- Priority 7: Improving access and participation

The equality objectives for 2007- 2010 are:

1. *To prevent and eliminate unlawful discrimination and institutional discrimination*

The overall aim of the General duty (see Equality Legislation section 1.3) is to ensure that there is no discrimination in the services we provide, the policies we develop and in our arrangements for the employment and development of the staff we employ to deliver those services. Importantly discrimination can also be reproduced through omission and neglect of the consideration of diverse needs.

Practices can be discriminatory in their effects as opposed to any intent, particularly in the institutional context, as a result of, for example, unexamined assumptions or omission and neglect of the consideration of diverse needs.

2. *To monitor, tackle and prevent incidents of harassment and discrimination*

The Council adopted a corporate racial harassment strategy in 1998. A review of this will be informed by a commissioned community project on the under reporting of racist incidents in the borough.

The Borough Race Equality Partnership obtained funding from the Community Safety Partnership for a one-year post to develop a consistent borough wide approach to tackling and monitoring racist incidents. The post worked to build capacity amongst a range of voluntary agencies and also worked closely with public bodies, such as the police, PCT, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Housing services. Training on racial harassment was also provided. Initial

guidance was produced and will be further developed by September 2007.

The Council will integrate this guidance into a wider guidance document covering all incidents of harassment and discrimination. Revised forms for the monitoring of incidents of harassment and discrimination will also be produced by September 2007.

All schools have been trained in tackling and monitoring racist incidents and a revised handbook was produced for schools.

Annual reports based on the Best Value Performance Indicators monitoring of racist incidents are produced. These are available on the Equality and Diversity web pages.

- 3. To promote equal opportunities in employment and in service delivery on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, disability, gender and race.*

See all sections of this Equality Scheme and the Corporate Equality Plan.

- 4. To achieve a representative and well-equipped workforce at all levels. See section 2.4.*
- 5. To identify, understand and work to eliminate barriers to equality of access, equality of treatment and equality of outcome (to meet the diverse needs of all who live, work and use the services of the borough) and to provide accessible information about services.*

This includes providing reasonable adjustments and positive action where necessary and lawful.

As a Council we are always trying to improve the way we provide services and information to our customers. The Customer First programme was established in 2003 to do just this, by making changes to the way the Council offers our services. User focus and diversity is key to the Council's Customer First programme and training. A 'Customer First and Valuing Diversity' booklet, which contains a good practice checklist for accessible services, was produced for all staff in 2005. This booklet will be revised in 2008.

- 6. To promote good relations between all sections of our diverse communities and ensure good community cohesion.*

A model of the "Working Together" groups will be progressed in the five most deprived areas of the borough. These will provide a focus for work to improve services through partnership working and sharing resources. They will be a focus for community development and we will measure their success by using a range of quality of life indicators. We

will ensure that the needs and concerns of vulnerable communities in these areas are heard and addressed through these groups.

Local research studies in Richmond highlight the complex relationships of race, ethnicity, socio economic status, disability, inclusion, gender, age, discrimination and harassment. It would seem that those experiencing vulnerability as a result of any of the above, and particularly for those who experience a multiple set of these, demonstrate some of the greatest level of need. Local research has shown for example, that people from BME backgrounds living in the most disadvantaged areas of the borough experience more racial harassment.

The Council will aim through its Community Leadership role on the LSP and other key partnerships and forums, to be as inclusive as possible in our approach and include all sections of our communities who live, work and visit the borough, particularly those experiencing vulnerability as a result of disadvantage, discrimination or exclusion.

The Council's Race Equality Partnership will work with other partnerships and forums to promote good race relations and community cohesion.

Key aims of Community Cohesion include:

- All communities feeling valued, safe and have a sense of belonging.
- All communities are working to build strong and positive relationships at work, in schools, in neighbourhoods, and in all aspects of daily life.
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued.
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- Consulting and involving all groups, including minority ethnic communities, in shaping local services, particularly through partnership working and community development

We need to ensure that as a borough we are as inclusive as possible in undertaking the above. The Council's vision, objectives and processes as outlined in this Equalities Scheme are all designed to ensure that this takes place coherently and systematically.

