

Corporate Equalities Plan

(including targets and 2004-05
action plan)

Oldham Council October 2004

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Oldham Council's Corporate Equalities Plan is the third strand of the Council's drive to become an excellent authority with regard to equalities and diversity by 2008. The first and second of which being:

- Oldham Council's Equalities & Diversity Policy;
- Oldham Council's Race Equality Scheme.

1.2 This document sets out how the Council plans to substantially improve its performance in promoting equality of opportunity, meeting the diverse needs of the people of Oldham, and valuing the diversity of its employees. The proposals include three year and five year corporate Equalities and Diversity Targets and a three year Action Plan to support its aims.

1.3 In addition to the action plan and targets there are a series of commitments and processes outlined within the document which clearly demonstrate how the Council will strive to monitor and achieve excellence in equalities.

1.4 The document covers the following areas:

- The Council Objectives
- The Council's Targets in relation to Equalities and Diversity
- Providing leadership
- Employment
- Workforce Profiling
- Recruitment and Selection
- Consultation
- Procurement and Partnerships
- Access to information
- Impact Assessment
- Corporate Action Plan
- Departmental Action Plan
- Mainstreaming Equalities
- Audit and self assessment mechanisms

1.5 Together the Corporate Equalities Plan, Race Equality Scheme and Equalities and Diversity Policy form the basis for organisational improvement across the equalities spectrum.

1.6 It is recognised that under the local management of schools budgets, each governing body has extensive powers and responsibilities over staffing matters. This Plan does not therefore apply to schools, but the principles contained in it will be recommended to schools by officers of the LEA as appropriate

2. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The overall objective is that **within five years,¹ the Council should be recognised as being among the best in the country in promoting equalities and diversity.** This will relate to its roles as a:
- community leader;
 - employer;
 - provider of services and
 - procurer and commissioner of services.
- 2.2 This objective will be measured by progression from level 1 to level 5 (the highest level) of the Equality Standard for Local Government.² While it is a challenging target to achieve this standard as a whole authority within five years, the Council should be able to demonstrate clear evidence of good practice and substantial progress from an early stage. The Council's draft Local Public Service Agreement incorporates a target of reaching level 3 of the Equality Standard by the end of March 2006.
- 2.3 The overall objective in respect of equalities & diversity is designed to parallel the Council's targets relating to the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment of becoming a "Good" authority within three years and "Excellent" within five years.
- 2.4 It is also an objective that through this plan, the Council will contribute to building confident communities as set out in the Forward Together – Building Confident Communities the boroughs Community Cohesion Strategy which has been agreed by Council. Forward Together introduces the vision, the opportunities and challenges, the planning framework and programme of action of community cohesion across the Borough of Oldham.
- 2.5 Oldham Council's vision of Community Cohesion is:

'Together, we want to make the Borough of Oldham a place in which people are well educated, with a thriving economy providing people with decent jobs; which has an attractive and healthy environment; where people are safe and live together peacefully; where everyone receives equality of treatment and people treat each other with respect; which welcomes visitors, and where people are proud to say they belong'.

¹ By 31 March 2008.

² This has been developed by the Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission, Equal Opportunities Commission and the Employers Organisation for Local Government.

3. MEASURING PROGRESS

- 3.1 Progress against the Equality Standard for Local Government will provide a headline measure of progress, but the table below contains a set of other draft measures relating to different aspects of the Council's performance. These relate to the Authority as a whole, and some might also need to be broken down to a departmental or service unit level e.g. those relating to changes in the workforce. Departments could also adopt equalities targets relating to their own services e.g. for educational attainment or the provision of particular social services.
- 3.2 Table 1 below sets out the proposed corporate Equalities & Diversity targets. Many of these are Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) on which the Council is already required to report annually.
- 3.3 Progress will be reported through an annual Equalities & Diversity report as well as quarterly through the Council's Performance Management system. As the Council makes progress it will be able to seek external recognition for the developing good practice – for example through seeking Beacon Status or other awards.

Table 1 - The Council's proposed Corporate Equalities and Diversity targets

Target	Baseline 2003/04	Target by the end of			Aspirational Target
		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	
1. Percentage of the Council's workforce who: a. are of Black or Minority Ethnic origin (BVPI17) b. meet the Disability Discrimination Act definition of disability (BVPI16)	5.7% 2.2%	6.8% 2.39%	7.9% 2.6%	8.2% 2.8%	The Council's workforce is representative of the economically active population of Oldham
2. Percentage of the top 5% of earners who are: a. women (BVPI11a) b. of Black or Minority Ethnic origin (BVPI11b)	41.7% 4.9%	42.6% 5.35	43.9% 5.8%	45.21% 6.69%	In proportion to the economically active population of the Borough
3. Percentage of new starters who are from ethnic minorities	To be established	To be established	To be established	To be established	In proportion to the economically active population of the Borough
4. Level of the Equality Standard for Local Government which the Council has reached (BVPI2a and Local PSA target)	Level 1	2	3	4	5
5. Race Equality Performance Score (BVPI2b)	39%	67%	83%		100%

