

Single Equality Scheme

2007 - 2010



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

2nd Edition

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Foreword

This Single Equality Scheme sets out how Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council will meet its duties under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006.

It meets the requirement in each piece of legislation to develop a specific Equality Scheme, bringing the three areas together without losing focus on the specific needs of any community.

Though the Council is only required by law at this time to publish a scheme or schemes about race, disability and gender, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's commitment to equality is wider. It also encompasses age, religion and belief and sexual orientation. The Council's equal opportunities policy states that:

"We will achieve equality of opportunity by removing direct and indirect discrimination wherever it exists. It is recognised that people may be disadvantaged because of their: age; gender; race, colour, ethnic, national, cultural or social origin; disability; religious belief, or non belief; marital status, family circumstances, or caring responsibilities; sexual orientation; class, level of income, or housing circumstances; membership or non membership of trade unions, or involvement or non involvement in trade union activity."

We will report progress against the scheme by 30th June each year, in line with the publication of our performance against equalities related Best Value Performance Indicators.

Insert signature

George Garlick
Chief Executive

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Councillor Bob Gibson
Leader of the Council

Executive Summary

This is Stockton's Second Single Equality Scheme effective from April 2007 to March 2010, which will be reviewed on an annual basis. It brings together action plans for Race, Gender and Disability equality, thus meeting the Council's statutory duties in these areas, but also goes beyond these three streams and begins to consider how the Council develops its approach to equalities and diversity for all residents of Stockton in response to the recent Equalities Review report and forthcoming report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. The Council is also committed to responding to all diversity related legislation and views a single equality scheme as the best mechanism for achieving this.

The scheme is organised by the six themes of the Council Plan namely;

- Liveability
- Community Safety
- Economic Regeneration and Transport
- Healthier Communities and Adults
- Children and Young People
- Organisational Effectiveness

with specific actions for equalities identified under each. This ensures that equalities issues are set firmly at the heart of the Council's service planning arrangements, and further as targets are written into service plans unique to individual services, ensure that equalities targets and actions are embedded across the Council.

The scheme also highlights how the Council has worked with and listened to its residents, how the results of these consultation exercises have fed into the development of action plans and also the need and commitment to the ongoing consultation and involvement required to ensure the scheme is a success.

As well as delivering high quality services to all residents, the Council is also committed to being a model employer and as such this scheme outlines how we meet our varied duties in terms of recruitment and employment practices.

It is an ambitious and challenging agenda but one to which we are committed to ensure that all residents of the borough have equal access to the excellent services provided by the Council.

Introduction: The Borough of Stockton-on-Tees

Stockton-on-Tees is a diverse Borough located in over 20,000 hectares at the heart of the Tees Valley. It comprises an urban and rural environment with a number of towns and villages, each with its own distinctive characteristics, including Billingham, Stockton, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick and Yarm. The area has a population of 187,100 (up from 175,300 in 1991) and records the largest population increase of the Tees Valley Boroughs over the last twenty years; this rise is projected to continue and population trends suggest a total population of 189,200 by 2016. Despite having some of the most populous urban centres in the Tees Valley the population growth figures are unevenly balanced across the area; with growth being driven in the south of the Borough, and particularly within the new Ingleby Barwick community. Projections show that the resident population will age sharply in the next ten years; this will be coupled with a decline in the number of children being born in households in the area. By 2021 the population of working age will account for only 59% of total population down from 63% in 2005. The overall growth disguises these significant shifts in the population structure; for the council these changes will lead to rising demand for some public services such as housing, planning and adults' social care, and infrastructure pressures in the south of the borough where most of the growth is situated.

Across the Stockton-on-Tees' communities there is a wide social and economic mix, with areas of significant disadvantage situated alongside areas of affluence. Whilst 15% of the Borough's population live within the top 20% of the most affluent areas nationally, 34% of the resident population live in the 20% of the most deprived areas nationally. Some 2.8% of the population is made up of Black and Minority Ethnic communities (an increase of 1.2% from 1991) and the area is culturally diverse with over 70 languages spoken within the Borough.

Stockton Renaissance

Stockton Renaissance, the Local Strategic Partnership, brings together representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to drive forward the Community and Neighbourhood Renewal strategies to secure more jobs, better education, improved health, reduced crime and better housing, closing the gap between disadvantaged communities and the rest of the borough. The partners involved in Renaissance have a keen interest in ensuring all residents of the Borough have equal access to their services and are not discriminated against for any reason. With this in mind, public sector partners across Renaissance are both developing their own equality schemes and working to help secure the aims and objectives outlined within this strategy. Renaissance has created a Community Cohesion sub-group which reports directly to the main partnership board. Consisting of representatives from across the public, community and voluntary sectors, the group is developing a Community Cohesion Strategy for the borough. The strategy champions Renaissance's commitment to supporting community

cohesion and outlines how partners will work together to ensure the Borough's communities are cohesive into the future.

Equality objectives are best achieved by working in partnership. The Council will seek opportunities to work with partners to achieve shared objectives and economies of scale where appropriate.

The Council

The Council Plan sets out the key objectives of the Local Authority for the next three years and forms a business plan for achieving the Council's contribution to the Borough's Community Strategy. The Council Plan also forms the overarching framework for delivery of individual service improvement and delivery plans, which set out in detail how the Council will provide key services and contribute to the five key Community Strategy themes. It is within the overall context of "promoting achievement and tackling disadvantage" that we work to eradicate the inequalities of resource and opportunity which prevent many of the people living in the Borough from participating in a culture of achievement.

The Council operates a Leader and Cabinet model with a Labour Cabinet and cross party Scrutiny Committees. It is organised into 3 main service groupings:

- Children, Education and Social Care
- Development and Neighbourhood Services
- Resources

The Council works in partnership with other public services within the borough, across the Tees Valley and beyond. Council housing is managed by an Arms Length Management Organisation, Tristar Homes Ltd and Leisure Services are provided by a Leisure Trust, Tees Active Ltd. This scheme applies to the Council's services only. A full list of the functions this scheme applies to can be found in the appendices.

Strategic Context of the Council

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and its partners in Renaissance, have a shared, three-fold vision for the future of the borough:

- Stockton-on-Tees driving economic renaissance at the heart of a vibrant Tees Valley City Region
- An enhanced quality of place, including renewed town centres and improved local neighbourhoods
- Enhanced well being and achievement for local people.

The vision will be achieved by the Council and its partners concentrating on five identified priority improvement themes, namely:

Economic Development and Transport, where the Council and its partners will work together across the Tees Valley to raise employment levels, strengthen the knowledge and skills base, create a more entrepreneurial culture and underpin this with improved transport links both within the borough and the wider area.

Liveability, and quality of life for local people will be improved through promoting community cohesion and improving local housing and environment.

Safer Communities will be developed through tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

Children and Young People will enjoy better health and well being with inequalities and disadvantage experienced by some children being tackled.

Healthier Communities and Adults. We will promote healthier communities by tackling smoking, obesity and drug and substance misuse, whilst also providing care and support for older people and vulnerable adults within our communities.

The Single Equality Scheme underpins and cuts across all themes and actions identified within both the Community Strategy and the Council Plan, ensuring that all residents of Stockton on Tees benefit fully from the range of initiatives being put in place to improve the local area.

The Council operates a competency scheme which identifies the skills and behaviours it expects from all its staff, these include:

Communication: Employees will express ideas and information clearly in a way which helps people understand.

Flexibility: Employees adapt to change and work effectively in a variety of situations.

Making things happen: Employees take responsibility for personal organisation and achieving results.

Learning & developing: Employees actively improve and develop new skills and knowledge, learning from past experience.

Putting customers first: Employees put the customer first and provide excellent service, to both internal and external customers.

Equalities are embedded throughout the competency framework and provide an opportunity for Officers to demonstrate how they promote the agenda in all aspects of their work. For example maximising the use of translation services or hearing loop systems to ensure high quality communication, or by being flexible in service delivery for disabled people. Managers have additional competencies within their framework to ensure that their teams are operating effectively not least the specific requirement to effectively manage diversity.

Our Equalities Objectives

In order to ensure Equality and Diversity are embedded in the Council's service planning and delivery processes, our equality objectives support the six themes of the Council Plan:

- Liveability
- Community Safety
- Economic Regeneration and Transport
- Healthier Communities and Adults
- Children and Young People
- Organisational Effectiveness

These are described in detail overleaf:

Council Plan theme	Equality Objectives
Liveability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a range of accessible environment, planning and housing services that meet the needs of local people • To promote more cohesive communities
Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a safe borough for all residents regardless of their age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender or disability
Economic Regeneration and transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To remove barriers to training and employment ensuring equality of opportunity for all • To ensure the transport network is accessible to all sections of the community
Healthier Communities and Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote and enable independent living • To ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in cultural and leisure activities
Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all children and young people • To ensure that children and young people are not subject to bullying, accidental or deliberate harm because of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion, or any other reason. • To provide children and young people with an inclusive environment that enables them to enjoy and achieve • To enable children and young people to make a positive contribution to an inclusive and cohesive society • To enable young people to achieve economic wellbeing through access to equal opportunities in training and employment
Organisational effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure our employment policies and practice are fair and equitable • To effectively consult and involve all sections of the community • To provide strong leadership which enables the principles of equality to be embedded across the council • To improve the accessibility of our services to all residents

National context for Diversity

As well as delivering on its commitment to promote equality across all the six strands of diversity- age, disability, faith and belief, gender, race and sexual orientation, the council has a duty to comply with a large and complex suite of equality legislation. As such, the Council's Single Equality Scheme has been devised to ensure that our employment practices and service delivery comply with the following Equal Opportunities Legislation, Codes of Practice and recommendations:

- Anti-social Behaviour Bill
- Childcare Act 2006
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Disability Equality Duty
- Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005
- Disability Rights Commission (DRC) Act 1999
- Employment Act 1990 (amended)
- Employment Equality Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006
- Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulation 2005
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Equality Act 2006
- Equality Act 2004
- Equal Pay Act 1970 as amended by the Equal Pay (Amendment)
- Equal Opportunities Commission and Commission for Racial Equality Codes of Practices
- Equality Standard for Local Government
- Five Year Plan for Asylum and Immigration
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Gender Equality Duty
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006
- Independent Living & Human Rights Act 1998
- Incitement to Religious Hatred Act (1986 Public Order Act)
- Macpherson Recommendations, Stephen Lawrence Inquiry
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Race Equality Duty
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

The equality and diversity agenda has been driven forward by a significant reform of equalities legislation, both in terms of service delivery and workforce management over the last five years. As part of this reform a range of initiatives and key documents have been developed, which set out proposals for change and the implications for councils like Stockton-on-Tees. Some of these are highlighted below:

- **Civil Partnership Act 2004** ensures same sex partners who register as civil partners will be treated the same as a married couple for a number of legal rights. These include pensions, recognition for immigration, equal treatment for tax purposes including inheritance tax and better protection from domestic violence. Civil partners are also exempt from testifying against each other in court as are married couples, as well as having next of kin rights, thus overcoming a number of previously experienced problems, such as hospital visiting. Local authorities are obliged to provide civil partnership ceremonies as part of their register office functions where there are requested. A couple who have not registered their partnership but have lived together as if they were civil partners are to be treated as heterosexual unmarried couples living together as husband and wife.
- **Disability Discrimination Acts (DDA)** - give disabled people rights in a wide range of key areas such as employment, education, access to goods, facilities and services and buying or renting land and property. They require public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people, and organisations to take reasonable steps to tackle policies, practices and physical features that act as a barrier to disabled people who want to access their services.
- **Equality Act 2006** – establishes a single Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) from October 2007, and a duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity between men and women (the 'gender duty'). It also makes discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the provision of goods, facilities, services, premises, education and the exercise of public functions unlawful, and provides powers to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services, including adoption. The Equality Act regulations are due to come into force in April 2007.
- **Employment Equality (Religion or Belief)/(Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003** – outlaw discrimination in employment and vocational training on the grounds of religion, belief or sexual orientation. It prevents both direct and indirect discrimination as well as harassment and victimisation on these grounds.

- **Equalities Review**, which is jointly sponsored by the Equality Minister and the Minister for the Cabinet Office, will:
 - Investigate the social, economic, cultural and other factors that limit or deny people the opportunity to make the best of their abilities
 - Provide an understanding of the long term and underlying causes of disadvantage that need to be addressed by public policy
 - Make practical recommendations on key policy priorities for: the government and public sector; employers and trade unions; civic society and the voluntary sector
 - Inform both the modernisation of equality legislation, towards a single equality act; and the development of the new commission for equality and human rights.