- 7. To promote positive attitudes towards diversity and value the diversity of all who live, work and visit the borough.*

We will also continue to implement our communications and positive images campaign, which began in 2003 with the distribution of multi faith calendars and posters valuing diversity around Council buildings. This has also continued in events undertaken by Cultural services and Education since 2003.

The MORI (2005) study showed that on the whole people from BME backgrounds enjoyed living in the borough, although they thought more could be done to celebrate and value the diversity of the borough. The MORI study used a focus group approach. Other local studies and feedback from community and voluntary groups demonstrate the complexity of the issues in Richmond as outlined above.

Results from the 2005 staff survey also demonstrated that staff from BME backgrounds felt that more could be done to promote good race relations.

As part of the communications and positive images campaign we will also undertake an awareness raising campaign about disabilities, including 'hidden disabilities' to ensure better knowledge and increase the confidence of disabled people in the community and amongst staff that disclosure of a disability will produce positive outcomes and not negative ones.

See Appendix One for the complete Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy Statement.

The strategic equality objectives are translated into a three-year corporate equality and diversity action plan. Directorates will in turn translate the strategic equality objectives within directorate equality action plans and service plan objectives.

Directorate and corporate equality action plans will be monitored by directorate management teams and corporate equality groups. Progress from these will be reported annually within the annual equality and diversity monitoring and review report.

1.3 EQUALITY LEGISLATION

Under the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act, there is a General Duty placed on all public bodies including local authorities. The General Duty is a positive duty that builds equality into the beginning of the process of policy-making rather than make adjustments at the end of the process. It represents a change from a legal framework where the onus is on the individual to bring a complaint of discrimination to one where the onus is on the public sector to seek out actual or potential discrimination and address it.

1.3.1 Race Relations Amendment Act 2000: Race General Duty

The Council has a statutory duty to promote race equality by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity; and
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

1.3.2 Disability Discrimination Act 2005: Disability General Duty

The Council has a statutory duty to carry out its functions with due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to meet disabled peoples needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

To meet all our legislative commitments the Council has adopted the principles of the Social Model of Disability:

“The social model of disability argues that most of the day-to-day problems that disabled people face are caused by the fact that society is designed to meet the needs of non-disabled people. What disables people is not a particular condition but the way society reacts to it, for example lack of physical access, lack of opportunities in jobs and education, lack of choice, negative attitudes and assumptions.”

There is a separate report produced by the Council, which outlines our approach to disability equality. The report is available on the website and on request.

1.3.3 Sex Discrimination Act as amended by the Equality Act 2006: Gender General Duty

The Council has a statutory duty to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful sex discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

As part of the duty, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment and vocational training (including further and higher education), for people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.

The scope of legal protection against discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment will be extended in the Sex Discrimination Act by 21 December 2007, by the implementation of the Goods and Services Directive 2004/113. By that date (or the date of implementation if earlier), public authorities will be under a duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of gender reassignment in the provision of goods and services.

In addition to each General Duty, there are specific duties, which outline the manner in which the General Duty is to be implemented. All the specific duties have informed the structure of this Equality Scheme.

The duties apply to services, employment, policy development, procurement, performance management, organisational design and delivery, and any other departmental activity that is not explicitly exempt from the Acts.

Action relevant to each strand is highlighted in the action plan.

The General duties to promote equality are about **a pro-active approach** to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting equalities. The Equalities Scheme framework and action plan are designed to help implement such an approach.

1.3.4 Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

The 2003 Regulations outlaws discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment including recruitment, training, pay, promotion, dismissal and references.

