

Waverley Borough Council  
Corporate Equality Scheme 2009-2011

Equal Life Chances for  
All



31 March 2009

# Contents

Foreword .....	3
Executive Summary .....	4
1. Introduction.....	6
1.1 What do we mean by Equality? .....	6
1.2 What do we mean by Diversity?.....	7
1.3 Publication of the Scheme in different languages and formats .....	7
2. Managing and measuring progress on equality .....	8
2.1 Adapting our existing structures.....	8
Our strategies and policies .....	8
Our staff and culture .....	8
Our partnerships.....	9
2.2 Managing progress on Equalities and Diversity .....	10
How we will manage our progress.....	10
Critical Partners .....	10
2.3 Year on year improvement – The Waverley approach .....	11
Step 1 – Equality Impact Assessment.....	12
Step 2 – Reality check.....	13
Step 3 – Planning and Financing .....	13
Step 4 – Monitoring .....	13
2.4 The Equality Standard for Local Government .....	14
3. Delivering Equalities .....	15
3.1 Knowing our community – equality mapping .....	15
3.2 Place-shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment.....	16
3.3 Community Engagement and satisfaction .....	17
3.4 Responsive services and customer care .....	18
3.5 A modern and diverse workforce .....	19
4. Conclusion .....	20
List of annexes .....	21

## Foreword

Waverley is one of the best places in the country to live and work – a recent survey told us that 86% of Waverley residents are satisfied with life in the Borough. We are committed to improving this even further by improving the many public services that we provide to our residents, and by preserving and enhancing Waverley's beautiful and precious environment. We set out how we plan to do this in our Corporate Plan for 2008-2011 – *Town and Countryside Together*.

Despite the general strength of our local area, there are still some residents who experience barriers and discrimination in playing an equal part in the life of the Borough. The Borough Council has a key role in addressing these barriers and creating a fairer and more cohesive Borough. The challenge for us is to ensure that all who live and work here contribute to and share in the ongoing success of the Borough, and that we consider everyone's needs when we act. We are passionate about ensuring that all who live and work in the Borough have equal life chances.

This Corporate Equality Scheme sets out how we intend to do this.



Richard Gates, Leader of the Council



Mary Orton, Chief Executive

## Executive Summary

This Corporate Equality Scheme sets out Waverley Borough Council's approach to ensuring equal life chances for all, in service delivery, community shaping and developing, and in employment matters. This means ensuring that Waverley goes beyond simply meeting its statutory responsibilities. Instead, we are seeking to ensure that equality and diversity are a key part of all that we do as a Council.

With the range of measures in place, and with the publication of this Scheme, we are self-certifying ourselves as having met level 2 (emerging) status of the Equality Standard for Local Government. We are committed to achieving level 3 status within the life of this plan; by March 2011. This will be the equivalent of level 2 (Achieving) status in the draft Equality Framework for Local Government, which is due to be implemented during 2009/10.

Our approach mirrors the five strands of the revised framework:

- Knowing your community – equality mapping:
  - We are stepping up our approach to information gathering, ensuring we have a robust understanding of our communities and their needs.
- Place-shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment:
  - We are taking a strong lead on ensuring equal life chances for all, both internally and in our role at the heart of the life of the Borough.
- Community engagement and satisfaction
  - We are moving towards a model where representatives of minority groups are key partners in designing and delivering our approach to ensuring equal life chances for all
- Responsive services and customer care
  - We are constantly seeking to ensure that we are responsive to the needs of our community and that our services are delivered responsibly and sensitively.
- A modern and diverse workforce:
  - We are ensuring that all of our staff and councillors are aware of their responsibility to promote equal life chances for all, and taking steps to ensure that our workforce is reflective of the community it serves.

Promoting and guaranteeing equality and diversity is a high priority for Waverley Borough Council. The Chief Executive has personal responsibility for leading on this, and chairs the Corporate Equality Group.

We are reviewing all of our community strategies and partnership arrangements to ensure that they reach the highest standards for equality and diversity, and regularly undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) for each of our service

areas. We have also completely refreshed our employment policies to ensure that all Waverley employees are aware of their responsibilities and work in an environment where everyone is valued regardless of their background.