6.	Percentage of hate incidents reported to the Council which resulted in follow up action (BVPI175)	69.6%	100%	100	100%	100%
7.	Percentage of Council buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people (BVPI156)	56%	62%	64%	65%	95% ¹
8.	Percentage of Council employees who have received Diversity Training	Baseline to be established	To be established	50%	85%	85% ¹
9.	Percentage of Councillors who have received Diversity Training	Baseline to be established	To be established	95%	95%	95%
10.	Measure of staff attitudes to equalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff feel OMBC is an equal opportunities employer • Staff feel they are fairly treated 	71% 67%	75% 71%	79% 75%	83% 79%	To be established
11.	Percentage of Council managers assessed as	Baseline to be established	To be established	75%	85%	85% ¹

competent in equalities and diversity issues through the performance assessment process					
12. Percentage of local people who think that Oldham is a place where people from different backgrounds can live together harmoniously	Baseline to be established	To be established	To be established	To be established	At a level exceeding that in areas with a similar demographic and economic composition

1. While the Council would ideally achieve 100% on these targets, there are practical reasons why this is impossible – for example the turnover of employees means that at any point in time not all would have received race and cultural awareness training, and as new managers are appointed it will take time for them to develop the skills for them to be assessed as competent in equalities and diversity issues.

4. PROVIDING LEADERSHIP

- 4.1 It is crucial in ensuring rapid progress on this agenda that there is strong leadership at both a political and officer level. This is supported by the Council's new Cabinet structure, with equalities and diversity being the responsibility of the Leader of the Council as the portfolio holder for community cohesion. Similarly, the Leader of the Opposition Group leads on community cohesion issues. Other key responsibilities lie with the Cabinet member with the portfolio for human resources, and the chair of the Community Strategy and Cohesion Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.2 A new **Leader's Advisory Group on Equalities, Diversity and Cohesion** has been established which will provide direction for the work on equalities and diversity and consider priorities for the annual action plan. This Group will be chaired by the Leader, with cross party representation. The Group will also incorporate representation from different communities of interest in Oldham such as: the Black & Minority Ethnic Group Network; Inter-Faith Forum; Oldham Race Equality Partnership; Community Cohesion Partnership; Oldham Disability Alliance; Women's Network; and the Children & Young People's Partnership. These representatives will be drawn from the membership of the Ethnic Minority Panel and the Voluntary Sector Panel.
- 4.3 The **Diversity & Cohesion Overview & Scrutiny Committee** have a key role to play in contributing to the development of policy and practice relating to equalities and diversity, and in assessing progress.
- 4.4 At an officer level, an **Equalities & Diversity Action Group** has been established to drive forward work on this issue. This is chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive, and reports to the Council's Cabinet, the Leader's Advisory Group and the Strategic Management Team (the Council's Chief Officers). The other members of the Action Group are the Executive Director (Environmental Services), Assistant Chief Executive (People & Quality), Corporate Policy Manager, Head of Corporate Human Resources and Head of Organisational Development.
- 4.5 Officer task groups working on aspects of the Equalities & Diversity Action Plan will report to the Action Group.

5 EMPLOYMENT

- 5.1 The Council is committed to employing a workforce which is representative of the wider Oldham community as it recognises that a workforce, that represents the community it serves, will be better able to respond to their needs. In addition to providing more appropriate services to the community, the Council having a representative workforce will increase the confidence and trust in the Council from the communities it serves and ensure that the Council becomes an employer of choice. The business rationale is clear and unambiguous.

- 5.2 While the Council has made progress in creating a more diverse workforce, there is a need to accelerate the process particularly in respect of staff from Black & Minority Ethnic communities. This needs to be a priority area of activity.
- 5.3 Over the next few years the growing need for people to work in health and social care and construction will provide a range of employment opportunities which the Council and other organisations can use in promoting workforce diversity. However, there are also many things which can be done in the shorter term to achieve this including:
- Changing recruitment practices e.g. through use of local radio, outreach with local communities;
 - Promoting the image of the Council as an employer, both through marketing and schemes such as work placements which give people experience of how the Council works;
 - Development of traineeship schemes in areas of recruitment difficulty – which could bring in both more younger people and more employees from ethnic minorities;
 - Positive action to better equip people from groups that are under-represented in the work force for making successful applications for jobs in the Council;
 - Changes to the culture and work arrangements in parts of the Council to make it a more attractive place to work for e.g. disabled people or people from ethnic minorities.
- 5.4 The Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and to taking steps to tackle longstanding inequalities in our workforce. To enable us to do this and to help us achieve our targets in this area the Council will undertake a number of measures some of which are outlined below. (a full list can be found in the Equalities and Diversity Policy and Race Equality Scheme). The Council has also recently developed a ‘People Strategy’ (available from Corporate HR) to provide strategic direction to the Council’s ongoing work in relation to its workforce which also contains specific actions in relation to equalities and diversity.

5.5 Pay, Conditions and Benefits

- 5.5.1 The Council recognises that inequalities can be tackled directly by providing decent pay rates and high quality conditions of employment for employees.. The Council will do this through such things as the Flexible Working scheme, harmonisation of terms and conditions between different groups of employees, provision of welfare services to employees and enhanced maternity/maternity support and paternity provisions. Further detail about these policies can be found in the Equalities and Diversity Policy. The Council also aims to set an example of best practice to other local employers
- 5.5.2 New policies in relation to pay, conditions and benefits as they are developed, will acknowledge and take account of the Council’s diverse workforce and will aim to encourage diversity and eliminate unfair treatment.