The Government has also published regulations to protect people from being discriminated against in the provision of goods and services because of their sexual orientation. Subject to Parliamentary approval, the regulations will come into force on 30 April 2007. Faith- based adoption and fostering agencies will have until the end of 2008 to adapt their services

1.3.5 The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2006

The 2003 Regulations outlaws discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in employment and vocational training including recruitment, training, pay, promotion, dismissal and references.

The Equality Act 2006 similarly allows the Government to introduce regulations making it illegal for the providers of goods and services to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief, and they too are expected to be introduced on 30 April 2007.

See appendix 8 for detail of all Equality legislation.

1.4 THE EQUALITY STANDARD FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Equality Standard for Local Government provides a framework for delivering continuous improvement in relation to fair employment outcomes and equal access to services.

- It provides a framework and a body of good practice equality indicators, which is built on legislation and good practice.
- It is a tool to help us develop, implement, evaluate and review our equality/diversity policy, objectives and outcomes achieved.

It has five levels, which cover all aspects of policymaking, service delivery and employment. The levels are built on a cycle of continuous improvement:

- Level 1: commitment to a Comprehensive Equality Policy
- Level 2: assessment and consultation
- Level 3: setting equality objectives and targets
- Level 4: information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level 5: achieving and reviewing outcomes

Each level is made up of four key areas through which the general level commitments are translated:

- Leadership and corporate commitment
- Consultation, engagement, community development and scrutiny
- Service delivery and customer care
- Employment and training

The Council has self-assessed itself as meeting level two of the Equality Standard. In April 2007, an external assessor from DIALOG will be undertaking a preliminary diagnostic assessment of the Council's work for levels 1-3. The assessment will be used for future action planning for level 3 attainment and the Equality Mark award.

The Council is working towards level 3 external assessment by December 2007 (revised from March 2007); level 4 assessment by December 2008 and level 5 external assessment by March 2010.

1.5 COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSEMENT (CPA)

User Focus and Diversity is a cross cutting theme in the CPA process. Understanding and meeting the diverse needs of our local communities is key to the CPA process. The Borough Community Plan and Council's Corporate Plan contain the cross cutting theme of Equalities and Diversity and the aims of the Council's Equalities Scheme will thereby be incorporated within Community Plan and Service plan objectives.

1.6 BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

There are several Best Value Performance Indicators for equality work. These too act as important drivers for this type of work.

2. KEY THEMES

2.1 INFORMATION

A Communications sub group is currently working with staff from Communications on an internal and external communications campaign to promote equalities and value diversity in the borough.

The campaign will build upon work undertaken as part of the Valuing Diversity/ Customer First series of posters produced for staff and customers. This has also involved a Positive Images campaign in Council literature and welcoming mages/multi faith calendars displayed around council buildings.

The Council has produced an **Accessibility Guide**, which outlines where staff can go to, in order to get translation and interpreting help for people whose first language is not English, and require assistance in order to be able to access our services. The Guide also outlines where staff can access help for disabled users and potential users.

Annual monitoring reports are produced on the use of translation and interpreting services.

We will work to ensure that our information about services is produced in accessible formats to meet diverse needs. Within the resources of each planning cycle we will look to see what further improvements can be made in response to feed back from disabled people and people from BME backgrounds.

To gather information we will where possible and relevant, integrate equalities monitoring and equality questions in local surveys, consultation and research undertaken. This information becomes part of our ongoing monitoring for equality impact and needs analysis. All information gathered will be used to inform equality objective setting and the review of outcomes achieved.

2.1.1 Equalities Monitoring

The general duties to promote equality require that we are able to demonstrate equal access to services and that we have found out about diverse needs as a part of this. The statutory framework also requires us to show that we are not discriminating in any aspect of our service or employment provisions. This is why the Council has a policy commitment to monitor service usage by equality groups, to undertake equality impact and needs assessments, and find out about diverse needs.

Since 2002, the Council has used standard equality monitoring categories. These have been further updated in 2006 with the incorporation of extended disability monitoring categories as recommended by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) (see Appendix Three).