Understanding the needs of our community means that we need to get our community involved in our management and monitoring process. We have therefore designed an innovative call-in process for our EQIAs – putting our communities in charge of monitoring and managing our progress. They decide which services we should focus our attention on, and how we are performing.

Ensuring that we keep on top of equalities and diversity means constantly reassessing our progress and refining our approach where necessary. This is a fluid document, but we will refresh it completely and relaunch it in Spring 2011. This will allow us to develop it alongside our next Corporate Plan – placing our approach to equalities and diversity at the heart of corporate objective-setting exercise.

This Scheme also comprises our statutory race, disability and gender equality schemes. These have been refreshed and republished as annexes to this document. The publication of this new, overarching Scheme does not mean that our commitment to any of these themes is downgraded in any way. On the contrary, we believe that the publication of the Corporate Equality Scheme shows our commitment to pressing forward with renewed commitment in all areas of potential inequality.

We recognise that documents such as this can often contain many warm words, but little by way of real commitment to action. That is why we have annexed our draft action plan for 2009/2011, which sets out what we intend to do over the next two years. As well as a commitment to action at a corporate level, we will also ensure that each service level EQIA includes a SMART action plan. As we move through the period of this Corporate Equality Scheme, we will also be developing a strong set of targets and objectives to help us monitor how effectively we are delivering on our key equalities objectives – to create equal life chances for all.

# 1. Introduction

Diversity is an important part of everyday life in Waverley. We value this diversity greatly and are keen to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged unfairly by their age, gender, race, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation. This Corporate Equality Scheme makes a top-level commitment to taking forward actions that will enable Waverley Borough Council to achieve our aspiration of "Equal Life Chances for All". It incorporates our statutory Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes and our commitment to meet all of our statutory equalities duties.

This Corporate Equality Scheme sets out our approach to placing equality at the heart of every service and strategy of the Council, and how we intend to monitor our progress in first developing our structures, and then actually delivering real improvements in life chances.

The Scheme is a live document, which will be developed and updated through the course of the next two years. We will launch a new scheme alongside our new Corporate Plan in April 2011.

## 1.1 What do we mean by Equality?

Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. In practice, this often means ensuring that all people achieve equal outcomes, either in the standard of service they receive or as employees. It is not about treating everyone in the same way, but recognising that individuals have different needs, which may need to be met in different ways.

Equality covers the six areas recognised by law – Race, Gender, Disability, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation and Age. These strands are not mutually exclusive, and some people may face obstacles for more than one reason. Many also face discrimination or obstacles for reasons outside of this list. An awareness of these issues must permeate all that we do, so that we treat people as individuals, with individual needs.

In some instances, delivering equality may mean breaking down unfair barriers and discrimination. In other instances, it may simply mean changing the way we deliver services to make them more accessible for all – we view this as very much a matter of good service delivery.

However, delivering equality means more than just tackling areas of concern. We are increasingly focussing our attention on how we can use our services, and our Borough-wide influence, to proactively promote equalities and heighten

others' understanding of the needs and aspirations of people from every background.

## **1.2 What do we mean by Diversity?**

Diversity among our citizens, service-users and employees is not limited to the six statutory equalities strands; it also includes educational background, geographical location, marital status, class and work experience to name a few. A positive attitude to diversity embraces these differences as a valuable part of our society and as an opportunity to learn from others and improve our performance.

We are continually striving to ensure that all of our employees are accepted for their cultural backgrounds and differences in lifestyles, and are recognised for their abilities and skills to do the work.

As key place-shapers we are also in a position to influence the life and culture of our Borough, and ensure that diversity is valued by all. To ensure that we achieve this, diversity is at the heart of our organisation and integrated into all daily Council business.

## **1.3 Publication of the Scheme in different languages and formats**

In line with The RNIB's *clear print* good practice guidance, this document is written in 12-point font. Large print or audio versions are available on request.

In line with CLG's Guidance for Local Authorities on Translation of Publications (December 2007) we have considered carefully whether this material should be translated automatically into other languages. That guidance recommends that councils ask initially whether there is evidence of a need or demand for this translation. In our consideration on this, we noted that in excess of 95% of our resident population are White or White British. Only 1.11% of our resident population moved into the area from outside the UK, and a significant proportion of that number originated from English-speaking countries. Furthermore, our service-level surveys indicate that there is an extremely low level of residents who do not speak English. For these reasons, and in line with government guidance, we do not intend to automatically translate this document into other languages. However, given that the focus of this document is on equal opportunities, we are keen to provide translated versions of this document to any Waverley resident who requests it.