- 5.5.3 The Council is fully committed to the principal of equal pay and supports the fact that men and women should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value. In order to achieve equal pay for employees doing equal work we operate a pay system, which is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias.
- 5.5.4 In addition to this commitment the Council is fully committed to undertaking a job evaluation exercise (to be completed by 31 March 2007) with the aim of harmonising terms and conditions across the sexes which may be out of line. This job evaluation exercise is built upon best equality practice, following consultation with statutory equalities bodies.

5.6 Workforce Profiling

- 5.6.1 To support the Council in achieving its challenging employment targets contained in this document, the Council is fully committed to the use of regular workforce profiling within the organisation
- 5.6.2 The Council does this on two levels. Firstly on a yearly basis the Council produces an annual Equalities and Diversity Report which has a section on Employment Monitoring. Within this section the Council reports on its statutory monitoring duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. How the Council intends to meet these duties is set out in its Race Equality Scheme. The Act requires the Council to monitor, by reference to racial group:
- Staff in post; and
 - Applicants for employment, training and promotion;

Staff who:

- receive training;
 - benefit or are disadvantaged as a result of performance assessment;
 - are involved in grievance procedures;
 - are the subject of disciplinary procedures; or
 - cease employment with the Council for any reason.
 - publish annually the results of this monitoring.
- 5.6.3 In addition to reporting on race this report also contains the Council's data with regard to gender and disability.
- 5.6.4 This report is presented to the Strategic Management Team of the Council and then presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet for ratification. In this way the Council can keep an overall view of how it is performing against both its workforce targets and its responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- 5.6.5 Secondly the Council produces a workforce profiling report on a quarterly basis. This report is presented to the Strategic Management Team and the Ethnic Minority

Panel and enables the Council to track its performance with regard to the workforce targets that it has set for itself.

- 5.6.6 On a day to day basis the Council's employment monitoring will be overseen by the Corporate Human Resources Team.. This section is responsible for collating the information for the various reports and acting as a central point for Departments to submit their monitoring data too.

5.7 Recruitment and Selection

- 5.7.1 The Council is the major employer locally and so wants to attract the best people and ensure, that at all levels, the workforce is representative of the community it serves. It is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and to taking steps to tackle longstanding inequalities in our workforce.

The Council will do this through such things as:

- all jobs being advertised both internally and externally at the same time using the most appropriate methods;
- those undertaking recruitment will be trained in implementing the Recruitment Policy in order to maintain high levels of competence.
- recruitment following the Council's policy on Recruitment based on agreed criteria for jobs, fairness and transparency of decision-making;
- advertising of posts to ensure no preference is indicated for one group of applicants (unless there is a genuine occupational qualification) and by using media that will not restrict availability of information about vacant posts;
- positive action being used to encourage applications from underrepresented groups, where possible;
- work being undertaken in partnership with key agencies and the local community to raise awareness of opportunities for employment with the Council.

- 5.7.2 As part of its aim to improve the way that the Council undertakes recruitment and selection, the Council is currently revising its recruitment policy. The aim of this is to ensure that the Council's recruitment policy supports the Council's aim of creating a more diverse workforce and ensuring the Council, in all cases, employs the best person for the job.

- 5.7.3 The Council recognises that recruitment advertising plays a significant role in attracting and recruiting a diverse workforce. The Council is committed to using a range of publications to advertise its posts. This range of publications includes a mix of speciality publications specifically targeted at minority groups.

- 5.7.4 The Council is also looking at the way it advertises itself and is undertaking a pilot of targeted recruitment campaigns in a range of minority publications which advertise the Council as an employer. This is in addition to advertising specific jobs in the minority press and it is hoped that this will go some way to promoting Oldham as an employer of choice for all minority communities.

5.8 Staff training and development

5.8.1 Staff training is central to effective implementation of the Equalities & Diversity Policy. Current strands of this are:

- Ensuring the participation of all staff in Diversity Training,
- Support for managers on their responsibilities in promoting the full range of diversity agenda (to include race equality);
- The development of the Management Competency framework, including an integral theme of equalities; and
- Recruitment and Selection training for all employees involved in the process.

5.8.2 While some departments currently provide training for staff relating to equalities and diversity issues, such as training in relevant anti-discriminatory practice relating to their service area, there is a need to expand the range of training provided, the range of services providing such training and to ensure a consistency of approach.

5.8.3 In addition, implementation of all the proposed changes including: the Equalities & Diversity policy itself; the use of the Equalities Standard; introduction of Equalities Impact Assessments; and new procedures relating to hate incidents all have significant training implications.

5.8.4 Similarly, there is a need for training and development for elected members to increase their understanding of these issues so informing the decisions they take and carry out their duties as community leaders.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Council acknowledges the benefit that can be obtained from effective consultation on equality issues. The Council's aim in terms of consultation is for the whole of the communities of Oldham to be part of the decision making processes of the Council. In this way the communities of Oldham can act as a check on the Council, scrutinising our proposals and offering alternative ways of working which are more suited to their needs.

6.2 The Council acknowledges that, in the past, it has not been as effective as it could have been in obtaining the views of marginalised groups within the community and has undertaken a great deal of action to try to alleviate this problem.