The findings of the 2005-2006 Equality audit and assessment process demonstrate that while equalities monitoring information is collected by some service areas, information is not routinely analysed and used to inform the equality action planning process. Information collection also needs to improve in some key service areas.

Detailed Equalities Monitoring Guidance will be produced in 2007 to help increase the confidence of staff to understand why the information is needed, how to ask for the information, and possible ways of analysing the information.

2.1.2 Consultation and Involvement

The Council has recently undertaken a review of its methods for consultation and involvement and findings from this will help to strengthen best practice in how we seek the views and experiences of equality groups.

A Consultation and Participation strategy has been produced from the findings of the review, which will help progress the involvement of equality groups in the planning, review and monitoring of services and functions. Consultation standards will shortly be produced by the Consultation strategy group, as part of the revised strategy.

We will also produce a list of all community and voluntary groups by equality strands and will make sure that it is used as efficiently as possible in order to avoid consultation fatigue.

The Council has a good track record of consultation with disabled people. Representatives of voluntary organisations and the Richmond Disability Forum (RDF) have been invited to become part of Council Committees such as Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Transport Consultative Group as community advisors. The Council also included disabled people as a part of its main consultation mechanism on service delivery, the Citizens' Panel. The Richmond Disability Forum was also a member of the Council's internal group (ALOG), which oversaw the building access audits in 2003/2004.

The involvement duty (which is ongoing) is key to helping us bring the views, experiences and expertise of disabled people and groups representing disabled people, people from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, men and women, Lesbian women and Gay men and different faith groups, to inform equality work.

The partnership section (2.2.1) outlines the equality partnerships involved in this process. We will ensure that the involvement duty is further built into other key partnership working and user feed back forums and methods currently used and further developed by service areas and functions.

The Council also periodically undertakes detailed research into the experience of disabled service users and staff (see 'Access' section 2.3) and service users and staff from BME backgrounds. Issues and concerns raised will be incorporated within equality action plans and have also been brought to the attention of our partners on the LSP.

The Council has also consulted with focus groups of male and female staff and used findings from events held by the Domestic Violence Forum to inform some of the gender equality objectives in the Corporate Equality Action Plan.

The Council has also launched a new LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender groups) Community Forum in March 2007.

In 2007/2008 the Council will also further develop the borough Inter-faith Forum.

Other important consultation forums include: the Domestic Violence Forum; The Richmond Youth Forum and the Richmond Voluntary and Community Sector Forum.

We also have four staff support groups in the Council:

- Black Worker's Support Group
- LGBT staff support group
- Staff Disability Action Group
- Women's Network

The equality action plans outline how we will strengthen the involvement of equality groups in the planning and review of services.

2.2 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

2.2.1 Partnerships

The Council currently has two equality partnerships, Race Equality Partnership (REP) and the Disability Equality and Access Partnership (DEAP). The two equality partnerships report to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and also have representation on the Community Safety Partnership.

- *The Race Equality Partnership* (REP) was formed in November 2003. The partnership is a multi agency forum to promote race equality in the borough. It meets quarterly and is chaired by the Assistant Director of Housing. Its membership includes: Registered Social Landlords, Richmond PCT, RCVS, Richmond Police, Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group, Housing, Youth Offending, Education, Black Worker's Support Group, BME Carers Officer, Community Safety Partnership and Corporate Policy staff.

Key objectives of the group include:

- To promote race equality and good race relations by developing a borough wide multi agency approach
- To achieve a consistent approach to the tackling, prevention and monitoring of racist incidents
- To develop a borough wide approach to promoting race equality, valuing diversity and community cohesion
- To undertake shared events: e.g. consultation, training, and celebrating diversity events.

- To maintain regular dialogue with other key partnerships.

The formation of the Race Equality Partnership was an outcome of the first Race Equality Scheme.