## **2. Managing and measuring progress on equality**

### **2.1 Adapting our existing structures**

#### **Our strategies and policies**

The Council's overarching vision and priorities for the period 2008-2011 are set out in our Corporate Plan – Town and Countryside together. Our priorities are:

- Environment: Protecting and enhancing Waverley's unique mix of rural and urban communities
- Improving lives: Improving the quality of life for all, particularly the more vulnerable, within our society
- Subsidised Affordable Housing: Working for more affordable housing to be built and managing Council housing well
- Leisure: Improving and supporting opportunities for all to take part in sport, recreation and culture
- Value for Money: Ensuring all activities are customer focussed and provide good value for money

With this Corporate Equality Scheme, we are signalling our commitment to ensuring that equalities issues are placed at the heart of all we do as a Council. The structures and policies we put in place to ensure that all have equal life chances will be based on this principle – we are not seeking to 'bolt-on' equalities onto our existing structures, policies and practices, but to make equalities a central part of everything we do.

As a Council we produce a range of plans and strategies. During the life of this Scheme, we will review all of our existing policies and strategies to ensure that they take account of equalities issues. In addition, all new policies and strategies will be developed with the benefit of an Equality Impact Assessment.

#### **Our staff and culture**

Waverley Borough Council was recognised as one of the best councils to work for in the Times 2008 'Best Councils to Work For' awards, and we retained our IIP accreditation with a glowing report. But we recognise that we must still do more to improve. Our employees need to be personally committed to the agenda



for it to make any difference to how we act. All new members of staff and Councillors already undertake mandatory Equalities and Diversity training and we have made a number of significant steps in the last few months:

- Running an equal pay audit (completed in 2008, with the results of the review due to be rolled out in 2009/10)
- Commissioning an accessibility audit of our main Godalming office, and of the public areas of our Farnham and Haslemere offices (completed during 2008)
- Setting aside a prayer and contemplation room for use by staff in our Godalming office (established during 2008)
- Running in depth training for senior and middle-managers on equality impact assessments (first round of training completed during 2007, with further training scheduled for 2009/10)

We have set out our plans for improving our employment and training in section 3.5.

## **Our partnerships**

The Council is central to partnerships with many other organisations within the Borough, in Surrey and beyond. We see efficiencies and strength in working together in partnership with other public bodies to: -

- develop policies;
- share initiatives; and
- promote equality and diversity.

The primary partnership in Waverley is the Waverley Strategic Partnership (WaSP). The Terms of Reference for the WaSP Board, established in September 2008, guarantee the inclusion of an older people's representative, a younger people's representative and a faith representative. A representative of the Waverley Disability Forum also attends the meetings at the invitation of Waverley Borough Council. We continually re-visit the groups involved in order that we can meet the needs of all the equality strands.

We are active participants in local equality networks including the Surrey Equality and Diversity Network (SuDEN) and the South West Surrey Partnership Board for Disabilities.

We will also promote equality and diversity issues outside of the public sector through our participation in private sector networks including the Waverley Business Forum, the local Chambers of Commerce and Town Initiatives.

Many of our services are delivered using external contractors, and it is vital that these companies, and the people who work for them, display the same

commitment to equal life chances for all that we do. We already include a clear commitment to this in our procurement policy, which is annexed to this Scheme, but we will do more to make sure our contractors, and those who receive significant grants from us, take this issue seriously. To this end, we have recently undertaken an audit of our existing major contracts to ensure that our contractors comply with our equality and diversity standards. We will continue this process through the period of this Scheme, guaranteeing that all new contractors taken on by Waverley from April 2009 comply with these standards.

## **2.2 Managing progress on Equalities and Diversity**

### **How we will manage our progress**

We are committed to ensuring that equalities and diversity is at the heart of all we do as a Council. To this end we have established a management structure for equalities that covers every level of the council, from the very top to service level.

The Council is led by **the Executive**, comprising the Leader and nine other councillors. One member of the Executive is responsible for leading on equality and diversity issues. All major policies and projects that are taken to Executive detail the equality and diversity implications of what is being proposed.