6.3 As a result of this there is now a Consultation Strategy to give best practice guidance on how consultation should be undertaken. This contains eight principles of consultation which state that the Council will:-

1. Respect people. Listen to and value their contributions.
2. Be clear about the scope of consultation.

3. Strive to give people equal opportunity to contribute.
 4. Identify the needs of different sectors of the community.
 5. Keep people informed.
 6. Make effective use of resources.
 7. Work with partners.
 8. Learn from experience.
- 6.4 This Strategy is supported by a Consultation Guide for Council staff and the Authority's Consultation Events (ACE) database, which is used to share information about consultation events. A Citizens' Panel has also been established to allow different parts of the Council to consult with a broadly representative cross-section of the Oldham population on issues, as required. There is also some use of focus groups drawn from the Citizens' Panel, to allow for more in-depth study of people's views.
- 6.5 The Council also has an Ethnic Minority Panel whose membership is drawn from Councillors across the parties and individuals who represent the ethnic minority communities in the Borough. This group is consulted on a range of policy issues relating to race equality issues.
- 6.6 The Council also has a Voluntary Sector Panel along the same lines as the Ethnic Minority Panel. The membership of this group consists of cross party Councillor representation and nominated voluntary sector representatives from the Voluntary Sector, Community and Faith Sector Partnership.
- 6.7 The Council also has a network of Area Committees and Tenants and Residents Associations which are of great value to the Council in terms of consultation.
- 6.7 A new **Leader's Advisory Group on Equalities, Diversity and Cohesion** has been established which draws from the membership of both the Ethnic Minority Panel and the Voluntary Sector Panel. This group will be an increasingly invaluable consultation forum for the Council in the coming months.
- 6.8 The Council has also established a Black Workers Employee Network, Women's Network, Disability Network and a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans network which will be an invaluable method of communicating with our employees and provide an opportunity for employees who may not historically had a voice in the Council to have their opinions heard. It will also provide an extra level of scrutiny for the Council and lead to more open and informed decision making.

7 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE COUNCIL'S PROCUREMENT AND COMMISSIONING OF SERVICES

- 7.1 Through procuring and commissioning services the Council has an opportunity to influence the behaviour of a range of other organisations. The Council will build on the existing work that the Council's Strategic Finance team have done in this area, for example by ensuring that all those involved in procurement are aware of how they should be using the process to pursue the Council's social objectives and to ensure that the procedures are operated effectively – for example by ensuring that contractors comply with the quality standards required by the Council. An immediate priority is to ensure that the Council's procedures comply with recent guidance produced by the Commission for Racial Equality.
- 7.2 In light of the above the Council is fully committed to ensuring its spending power is exercised in order to promote equality of opportunity. For a fuller description of how the Council intends to do this please see chapter 8 in the Equalities and Diversity Policy available on the Council web site.

8. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 In the same way as through procuring and commissioning services the Council has an opportunity to influence the behaviour of a range of other organisations through its partnership arrangements. The Council carries out an increasing number of its functions in partnership with other organisations and is fully committed to ensuring it promotes its principles and values with regard to equality in all its partnerships. It will do this through (amongst other things):
- requiring equality of opportunity and fair employment practices from partners;
 - identifying opportunities to undertake with our partners to promote equality of opportunity within their organisation;
 - providing support to our partners where it is felt they do not meet the Council's criteria for equalities and diversity;
 - working with and informing our partners, in matters related to contracting to enable them to improve their own performance when commissioning or procuring services.
- 8.2 In an aim to ensure this is done at all levels of the Council, this has been specifically addressed in the Service Planning Guidance issued by the Council and training given to service managers on including action relating to partnerships within their service plans.

9. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- 9.1 The Council acknowledges that the provision of appropriate information is a key milestone in the promotion of equalities and diversity and the Council is committed to ensuring all the information it produces is accessible to all members of the community.

9.2 The Council provides a wide range of information and formats for presenting that information. These include:

- Publications, Reports and a large number of topic based documents;
- The Oldham Council website;
- Internal communications systems such as an intranet for employees of the Council;
- Information and advice services to the public and organisations;
- Customer services;
- Participation in events on particular topics;
- Use of the media for advertising and press articles.

9.3 The Council has acknowledged that it has failed to provide this information in the most accessible format for some members of our community, including those from the BME community in the past but now has arrangements in place to do this more effectively, some of which include:

- provision of interpretation and translated materials via the interpretation and translation service
- outreach work by Departments
- targeted publicity
- targeted projects
- consultation with minority ethnic forums and voluntary and community groups in the Borough
- services targeted and specifically set up for our BME communities
- language line is in operation across the Council
- consultation on our service delivery with our BME communities
- corporate and Departmental guidance on how to produce information accessibly
- corporate Communications Strategy under development
- expansion of the Web Site for more effective distribution of information

9.4 In addition to the above the Council has also made a commitment to provide any information to residents of Oldham in the most appropriate format relating to their needs on request.

10. THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) STRATEGY

10.1 Since 31 May 2002, public authorities have been bound by the duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, one of which is to undertake Race Equality Impact Assessments on all relevant policies and functions. This is a concept that has been widened by Oldham Council to comply with the Equality Standard for Local Government. The Council's Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) now cover the impact on other potentially disadvantaged groups, not just ethnic group.