- *The Disability Equality and Access Partnership (DEAP)* is not a “partnership” in the operational sense of the word where different “partners” have assigned roles and resources to go away and do things, but is more of a consultation forum where the Council is able to have a dialogue with disabled people in the borough about how to improve Council services, employment opportunities, and access to the built environment for disabled people. The aim of the Partnership is to improve the access of disabled people to all the Council’s services, employment, and premises. DEAP was formed in 2004.

DEAP’s membership includes disability community and voluntary groups, RCVS and representatives from key Council service areas. The Assistant Director for Adult Services chairs DEAP.

(Appendix Two contains a chart of all other partnerships)

Partnerships and the General duty:

Where a partnership involves a listed public authority, and race/gender/disability equality has relevance for its work (this will be the case for most partnerships), then the general statutory duties to promote equality will apply.

Currently all partnerships are undertaking a programme of Equality Impact Needs Assessments (EINA) reviews based on guidance produced. Findings from a recent study undertaken by internal audit will also be incorporated into revised equality guidance for Partnerships.

2.2.2 Suppliers (Procurement and Commissioning of Services)

The duty to promote equality applies to procurement itself. Where a public authority’s function is carried out by an external supplier on its behalf, the local authority remains responsible for meeting the duty.

So public authorities must build relevant race/gender/disability equality considerations into the procurement process to ensure that all of their functions meet the requirements of the General duty, regardless of who is carrying them out.

The Council has produced specific guidance on Equalities and Procurement. This has been amended for 2007.

All contracts for the procurement and commissioning of services in key relevant areas incorporate equality objectives and monitoring requirements. All those who undertake the tendering process in relevant areas, including the

employment of staff, complete standard equality questions as part of that process. Equality objectives are built into service specifications in high relevance to equality areas. The EINA process will be used in contract reviews.

The Council will continue to amend its guidance and will seek to incorporate best practice.

2.3 Equal Access to appropriate and responsive services to meet the diverse needs of all who live, work and use the services of the borough.

In November 2005, the Council commissioned MORI to do a survey of disabled people in the borough and to report on their experience of council services. The survey identified barriers in employment, adult education, housing, health, transport, access to leisure, participation in public life, independence and choice/control over one's life, income/earnings, crime prevention and harassment, among other things.

The feedback from this report informed the first edition of the Disability equality scheme including the action plan and will also help in prioritising areas for impact assessment

In May 2004, the Council carried out a best value review of the People with Learning Disabilities (PLD) service. The report found that on the whole a good service is being offered and developed a service improvement plan, which is being implemented. The improvement plan covers transition to adult life, advocacy, direct payments, person centred planning, communication, health, housing, education and lifelong learning among other things.

In November 2004, the Council commissioned a study by Richmond MENCAP to review the experience of BME learning disabled people in the borough in accessing Council services. The study identified barriers relating to language needs, gaps in knowledge about diverse needs, and resulting service provision. The Richmond PLD team together with the Joint Commissioning Board for people with learning disabilities have produced a specific action plan for their services arising from the report's findings. The findings of the report have also informed the work of two key EINAs in Adult services, which have resulted in action plans to improve service provisions for people from BME backgrounds.

As part of the setting up of the Council's Children's Trust under the Children Act, the Council has established an integrated Disabled Children's Service to improve outcomes for disabled children in the borough.

As part of adopting the social model of disability, the Council will be guided by the principles of 'Inclusive Design'.

- The Council is currently implementing a programme of civil works that has come out of the audit of all its buildings, roughly 120, that are open to the public. An investment programme of almost £1 million has been

put in place to fund the works, which includes work to make listed buildings accessible.

- The Council has set the following Best Value Performance targets:
 - 75% of Council owned buildings being accessible by the end of 2006/2007;
 - 90% by the end of 2007/2008;
 - 95% by the end of 2008/2009

Since 2001, the Council has undertaken work to improve service provisions to meet the growing diversity of the borough. Education and Children's services show many examples of good work and educational outcomes: in tackling and monitoring racist incidents, capturing the views and experiences of African and Caribbean children, extensive work with Traveller children, improving access to education for disabled children, Race equality handbook for schools and equality conferences for education and social care staff. Cultural services undertake annual programme of events to celebrate the diversity of the borough in the annual carnival, gallery exhibitions, library and music events.