**The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**, made up of Elected Members, has responsibility for scrutinising the Council's progress through the Equality Standard, and for ensuring that equality targets across the Council are met.

**The Corporate Equality Group**, chaired by the Chief Executive, maintains an officer oversight of the Council's progress through the Equality Standard, and monitors overall progress in achieving equal life chances for all, as measured through our emerging corporate equality targets. This group is accountable for ensuring implementation of this Corporate Equality Scheme and provides a link to the Executive Management Team of the Council. Membership includes officers from each directorate, and a cross section of staff grades and backgrounds.

Each service area has an **Equality Task Team** responsible for overseeing and monitoring progress on equalities issues. These groups manage the annual Equality Impact Assessment process and monitor progress against emerging service level equality targets and objectives.

### **Critical Partners**

Despite our best efforts, we cannot understand entirely the needs of different groups of people without hearing their voice. We have therefore created a series of external critical partner groups. They have each been charged with:

- Keeping us informed about the barriers facing the people that group represents, and their needs.
- Advising us on how best to deliver services for that group
- Acting as independent accountability partners, monitoring our performance on each of the equalities strands

Our Critical Partner Groups cover all six statutory equalities strands:

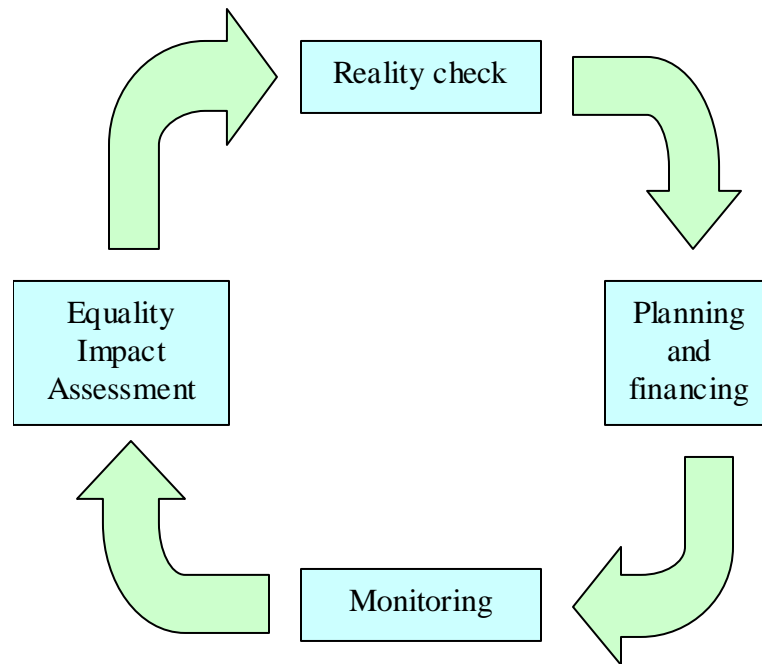
- Waverley Disability Forum
- Waverley Faith Forum
- The South West Surrey Over-Fifty reference group
- Waverley Top Youth Council
- Waverley LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) contact group
- Waverley ethnic minority contact group (this is in the process of being set up – we have formally requested permission to utilise contacts through the Surrey Police DIAG group).

Our assessment of the labour market in Waverley and understanding of local issues has led us to conclude that there is limited need for a dedicated critical partner group covering gender equality issues. Instead, we seek to understand the specific barriers facing both men and women through the work of the other five critical partners groups.

These Critical Partner Groups operate in different ways according to the needs and desires of that group. For example, the Top Youth Council meet fortnightly, whereas the LGBT contact group operate remotely as an email group. All of our Critical Partner groups were consulted during the production of this Scheme.

## **2.3 Year on year improvement – The Waverley approach**

We will constantly strive to improve our performance in delivering equal life chances for all. In practice, we will do this through a dynamic yearly cycle of planning, action, monitoring and reflection.



## Step 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

In August of each year, each service area refreshes its Equality Impact Assessment. This is an inclusive process, involving everyone in the service area, from the Head of Service to the people who deliver the service on the ground.