10.2 An EIA is essentially an assessment tool that is used to identify the positive and negative impacts (or potential impacts) on racial or other groups of any development

– be that a policy, programme or project - in a systematic and structured way. In the light of the assessment, if it is decided that the policy has an adverse impact, the Council must consider alternative policies which more effectively achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity or measures which might be employed to mitigate the adverse impact

10.3 The Council has devised an Equality Impact Assessment toolkit (available on the Council internet) which contains three levels of EIA:

- **Initial Assessment/Screening**
- **Partial EIA**
- **Full EIA**

10.4 The reason for the three levels is that a full assessment may not be necessary in every case, nor may it be appropriate to conduct a full assessment initially. Using the three levels enables a reasonable, practical and manageable approach to the process of EIA.

10.5 Oldham Council has endeavoured to mainstream the process of EIA within the service planning process. From April 2004 all services have identified within their service plans what EIAs they will be undertaking during the year. This is seen as essential if the EIA process is to work as the inclusion in the service plans ensures that managers can allocate time to the process and so that the EIA process is not seen as ‘an add on’ to the substantive work of the services.

10.6 In addition to identifying EIAs through the service planning process the Council will also strive to undertake full impact assessments on all its projects of strategic significance such as the Community Strategy, Housing Market Renewal etc.

10.7 The Council acknowledges that the EIA process will take some time to become completely mainstreamed within the Council and as such there will be a period of implementation that may span a few years until people have the skills and experience to routinely undertake EIAs. To help with this, the Council’s Equality and Diversity team will act as internal consultants and undertake EIAs along with departments. In addition to this all completed EIAs will be collected together and stored in electronic format on the Council’s Internet. This will assist Departments in undertaking EIAs as it will work as a bank of good practice examples for them to refer to.

11. SERVICE NEEDS REQUIREMENT ASSESSMENTS

11.1 Oldham MBC is committed to improving its service delivery in terms of Equality and Diversity and has demonstrated this in a number of ways. An example of this is the councils commitment to achieving the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG).

- 11.2 The Council is currently at level 1 and working to achieve level 2 in 2005. One of the major requirements of level 2 is that the council and all departments undergo a service needs requirement assessment, which provides a process through which managers and staff can identify whether the service has an adverse impact upon any particular groups and should ultimately produce solutions, which help remove barriers.
- 11.3 A SNRA differs from an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) as it allows for a much more holistic approach and is wider in its scope. Whereas an EIA looks at individual policies or projects in detail, a SNRA takes a more general approach to the existing delivery of a service and therefore does not limit the assessment to new areas of work or where existing work is being significantly amended.
- 11.4 The Diversity & Cohesion Unit have developed a toolkit and guidance to assist service manager & staff when undertaking a SNRA, which should also ensure a standard approach is adopted. The model used has been adapted from and the model proposed by DIALOGUE but has been amended to make the process more manageable.
- 11.5 This assessment is the first part of the Service Improvement Planning process for 2005/6 and the actions / recommendations identified will be translated into what was under 'Community Cohesion' in 2004-2005.
- 11.6 The Diversity and Cohesion Unit has produced the guidance and toolkit and are available for support throughout these processes. However the Departmental Equality champions and Groups are ultimately responsible for ensuring that these assessments are organised and carried out within their department.
- 11.7 All SNRA across the council are scheduled for completion by March 2005. However, as these assessments have been built into the Service Planning Process and they will be reviewed annually. All actions arising out of the assessment will be monitored on a quarterly basis through the Council's existing performance management framework.

12 IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

- 12.1 It is essential that the Corporate Equalities Plan is not simply a document that "sits on the shelf", but is something that all parts of the Council actively contribute to implementing. The Equalities & Diversity targets will provide a direction for this and to achieve these, the Council will produce a rolling three year Equalities & Diversity Action Plan, which will be updated annually. In addition to the Corporate Action Plan, each Department will also produce a 12 month equalities action plan and incorporate the actions from this in their individual service plans.

13 THE CORPORATE ACTION PLAN FOR 2004/07

- 13.1 The Corporate Action Plan can be found at Appendix 1 and it sets out a proposed action plan for work to implement the Corporate Equalities Plan, Equalities and Diversity Policy and the Race Equality Scheme during 2004/05, and contribute to achievement of the Equalities & Diversity targets. There is also a preliminary action plan for 2005/6 and 2006/7 as it is clear that full implementation is a process which will extend over many years, and due to this, the action plan will be updated annually.
- 13.2 Each year the Action plan will be devised and consulted on during February and March. After consultation it will then be approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and finally by Cabinet.
- 13.3 The Corporate Action Plan will be reported on quarterly to the **Equalities & Diversity Action Group** who will monitor the performance of the Council in relation to the Plan.
- 13.4 At the end of the year an Annual Equalities and Diversity Report will be produced and circulated widely which will address each of the actions in the Action Plan and report the progress against the actions. This report will also be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet with the updated Action Plan for the following year.

14 THE DEPARTMENTAL ACTION PLANS FOR 2004/05

- 14.1 The Departmental Action Plans support this document and can be found on the Council web site and they set out proposed action plans for work to implement the Corporate Equalities Plan, Equalities and Diversity Policy and the Race Equality Scheme during 2004/05 at a Departmental Level.
- 14.2 These Departmental Action Plans will be monitored by the Departmental Equalities Group and will be reported on quarterly to the Departmental Management Team.
- 14.3 At the end of the year the Department will submit a report on their progress on equalities and diversity which will address each of the actions in the Action Plan and report the progress against the actions. This report will form a chapter of the Corporate Annual Equalities and Diversity Report.