- **Equality Standard for Local Government** sets out a framework for integrating equalities in service and workforce planning. It requires that services across the Council take ownership of the equalities agenda and engage in dialogue with target groups, thereby developing and achieving clear equalities objectives. The Council is working towards achieving level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. This will mean that it is continuously assessing all its policies, practices and procedures to determine if they have an adverse impact on the community. The Council is focussed on reaching level 3 of the Equality Standard by April 2009.

- **Gender Recognition Act 2004** - allows transgender people (who are able to satisfy the necessary evidential requirements) to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate, which provides full legal recognition of their acquired gender. Following a successful application, the law regards the transsexual person as being of their acquired gender, and ensures they have all the rights and responsibilities appropriate to that gender.

- **Human Rights Act 1998** - The act applies directly to public authorities and incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law. Human rights are rights and freedoms that belong to all individuals regardless of their nationality and citizenship. They are fundamental in maintaining a fair and civilised society.

- **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000** amended the 1976 Race Relations Act which was introduced to prevent discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin in the fields of employment, the provision of goods and services, education and public functions. It also set up the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The 2000 amendment to the act introduced onto public authorities the general duties to promote racial equality and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

The Gender, Race and Disability Equality Duties

These duties impose broad obligations on public authorities to:

- Eliminate discrimination and harassment;
- Have due regard to the promotion of equality and opportunity between persons and other persons;
- Promote positive attitudes;
- Encourage participation by minority and under-served groups in public life;
- Take steps to take account of people's specific needs even when this requires treating some individuals more favourably than others.
- Conduct impact assessments, and draw up relevant schemes (and publicise them).

The three duties are broadly similar in their approach and aims, however in order to ensure the Council is compliant with all, they are detailed overleaf:

The Race Equality Duty

What is Race?

A race is a distinct group or population of people distinguished in some way from others most often in terms of physical characteristics but also language, history, ancestry and culture.

What is the Race Equality Duty?

The duty was detailed in the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and includes both a general and specific duty.

The General Duty as set out in section 71(1) of the Act, requires a public authority in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between different racial groups.

The Specific Duties are set out in articles 2(3) and 2(4) of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001 which states that a public authority should develop a race equality scheme which highlights:

- Those of its functions and policies, or proposed policies, which it has assessed as relevant to its performance of the duty imposed by section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act and its arrangements for:
 - assessing and consulting on the likely impact of its proposed policies on the promotion of race equality
 - Monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality
 - Publishing the results of its assessments, consultation and monitoring, providing public access to information
 - Training staff in connection with the duties

The Race Equality Scheme must be reviewed every three years.

What are the key issues in Stockton-on-Tees?

Stockton-on-Tees has a relatively low number of BME residents at 2.8%, mainly of Pakistani and Indian origin. Residency is concentrated in the 2 main town centre wards of Stockton Town Centre with an 11.5% BME population and Parkfield and Oxbridge with 11.7%. (Census 2001)

The age profile for the borough shows that on average, Stockton's BME population is younger than the borough as a whole with 34% of BME residents being aged 16 or under compared with a whole borough figure of 21%. In contrast to this, the older population shows a different picture with only 4.8% of the BME population in the "retired" group compared with a whole borough figure of 21%. This leads to the take up of different services within the BME population.

The number of BME residents recording long term health problems or disability is at 12%; considerably lower than whole population figure of 20%. This may in part be due to the age profile however, supported by the fact that in the over 65 age group, the number of BME residents recording health problems and disability is slightly higher at 55% than the wider population at 52%. This has implications for the ways the BME communities access health, education and social services.

What matters to Stockton-on-Tees residents?

This scheme and its associated action plan has been developed as a result of significant consultation with Stockton's BME residents. The issues raised and concerns identified will be addressed in detail in the action plan and individual Service Improvement Plans. The following key issues were highlighted:

- Consultation and Participation were seen as key and BME residents call on the Council to provide culturally appropriate techniques and materials to allow them to play a full part in consultation.
- Access to events, parks and open spaces is important to people. Again information about what is happening needs to be accessible and a sense of wellbeing and feeling safe is a priority.
- Many members of the BME community are keen to take up work locally, including for Stockton Council. Recruitment techniques need to accommodate how the local community access recruitment materials and traditional working patterns

What impact have we already had on race equality in Stockton-on-Tees?

- A comprehensive telephone interpretation training programme has been delivered which, as well as providing staff with the practical skills to access interpreters in 150 languages through National Interpreting Service, has also raised staff awareness of the diverse cultural make-up of the borough. It has focused services to think about why and how they made need to adapt service provision to ensure equality of access. This had led to services being more accessible to a greater number of people.
- The distribution of "Mythbuster" booklets across the borough has both informed the community and prepared Council staff with facts to counteract many of the misunderstandings about Asylum Seekers and Refugees.
- Implementation of the Offensive Incident reporting procedure now enables council staff and local residents to report incidents that may not require Police or enforcement action. This is being increasingly used to monitor and identify patterns of racist or other hate based incidents. This will help plan and deliver effective multi-agency responses.

- Piloted community projects such as the “Community Wardens Volunteers (CWV) programme”. Previously, BME residents had been underrepresented in the warden’s scheme and other services. The volunteering programme not only gives BME residents the opportunity to make a difference in their community, but provides a career and progression route into employment within local authority.
- Promoted the Council’s resident’s panel (Viewpoint) to BME communities and successfully recruited members from the community onto the panel. Therefore creating the opportunity for BME residents to engage with council services and staff.
- In early 2005, Stockton Renaissance, the Local Strategic Partnership, endorsed a proposal put forward by Stockton International Family Centre (SIFC) to develop a ‘BME’ Network group in order to facilitate the ‘BME’ communities engagement in the LSP processes. The BME Network has proven to be a strong organisation and now has a representative on the LSP Board.

The Disability Equality Duty

What is Disability?

People are affected by disability or health conditions in different ways. This can happen suddenly, as a result of accidents or strokes for example, or gradually as a result of conditions such as arthritis and multiple sclerosis. There is often no defining moment when a health issue becomes a disability, at least for the individual concerned. If a condition affects everyday activities, such as

- the ability to move around
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- the ability to lift, carry or move ordinary objects
- speech, hearing or eyesight
- memory, or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- ability to recognise physical danger

and has lasted, or is likely to last, at least a year, then it is likely to be covered by the Disability Discrimination Act

There are two approaches to disability commonly used, the Medical Model and the Social Model.

Medical Model

The “medical model” is a traditional model of disability focused on the individual and their particular physical difficulties which prevents them from undertaking everyday activities which non-disabled people take for granted. The range of social contact for the disabled person where the 'medical model' is applied is illustrated in the diagram overleaf.



Social Model

The "social model" focuses on the social environment and how it causes some people to be disabled. As a result if the organisation of society e.g. stairs to access buildings, lead to disability then it is these things which must be changed. The disabling forces at work where the 'social model' is applied can be seen below:



The Council fully supports the Social Model definition of disability. As service providers we must ensure that we do not impose barriers on anyone accessing our services and that we consider the needs of the individual person rather than focusing on any impairment.

What is the Disability Equality Duty?

There are two duties which apply to councils.

The **General Duty** requires the Local Authority to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and

- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

This general duty provides a framework for the council to carry out their functions more effectively and to tackle discrimination and its causes in a proactive way. It requires us to adopt a proactive approach, mainstreaming disability equality into all decisions and activities.

The **Specific Duties** require the Local Authority to:

- Publish a Disability Equality Scheme demonstrating how it intends to fulfil its general and specific duties.
- Involve disabled people in the development of the scheme which outlines:
 - They way in which disabled people have been involved
 - The authority's methods for impact assessment
 - Steps which the authority will take towards achieving the general duty
 - The authority's arrangements for gathering information in relation to employment, education and service delivery
- Deliver the scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable and impractical to do so

What are the key issues in Stockton-on-Tees?

Stockton has a higher percentage of permanently sick and disabled people and people with a long-term limiting illness than the national average.

	Stockton	England & Wales
Permanently sick and disabled	7.1	5.5
Limiting long-term illness	19.9	17.9

- Within Stockton, there are an estimated 500 adults with a severe disability and nearly 3,000 adults with a mild disability.
- There are 9,552 blue parking badge holders as at 31 March 2006.
- As a service provider in 2006, we had:
 - 4374 clients who received a service who have been classified as having a Physical Disability or Sensory Loss,
 - 1004 clients with a Mental Health support need,
 - 407 who had a Learning Disability
 - and 340 Vulnerable adults
- We have 200 children with a disability receiving services through the local authority and in combination with Health Services.
- Around 1,000 children have a statement of special educational needs

- Over 500 people are registered as partially sighted, and almost 400 people registered as blind in Stockton. Of those 74 per cent are 65 and over and 60 per cent 75 and over.
- The majority (85 per cent) of people with sight problems are older people, aged over 65.
- 2135 people are registered as hard of hearing, with over 100 registered as Deaf
- In the 2001 Census almost 19,000 people in Stockton on Tees said they looked after someone

What matters to Stockton-on-Tees residents?

Both through the Council's usual consultation mechanisms and in developing this scheme we gathered the views of a large number of disabled residents who raised the following as key issues:

- Equality of access to information and services
- The opportunity to influence decision making, both on a personal level about issues like individual care packages and at a strategic policy level
- The need for a more formal mechanism for disability groups or individual residents to have an ongoing dialogue with the council specifically about disability issues.
- Receiving information in appropriate and accessible formats.

What impact have we already had on disability equality in Stockton-on-Tees?

- The establishment of the Disability Advisory Group has provided opportunity for local people with an interest in disability to work with council officers on policy development and look at some of the practical ways to improve access to services. The group also provides networking opportunities for local groups to share information and good practice
- The translation and transcription guidelines produced by the Diversity Team have provided guidance to services about when and how to provide information in alternative formats
- Preparation for the Disability Action Plan has enabled services to identify priorities to ensure equality of access for disabled residents

The Gender Equality Duty

What is Gender?

The term 'gender' refers to the social construction of female and male identity, rather than biological differences between men and women. It includes the ways in which those differences, whether real or perceived, have been valued, used and relied upon to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them. The significance of this is that the lives and experiences of women and men, including their experience of accessing services, can be significantly different. Gender is not always fixed and the Gender Equality Duty urges public service providers to have due regard to the needs of transgender residents.

What is the Gender Equality Duty

The duty to promote Gender Equality was issued under the Equality Act 2006 which amended the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, in a similar vein to Race and Disability legislation, it contains both a general and specific duty:

The General Duty on all authorities is when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination between women and men
- to promote equality of opportunity between men and women

The Specific Duties are as follows:

- to prepare and publish a gender equality scheme, showing how it will meet its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives,
- in formulating its overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap,
- to gather and use information on how the public authority's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workplace and in the delivery of services,
- to consult stakeholders and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives,
- to assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality,
- to implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impractical to do so,
- to report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years.

What are the key issues in Stockton-on-Tees?

The balance of males and females within the borough is fairly evenly split with 49% of the population being male and 51% female. However, the workforce of the Council does not reflect this balance, with 76% of the workforce being female and 24% male. Although this is a large difference, this is not unusual for similar types of authority.

Transgender people's needs must be accounted for as part of the Gender Equality Duty. However, there is no data available outlining the numbers of transgendered residents of Stockton.

What matters to Stockton-on-Tees residents?

Generally, females tend say they are more satisfied with the way the Council is running the Borough. However, males are happier with Stockton as a place to live. There is also a higher sense of belonging among females even though males express more pride in their local area.

More detailed data shows there are differing levels of take-up and satisfaction between men and women across a number of service areas, notably, transport related services, community safety and council communications. In many of these areas, further investigation work will need to be carried out to determine what can be done to improve satisfaction and use of a range of services.

What impact have we already had on gender equality in Stockton-on-Tees?

In general, satisfaction is high with Council services. Females are particularly satisfied with libraries, events and doorstep recycling. Males are particularly satisfied with support services for the elderly, parks and open spaces and council housing. Further work will be carried out to ensure equality of opportunity between males and females which will in turn raise satisfaction with Council services to the same levels.

The authority has systems of gender monitoring for the recruitment, retention and progression of staff. This helps to ensure the HR systems are fair, and where discrepancies appear, action can be taken to address them.