The process of generating an EQIA follows the six-step approach recommended by iDEA:

1. Initial Screening – establishing whether the service area has the potential to have a significant positive or negative impact on different groups in the Borough
2. Scoping and Defining – agreeing the parameters of the assessment, and who is responsible for completing the assessment
3. Information Gathering – identifying the main sources of information, where there are gaps in knowledge, and how those gaps will be filled
4. Making a judgement – using the understanding of the needs of particular groups to assess what impacts the service provision will have, and whether such impacts can be justified
5. Action planning – Agreeing what actions should be taken to remove or alleviate the potential for the service to have negative impacts, and putting these into a SMART action plan
6. Publication and Review – ensuring that the EQIA is published in a manner appropriate for the community, and kept under review

Copies of our most recent Equality Impact Assessments are published on the Waverley Borough Council website.

## **Step 2 – Reality check**

In January every year we prioritise 3-4 service areas we believe need to be looked at in more detail. These are then discussed by an invited forum of experts and representatives of minority groups. Their feedback is crucial in helping us understand the service-user perspective and providing a reality-check on our performance.

At this time, we also encourage each of our 6 priority equalities critical partner groups to hold us to account on our performance. We invite them to “call-in” one or two services’ equality impact assessments and go through them with a fine toothcomb, giving us honest feedback both on our plans and our performance.

This innovative approach goes far beyond simple consultation, to ensure that representatives of minority groups have a real say in how we deliver our services.

## **Step 3 – Planning and Financing**

Once the reality checks are complete, we finalise our EQIAs, particularly the action plans, ensuring that they are SMART.

In many instances, the actions we propose will require resources – these pressures are factored into the service planning process alongside other funding pressures. This step is very important – we recognise that we need to show how seriously we take equalities issues by backing up our plans and strategies with appropriate funding. Our willingness to prioritise funding for equalities issues is a mark of how deeply ingrained equalities issues are into the culture of our organisation.

## **Step 4 – Monitoring**

Finally, each service area monitors the impact of their actions throughout the year, proactively seeking out the experiences and views of our equalities critical partners as new measures are rolled out.

Wherever possible, we will seek to obtain outcomes data, such as targeted usage or user-satisfaction data, to provide us with an objective assessment of the impact of our actions. An assessment of these data forms the basis of the needs-assessment for the next year’s EQIA process.

## 2.4 The Equality Standard for Local Government

Our key tool for measuring our progress in providing equal life chances for all is the Equality Standard for Local Government. The Equality Standard consists of five levels of achievement:

- Level 1: Commitment to a Comprehensive Equality Policy
- Level 2: Assessment and Consultation
- Level 3: Setting equality objectives and targets
- Level 4: Information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level 5: Achieving and reviewing outcomes

In December 2007 we assessed ourselves at achieving Level 1. With the publication of this Corporate Equality Scheme, and following a rigorous self-assessment process (set out in Annex 8) we are self-assessing ourselves as achieving level 2.

The revised Equality Framework for Local Government will come into effect during 2009/10. This will rationalise the five levels into three levels – emerging, achieving and excellent. We intend to attain *achieving* level within the life of this scheme, by March 2011, and *excellent* level as soon as feasible after then. Recognition of achieving these levels will require external assessment.

The revised framework focuses on five areas of change management:

- Knowing your community – equality mapping
- Place-shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services and customer care
- A modern and diverse workforce

We are basing our approach around these five themes, as set out in the next section of this report.

## 3. Delivering Equalities

### 3.1 Knowing our community – equality mapping

Understanding the profile of our communities and the life chances and opportunities of different groups is crucial in identifying priority outcomes that can shape strategic planning and service delivery. We will achieve this by:

- Collecting information in a sensitive and sensible fashion about our communities and individuals, and our own workforce. We will focus not just on people's equality strands, but also other relevant demographic information, such as socio-economic, health and education status, the availability of transport etc
- Analysing this information to understand people's needs, not just their equality strands and background
- Using our understanding to improve our service delivery, and to inform the development of our key strategies, such as our Corporate Plan
- Sharing our understanding with key partners to inform their service delivery and the development their key plans and strategies, particularly key strategies such as the Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy

We have made significant progress in this already, including:

- Analysing in detail the basic demographics of our community and identifying the key communities and groups most at risk of barriers
- Engaging in an employment equality assessment of the local labour market
- Listening to the concerns of key groups through the social inclusion forum, equalities forum, and equalities critical partners