15 MAINSTREAMING EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

- 15.1 Mainstreaming of equalities and diversity involves building it into every aspect of what the Council does. **The Equality Standard for Local Government** provides a framework for doing this on a systematic basis, moving through five levels of:

- 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.

15.2 In measuring progress, the Authority is only as strong as its weakest part, and it needs to build up a set of evidence of progress that can be used in assessing what level of the Equality Standard it has reached. A process for carrying out this work is under development.

16 SELF ASSESSMENT AND AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS

16.1 The use of the Equality Standard for Local Government will involve every service self assessing its performance on equalities and diversity on an annual basis, and identifying gaps and areas for improvement. It will then prioritise these and take action to address them. This will be built into the annual service planning cycle, so that consideration of equalities and diversity issues is integral to this rather than an “add on”. Service plans will therefore be expected to include appropriate equalities and diversity targets and action for implementing change – for example measures to make services more accessible to different groups, provision of relevant staff training, or measures to create a more diverse workforce. In this way the service’s performance on equalities and diversity will be monitored on a quarterly basis through the Councils quarterly monitoring arrangements.

16.2 Each Department has a nominated Equality Champion at 2nd tier level. The self-assessment process requires a strong corporate commitment and it is important that Departmental Equality Champions play a central role. This will be to manage the self-assessment and audit process and ensure that there is accountability and effective consultation.

16.3 There is also a Validation group which is responsible for assessing the Council’s evidence files for the Equality Standard for Local Government. This group is comprised of both internal and external representation and is a vital part of the self assessment process. The inclusion of the Validation group in the process is to ensure objectivity and the engagement of key stakeholders.

16.4 For a more detailed explanation of the self assessment and audit arrangements of the Council please see Oldham Council’s Equality Standard for Local Government Toolkit (available on the Council’s web site)

17 SERVICE DELIVERY MONITORING

17.1 To ensure that the Council continually improves its service delivery, comprehensive service delivery monitoring has been introduced across Council Departments.

17.2 Much of this monitoring has arisen out of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Equality Standard for Local Government. The aim of this monitoring is to ensure that people from marginalised groups have equal and fair access to the

Council's services and are, indeed, using the Council's services. Over the coming years the Council intends to widen the monitoring it currently undertakes to ensure that its policies and procedures are not having an adverse affect on different groups within the community.

- 17.3 The Council aims to be open, honest and accountable in relation to service delivery and to facilitate this, each Department will produce a yearly service delivery monitoring report where the results of its service delivery monitoring will be examined. Where the monitoring points to an under or over use of a service, recommendations will be put forward in this report on how to overcome the apparent problem.
- 17.4 It is a legal requirement to publish the results of the Council's monitoring under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the yearly report from each Department will meet this duty. Once the report has been written, it will be presented to the Departmental management team for approval. Once approved, the report will be published on the Council's Web site for general viewing.

18. CONCLUSION

- 18.1 This document has set out the broad framework for how the Council plans to substantially improve its performance in relation to equalities and diversity issues and should be read in conjunction with the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policy and Race Equality Scheme. These three documents together form the basis of the Council's commitment to improving its performance on equalities and diversity at all levels.

19. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 19.1 For further information on this plan or any other aspect of equality and diversity at Oldham Council please contact

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Principal Officer (Equalities and Diversity)
Corporate Policy
3rd Floor Civic Centre
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1XL

Tel. 0161 911 4189

Email ce.marcus.roe@Oldham.gov.uk

- 18.2 Alternatively please visit our web site for copies of this and other documents relating to equalities and diversity at:

<http://www.oldham.gov.uk/council/diversity/index.shtml>

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2004/07

Action	Lead Person/Group	Milestones	Time table	Planning Links	Progress as of 1 November 2004
LEADERSHIP					
A1 Policy and Progress					
1. Establish a Leaders Advisory Group on Equalities, Diversity and Cohesion	Council	Group established	April 2004	Corporate Equalities Plan (CEP)	Achieved Group Established and to date has met once
2. Formulate a Corporate Equalities Plan and Action Plan	Corporate Policy Manager	Policy and action plan developed	April 2004	CEP Race Equality Scheme (RES) Equality Standard for Local Government	Achieved but not yet approved
		Consult on the CEP	July 2004		Achieved Consultation taken place
		Produce a consultation report	July 2004		Achieved Report Produced
		Make the plan available in a range of formats	July 2004		Achieved Available in a range of languages
3. Revise the Council's Race Equality Scheme	Corporate Policy Manager	RES fully revised and published	January 2005	RES	Achieved Fully revised, not yet published awaiting approval from Cabinet

9. Produce Annual Social Inclusion Audit	Research Manager	Audit published and disseminated inside and outside the Council	December 2004	CEP	
10. Undertake a Service Needs Requirement Assessment within all services	Executive Directors Service Managers	Guidance produced Assessments carried out and results fed into service plans for 2005/6	November 2004 March 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government RES	Achieved Guidance produced and circulated and support offered to Departments
A2 Communication					
1. Provide leaflet for all job applicants on equalities and diversity to be included within the Corporate Induction Process	Principal Officer (Equalities & Diversity)	Leaflet published and routinely provided to all job applicants	October 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	Achieved Leaflet produced and incorporated within Corporate Induction
2 Repeat full page advertisement in Council tax leaflet concerning how to do business with the Council with regard to equality and diversity	Corporate Strategy Manager	Advertisement included in the booklet	April 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government	