We are doing well with females in top managerial positions, with the percentage of the top 5% of female earners employed by the authority at 49.47%. However, as the action plan shows, we are carrying out further work to look generally at the levels of women in the higher pay brackets.

Preparation for the Gender Action Plan has allowed the Council to identify priorities to ensure equality of access for male and female residents.

Age, Faith & Belief and Sexual Orientation

“Strong and Prosperous Communities” the recent Local Government White Paper has recognised the importance of community cohesion and valuing all residents to improving quality of life. This is coupled with the ongoing Discrimination Law Review which is considering the introduction of a single public sector equality duty, thus creating a more streamlined equalities structure. Also, the ongoing equalities review has recently reported and identifies the core priorities for local authorities and their partners in terms of promoting equalities. This will enshrine all aspects of equalities into the work of public authorities.

The Council is already committed to improving its services and the quality of life for all Stockton residents regardless of their race, gender or disability but also their age, faith and sexual orientation. As a result the Council is looking to develop strategies and action plans in these areas over the short to medium term. This will supplement the general action plan included in this document which includes actions which cut across all six diversity strands.

Further information on age, faith and sexual orientation is given below.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 came into force on 1 October 2006. They apply to employment and vocational training, and prohibit unjustified direct and indirect age discrimination, as well as harassment and victimisation on grounds of age. The regulations (which do not affect the age at which people can claim their state pension):

- ban age discrimination in terms of recruitment, promotion and training.
- ban unjustified retirement ages of below 65.
- remove the current age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights.

They also introduced:

- A right for employees to request working beyond retirement age and a duty on employers to consider that request.
- A new requirement for employers to give at least six months notice to employees about their intended retirement date so that individuals can plan better for retirement, and be confident that "retirement" is not being used as cover for unfair dismissal.

The Council is implementing these regulations through its Human Resources function and employment practices to ensure no current or potential employee

experiences discrimination as a result of their age. However, the Council is also committed to ensuring that no member of the community experiences any such discrimination in all aspects of their lives and has equal access to the services provided by the Council. As such, the Council will be developing an Older People's Strategy with older people and their representatives over the coming months.

Faith & Belief

As a result of the Employment Equality (Religion or belief) Regulations 2003, it is unlawful to discriminate against an employee on grounds of their religion or belief. These regulations prevent both the indirect and direct discrimination as well as harassment and victimisation of an individual and have been implemented across Stockton Borough Council.

In the wider community, the Council and its partners have tended to consider race and faith together and indeed representatives of different faiths have been involved in the development of this scheme to date. Work will continue with the community to further develop understanding of the issues and consideration given to how best to address any faith based discrimination identified. Also we will work to further develop our understanding of the issues surrounding belief. Appropriate actions for faith and belief will be developed through the implementation of this scheme.

Sexual Orientation

Gay men, lesbians and bisexuals are protected at work by the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations of 2003, which in a similar way as faith regulations, prevent discrimination and harassment at work as a result of sexual orientation. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has implemented these regulations and works to ensure no discrimination takes place amongst its workforce.

In the wider community the Government estimates that approximately 5% of the population are either gay men, lesbians or bisexuals although figures are not clear as no national census has requested data on sexual orientation. This would potentially equate to over 9,000 Stockton residents.

There is no apparent "gay scene" in Stockton, and that in nearby Middlesbrough is still relatively small compared with other urban areas such as Manchester, Liverpool or even Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This may in turn lead to a lack of openness amongst gay male, lesbian and bisexual residents of Stockton.

The Council is committed to creating a borough where all residents have equal access to its services and events and feel accepted and valued as citizens. As such renewed efforts will be made to consult and involve gay, lesbian and bisexual residents of Stockton in the development of services.

How Have we Developed the Scheme

This scheme has been developed collaboratively and is the result of consultation and involvement with local people as well as Members and officers of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. Detail of how specific groups have been involved is given below with more general information on how the Council consults and uses data detailed later in this scheme.

Disabled people

The council has actively involved disabled people in the development of the disability section of this scheme. This has included:

- A targeted questionnaire focusing on making contact with the council, visiting buildings, information, services, employment, and a section for open comments
- Face to face discussions with local representative groups such as Stockton Blind People's Voice, Diabetes Support Group, Stockton Helps All (learning disabilities), and Hartlepool Deaf Club.
- A "tell us what you think" event open to all disabled people providing direct access to council staff to discuss issues and experiences
- Work with disabled young people to identify issues and get ideas for how services can be improved
- A questionnaire to employees identifying themselves as disabled

The feedback received from disabled people has been used to form the Disability Action Plan which can be found in later in this document. We have set up a representative Disability Advisory Group to work with us on further developing and delivering the Disability Action Plan.

In addition the Council has or has access to a range of established mechanisms for seeking the views of and working with Disabled people.

These include:

- Adult and Youth Viewpoint (our residents panels) where Disabled people are included in all our regular consultations as well as those specifically related to disability issues.
- Service user groups e.g. Stockton Helps All – self advocacy and consultation for people with learning disabilities; Creative support – consultation forum for people with mental health problems
- Stockton Disability Forum
- Working with established disability groups including Blind People's Voice UK, Shopmobility, Stockton Parent Support, North East Centre for Independent Living

BME Residents

The Council's approach of engaging with BME communities in Stockton, has taken a number of different forms consisting of:

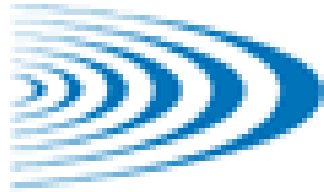
- The Development the Parkfield & Mill Lane 'BME' Forum (Hamari Awaaz),
- Commissioning from the LSP to develop the BME network group
- The engagement of Viewpoint members from BME communities
- The support of Stockton's Asian women's forum
- Promoting services to the BME communities using art, leisure and cultural events for e.g. Mela.

Gender

The council has carried out a number of thorough consultation activities. The thrust of the investigation for this scheme has involved reanalysing existing data, to determine whether there is any gender difference. The analysis of this data has directly fed into objectives for the Gender Action Plan aimed at tackling the observed issues. To ensure ongoing engagement services are being encouraged to collect further service user data and investigate reasons for differing use and satisfaction in services.

Viewpoint carries out questionnaires and focus groups on a regular basis giving residents the opportunity to give their views on a variety of services offered by the Council and its partners. Demographic data is routinely collected from Panel Members which allows for detailed and targeted analysis. Results from recent consultation exercises have been analysed by Gender to highlight areas of difference between men and women.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has well embedded Human Resources recording systems which hold a variety of workforce data, analysis of which has informed the development of the Action Plan. Moreover this is supplemented by regular staff surveys which gather employee views on their experiences of working for the authority. Recent results have been considered and any observed differences between male and female employees will be investigated and addressed through the Action Plan. The Council benefits from strong relations with Trades Unions and will work closely together to improve gender equality.



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Quality Service Provision

Equalities Impact Assessments

Equalities Impact Assessments are a crucial mechanism for ensuring the embedding of equalities and diversity across the Council. Impact assessments will be carried out covering all 6 equality and diversity strands (race, religion, disability, age, gender and sexual orientation) and will identify both good practice as well as areas where our performance in ensuring diversity could be improved. They will be based on a variety of data held by the Council to give as full a picture of possible of the impact of individual services and policies and, where weaknesses are identified ensure that they are addressed in the shortest possible timeframe. In line with statutory requirements our equality impact assessment process will be applied to both new policies as well as existing policies and functions on an agreed programme.

Impact assessments - existing policies and functions

The programme of impact assessments will be agreed by the council's corporate management team following discussions with appropriate representative groups on priorities. Once identified, functions and policies will be impact assessed in order of priority with those having the most impact on equalities being considered first.

Our approach of applying one impact assessment covering all six areas to current practice and policy will ensure that we come to a rounded view and that by altering our policy or practice to address the equality of one group we do not disadvantage another. It also reduces the potential administrative burden that could prevent impact assessments being effectively carried out.

Impact assessments – new policies and practice

A similar process to that described above for existing policy and practice will be applied to new policies and practice, as required by the relevant statutory codes of practice. Where decisions require Cabinet approval, the outcome of the impact assessment will be included in reports. Where decisions require a "delegated decision" to be recorded the outcome of the impact assessment will be included on the appropriate record. Both reports to Elected Members and delegated decision records are available on the council's website. Equality issues will also be embedded within the Council's constitution.

All impact assessments will be carried out by services, with appropriate support and challenge from the council's Diversity Team. The results of impact assessments will be published on the council's website.

Consultation and Involvement

Consultation and involvement

The council's existing mechanisms for consulting local people include:

- Biennial independently carried out residents surveys
- Our residents panel (Viewpoint) which includes young people, disabled people and members of our Black and Minority Ethnic Communities. A range of surveys and focus groups is undertaken each year
- Specific consultations on key issues such as town centre re-developments

The council has published guidance on consulting with young people and disabled people and offers training to all staff across the council on these areas, as well as a general consultation course.

In order to increase the level of involvement that local people have in shaping services and ensuring they meet specific needs the Council and its partners support a number of advisory groups to provide both guidance and act as a critical friend in policy development and review. For example the disability advisory group has been established to work with us on improving and testing services and we will consult this group on priorities and proposed actions relating to disability.

Gathering information

We have processes in place to analyse information about the borough and its residents to develop "profiles" focused on disability, gender, race, and age. These profiles are published on the council's website and used by services to provide contextual information for developing and providing services.

We are seeking ways to improve the collection of meaningful data which will help us to understand the relationship between being within a minority group and other socio-economic data such as health, employment, and crime.

Feedback from residents and service users is collected via a number of mechanisms including the council's complaints system. Those providing feedback are asked to provide some information about themselves e.g. ethnicity, disability to enable a full analysis of the feedback.

We are also developing a range of local performance measures to help us monitor the impact of the improvements set out in the action plans and progress towards our objectives.

Education

In terms of education we have an overarching Accessibility Strategy, together with individual School Accessibility Plans. These provide a framework for monitoring the impact of practices on disabled pupils and students. Guidance and training is provided to schools to assist them in this work. We also monitor School Ofsted inspections (which include a number of judgements relating to equality, diversity and inclusive practice) to help us assess the impact of schools' work on pupils with particular needs, including those with a disability. Value added analysis of outcomes for SEN pupils is undertaken annually. The impact of policies in relation to school admissions and school transport have considered the needs of disabled pupils and made appropriate provisions.

In relation to race issues, 'The Race Relation Act' 1976 (statutory duties) order 2001 highlights that the governing body of a school must have a race equality policy in place which describes how the school will prevent racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good race relations across all areas of schools activity, thereby meeting both the general and specific duties. The policy should be embedded within the schools development plan, give details of how and by whom it will be implemented and outline remedial actions should implementation fail.

To improve education for girls and boys alike, work will focus on narrowing achievement gaps in schools, reviewing anti-bullying strategies and encouraging more adult males to be involved in their children's education.

Ensuring Access to a Quality Service

The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents and potential service users have access to information and services, provided by trained, efficient and helpful staff and which are consistent and appropriate to their needs.

A range of facilities are already available to help people access information and services from the Council:

- Telephone interpretation (over 150 languages)
- Face to face interpretation by prior arrangement, including sign language
- Transcription into a variety of formats such as Large Print, Braille and audio
- Translation of written documents on request

All services have access to face to face interpretation, transcription and translation services and an increasing number have been trained to use the telephone interpretation service (we expect 100% of services to be operational with this facility by April 2007).

The Council's Access to Services strategy and Customer First programme includes equalities and diversity issues. The Access to Services Strategy includes ensuring that new contact centres (both walk in and telephone) are fully accessible to all groups including Black and Minority Ethnic residents and disabled people.

The Customer First programme includes equality criteria which must be met in order to achieve each level of award. For example, in order to achieve Level 2, services must ensure that they have trained staff in using the telephone interpretation service and that the service is operational, that there is a hearing loop installed and working at each reception point, and that the appropriate reception points are fully accessible.

All council buildings have been audited for compliance with the accessibility criteria in the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act, using Document M of the Building Regulations as guidance' and remedial works have taken place. A second audit will take place by the end of 2007 in partnership with our Disability Advisory Group. Actions arising from this will be fed into the council's capital programme and Disability Action Plan.

Equalities Training for Staff and Councillors

The Council provides training to staff on a range of equalities related issues and will be introducing a revised programme of training during 2007. The programme will include:

- Diversity essentials for all staff
- Diversity for managers
- Diversity for councillors and co-opted members
- Specific courses on age, disability, gender, race, religion and sexual orientation

Training needs are identified through annual appraisals of all employees. Equalities and Diversity are being embedded in our revised organisational values and our new competency framework. We have set ourselves the target of delivering equalities training to all first, second and third tier officers as well as 10% of all other staff by the end of March 2008.