Although we have made strong progress, we recognise that there is still much more to do. Our key challenges over the life of this plan are:

- Gathering appropriate information using a range of techniques, across all equality target groups, to inform policy and strategy and to prioritise
- Sharing information and data appropriately and as necessary across the council and with partners in order to achieve equality outcomes
- Mapping, disaggregating and using relevant and appropriate information to assess equality objectives
- Identifying how our communities are changing and the impact this may have on service priorities
- Forging a strong evidence base that will inform the development of our next Corporate Plan, and our contributions to the next Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

Our action plan for meeting these challenges is attached at Annex 1

## 3.2 Place-shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment

Waverley Borough Council is in a unique position to determine local priorities and shape the future of our area. To embed equality of life chances within our local partnerships will require strong, strategic leadership and effective stakeholder relationships. We will achieve this by:

- Taking a public lead in calling for equal life chances for all
- Taking a lead in equalities provision for our own staff and in all of our service delivery and corporate policies
- Ensuring that all our partnership relationships and contracts support this
- Working proactively to encourage and support all local residents, communities, companies and organisations in prioritising their own commitment to equal life chances for all

We have made significant progress in this already, including:

- Producing and publishing EQIAs for each of our service areas
- Establishing a mechanism for regularly and consistently updating our EQIAs, and allocating resources to help deliver them
- Committing publicly, through our Leader and Chief Executive, to improve equality outcomes for our community
- Establishing corporate and service level Equality Groups to drive forward our agenda
- Integrating our understanding of equalities issues into how we communicate
- Committing to promote equality through contracts, commissioning and grant aid

Although we have made strong progress, we recognise that there is still much more to do. Our key challenges over the life of this plan are:

- Setting clear organisational and partnership equality priorities that are owned and understood by all key stakeholders, including the third sector
- Embedding equality objectives into our Corporate and strategic plans
- Ensuring that equality and cohesion priorities and objectives are monitored regularly by the political leadership and senior management
- Allocating appropriate resources to achieve objectives
- Publishing the outcomes of our service-level Equality Impacts Assessments on a regular basis
- Addressing equality issues through the Overview and Scrutiny processes
- Undertaking work to promote equality of opportunity in terms of participation as elected representatives

Our action plan for meeting these challenges is attached at Annex 1.



### 3.3 Community Engagement and satisfaction

Community engagement is crucial to every aspect of Waverley Borough Council's work. This must go beyond simple consultation exercises, as important as they are. Instead, we are moving towards a model where representatives of minority groups are key partners in designing and delivering our approach to ensuring equal life chances for all. No-one understands the needs of minority groups better than the groups themselves, and we are committed to making our performance in this area accountable to them. We will achieve this by:

- Making full use of our Equalities Critical Partners and the Equalities Forum to engage with minority groups
- Considering, for each service area, whether it would be appropriate to involve representatives of local people in key decisions and delivery
- Ensuring that consultation is key to all aspects of our business

We have made significant progress in this already, including:

- Consulting with our partners on our equalities priorities
- Developing inclusive community engagement structures
- Working together with partners to ensure that diverse interests are balanced in service delivery

Although we have made strong progress, we recognise that there is still much more to do. Our key challenges over the life of this plan are:

- Setting local public service priorities alongside national ones which involve local people and their identified needs
- Ensuring that consultation with stakeholders and the third sector is systematically built into EQIAs, the self-assessment and planning processes

Our action plan for meeting these challenges is attached at Annex 1.

### 3.4 Responsive services and customer care

Service provision and commission remains central to what Waverley Borough Council does. Our services need to be accessible by people of different backgrounds. This will require us to make use of our understanding of our minority groups' needs.