Housing services have supported many families from refugee backgrounds. The Supporting People team fund and monitor supported housing providers to promote independent living. Adults services have undertaken a comprehensive EINA review of their assessment process and will shortly be implementing an action plan to build upon improvements.

Future improvements will be informed by: Customer First work, further improvements in involvement and consultation, equality and diversity training programme for all staff, and improvements in equalities monitoring of services and analysis.

We recognise that there is still more work to do and this will be undertaken through corporate and directorate equality action plan work.

2.4 Equal Opportunities in Employment and Training

Workforce Equalities Monitoring and Analysis: we have annually published monitoring data since 2003 in relation to race equality and since 2004 across race, gender and disability (see Appendix Four).

The Council currently monitors key employment outcomes for employees by race, disability and gender. These outcomes cover areas including

- staff in post
- applicants for employment and training
- staff who receive training
- staff who benefit or suffer detriment from performance assessment procedures, such as the appraisal process
- complaints
- staff involved in disciplinary or grievance procedures
- leavers

By March 2008, measure for monitoring sexual orientation, religion/belief and age will be introduced.

The Council has set employment targets that aim to create a workforce that reflects our local communities with regards to ethnic origin and disability.

For ethnic origin two different targets are set:

- Borough population – 9.9% of the workforce should be black and minority ethnic people.
- Travel to Work area – 15% of the workforce should be black and minority ethnic people.

The travel to work target is based on our analysis of the local labour market, which is a good practice indicator as outlined in level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. It was also a target arising from the first scrutiny task group report on equalities in 2001.

For disability we have the following target:

- Borough population - 8.43% of the workforce should be disabled people.

In the last few years the Council has actively sought to attract greater numbers of black and minority ethnic (BME) applicants to address a historic under representation in the workforce. This strategy has proved very successful and the number of black and minority ethnic staff has increased significantly over the last three years from 6.1% in April 2003 to 9.2% in April 2006. When Schools are accounted for separately the proportion of BME staff rises to 12.5%, highlighting the relatively low level of BME staff working in our Schools. There are also differences in the ethnic make up of the Council's various directorates. However, there is an under representation of BME employees in the Council's most senior management and in the top 5% of earners.

The number of disabled staff in our workforce is currently 2.7% which is significantly below our workforce target of 8.43%. When Schools are accounted for separately the proportion of disabled staff in the rest of the workforce rises to 4.2%, compared to 1.3% of disabled staff in schools. However there is a significant under representation of disabled people at the most senior management levels, and there are no disabled staff in the top 5% of earners in the Council.

There is a clear gender difference in the Council's workforce with men making up 25.6% of the overall workforce compared to 74.4% women. When Schools are separated out from this figure, the proportion of male employees rises to 36% - in contrast, only 15% of School employees are men. There are also significant gender differences in the proportion of women and men employed in different directorates with Adult Social Services and Housing having a majority female staff and Environment having a majority male staff.

In line with the introduction of changes to employment legislation on age discrimination, we have reviewed all our employment policies and procedures, implemented an action plan for change, and issued guidance to managers. We have also changed our Managing Ill Health and Attendance Policy to strengthen the guidance given to managers on making adjustments for disabled staff, and will be reviewing the impact of this policy with our Staff Disability Action Group next year.

We are conducting an equal pay audit in the first quarter of 2007. This will be used as the basis for developing an Equal Pay Action Plan to redress any pay differences identified.

For Training see section 3.6.

There is a separate detailed report on Equality and Diversity in Employment and Training which is available on the website and on request.

3. KEY PROCESSES

3.1 RESPONSIBILITY, SCRUTINY AND CHALLENGE

The Leader of the Council is the Lead Member for equality and diversity. All staff are responsible for adhering to the Council's Equality and Diversity policy and all managers are responsible for implementing this Equality Scheme.