Equality and Diversity is included in the induction of new elected members. All Elected Members have signed the Model Code of Conduct which is based on the general principles of conduct both of which include obligations to promote equality.

We evaluate the quality of our training through attendee feedback and are seeking ways to link training outcomes with customer satisfaction and behavioural changes in our staff.

The Diversity Team

In response to the growing diversity agenda, the Council has taken the proactive step of developing a diversity team. The team has 3 members, each of which has expertise and experience in two of the six diversity strands, age, faith, gender, sexual orientation, disability and race. The team has a dual role both to work proactively with community groups and representatives to ensure that we have accurate and complete information on our residents' needs and then help, support and advise council service groupings to ensure their services are accessible to all. In order to effect change across the Council, the Diversity Team has a key role to play in Policy Development, both corporate diversity strategy and policy but also in embedding the equalities agenda within all plans, policies and strategies produced by the Council thereby ensuring all of our activities are promoting equality.

The introduction of the Diversity Team represents a significant investment of resources by the Council to ensure that its services are delivered in a fair and equitable way. All financial planning and expenditure associated with the team and its operation will be subject to the usual robust financial management arrangements.

In addition to the Diversity Team, the Council also benefits from an equality and diversity advisor being based within the Human Resources function. This advisor works to ensure that the Council's recruitment, retention and all HR related policies and activities actively promote equality and diversity and that as such the Council is moving towards a more diverse workforce which reflects the diverse nature of our resident population.

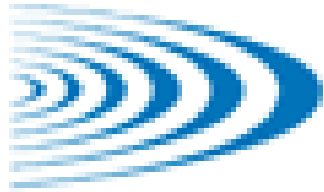
Procurement

The European Union and Government are committed to developing public sector procurement to promote greater equality and diversity in our communities and have developed both legal arrangements and guidance to help ensure this happens. There is great scope for improving public sector procurement to achieve greater equality through:

- ensuring suppliers comply with equality requirements, including discrimination law and family friendly legislation
- ensuring that contracts for delivering services meet the needs of diverse communities
- promoting the engagement of businesses led by people from disadvantaged groups

The Discrimination Law Review has been considering the issue of procurement within its terms of reference and will develop recommendations in the forthcoming White Paper for consultation.

Diversity and inclusiveness in public sector procurement is an issue of great importance and the Council is already committed to procurement processes that eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. Work is already ongoing in many areas, such as assessing potential contractors' / service providers' approach to equalities for example ensuring they have an equal opportunities policy. Further improvements will be implemented over the coming years with key improvement areas including the monitoring and review of contractor performance against equality requirements and ensuring the new standardised terms and conditions fully embrace the requirements of the equalities legislation.



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Employment

The Council as an employer

The Council is one of the largest employers in the borough and has committed itself to the highest standards of equality and diversity related policies and practices, some of which are detailed below. The Council is also committed to working towards ensuring that its workforce is reflective of the diversity of the borough's residents.

Equal opportunity policies

The council has a range of employment related codes of practice and equal opportunities policies:

- Codes of Practice in employment, promotion and training
 - Avoidance of Age Discrimination
 - Disability Equality
 - Racial Equality
 - Religion and Belief Equality
 - Sex Equality
 - Sexual Orientation Equality
 - Transsexual Equality
- Equality and Diversity Policies
 - Aids / HIV policy
 - Dignity at Work Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
- Service Codes of Practice
 - Disability Equality
 - Sex Equality

These policies are developed in line with the appropriate regulations and legislation in consultation with employees and Trades Unions. Full copies of our equal opportunities policy and codes of practice are available on the Council's website at www.stockton.gov.uk

Equal opportunity information

We regularly collect equalities data from our employees and potential employees via:

- Regular data matching on employee data held by the authority
- Equal opportunity forms issued with application forms for jobs within the council

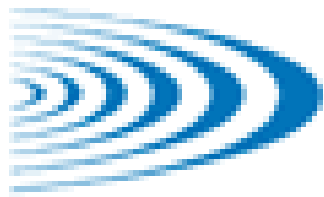
This information is analysed at least annually to tell us:

- The ethnic breakdown of the workforce
- The percentage of the workforce which considers themselves to have a disability
- The age profile of the workforce
- The gender profile of the workforce
- The pay profile of employees by ethnicity, age, gender and disability
- The ethnicity, age, gender and disability profile of those applying to work in the council compared to those appointed

All information is broken down into service areas as well as being available council wide.

We are seeking ways to improve our data collection and analysis to include areas such as take up of training opportunities by ethnicity, age, gender and disability, the sexual orientation of our employees and the impact of our absence management policy on different groups of staff. In addition, we regularly carry out staff surveys and are developing a programme of staff focus and support groups so we can better understand the experience of working for Stockton Council.

It is vital that the Council is leading the way in terms of diversity in employment and as such has developed a series of objectives and targets to continually improve its Human Resources policies and practices which can be found appended to this scheme.



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Appendices



APPENDIX ONE

Risk Management

Failure to deliver against the Single Equality Scheme is a risk for the Council, not least because we will be not be meeting our statutory duties but also because we will be failing the residents of Stockton in terms delivering services to meet their diverse needs.

The risks associated with this strategy will be managed by the Council through its usual risk management procedures and have already been subject to the standard risk assessment protocols. Further, through the ongoing performance management of this strategy, outlined in the next section, any risks will be identified at an early stage and managed accordingly.

APPENDIX TWO: Performance and review

The Single Equality Scheme will be subject to the Council's usual rigorous performance management arrangements. The actions highlighted in the various action plans will be written into the Service Improvement and Business Unit Plans for the relevant services. Not only will this ensure that these targets are subject to ongoing performance management and monitoring but also serves to ensure that work on equalities is embedded across the authority.

The Council will also maximise the opportunities provided by PI data to both benchmark our services against those of other high performing authorities but also to demonstrate year on year improvement in key equalities areas. Moreover the challenge offered by our forthcoming corporate assessment and the drive to maintain our 4-star improving strongly status is key to the authority this year and ensuring equal access to service for all is an important part of this agenda.

The ongoing involvement of both employees and the community is a vital aspect of this scheme and through both its internal mechanisms as well as community consultation activities, the Council will ensure this happens. The Disability Advisory Group for example will have a crucial role to play in the ongoing development and monitoring of the disability equality scheme.

Appendix Three: List of Applicable Functions

Resources

- Acquisition, Disposal, Valuation & Estates Management
- Finance
- E Government
- IT
- Taxation and Administration
- Human Resources

Children, Education and Social Care

- School Improvement
- Governor Support
- Sports Development
- Pupil Attendance
- Pupil Exclusions
- Tees Valley Music Service
- SEN Assessment & Monitoring
- Educational Psychology Service
- Education Other Than At School
- Specialist Learning Support
- Safeguarding Services
- Children Looked After
- Children in Need
- Sure Start
- Connexions (Locality)
- Emergency Duty Team
- First Contact
- Youth Offending Team
- Pupil Admissions
- Teenage Conception Strategy
- Review Unit
- Youth Service
- Involvement and Participation
- Libraries
- Adult Education
- Museums
- Arts
- Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF)
- Community Transport

- Client Financial Services
- Customer Care and Complaints
- Community Care Services
- Residential/Day/Home Care
- Integrated Learning Disabilities Service
- Welfare Rights
- Adult Protection
- Direct Payments
- Integrated Mental Health Services
- Supporting People
- Drug Action Team
- Strategic Planning
- Integrated Commissioning
- Partnership Development

Development and Neighbourhood Services

- Housing Benefits
- Parks & Countryside Services
- Homeless & Housing Advice
- Care for your area (street cleansing, refuse, recycling, parks and grounds maintenance, cemeteries)
- Registration Services
- Bereavement Services
- Events
- Waste Management
- Catering & Cleaning
- Highway & Winter Maintenance
- Registrars
- Community Safety
- Security Services
- Trading Standards & Licensing
- Public Protection
- Animal Welfare
- Development Control
- Development Plans
- Building Control
- Health & Environmental Improvement
- Waste Strategy
- Regeneration Projects
- European and External Funding
- Business Development
- Community Enterprise
- Traffic Management
- Transportation Planning
- Road Safety
- Highway /Bridge Design and Maintenance
- Street Lighting

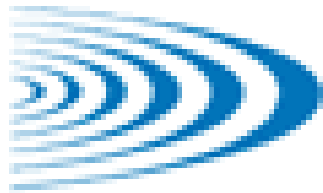
- Architectural Design
- Quantity Surveying
- Engineering
- Building Surveying
- Property Inspection
- Care Call
- Concessionary Fares
- Blue Badge Scheme
- Car Parking
- Town Centre Management
- Tourist and tourism information
- Fleet management

Law and Democracy

- Electoral Services and community engagement
- Scrutiny
- Democratic support
- Member support
- Legal Services

Policy, Performance and Communications

- Research and Consultation
- Performance improvement
- Communications
- Diversity
- Neighbourhood renewal
- Local Strategic Partnership (Stockton Renaissance)



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Consultation Summary:

**Disability Equality
Race Equality
Gender Equality**

Disability Equality Scheme

Executive summary of Employee Survey

October 2006

Draft

Background

- Surveys were distributed to employees of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Tees Active and Tristar Homes Ltd in September 2006.
- Surveys were distributed via the internal intranet system.
- Heads of Service and third tier managers were asked to encourage employees to complete the survey
- The survey was made available via the Council's notice board.
- Paper based versions of the survey were available on request
- The survey was advertised via Message of The Day
- In total 40 surveys were completed
- The report that follows details the results of this survey

Working for the Council

Staff rated the overall experience of working for the Council as seven out of ten.

When asked how likely respondents felt people with disabilities were to get jobs with the Council, twelve per cent felt disabled people were more likely to get jobs, fifteen per cent felt they were less likely and seventy three per cent felt it made no difference.

Disclosure of disability

Forty three per cent of respondents felt the best time to disclose a disability was on the application form, with twenty two per cent at interview, and eleven per cent when a person was offered the job or had been in the job some time.

Reasons given for encouraging disclosure included:

- Colleagues and managers can be more supportive and understanding of needs
- Raising awareness of disabilities can help make working easier
- Policies encourage you to do so

Reasons for discouraging disclosure included:

- Fear of discrimination
- Feelings that it may hinder future opportunities
- People do not want to be treated differently and feel that people would not understand.

Information

Eighty six per cent of respondents did not require information in any other format. Of those who did require information in other formats, six per cent got it all of the time and eight per cent only received it some of the time.

Safety and sickness

Ninety two per cent of respondents were confident that they could safely exit their building in an emergency.

For those respondents who had been off for a period of sickness, fifty nine per cent said that on their return to work no adjustments were needed. Sixteen per cent were offered and given adjustments, nine per cent were offered adjustments but they were not given and six per cent were offered them but they were not given soon enough.

Barriers to working equally as a disabled person

When respondents asked what they felt the biggest barriers were to working equally as a disabled person, the top three barriers were:

- Attitudes of other staff
- Lack of disability equality training for other staff
- Not being equally valued

How likely would you be to recommend Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council as a place to work for other disabled people?

Never 0	Unlikely 6%	Neither 14%	Possibly 26%	Quite likely 37%	Definitely 17%
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Harassment, bullying or abuse

Over a quarter of respondents had experienced harassment, bullying or abuse, with the main perpetrators being identified as service users (42%) and managers/team leaders/supervisors (25%). Of those fifty per cent had reported the incident. Reasons for non reporting included

- I would have complained but I was worried about what would happen
36%
- I would have complained but I did not think action would be taken
27%

"Because this has happened in the past - when things happen behind closed doors there is no evidence. So no action is taken, and it make life worse for the complainer"

Priorities for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to do to attract, retain and allow disabled employees to perform equally in their jobs

Recruiting and retaining disabled and Deaf people in the workplace

- Support people who become disabled in the workplace
- Quickly provide reasonable adjustments in the workplace

Partnership and team-working for equality

- Involve disabled and Deaf staff and consult them in planning

- Train line managers in disability equality

Experiences of disabled and Deaf staff

- Treat disabled staff with dignity and respect
- Treat disabled staff fairly as equal and diverse individuals

Summary

Consultation with employees has highlighted a number of key areas that need to be addressed to improve working arrangements for employees with a disability or sensory loss. In summary these are:

- Attitudes of staff / managers
- Policies / issues linked to the disclosure of disabilities
- Making information accessible to all
- Safe exit of buildings
- Dealing with sickness / return to work
- Training and awareness of officers
- Equality and mutual respect
- Experiences and reporting of harassment, bullying or abuse
- Attraction and retention of employees



Disability Equality Scheme

Executive summary

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council responses

October 2006

Draft

Background

- A survey was developed to cover services provided by Stockton Council, Tees Active Leisure, Tristar Homes Ltd, Cleveland Police and Cleveland Fire Brigade.
- The survey was distributed to over 4,000 people with disabilities who lived within the Borough, or were a service user within the Borough. The surveys were distributed throughout August and September 2006.
- Where it was not possible for individuals to complete a survey, support was offered.
- In total 310 questionnaires were returned completed.
- A full report detailing the complete findings is also available.