We are constantly seeking to improve the responsiveness of our services and customer care. We will achieve this by

- Running regular Equality Impact Assessments at service level, which each service area refreshes on an annual basis
- Using our critical partners and ongoing consultation to keep aware of customer needs
- Ensuring our internal processes support our aim of providing equal life chances for all

We have made significant progress in this already, including

- Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for each service area
- Consulting and engaging local communities on all aspects of service planning and delivery
- Ensuring that all our procurement and commissioning processes take account of equality issues
- Putting in place structures to ensure that service equality outcomes are delivered monitored and reviewed effectively
- Putting in place processes to ensure that harassment, hate crimes and antisocial behaviour by Council staff are dealt with effectively

Although we have made strong progress, we recognise that there is still much more to do. Our key challenges over the life of this plan are:

- Producing a set of equality outcomes/objectives/goals at service level to meet the needs of identified equality target groups
- Establishing structures at service level to monitor progress and monitor performance. Regularly monitor equality and cohesion objectives by portfolio holders and departmental management teams
- Allocating appropriate resources to achieve objectives
- Putting in place mechanisms to ensure that equality objectives are delivered by contractors through contract management, and that they are monitored properly
- Ensuring that contractors, commissioned services and grant receivers regularly review their services and access to them to ensure they continue to be appropriate and accessible.

Our action plan for meeting these challenges is attached at Annex 1.

### 3.5 A modern and diverse workforce

Our ability to deliver responsive, personalised services will depend in a large part on the skills, understanding and commitment of our workforce. We will achieve this by:

- Implementing fair employment practices that comply with legislation, including equal pay legislation
- Training all our staff on equalities issues, including EQIAs
- Ensuring that the workforce profile reflects the diversity of the community insofar as that is practicable, and that measures are in place to monitor diversity and promote equality of opportunity.

We have made significant progress in this already, including:

- Ensuring that all Waverley Councillors have received a minimum of one half day's awareness training on equality and diversity issues. The training gave emphasis to what Councillors can do to make a difference.
- Ensuring that all Waverley staff have received awareness training, and establishing this as part of the induction programme for new staff. Further, in-depth, training is also provided for staff in particular roles with the training being focused on the needs of the service that they provide; for example focused equality training for those involved in the Council's role as a housing landlord.
- Undertaking an equal pay audit
- Ensuring all our recruitment and employment procedures are consistent with current legislation and employment Codes of Practice

Although we have made strong progress, we recognise that there is still much more to do. Our key challenges over the life of this plan are:

- Ensuring that all our workforce strategies address equality issues
- Making significant progress on the equal pay review and reaching agreement with the unions
- Delivering a broader range of learning and development interventions to support members and officers to deliver equality outcomes
- Setting employment objectives based on internal monitoring information, the assessment of the local labour market and barriers
- Acting on adverse trends identified in the monitoring of employment data
- Considering equality implications of objectives in management and individual appraisals
- Running impact assessment for all employment procedures

Our action plan for meeting these challenges is attached at Annex 1.

## 4. Conclusion

With this Corporate Equality Scheme we are committing ourselves to ensuring that equality and diversity is at the heart of all that we do.

We recognise that generating equal life chances for all is not something that can be achieved overnight. This Corporate Equality Scheme is just the start – the foundations laid with this Scheme will be built on in future years, starting with the preparations for our next Corporate Plan.

This version of the Waverley Corporate Equality Scheme for 2009 – 2011 is a working document. *[It was adopted by the Council Executive on 31 March 2009 as the Council formally self-certified as achieving level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.]* It sets out our strategy for the next two years, but we recognise that as we develop our understanding of the needs of our community, some emphases may change. We are also aware that the new Equality Standard for Local Government, which is due to be rolled out during 2009, may bring to light other priority areas for improvement. For these reasons, this Corporate Equality Scheme will remain a working draft rather than a fixed strategy.

If you wish to know more about Waverley Borough Council's approach to equalities and diversity please contact Louise Norie at [louise.norie@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:louise.norie@waverley.gov.uk) or by calling 01483 523333.

## **List of annexes**

- Annex 1 – Action plan for delivering equalities 2009-2011
- Annex 2 – Race Equality Scheme (Statutory)
- Annex 3 – Gender Equality Scheme (Statutory)
- Annex 4 – Disability Equality Scheme (Statutory)
- Annex 5 – Extract from Waverley Procurement Strategy
- Annex 6 – Baseline Demographic data on Waverley citizens
- Annex 7 – Glossary of terms

For a large print, text only copy of this Scheme, a copy in a different language, or an audio version, please contact [louise.norie@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:louise.norie@waverley.gov.uk) or call 01483 523333.

Comms/exec/2008-09/329