All our equality structures, including the equality partnerships, incorporate scrutiny and challenge. Finance and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive all equality progress reports. Consideration is also currently being given as to how to further strengthen the involvement of other Members in the equalities scrutiny and challenge process. We will also strengthen the involvement of the two equality partnerships and other community and voluntary groups in the equalities scrutiny and challenge process.

Scrutiny and challenge will also be part of the external evaluation of the Council's equality performance. This will be an integral part of assessment for levels 3-5 of the Equality Standard.

3.2 STRUCTURES FOR DELIVERING EQUALITY (see Appendix Two)

Corporate Equality Structures have recently been revised. There is a strategic group (SEEB: Strategic Equalities Executive Board), which is chaired by the Chief Executive, an HR Equalities Working Group, which is chaired by the Head of Corporate Human Resources and a group for directorate equality working group leads and staff support group leads, which is currently chaired by the Equalities and Diversity Manager (CEDG: Corporate Equalities Working Group).

Each directorate has an equality working group (in Chief Exec's Office, given the size, this group is combined with the IIP group).

Reference has already been made to the two equality partnerships around disability and race equality (see section 2.2.1 for further detail). The Council also has the following community forums which feed into the work of the borough:

- Domestic Violence Forum
- Inter-Faith Forum
- Youth Forum
- LGBT Community Forum

3.3 EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENTS (EINA)

An EINA is a process for refocusing services or employment practices according to the needs of different communities or a diverse staff group.

The purpose of an EINA is to provide a baseline assessment of a policy/procedure/service area with regard to race, gender and disability.

It can be used to analyse the impact of a whole service or just one aspect of it.

The question to be asked is whether current (or new/proposed) policies, services and functions may have discriminatory outcomes, whether there are any unmet needs or requirements with regard to race, gender and disability, and what further actions can be taken to promote equalities in the area ?

For the first Race Equality Scheme, which was produced in May 2002, a comprehensive screening of all functions and services was undertaken in relation to Race Equality. This was again revised for the 2005-2006 Race Equality Scheme. From 2004 all equality and impact needs assessments (EINAs) have been undertaken in relation to all six equality strands. See pages 28-29 for all current and completed EINAs.

In November 2005- February 2006 a comprehensive equality screening and risk assessment was undertaken by all directorates in relation to the six equality strands of age, disability, faith, gender, race and sexual orientation.

The priority list for 2007 EINAs has been drawn up following feedback from the two equality partnerships; initial sessions with the four staff support groups; the Corporate Equalities Development Group and Strategic Equalities Executive Board; inspectorate findings and local research data. Further work will be undertaken with all the equality groups to agree priority EINAs for 2008 and 2009. For an initial priority list for 2007 see page 30. Directorate Equality Action Plans outline further priority areas.

All directorates will incorporate equality objectives arising from EINAs in their equality plans and service plans.

3.4 MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRESS

Progress on delivery of the Equality Scheme will be monitored by SEEB and reported on a regular basis.

The Council will undertake a review of the Equalities Scheme every three years. Annual Equality monitoring and review reports will be produced. Annual report findings will also inform the annual prioritisation of EINAs and inform equality objective setting and review of equality action plans.

3.5 PUBLISHING

The Council has published progress and outcomes of EINAs since 2004. Pages 28-34 lists all the EINAs undertaken to the present (48 EINAs).

We will annually publish progress and outcomes of EINAs undertaken in our annual equalities monitoring and review report, which will be published at the end of each year. Outcomes of EINAs undertaken are incorporated within directorate and corporate equality action plans and service plans.

All EINAs will be published on the web or available in public documents.

3.6 EQUALITY TRAINING

A programme of equality/diversity training (RichMix) is currently being undertaken to equip staff with the skills, information and understanding to deal fairly and appropriately with all sections of Richmond's communities.

The RichMix programme is the first part of an overall Equalities and Diversity Training strategy. Subsequent components will include disability equality training, tackling and preventing incidents of harassment and discrimination, awareness of the needs of diverse communities, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) groups, BME groups and Faith groups.