3	Develop a web page on the Council's website concerning equality and procurement	Corporate Strategy Manager	Web page developed	December 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government	
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EMPLOYER

B1 WORKFORCE MONITORING

<p>1. Complete introduction of all monitoring systems required to meet specific employment duty of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act</p> <p>Produce quarterly workforce monitoring reports</p>	<p>Head of HR</p>	<p>Systems set up to analyse employee data in line with the employment duties of RRAA,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff in post • Applicants for employment and promotion • Grievance, disciplinary and capability procedures • Staff applying for and receiving training <p>Report produced</p>	<p>September 2004</p> <p>Quarterly</p>	<p>RES Equality Standard for Local Government CEP</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Partially Met systems set up in nearly all areas of the Council to monitor staff receiving training and in some places for those applying</p> <p>Achieved Two reports produced so far</p>
<p>2. Improve workforce monitoring for Disability issues.</p>	<p>Head of HR</p>	<p>Information from staff collected and held in Personnel Information System</p>	<p>June 2004</p>	<p>Equality Standard for Local Government CEP</p>	<p>Partially Met All staff approached and improved figures obtained. Needs more work in the coming year</p>

3.	Departmental workforce diversity targets incorporated into service plans	Chief Officers	Targets incorporated in 2004/05 Departmental Plans	March 2005	RES CEP Equality Standard for Local Government	
4	Undertake a review of the Corporate Personnel System and assess its suitability for reporting on the full range of equalities criteria specifically its suitability for reporting under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000	Head of HR	Report produced	December 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP RES	Work in progress
5	Undertake an Equal Pay Review within the Council	Head of HR	Equal Pay Review undertaken	March 2007	Equality Standard for Local Government	

B2 Positive Action

1. Develop positive action measures to improve recruitment and retention of staff from ethnic minorities and other marginalised groups	Head of OD Head of HR	Report outlining a selection of positive action measures which could be adopted by Oldham MBC Introduction of first measures	June 2004 March 2005	RES Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	Achieved OD have completed a young gifted and ours report suggesting possible ways forward. This report has been forwarded to the Head of Hr and Corporate recruitment team. Partially Met , in the process of implementing measures
2. Introduce and develop work placement opportunities for people in marginalised groups	Head of OD	Programme commences	March 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	OD have completed a young gifted and ours report suggesting possible was forward. This report has been forwarded to the Head of HR and Corporate Recruitment Team
3. Build a positive action element into the management development programme for staff from black & minority ethnic groups, women and disabled people (as well as other marginalised groups)	Head of OD	Proposals for positive action programme agreed	September 2004	CEP Equality Standard for Local Government	Quick win project to target some women, people from ethnic minorities and disabled people for management development.
4. Develop a recruitment advertising strategy for Oldham Council	Head of HR	Strategy developed Guidelines developed	August 2004 March 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	Achieved Part on new Recruitment Policy.

5	Introduce a corporate mentoring scheme which is to be Piloted at members of the Council's Workers Forums	Head of OD	Scheme Developed	September 2004	RES ESLG	Achieved Scheme up and running and being piloted on BME, Women, LGBT and Disability employees of the Council
5	Provide a report on the effectiveness of the Authorities positive action schemes	Head of HR	Report produced	December 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government	

B3 Employee Well-being

<p>1. Continue to promote work life balance/ family friendly policy to contribute to the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce.</p>	<p>Head of Corporate HR Principal Officer (Equalities and Diversity)</p>	<p>Improve and promote flexible working policies</p> <p>Establish flexible working pilot initiatives and implement fully if successful</p> <p>Implement IIP profile on work life balance and achieve accreditation</p> <p>Undertake an audit of current uptake of Flexible working</p>	<p>December 2004</p> <p>December 2005</p> <p>December 2005</p> <p>April 2004</p>	<p>Equality Standard for Local Government CEP</p>	<p>Achieved Improved Flexi Time scheme Established cross departmental working group on flexible working and work life balance</p> <p>Achieved Audit completed and results fed into the revision of the policy</p>
<p>2. Further develop, implement and promote a Dignity at Work Policy for staff</p>	<p>Head of HR</p>	<p>Policy revised and re-launched Review undertaken on the take up and use of the policy</p>	<p>September 2004</p> <p>March 2005</p>	<p>CEP RES Equality Standard for Local Government</p>	<p>Partially Met Policy reviewed and awaiting approval</p>

3	Undertake a review of all employment policies for consistency with current equalities legislation and codes of practice	Head of Corporate HR	Review undertaken and report published	April 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government	Achieved Report Produced
4.	Fully implement improved systems for reporting, recording and follow up of Hate Incidents within the Council	Principal Officer Equalities and Diversity	System operational Review of Hate Crime reporting system	June 2004 January 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government	Achieved System developed and training devised and promoted for all staff involved in the system from all Departments
B4 Training and Development						
1.	Develop and deliver a comprehensive diversity training plan	Head of OD	Plan developed Evaluation report produce	June 2004 December 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP RES	Achieved Equalities Plan developed and currently being implemented.
2.	Introduce management development programme incorporating building competency in community cohesion.	Head of OD	Competence framework developed Training commences	December 2004 December 2004	CEP	