Technical note

Net is calculated by subtracting those on the negative end of a scale from those on the positive end of scale e.g. those who are dissatisfied and very dissatisfied from those who are satisfied or very satisfied.

Section One Making Contact

The first section of the questionnaire looked at making contact, with sixty seven per cent of respondents having made contact with the Council in the last year; the majority by phone. When asked if respondents had made their disability known either before or during contact, sixty one per cent of respondents contacting the Council had.

Positive comments focussed on respondents ability to get straight through to the person respondents wanted to talk to and helpfulness of staff. Negative comments focussed on respondents feelings that they got passed round a lot and that calls were not returned.

"Easy to telephone and staff were helpful"

"Always seem to have trouble finding the right person to deal with"

Section Two Visiting Buildings

The most frequently visited buildings in the Council were Municipal Buildings, 16 Church Road, Central Library and the bus pass office on Church Road. Key issues raised by venue included:

Municipal Buildings / Stockton venues

- Doors – all need to be automatic (manual ones too heavy). There is a problem with clear glass as those with a visual impairment cannot distinguish a door if there is no contrast
- Parking – needs to be disabled parking directly outside

- Need access ramps to all buildings
- Toilets need to be accessible (particular problems for visually impaired in Central Library)

Billingham buildings

- Public toilets are down stairs
- Kingsway /Queensway House – stairs access from town
- Need more room for wheelchairs in offices
- Need automatic doors
- Lifts in some venues often out of order

Thornaby buildings

- No access ramp to Pavillion
- Too many stairs
- Lifts often out of order

Section Three Information

When asked if respondents had received information from the Council in the last year, 199 had received information. Of those sixty per cent said it was easy to understand and the overall net accessibility (how accessible people felt the information was) was seventy seven per cent. Suggestions for improving communications included introducing talking bills and talking books.

Overall how accessible do you think the information you received is from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council?

Very accessible	Fairly accessible	Neither	Not very accessible	Not at all accessible	Do not know	Net
44%	38%	3%	3%	2%	11%	77%

Section Four Services

The most frequently used services were social care, libraries and housing benefits. The overall net satisfaction with Council services was seventy five per cent.

When asked reasons for satisfaction the main reasons given were that issues were dealt with quickly and that staff were polite and helpful. Reasons for

dissatisfaction included no communication, service no longer available and that things take too long to happen.

When asked how staff treated respondents:

Helpfully	78%
With respect	58%
They listened to me	60%
My needs were understood	55%

"Calls I made were helpful and more importantly actually dealt with"

"I feel the Council listen but do not hear if what is said does not fall in line with their requirements. They understand only what suit them on matters of public concern – they treat me with no respect".

When service users were asked satisfaction with individual services, the top three net satisfactions were:

Refuse collection	(89%)
Libraries	(85%)
Parks and open spaces	(80%)

The services with the lowest levels of satisfaction were:

Roads and pavements	(8%)
Support services for people with a sensory loss	(16%)
Public conveniences	(37%)

Summary

Consultation with members of the public has highlighted a number of key areas that need to be addressed to improve service access and provision for people with a disability or sensory loss. In summary these are:

- Access to buildings and facilities
- Pavements (broken slabs, and kerbs)
- Disabled parking and blue badge schemes
- Staff attitudes and customer care
- Communications

Race Equality Scheme

Executive summary of consultation

BME Viewpoint consultation

Consultation with BME Forum

Draft

Key Summary findings:

'BME' Viewpoint Consultation Sessions

A number of consultation sessions were held with members of BME Viewpoint panel. The purpose of the sessions was to gauge opinion on accessing council services.

Translation issues

Translation should only happen where there is a real need due to cost implications. In documents, present one sentence in the six most frequently spoken languages (Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Punjabi, and Urdu). Despite concerns over quality of professional interpreters and the level of training, only use professional interpreters rather than friends and family.

Telephone Interpreting

Initially a three way telephone interpretation system to set up face-to-face meetings with people who need interpretation. Confidentiality and impartiality should be part of the training within workshops for interpreters. Issues have been raised about time delays on Language Line, use of the correct dialects and the informal aspect of telephone conversations. A pilot scheme is to be set of initial contact. Suggested locations for this pilot scheme included Municipal Buildings and Citizen's Advice Bureaux as well as various leisure and recreational facilities. This would also be useful for doctors, colleges, schools, police and taxi offices.

Welcome Signs

Put up welcome signs with different languages underneath. This would enable service users to more easily identify their interpreting needs and would be welcoming.

Transport issues

Buses – There is no regular service and certain routes are real unreliable. Some users find the service expensive and that the stops are too far apart.

Cycling - Cycle tracks were viewed positively but there were concerns over safety and places to safety lock bikes in the town centre; safe and dry storage would help with most issues.

Walking – The main issue with walking was safety, especially at night. Better policing, more community wardens and better provision of street lighting helped people feel safer.

Road Safety - In general there were no great concerns about road safety but there were some issues that could be improved such as making speed restrictions more clear, more zebra crossings and speed bumps and better use of pavement build outs and central refuges.

Traffic Management / Air Quality - There were concerns over pollution but also recognition that traffic is not the only cause of pollution. Parking is not an

issue in the town centre but can be in residential areas due to the restrictions of residential permits.

Highway and Footpath Maintenance - In general the current road works to make improvements were viewed positively. However, it was noted that they are often timed badly and take a very long time to complete.

Taxis - Opinions were varied; issues raised included price, reliability and driving standards.

Trains – In general trains were viewed negatively with problems such as bad links with other public transport, poor timekeeping, and price, lack of information and poor lighting and personal safety issues.

Draft

Key Summary findings:

Consultation with Parkfield & Mill Lane 'BME' forum (Harmi Awaaz which means Our Voice)

The 'BME' forum Harmi Awaaz was set up in 2005, in partnership with local residences, Stockton borough council officers and the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder programme. The remit of the forum was to offer support and guidance to local BME residences living in the town centre wards of Parkfield & Mill Lane. The findings have been addressed, though contacting various different services and incorporating the issues into the race action plan.

Issues

- Lack of culturally sensitive counselling services
- Lack of health education and poor access to health services
- No leisure activities for BME women
- Need more preventative work around alcohol and drug abuse
- Anti-social youths and lack of youth facilities
- BME children underachieving at school and lack of after school clubs
- Lacking training opportunities and ability to gain employment
- Better opportunities for women and improved access to child care
- Housing issues and problems with rubbish

Solutions

- Better integration between different communities
- More cultural awareness
- Better health / leisure opportunities
- Racist remarks on the streets/in school
- Discrimination issues
- Knowledge around drugs and the effects for everyone
- Education programmes for young people & adults
- Park facilities and events & activities
- More young people services
- Increased involvement of the press media & press
- Job opportunities for young people & adults
- Penalties for antisocial behaviour
- Better consultation on community issues such as housing and health

Gender Equality Scheme

Executive summary of Employee Survey

October 2006

Draft

Background

- Surveys were distributed to employees of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Tees Active and Tristar Homes Ltd in September 2006.
- Surveys were distributed via the internal intranet system.
- Heads of Service and third tier managers were asked to encourage employees to complete the survey
- The survey was made available via the Council's notice board.
- Paper based versions of the survey were available on request
- The survey was advertised via Message of The Day
- In total 40 surveys were completed
- The report that follows details the results of this survey

About The Employee

- Of those who stated their sex, 71% were female and 29% were male. This reflects our workforce. More males work full time, males tend to be in manual/craft jobs and posts of SO1 and above and more males have managerial/supervisory responsibility for staff.
- More females have worked for the Council for 1-2 years and more males have worked for the Council for 2-5 years
- Female staff are more likely to live within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.

Customer Care

- Females are generally more positive about customer service; the exception to this positive trend is that females are less likely to think management at SBC set a good example of good customer service.
- Females say they make more suggestions to improve customer service and more females think the Council offers good customer service.

The Employee and Their Job

- Females feel more positive about a number of aspects of work relating to how they can use their abilities, feeling part of the team / council, pride in the council, feeling valued and feeling confident about their job security.
- **Females were more likely to agree that they had a clear understanding of who they are accountable to and there was a general trend to suggest females felt they had more understanding of what was expected than males.**

The Service Area

- The general trend shows that females feel more included in the way their service operates and in discussions about their service grouping.

Senior Management

- Females are generally more positive about management, have more confidence in managers and feel managers understand their day to day problems.

Communications and Involvement

- Females are significantly more satisfied with the Council's internal communications and the trend shows they are more positive about internal communications.
- Fewer females are aware of the staff suggestion scheme but they are just as likely as their male counterparts to make a suggestion.

Training, Learning and Development

- More females say they have better training and development opportunities. In addition, more females said it is agreed why they are going on training with their line manager and more females thought they had good opportunities for progression.

General Well-being

- Data suggests that males feel they are playing a useful part in things but are more likely to feel they can't overcome their difficulties; and slightly more males said they felt under constant strain.
- Significantly more females felt motivated in their job.
- Data suggests that when experiencing violence at work, females are more likely to have more than one attacker and males are more likely to be attacked by members of the public.

Fairness at Work

- The general trend shows females feel equality and diversity issues are taken more seriously in the council. More females think equal opportunities are taken seriously, recruitment and selection are fair and that complaints about harassment would be dealt with seriously.
- More males felt as though they had been unfairly treated in the past 12 months.
- More females think the Council is a good place to work / that they enjoy working for the Council.

Gender Equality Scheme

Executive summary

Of Residents' Survey 2006

Draft

Background

- Results are based on 1,032 interviews with residents 16+ across Stockton-on-Tees, conducted face-to-face, in home between 3rd June – 30th July 2006.
- At the analysis stage, data were weighted by gender, age and work status to the overall profile of the Borough using 2001 Census data.
- All results were tested by MORI to ascertain whether there were significant differences. The following highlights the areas where male / female show a significant difference from each other or from the total.

Summary of Results

The Borough and the Council

- Although males are happier with Stockton as a place to live, females are more satisfied with the way the Council are running the Borough and the way it provides services. More males said that they felt proud of their area but more females say they feel they belong to Stockton-on-Tees.
- Significantly more females (15%) think the Council is good value for money, with 12% of males giving the same response.
- 19% of females said that more facilities for children under 13 would improve quality of life; compared to 12% of males (a total of 178 people gave this answer)
- When asked about attitudes to the Council, 60% of females said they like know what is going on but are happy to let the Council get on with their job, compared to 51% of males. 28% of males said they would like to have more of a say in what the Council does and the service it provides compared to 22% of females.
- The trends show men placed emphasis on the economy related issues, whilst women placed more emphasis on affordable housing and people.
- When asked satisfaction with services, males are more satisfied with:
 - Support services for elderly people (71% compared to 38% of females)
It is also interesting to note that no more males say they benefit from support services for the elderly. This result was based on only 75 responses.
 - Parks and open spaces (62% compared to 43% of females)
 - Street cleaning (67% compared to 61% of females)
 - Council Housing (45% compared to 25% of females)
 - GPs (89% compared to 83%)
- More females are more satisfied with:
 - Libraries (89% compared to 82% of males)
 - Leisure centres (42% compared to 28% of males)
 - Swimming pools (53% compared to 36% of males)
 - Events (87% compared to 78%)
 - Council tax administration (55% compared to 43% of males)

- Road maintenance and repairs (8% compared to 1% of males)
- Car parks (46% compared to 34% of males)
- Doorstep recycling (90% compared to 82% of males)
- The police (54% compared to 30%)

Quality of Life

- When asked about quality of life males thought the following were most important:
 - Leisure centres (26% compared to 18% of females)
 - Road maintenance and repair (26% compared to 19%)
 - Recycling facilities (17% compared to 11%)
- Females thought the following were most important to quality of life:
 - Street cleaning (29% compared to 23% of males)
 - Support services for the elderly (15% compared to 10%)
 - Street lighting (18% compared to 12%)
 - Swimming pools (12% compared to 8%)
 - Nursery schools (14% compared to 7%)
 - Day/evening classes for adults (8% compared to 5% - this was based on 67 responses)

Communication

- 4% of males (compared to -4% of females) agree the Council is remote and impersonal.
- Females felt significantly better informed than males, with 30% saying they felt Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council keeps them well informed about the services and benefits it provides, compared to 12% of males.
- Significantly more females think the Council is good value for money.
- Females are more likely to get their information from Stockton News or from leaflets through the door. Males said they were more likely to gain information through local radio. However, overall Stockton News was still the most popular medium. More females said they had seen Stockton News and of those who had, more females thought it was useful.