Further development and implementation of the Equality and Diversity training strategy will consider the design and delivery of service specific equality training.

All managers are required to undertake Recruitment and Selection training prior to taking part in the recruitment process. Prior to Rich Mix, staff undertook equalities training as part of Customer First, disability awareness training and Introduction to Equalities and Diversity. Equalities briefing and training was also provided as part of the introduction of the Council's Race Equality Scheme and Equality Standard work.

Members undertook an Equality briefing session in 2005 and an Equalities Induction for all new members in 2006. Further equality briefing sessions will be undertaken for Members.

3.7 COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION

We aim to get to a position where all staff and managers are clear as to which forms and procedures to use for the range of incidents:

- Staff on staff incidents
- Complaints by staff
- Staff and service users
- Incidents covered by the Violence at work policy
- Service users on service users
- Complaints by service users

Each service will also look at service specific requirements, for example, in relation to particular client groups. Education has already achieved this for schools. Service specific guidance has also been produced for Housing.

The Council revised the Dignity at Work policy and procedure into an Anti Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Handbook for all employment related incidents in 2006.

CONCLUSION

This Scheme is a living document. It will be reviewed and amended on a yearly basis and thoroughly after three years. If you would like to comment on any aspect of this Scheme please contact:

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List of EINA's current and undertaken by Department 2002-2006**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S**

1. The recruitment and employment of disabled people : current
2. Review of Recruitment and Selection process and procedures
3. Revised guidance for tackling, preventing and monitoring incidents of harassment, abuse and discrimination: corporate overview to be completed by June 2007
4. Anti Discrimination procedures handbook
5. Revised Grievance Procedure
6. Management of Absence revised policy and procedure: current
7. Home working Policy: current
8. Partnerships Guidance
9. Community Safety Partnership
10. Community Plan 2007-2017: current
11. Consultation strategy: current
12. Community Engagement strategy (2007)
13. Democratic Services: current
14. Richmond Works: current

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. Public Website EINA
2. Intranet EINA: current
3. Revenues and Benefits –Front office: current
4. Revenues and Benefits-Out of office
5. Payroll & Pensions
6. Accountancy
7. Legal Services

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Admissions and Student Finance
2. Cultural Services
3. Children's Integration/Children's Board

List of EINA's current and undertaken by Department 2002-2006

4. Children and Young People's Plan: current
5. Adolescent Resource Team
6. Youth Services
7. Pupil and Student Support
8. Education Welfare Service
9. Library and Information Services: 2003 re: race equality only
10. Youth Offending Team Race Equality Audit and action plan 2005

ENVIRONMENT

1. Contact Centre Implementation
2. Procurement Guidance
3. Environment Directorate restructuring
4. Waste management
5. Local implementation Plan for Transport
6. Property Restructuring Outsourcing
7. Blue Badge Scheme: 2003 undertaken re: race equality only
8. Taxi Card Scheme: 2003 undertaken re: race equality only
9. Graffiti Removal Service: 2003 undertaken re: race equality only

ADULTS SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. Access to Information about Adult services: current
2. Access to Assessment process in Adult services: completed Oct 2006
3. Initial Equality assessment of all adult services undertaken in 2003
4. Equality audit undertaken by Directorate Equalities Board in 2004-2005
5. Meals Service: current
6. Homelessness
7. Housing Allocations
8. Supporting People

PRIORITY AREAS FOR FUTURE EQUALITY WORK: 2007

**Revise Equality Plans - Corporate
Directorate**

Improving equalities monitoring systems and use of data

Implement HR Equality Plans

Implement Equality & Diversity Training Strategy

Community cohesion

Involvement of Disabled People in Environmental Services

EINAs

Grants Policy & Review

Licensing Policy

Development Control

Children's Centres

Partnerships (some already completed)

Write up

Looked After Children and Child Protection - equalities position