3.	Deliver Race Equality training to a further 60 managers	Principal Officer (Equalities & Diversity)	60 managers trained	March 2005	RES Equality Standard for Local Government	Partially Met
4	Design and deliver recruitment and selection training	Head of OD	Training developed	June 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government	Not Met Deadline slipped due to the policy just being approved Training being delivered 13/01/05 & 09/03/05
5	Develop guidance to sit alongside the recruitment policy on recruitment and equalities	Head of HR		December 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government	

Service Provider

C1 Procurement

1	Ensure procurement training includes advice on the implementation of equality action objectives and targets in relation to contracts/partnerships	Head of Corporate OD Corporate Strategy Manager	Training delivered	December 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government	Not Met
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2.	Produce guidelines for procurement and contract for compliance.	Corporate Strategy Manager	Guidelines produced in line with CRE documentation Provide procurement training for managers	April 2004 August-September 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government RES	
3	Develop Procurement Strategy to reflect new CRE guidelines.	Corporate Strategy Manager	Strategy developed including targets related to promoting equalities and diversity through procurement	July 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government	
4	Ensure all contracts contain a compliance clause on equality practice	Corporate Strategy Manager		January 2006	Equality Standard for Local Government	
5	Continue to attend and work with the Chamber of Commerce around equality and procurement	Corporate Strategy Manager		On going	Equality Standard for Local Government	

6	Formulate and adopt a corporate procurement strategy with equality and cohesion as a central theme	Corporate Strategy Manager	Strategy Produced	September 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government	
7	HMR Procurement regime to reflect the equality and cohesion agenda	Corporate Strategy Manager		Ongoing	Equality Standard for Local Government	
8	Set up a Senior Procurement Group and a Procurement Champion to facilitate a bottom up approach to equality and procurement	Corporate Strategy Manager		September 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government	
C2 Equalities monitoring						

1. Development of equalities monitoring systems for relevant services	Principal Officer (Equalities & Diversity) Heads of Service	Training provided for managers in introducing monitoring systems (as part of RES training) Guidance produced and circulated on Equalities Monitoring for Service Delivery	November-December 2004 July 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP RES	Partially Met 60 managers trained in 2004/05. New training course developed but not yet rolled out Not Met Revised timetable March 2005
2 Develop guidelines for information gathering and equality monitoring in service delivery	Principal Officer (Equalities and Diversity)		December 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	
3 Develop training and guidance on service delivery monitoring	Principal Officer (Equalities and Diversity)		January 2006	Equality Standard for Local Government	
C3 Consultation					

1	Establish networks for marginalised groups within the Council	Principal Officer Equalities and Diversity	LGBT Network established	September 2003	CEP RES Equality Standard for Local Government	Achieved Launched, active and well attended
			Women's Network established	July 2004		Achieved Launched, active and well attended
			Black Workers Network established	July 2004		Achieved Launched, active and well attended
			Disability Network established	July 2004		Achieved Launched, active and well attended

C4 Access

1.	Further development of disabled access provision	Assistant Director Environment & Building Control Environmental Services Department. Principal Officer (Equalities and Diversity)	Disability access checklist developed for meetings	June 2004	Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Equality Standard for Local Government	Achieved Contained within Disability Information Booklet and on the internet
			Disability good practice guidance developed for circulation within the Council	June 2004		Achieved Booklet developed and circulated
			Programme of improvements to make Council buildings accessible to disabled people	December 2004		

2. Improve provision of Interpreting & Translation Services	Unit Head (Diversity & Cohesion)	Audit and review of Interpreting and Translation Services	April - June 2004	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	Achieved Review undertaken with the input of the voluntary sector
		Research into the needs of the voluntary sector	February-April 2004		Achieved Undertaken as part of the review and informed the outcome of the review
		Establishment of improved Interpreting & Translation Service	October 2004		Not Met Due to difficulties with the review the new date for implementation is April 2005

Performance Management

1	Build equality objectives into the appraisal system for managers	Head of OD		March 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government	
2.	Produce Annual Equalities & Diversity Report	Corporate Policy Manager	Document published	October 2003	RES Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	Not Met Report to be produced in January 2005 Mostly employment data is produced quarterly. This report will cover a calendar year which will be relevant for service planning and setting service employment targets.

3. Quarterly progress reporting of departmental equalities plans on work which contributes to promoting equality and diversity as part of overall Performance Management System.	Assistant Director (Performance) with Unit Head (Diversity & Cohesion)	Quarterly reports produced and presented to departmental equalities groups	July 2004 and quarterly thereafter	Equality Standard for Local Government CEP	Partially Met One Department has undertaken quarterly monitoring other reported 6 monthly
4 Assist Departments in setting targets based on equalities objectives	Principal Officer (Equalities and Diversity)		August 2005	Equality Standard for Local Government	

<p>5. Incorporation of equalities and diversity objectives and action relating to improving performance incorporated into all 2005/06 Departmental Equalities Plans and Service Plans</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Performance)</p> <p>Principal Officer (Equalities & Diversity)</p> <p>Chief Officers and Heads of Service</p> <p>Assistant Director (Performance) with Principal Officer (Equalities & Diversity)</p>	<p>Equalities & Diversity linked into training on 2005/06 Service Planning</p> <p>Equalities objectives in relation to ESLG built into 2005/06 plans</p> <p>Assessment of compliance</p>	<p>September – December 2005</p> <p>March 2006</p> <p>July 2006</p>	<p>Equality Standard for Local Government RES CEP</p>	
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