Lifestyle

- When asked about the activities they had carried out within the last four weeks, females do more:
 - Housework (92% compared to 61%),
 - Aerobics, dance etc (11% compared to 2% - based on 71 responses)
 - Any other type of dancing (8% compared to 2% - based on 51 responses)
- Males do more other sporting related activities such as:
 - Cycling (19% compared to 11%)
 - Running / Jogging (13% compared to 6% - based on 97 responses)

- Football/Rugby (17% compared to 2% - based on 95 responses)
 - Golf (63% compared to 5% - based on 68 responses)
 - Squash (3% compared to 1% - based on 17 responses)
 - Watersports (5% compared to 1% - based on 31 responses)
 - Cricket (2% compared to 1% - based on 12 responses)
- Males are more likely to exercise more than five times a week with more females falling into the three to four times a week category.
 - 70% of females said they eat fresh fruit and 67% fresh vegetables most days. This compares to 60% and 61% for males. Males also eat more fried food, with 9% of males eating it most days, compared to 3% of females.
 - 54% of females and 43% of males have never smoked. 28% of males said they had given up smoking compared to 22% of females.
 - Men are heavier drinkers than women, with men appearing significantly more in all categories of drinking over 6 units of alcohol a week.

Community Safety

- 96% of males said they felt safe when walking outside during the day, compared to 89% of females. This dropped to 49% and 18% when asked about walking outside after dark.
- More males thought the level of crime had got better over the last three years, with a net result of -21% of females saying it had got better compared to -12% of males.
- 17% of females were satisfied with the levels of police patrols by marked vehicles; this dropped to 10% for males.

Gender Equality Scheme

Executive summary of BVPI Survey

Draft

The following data is from the 2006 BVPI General Survey. The data has been broken down by male and female, but it was not possible to carry out tests of statistical significance on the data. As a result, areas where there is 5% or more difference between male and female have been highlighted.

Summary of Results

Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning

- Females seem generally more satisfied with waste collection.
- Males are less satisfied than females in most areas of doorstep recycling.
- Males are again less satisfied most aspects of local recycling facilities, but are more satisfied in with many areas relating to the local tip.
- Females think that the keeping public land clear of litter and refuse has improved over the last three years; with 21% of females and 10% of males thinking it has improved.
- Females are also happier with improvements in collection of household waste (45% compared to 32%), local recycling facilities (46% compared to 36%);
- Despite the fact that males were less satisfied than females with, far more males think it has got better over the past three years (36% compared to 5% of females)

Community Safety

- Females feel more unsafe when outside in Stockton-on-Tees after dark. (A net of -37% females feel safe compared to -29% of males).
- Males are less satisfied that the Council has kept the land clear of litter and refuse with 55% of males compared to 66% of females stating they are happy.
- Males feel, more than females, that parents not taking responsibility for their children are a problem in their area (54% compared to 38% of females). Males also feel it is a problem that people are not treating other people with respect and consideration (28% compared to 17% of females).

Transport

- Females are less satisfied with the amount and accuracy of transport information.
- Fewer females said they had received or seen transport information on local transport services.
- Generally, females are less satisfied with all elements of the local bus service, with the largest difference in number of bus stops, whether buses arrive on time and the bus service overall.
- Females are larger users of local bus services.
- Females are more likely to think that road and pavement repair has worsened over the last three years.

Leisure and Culture

- Females are generally happier with leisure and culture facilities including sports and leisure facilities, libraries, museums and galleries and theatres and concert halls.
- More females (18%) have used sports and leisure facilities within the last six months (compared to 9% of males).
- Males are significantly more likely to visit museums and galleries once a month with 51% males and 7% of females visiting that frequently.
- More males have never used theatres and concert halls (27% compared to 22%).
- Females are also happier with improvements to sports and leisure facilities (5% compared to -5%); libraries (12% compared to 5%) and theatres and concert halls (-4% compared to -9%).

General Service Use

- Females are more satisfied with personal social services, the Fire and Rescue service and the Local Authority Education Service.
- The service user data shows there is a split in all areas between male and female usage. Males had used planning services more. Females had used housing, personal social services, fire and rescue services, the education service, transport services, environmental services and culture and recreational services.

Communication, Complaints and Decision Making

- Females feel better informed about how to pay bills, how to get involved in local decision making, how to complain about the Council and how well the Council is performing. However, males feel better informed about the standard of service they should expect from the Council and whether the Council is delivering on its promises.
- Males are far less satisfied with the way in which their complaints were handled with a net of -23% stating they are satisfied, compared to 4% of females.
- Females are more likely to contact the Council by telephone or email.
- More males felt that the staff were competent when they contacted the Council (60% compared to 54% of females)
- Females were more satisfied that with the opportunities for participation in local decision making provided by the Council and less males (-23%) felt that they could influence decision making than females (-17%)
- Females agreed more that the Council are making the local area a better place to live (50% compared to 39% of males), working to make the area safer (35% compared to 22% of males), working to make the area cleaner and greener (58% compared to 50% of males), is efficient and well run (31% compared to 17% of males), provides good value for money (13% compared to 1% of males), is trustworthy (30% compared to 25% of males), promotes the interests of local residents (14% compared to 6% of males) and acts on the concerns of the local residents (18% compared to 7% of males).

Gender Equality Scheme

Executive summary of Workforce Data

Draft

WORKFORCE GENDER PROFILE

- At any one time the Council employs approximately 8,500 employees, accounting for more than 9,400 contracts of employment. Approximately two-thirds of the workforce are female. This breakdown is not atypical for a Unitary Authority.
- Salary band by gender shows an over representation of female employees in the lowest salary band (up to 15k) and an under representation in the top band (45k +) (though this hasn't been adjusted to take account of full and part time working)
- More female employees work part time compared to male employees.
- More females are in the lowest salary bracket.
- At the upper end of the earning scale more men earn more than 45k compared than women.
- The breakdown of the total workforce between part time and full time employees by gender shows that women working part time make up almost half of the total workforce. Women also account for the vast majority of part time employees.
- Examples of job types that are predominantly held by men or women show there is scope for encouraging people of both sexes to consider working in non-traditional areas.
- The majority of casual staff are female.
- The majority of temporary staff are female.
- Females tend to have more days sickness than males.

Draft

Disability Action Plan
Gender Action Plan
Race Action Plan

Draft

Disability Action Plan

This action plan has been developed following discussions with disabled people. It details the key actions for disability that the council will take as part of achieving its overall equality objectives. The actions included in this action plan are also included in the council's service plans and Heads of Service will be held to account for their achievement through the council's performance management framework. Progress against the action plan will be reported annually.

For more information about the actions included in the plan, please contact the council's Diversity Team on 01642 528830 or diversity@stockton.gov.uk

Liveability

Equality objective - To provide a range of accessible environment, planning and housing services that meet the needs of local people		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Promote recycling and the refuse collection assistance service to disabled people	Head of Direct Services	Annual campaigns
Identify routes for actively promoting awareness of housing adaptations and Disabled Facility Grants	Head of Housing	March 2008
Involve service users in planning and remodelling their homes	Head of Housing	Ongoing
Ensure a range of accessible promotional materials are produced for housing schemes	Head of Housing	Ongoing
Develop a Housing Strategy for people with learning disabilities	Head of Housing	December 2007
Involve people with a disability in the development of the Local Development Framework	Head of Planning	December 2006

Involve people with a disability problem in the design stage of the new Billingham Town Centre	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	August 2007
Involve people with a disability problem through a steering group in the design stage of the Thornaby Pavilion and Library refurbishment	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	April 2007
Ensure that the design of the new leisure features of Billingham Forum meet the needs of disabled people and those with long term health problems	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	Summer 2008
Incorporate planning accessibility and disabled parking facilities into new projects	Head of Technical Services and Head of Planning	Ongoing

Equality objective - Promote community cohesion		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Promote participation in democratic processes by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling disabled people, parents and carers to get involved in partnership groups etc • Ensuring full accessibility of Polling Stations • Working in partnership with disability groups to produce Electoral Registration and voting materials in appropriate formats • Actively promoting electoral registration to disabled people 	All Heads of Service Head of Democratic Services Head of Democratic Services Head of Democratic Services	December 2006 ongoing May 2007 2007-2008 September 2007-2008 ongoing

Community Safety

Equality Objective - To provide a safe borough for all residents regardless of their age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender or disability		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Ensure disabled toilets are clean, accessible and vandalism is minimised	Head of Direct Services	Ongoing
Ensure all pedestrian crossings have facilities for disabled people (in line with targets for BVPI 165)	Head of Technical Services	Annually
Promote the offensive incident procedure	Head of Community Protection/ Head of Policy and Performance/ Head of Performance and Business Services Head of Housing	April 2007
Encourage landlords and agents to provide improved protection of their housing stock from burglary, particularly where burglary has occurred, and as part of the decent standards investment programmes		Ongoing
Work in partnership with other public sector agencies (e.g.	Head of Community Protection	Ongoing

Police and Fire) to deliver consistent, high quality community protection services for disabled people		through Safer Stockton Partnership
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Draft

Economic regeneration and transport

Equality objective – To remove barriers to training and employment ensuring equality of opportunity for all		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Identify barriers to training and employment using the results of the skills audit	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	Ongoing
Support business start-ups including enterprises created by disabled people	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	Ongoing

Equality objective - To ensure the transport network is accessible to all sections of the community		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Involve disability groups in transport planning	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing as part of LTP review
Continue expansion of cycle paths ensuring meets the needs of people with a disability or long term health problem	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing as part of LTP review
Provide Blue Badge scheme information in alternative formats	Head of Technical Services	September 2007
Maximise technology such as Real Time to provide up to date transport information	Head of Technical Services	In place Dec 2006 and ongoing
Implement new on-line booking system for Dial-a-Ride and review overall service in conjunction with disabled people	Head of Support Services	April 2008
Ensure wheelchair access is addressed by bus service	Head of Technical Services	Agenda for

providers using the Bus Quality Partnership		first meeting in 2007
Support the Bus Quality Partnership to secure national funding initiatives like Urban Bus Challenge and Kickstart	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing
Provide easy to understand transport information in accessible formats	Head of Technical Services	September 2007
Support Connect Tees Valley to secure funding to expand bus routes after 6pm (Easy Rider scheme)	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing
Conduct feasibility study around access to railways stations incorporating needs of disabled people	Head of Technical Services	March 2008
Improve pavement maintenance throughout the Borough	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing
Ensure all bus stops are accessible for disabled people	Head of Technical Services	By 2010

Healthier Communities and Adults

Equality objective - To promote and enable independent living		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Develop the Supporting People Service Inclusive Forum to promote user involvement in the development of services	Head of Adult Strategy	2007-8 ongoing
<p>Ensure disabled adult learners are not disadvantaged when registering or participating in adult learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the accessibility of information about adult learning opportunities e.g. providing materials in Braille or large print • Ensure accessibility of assessments for disabled adult learners • Improve access to learning areas provide full access to disabled people • Develop a wider range of entry level courses to promote independence 	Head of Adult Strategy	December 2006 ongoing
Implement recommendations of the Community Alarm Service review	Head of Adult Strategy	March 2007
Promote Direct Debit facility to disabled people	Head of Taxation and	March 2007

<p>Improve benefit claim processes by working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions</p>	<p>Administration Head of Housing</p>	<p>June 2007</p>
<p>Work with partner agencies to raise awareness that Council Tax bills and associated information is available in wide range of formats</p>	<p>Head of Taxation and Administration</p>	<p>June 2007</p>

Draft

Equality objective – to ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in cultural and leisure activities		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Provide support for learners with hearing difficulties, including older learners in exercise classes	Head of Adult Strategy	2006-7 ongoing
Review and revise ICT courses and learner support facilities	Head of Adult Strategy	2006-7 ongoing
Improve library services to disabled people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the VIP (Visually Impaired People's) library service and registering system Promote libraries as inclusive activity areas Raise awareness and promote the use of the read aloud software Liaise with RNIB to improve level of service for book users 	Head of Arts and Culture	March 2007 March 2008 March 2008 March 2007
Provide events information in all formats and promote use of the Internet for event listings	Head of Performance and Business Services	September 2007
Improve the accessibility of the borough's parks and open spaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review parks and countryside pathways network and 	Head of Direct Services	March 2010

<p>maintenance programme to maximise access to leisure facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve signage to indicate level of accessibility of pathways and that information boards are at a height accessible to wheelchair users• Provide regular rest points and benches on walkways• Provide accessible refreshment areas in Country Parks		
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Draft

Children and Young People

Equality objective – To promote the physical and mental health and well being of all children and young people		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Review care pathways for ADHD to identify clear referral routes for services	Head of Children's Strategy	December 2007
Review services for children with complex needs	Head of School Effectiveness	December 2007
Improve access to services for young people aged 16-25 with mental health problems that are also able to support young people with dual diagnosis	Heads of Strategy (Children and Adults)	March 2009 and ongoing

Equality Objective - To ensure that children and young people are not subject to bullying, accidental or deliberate harm because of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion, or any other reason		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Develop and implement anti-bullying strategy	Head of School Effectiveness	April 2007

Draft

Equality Objective - To provide children and young people with an inclusive environment that enables them to enjoy and achieve		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Develop and implement Play Strategy	Head of Children's Strategy and Head of Direct Services	Develop April 2007 Implement March 2010
Develop and commission new inclusive youth services	Head of Children's Strategy	December 2007
Develop systems for tracking progress of disabled pupils	Head of School Effectiveness	March 2007 and ongoing

Equality Objective - To enable children and young people to make a positive contribution to an inclusive and cohesive society		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Increase involvement of disabled children and young people through further development of the PIC (Participation, involvement and consultation) network and the promotion of Stockton Youth Voice	Head of Children's Strategy	March 2008 ongoing
Further develop the involvement of parents and carers in service development and delivery and community life in general	Head of Children's Strategy	March 2008 ongoing
Promote and develop use of direct payments for children and young people with a disability	Head of Children's Strategy	March 2008 ongoing

Equality Objective - To enable children and young people to achieve economic well being through access to equal opportunities in training and employment		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Divert potential offenders and reintegrated offenders into society through appropriate education and employment	Head of Children's Operations	Part of annual service delivery plans for YOS/Connexions

Draft

Organisational Effectiveness

Equality Objective - To ensure our employment policies and practice are fair and equitable		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Re-launch Dignity at Work procedure	Head of Human Resources	December 2006
Ensure emergency evacuation procedures are identified for all staff	Head of Human Resources and Head of Policy and Performance	June 2007
Develop policy on collecting equality information about employees and elected members	Head of Human Resources	December 2007
Ensure that recruitment materials are available in all formats and needs are met at interview	Head of Human Resources	August 2007
Review Equality related Human Resources Policies (format, application and effectiveness). Stage 1 to review disability related policies	Head of Human Resources	May 2007(stage 1) October 2007
Promote flexible working approaches within absence management procedure	Head of Human Resources	August 2008

Equality Objective - To effectively consult and involve all sections of the community		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Publish a revised Consultation Strategy / Framework including how to effectively consult with disabled people	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Provide consultation materials in a range of accessible formats including maximising the use of E-based facilities	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Continue to train council and partner employees in effective consultation techniques that take account of the needs of disabled people	Head of Policy and Performance	Ongoing
Ensure Viewpoint and Youth Viewpoint are representative and encourage the involvement of disabled people in the full range of panel activities	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2008
Establish Disability Advisory Group to inform and shape policy development and service provision	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Investigate demand for a Disabled Employee Forum	Head of Human Resources and Head of Policy and Performance	April 2008

Equality Objective - To provide strong leadership which enables the principles of equality to be embedded across the Council		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Roll out approach to Equality Impact Assessments	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007 and ongoing
Ensure Equality and Diversity is embedded within the Council's revised organisational values and new competency framework	Corporate Management Team	April 2007
Develop and roll out Equality and Diversity training programme for officers and elected members, including a focus on disability issues	Head of Policy and Performance and Head of Human Resources	June 2007 and ongoing

Equality Objective - To improve the accessibility of our services to all residents and employees		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Provide access to face to face interpretation, transcription and translation services for all departments	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Carry out a second audit of the accessibility of council buildings in conjunction with Disability Advisory Group	Head of Operational Finance	December 2007
Launch and roll out Interpretation, Translation and Transcription service	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Review and develop Internet and Intranet facilities to maximise accessibility	Head of Information and Communications Technology	September 2007 ongoing
Improve signage to ensure it is well positioned, in an appropriate font size and is well illuminated	All Heads of Service	March 2009
Revise the Customer First criteria in consultation with the Disability Advisory Group	Head of Performance and Business Services	December 2007
Ensure microphone and hearing loop systems are working at all reception points	All Heads of Service	April 2007

Review public evacuation procedures for all buildings	Head of Human Resources	April 2007
Ensure all food provided caters for a range of dietary requirements and is clearly labelled	Head of Direct Services	December 2007

Draft

Race Equality Action Plan

Draft

This race action plan has been developed following:

- **Consultation via Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council BME viewpoint panel - Annex 1**
- **Consultation with Parkfield & Mill Lane BME forum, Harmi Awaaz - Annex 2**

It highlights in detail the key actions that the council will take as part of achieving its overall equality objectives in and around the issues of Race and Faith. The actions included in this action plan are also included in the council's service plans and Heads of Service will be held to account for their achievement through the council's performance management framework. Progress against the action plan will be reported annually by the responsible services.

In practice, this will mean making sure that the general and specific duties of the 'Race Relations Amendments Act' of 1976 is central to the way we carry out any business or function.

Liveability

Equality objective - To provide a range of accessible environment, planning and housing services that meet the needs of local people.		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Promote recycling and the refuse collection assistance service to BME communities	Head of Direct Services	Ongoing
Identify routes for actively promoting awareness of housing services to the BME communities	Head of Housing	March 2008
Involve service users in planning and remodelling their homes	Head of Housing	Ongoing
Ensure a range of accessible promotional materials are produced for housing schemes	Head of Housing	Ongoing
Develop and integrate an action plan into the Housing Strategy to meet the needs of our BME communities	Head of Housing	December 2007
Ensure that we are complying with the statutory CRE code of practice on racial equality in housing	Head of Housing	March 2008

<p>Involvement of BME communities at the design stage of new developments</p> <p>Ensure that staff at all levels have undergone race, faith, belief and diversity training</p> <p>Ensure that frontline staff have attended telephone interpretation training</p>	<p>Head of Regeneration and Economic Development</p> <p>All Heads of Service</p> <p>All Heads of Service</p>	<p>Ongoing up to March 2010</p> <p>Phased over 3 years up to March 2010</p> <p>All 1st 2nd and 3rd tier officers by March 2008</p> <p>March 2008</p>
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Equality objective - To promote more cohesive communities.		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Promote participation in democratic processes by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering and enabling people from BME communities to actively get involved in partnership groups (e.g. Stockton's BME Network). • Ensuring full accessibility of Polling Stations for local residents whose first language is not English. • Ensure Election staff are trained in using the telephone interpretation service. • Work in partnership with BME groups to produce Electoral Registration and voting materials in community languages. • Actively promote electoral registration to BME communities. 	All Heads of Service	Ongoing up to March 2010
	Head of Democratic Services	May 2007
	Head of Democratic Services	March 2007
	Head of Democratic Services	March 2008
	Head of Democratic Services	March 2008

Community Safety

Equality Objective - To provide a safe borough for all residents regardless of their age, ethnicity, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender or disability		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Continue to develop & promote the borough offensive incidents procedures in partnership with Cleveland police	Head of Community Protection/ Head of Policy and Performance/ Head of Performance and Business Services	March 2008

Economic regeneration and transport

Equality objective – To remove barriers to training and employment ensuring equality of opportunity for all		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Identify barriers to training and employment using the results of the skills audit.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	Ongoing to March 2010
Support business start-ups including enterprises created by BME communities.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	March 2008
Examine the Council's approach to recruitment, identifying possible positive action initiatives.	Head of Human resources	March 2008

Equality objective - To ensure the transport network is accessible to all sections of the community		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Involve BME communities in transport planning.	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing LTP review
Provide Blue Badge scheme information in alternative formats and languages.	Head of Technical Services	September 2007
Improve accessibility of transport information:	Head of Technical Services	December 2006 –
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ maximise technology such as Real Time to provide up to date transport information. ▪ provide easy to understand transport information in alternative formats & Languages. 		Ongoing Ongoing
Conduct feasibility study around access to railway stations, incorporating needs of BME communities.	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing LTP review September 2007

Healthier Communities and Adults

Equality objective - To promote and enable independent living		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
<p>Supporting People Programme to establish & develop an 'Equality & Diversity' development group, then</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure a fair access policy is in place for people who are eligible for existing SP services (especially BME groups) ▪ Undertake needs mapping of BME groups in relation to the need for supported living services (to develop awareness of the needs of vulnerable people from BME groups) ▪ Identify gaps in service provision to meet the need for culturally sensitive supported housing service provision for people from BME groups 	Head of Adult Strategy	<p>June 2007</p> <p>March 2008</p> <p>Ongoing to March 2009</p> <p>Ongoing to March 2009</p>
<p>Maximise the use of libraries and promote their services for BME communities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing promotional facilities and functions e.g. meetings rooms, display spaces, ▪ Internet access ▪ Book Bus service to residential homes & day centres 	Head of Arts and Culture	Ongoing to 2010

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ housebound service and hospital library service▪ Encouraging BME participation in the Library Link		
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Draft

Equality objective – to ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in cultural and leisure activities		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
<p>Improve accessibility of adult education provision for BME communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide separate race / gender specific provision for learners where appropriate • Review and revise ICT courses and learner support facilities • Ensure that members of BME communities are not disadvantaged when registering or participating in adult learning activities • Improve the accessibility of information about adult learning opportunities e.g. providing materials in different languages and formats • Set up a system whereby officers and Tutors can access a telephone interpretation service 	Head of Adult Strategy	Ongoing March 2007 -2010

<p>To support the growth, participation in and creative development of SIRF Community Carnival.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden the range of individuals and groups involved, specifically with regard to reflecting the cultural diversity within the communities of Stockton <p>Promote the accessibility of the borough's events, parks and open spaces to BME communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote good relations between different racial groups using faith resource packages, cultural, educational and literary events • Provide events information in a variety of formats / languages and promote the use of the internet. • Review parks and countryside pathways network and maintenance programme to maximise access to leisure facilities. 	<p>Head of Arts and Culture</p> <p>Head of Arts and Culture</p> <p>Head of Arts and Culture</p> <p>Head of Arts and Culture / Head of Performance and Business Services</p> <p>Head of Direct Services</p>	<p>Carnival Arts Strategy and action plan implemented 2007 – 2009.</p> <p>March 2007- 2009</p>
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<p>Increase access and participation levels in leisure activities amongst under-represented groups, including young and old, disabled, girls and women and those people from BME Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a pilot programme to increase participation of under represented groups, including BME communities ▪ Identify and access barriers for under represented groups of people with low participation levels in sports and leisure 	<p>Head of Regeneration & Head of Performance and Business Services</p>	<p>March 2008</p> <p>March 2009</p>
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Children and Young People

Equality objective – To promote the physical and mental health and well being of all children and young people		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Implement key actions of “Be Healthy” theme of Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) with due regard to the needs of young BME residents.	Head of Children & Young People Strategy	CYPP being updated for 2007-2010

Equality Objective - To ensure that children and young people are not subject to bullying, accidental or deliberate harm because of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion, or any other reason		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Review anti-bullying strategy and develop an action plan, which takes account of the needs of children & young people from BME communities.	Head of School Effectiveness	Action Plan to be drawn up for 2008/09
Review offensive incident reporting mechanisms in schools	Head of School Effectiveness	By July 2008

Equality Objective - To provide children and young people with an inclusive environment that enables them to enjoy and achieve		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Develop and implement Play Strategy.	Head of Children's Strategy and Head of Direct Services	Strategy developed by summer 2007; action plan implemented during 2008.
Establish Integrated Youth Support Service as part of roll-out of the Integrated Service Area project.	Head of Children's Strategy	July 2008.
Track the progress of BME pupils as part of school monitoring procedures.	Head of School Effectiveness	As part of annual cycle of school performance review.
Raise achievement and continue improvements in educational attainment across key stages for all children, including black minority ethnic groups and hard to reach children.	Head of School Effectiveness	As part of annual cycle of school performance review.

Equality Objective - To enable children and young people to make a positive contribution to an inclusive and cohesive society		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Increase involvement of BME children and young people through further development of the PIC (Participation, involvement and consultation) network and the promotion of Stockton Youth Voice.	Head of Children's Strategy	As part of CYPP activity 2007-2010
Further develop the involvement of BME parents in service development and delivery and community life in general.	Head of Children's Strategy	March 2007-2010

Equality Objective - To enable young people to achieve economic well being through access to equal opportunities in training and employment		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Increase the level of young BME residents leaving school who access further education, employment and training.	CESC / Connexions	Annual review of Connexions business plan.

Organisational Effectiveness

Equality Objective - To ensure our employment policies and practice are fair and equitable		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Re-launch Dignity at Work procedure.	Head of Human Resources	December 2006
Develop a strategy / action plan to recruit & retain people from BME communities into the workforce.	Head of Human Resources	March 2008
Where reading and writing in English are not essential requirements of the job, ensure that recruitment materials can be accessed in different languages / formats to meet the needs of applicants.	Head of Human Resources	August 2007
Develop a policy on collecting equality information about employees and elected members in line with the Race Relations Amendment Act.	Head of Human Resources	December 2007

Equality Objective - To effectively consult and involve all sections of the community		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Publish a revised Consultation Strategy / Framework including how to effectively consult with BME communities.	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Provide consultation materials and methodology in a range of accessible formats and languages	Head of Policy and Performance	Ongoing
Continue to train council and partner employees in effective consultation techniques that take account of the needs of BME communities.	Head of Policy and Performance	Ongoing
Ensure Viewpoint and Youth Viewpoint are representative and encourage the involvement of BME residents in the full range of panel activities.	Head of Policy and Performance	August 2007
Undertake a feasibility study for a BME Employee & partners forum.	Head of Human Resources and Head of Policy and Performance	August 2008

Equality Objective - To provide strong leadership which enables the principles of equality to be embedded across the Council		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Roll out approach to Equality Impact Assessments.	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007 and then ongoing
Ensure Equality and Diversity is embedded within the Council's revised organisational values and new competency framework.	Corporate Management Team	April 2007
Develop and deliver Equality and Diversity training programme for officers and elected members, including a focus on race, faith, belief & community cohesion issues.	Head of Human Resources / Head of Policy and Performance	June 2007

Equality Objective - To improve the accessibility of our services to all residents		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Provide access to face to face and telephone interpretation, transcription and translation services for all departments.	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Roll out telephone interpretation, translation and transcription service.	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Review and develop Internet and Intranet facilities to maximise accessibility through a variety of different sources.	Head of Information and Communications Technology Head of Direct Services	Ongoing March 2008
Ensure all food provided caters for a range of dietary / diversity requirements		

Gender Action Plan

This action plan has been developed following analysis of survey data from employees and service users. It details the key actions relating to gender that the council will take as part of achieving its overall equality objectives. The actions included in this action plan are also included in the council's service plans and Heads of Service will be held to account for their achievement through the council's performance management framework. Progress against the action plan will be reported annually.

In data analysis there were some differences between male and female satisfaction in individual services. However, key themes coming through showed that although males were happier with Stockton as a place to live and had more pride in their area; females were generally happier with the way the Council runs the Borough and delivers services. The action plan encourages all services to better tailor their services to service users; it should follow that males become more satisfied with the way the Council runs the Borough.

Liveability

Equality objective - To provide a range of accessible environment, planning and housing services that meet the needs of local people		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Investigate and address gender differences in the take up of and satisfaction with direct services including recycling and environmental services.	Head of Direct Services	Ongoing
Investigate and address gender differences in the take up of and satisfaction with housing services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routes for actively promoting awareness of housing services, • involvement of service users in planning, improving and remodelling their homes, • providing a range of accessible promotional materials are produced for housing schemes, considering different ways males and females access information 	Head of Housing	June 2007 Ongoing Ongoing
Investigate and address gender requirements at the planning and design stage of regeneration and development projects	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	Ongoing to March 2010

Draft

Equality objective - Promote community cohesion		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Encourage and promote local men and women to participate and influence local decision making by utilising all available opportunities.	Head of Democratic Services	April 2008
Empower local men and women to become involved in democratic processes which affect the Borough	Head of Democratic Services	April 2008
Develop a sense of belonging and community cohesion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate why males feel more pride in their local area, • why females have a stronger sense of belonging to Stockton-on-Tees • and why females have a stronger identity with England and Wales/Britain, then integrate findings into Stockton Renaissance's Community Cohesion Strategy.	Head of Policy and Performance	June 2007

Economic regeneration and transport

Equality objective – To remove barriers to training and employment ensuring equality of opportunity for all		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Identify gender related barriers to training and employment using the results of the skills audit	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	Ongoing to March 2010
Support business start-ups, including encouraging more females to go into business	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	March 2008

Equality objective - To ensure the transport network is accessible to all sections of the community		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Involve all groups in transport planning, with consideration given to the different ways males and females use transport and transport information.	Head of Technical Services	Ongoing as part of LTP consultation
As part of the overall car park review, investigate why males are less satisfied with car parks.	Head of Technical Services	December 2008

Healthier Communities and Adults

Equality objective - To promote and enable independent living		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Develop the Supporting People Service Inclusive Forum to promote user involvement in the development of services and ensure an equal gender balance.	Head of Adult Strategy	2007-8 ongoing
Investigate the reasons for the differences in perceptions between males and females relating to support services for elderly people	Head of Adult Strategy	2008-9
Investigate possible barriers to male use of personal social services.	Head of Adult Strategy	2008-9
Work with partner agencies to raise awareness that Council Tax bills and associated information is available in wide range of formats, being mindful of the different ways male and female receive information.	Head of Taxation and Administration	August 2007

Equality objective – to ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in cultural and leisure activities		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
As part of the review of library services, develop a differentiated service which addresses the differing needs of male and female users.	Head of Arts and Culture	April 2008
Investigate what males and females want from events, with a particular view bringing male satisfaction in line with female satisfaction.	Head of Performance and Business Services	December 2009 via ongoing user satisfaction surveys
Parks and open spaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review parks and countryside pathways network and maintenance programme to maximise access to leisure facilities • consult to form an action plan to bring female satisfaction in line with male 	Head of Direct Services	September 2008
Carry out an impact assessment on the draft leisure strategy, to include considering male and female use of and satisfaction with leisure centres, sports facilities and swimming pools.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development	December 2008
		May 2007

Investigate male and female use of museums and galleries with a view to increasing female use and male satisfaction.

Head of Arts and Culture

Understand the drivers for differing use and satisfaction by 2008

Draft

Children and Young People

Equality objective – To promote the physical and mental health and well being of all children and young people		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Implement the key actions of the “Be Healthy” theme of Children and Young People’s (CYPP) with due regard to the needs of boys and girls.	Head of Children’s Strategy	CYPP being updated for 2007-2010

Equality Objective - To ensure that children and young people are not subject to bullying, accidental or deliberate harm because of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion, or any other reason		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Review anti-bullying strategy and develop an action plan, which takes into account the different forms of bullying experienced by boys and girls	Head of School Effectiveness	August 2007

Equality Objective - To provide children and young people with an inclusive environment that enables them to enjoy and achieve		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Develop and implement Play Strategy	Head of Children's Strategy and Head of Direct Services	March 2010
Establish Integrated Youth Support Service as part of the roll out of the integrated Service Area project.	Head of Children's Strategy	July 2008
Work to narrow achievement gaps in schools	Head of School Effectiveness	Ongoing with milestones in September
Improve access to play and activities for children and young people	Head of Children's Strategy	March 2008
The Youth Service will promote a broad youth work curriculum, which is appealing to both females and males	Head of Children's Operations	March 2008

Equality Objective - To enable children and young people to make a positive contribution to an inclusive and cohesive society		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Increase involvement of children and young people through further development of the PIC (Participation, Involvement and Consultation) network and the promotion of Stockton Youth Voice ensuring an appropriate gender balance.	Head of Children's Strategy	March 2008 ongoing
Further develop the involvement of parents and carers in service development and delivery and community life in general.	Head of Children's Strategy	March 2008 ongoing
Encourage family learning for all, to ensure males are as involved as females in their children's education	Head of Adult Strategy	2009-2010

Equality Objective - To enable children and young people to achieve economic well being through access to equal opportunities in training and employment		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Divert potential offenders away from negative behaviours and into society through appropriate education and employment	Head of Children's Operations	Part of annual service delivery plans for YOT/ Connexions

Draft

Organisational Effectiveness

Equality Objective - To ensure our employment policies and practice are fair and equitable		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Develop policy on collecting equality information about employees and elected members	Head of Human Resources	June 2007
Ensure that recruitment materials are available in all formats and needs are met at interview	Head of Human Resources	August 2007
Review Equality related Human Resources Policies (format, application and effectiveness).	Head of Human Resources	October 2007(stage 1)
Develop and promote flexible working approaches including those that will impact on absence management	Head of Human Resources	August 2008

Equality Objective - To ensure our employment policies and practice are fair and equitable		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Finalise new pay and grading structure	Head of Finance	March 2008
Carry out regular equalities audits (including equal pay reviews) and implement actions.	Head of Human Resources	Ongoing
Evaluate new posts in relation to equal pay	Head of Human Resources	Ongoing
Provide regular management and monitoring information in relation to equalities.	Head of Human Resources	Ongoing
Review and develop Recruitment and Retention Strategy	Head of Human Resources	March 2008
Promote the training and development programme across the workforce to redress gender imbalances in access and perception.	Head of Human Resources	April 2007 and annually thereafter
Investigate any gender imbalances in disciplinary and grievance cases by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing robust data collection • Investigating the reasons behind any gender 	Head of Human Resources	October 2007 March 2008

imbalances

- Addressing any gender imbalances

Investigating any gender imbalances in internal communications by:

- Further analysing existing data
- Investigating the reasons behind any gender imbalances
- Addressing any gender imbalances

Reinvigorating the “Improving Working Lives” group to consider work / life balance and effectively communicate the outcomes of the work to all staff.

Assistant Chief Executive

Head of Human Resources

From April 2008

March 2008

April 2007

Equality Objective - To effectively consult and involve all sections of the community		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Publish a revised Consultation Strategy / Framework including how to target males / females	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Provide consultation materials in a range of accessible formats including maximising the use of E-based facilities	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007
Continue to train council and partner employees in effective consultation techniques that take account of the differing needs of men and women	Head of Policy and Performance	Ongoing
Ensure Viewpoint and Youth Viewpoint are representative in terms of gender and encourage the involvement of males in a full range of panel initiatives	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2008
Carry out research to improve communications with all sections with the community considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ways males and females access information formats that appeal to males, specifically in relation to Stockton News the ways males and females like to get involved 	Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Policy and Performance	March 2008
Ensure all sections of the community are involved in Council work and have the opportunity to influence decisions, with a specific focus on involving males.	All Heads of Service	Ongoing

Equality Objective - To provide strong leadership which enables the principles of equality to be embedded across the Council		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Roll out approach to Equality Impact Assessments	Head of Policy and Performance	April 2007 and ongoing
Ensure Equality and Diversity is embedded within the Council's revised organisational values and new competency framework	Corporate Management Team	April 2007
Develop and roll out Equality and Diversity training programme for managers, officers and elected members.	Head of Policy and Performance and Head of Human Resources	June 2007 and ongoing
Following the publication of the EOC guidance on procurement, the Corporate Procurement Working Group will review the Council's approach to procurement priorities in light of equality legislation.	Head of Finance	December 2008

Equality Objective - To improve the accessibility of our services to all residents and employees		
Key Actions	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?
Increase satisfaction with the way complaints are dealt with, whilst also addressing the observed gender imbalance	All Heads of Service	Ongoing
Consider use of communication technology and how users want to contact services.	Head of Taxation and Administration	September 2007
All services to increase their understanding of how residents use their services, and tailor services to meet needs	All Heads of Service	Ongoing