

**West Berkshire Council**

**Equality Scheme**

**2010 - 2013**

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## Part 1

### Introduction

This is West Berkshire Council's first single equality scheme. It revises our Disability Equality Scheme, which ran until December 2009. It also draws from, and builds on, information previously published in our:

- Race Equality Scheme (2008-11)
- Gender Equality Scheme (2007-10)
- Comprehensive Equality Policy (2007-10)
- Corporate Equality Plan (2007-10)

West Berkshire Council's Single Equality Scheme sets out the processes that we have put in place to comply with our legislative duties with regard to equality, and describes how we will continue to build on these processes in order to ensure that all of our communities receive appropriate and accessible services, and that we are equally considerate of our duties regarding employment.

### Equality Statement

"West Berkshire Council will actively strive to address inequalities through its planning and delivery of services. All Council Members, employees, and agents will work to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and promote equality and good relations within all sections of the community. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation".

This scheme is organised into three sections:

- A description of how we are meeting each of our responsibilities under current equalities legislation;
- An overview of the diversity within the district of West Berkshire and, where available, a comparison with our employees;
- An action plan setting out the activity that we will undertake over the next three years.

This scheme has been developed as a result of wide spread consultation and involvement, and the activities identified in our action plan are aimed to address the issues arising from this consultation.

The action plan as reported in this scheme remains static, and reflects our position in March 2010. However in practice, our action plan is a live mechanism through which we are able to scrutinise our progress, and to record further activities, as they are

identified. Future reporting on this scheme will set out updates to the listed activities, and will also include additional actions identified along with their updates.

## **Our Responsibilities**

Public organisations are obliged to undertake particular activities in relation to disability, gender and race legislation. Current legislation has slightly different requirements for each of these diversity strands and there are currently no duties around age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Set out here is an amalgamated list of the general and specific duties that West Berkshire Council must adhere to.

### **General Duty**

When carrying out our functions, we must have due regard to the need to:

- Promote Equality of opportunity
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate harassment
- Promote positive attitudes
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

### **Specific Duties**

We are required to publish an equality scheme setting out the following information:

- How we involve and consult with people from different diversity groups in order to develop the Scheme and to inform the decisions that we make.
- How we assess our policies for equality issues.
- How we gather information in relation to employment, and delivery of education and other functions
- A report on our progress against previous equality schemes
- How we assess our functions and policies for their relevance to equality
- How we ensure that our information and services are accessible
- What activity we will undertake to investigate and if necessary address any gender pay gap

- ⇒ Our action plan for the next three years.

In agreeing our equality statement West Berkshire Council has made a commitment to extend our application of these duties to all diversity strands. In practice, we undertake to treat all people with the same level of fairness and respect. This single equality scheme will assist us in identifying activity to support this commitment.

For more detailed information about current legislation, including that around age, religion or belief and sexual orientation, please refer to Appendix A.

## **i. Involvement and Consultation**

In developing information for this equality scheme extensive consultation was undertaken both internally and externally. We have a number of mechanisms through which we undertake ongoing consultation, the results of which have fed into the development of this scheme.

The Council has produced a consultation toolkit which is used throughout the Council and is promoted for use when undertaking an equality impact assessment. We also have an online Consultation Finder which allows the results of consultations to be shared within the Council and helps to avoid consultation fatigue amongst consultees.

More information can be found at: <http://www.westberks.gov.uk/consultation>

Findings from equality impact assessments, or consultations undertaken for other business purposes, are also built into this scheme. We will continue to update our live action plan with these issues, and include these updates in our annual reports.

Employee survey – Internally, an employee survey is undertaken biennially which includes specific questions around equality issues. Some issues raised by the 2009 survey included - work life balance, and the reporting of harassment or bullying within the workplace.

The West Berkshire Minority Ethnic Forum hold regular Community Dialogue days, in which members of the community can raise issues of concern to them. These are relayed to the Council to inform our activity. Some key issues raised during these days included – the reporting of racist incidents in the West Berkshire area, and the need for a greater understanding of the needs of minority ethnic residents in relation to service provision (for example, leisure facilities, health needs).

The Disability Equality Scheme Scrutiny Board meets quarterly to discuss Council issues and raise awareness of the concerns of disabled people in the area. Members of the Board represent various disability groups in the area and are able to represent the views of these groups with the Council. Some of the key issues raised by this Board in 2009 were – the need to consult and communicate with the wider disabled community; consideration of the placement of street furniture; the introduction of barrier entry to some town centre car parks; and the involvement of this Board in decisions affecting travel concessions.

## ii. **Monitoring**

The Council's Annual Employment Report 2008-09 sets out the diversity of our work force including information on age, disability, gender and ethnic group. Data is now being collected from new employees on religion or belief and sexual orientation, and this information will be available in future reports.

## iii. **Achievements**

The following provides a summary of West Berkshire Council's key achievements in relation to equality over the past year. This section additionally includes an update on our regular activities throughout the year.

### o **Celebrating Diversity**

West Berkshire Council's Family Resource Service regularly holds events to recognise the diversity of our district. During 2009, the service has celebrated Chinese New Year and Black History Month. Plans are underway for 2010's events which will include Jewish Book week, and World Health Day.

### o **Changing Places toilets**

In November 2009, the first Changing Places toilet was opened in Newbury town centre. Negotiations are underway for a further two Changing Places toilets in the district.

### o **Taxis**

West Berkshire Council offers disability awareness training to all taxi drivers. This is currently on a voluntary basis, but it is intended to make the training mandatory for all new drivers in 2010.

### o **Disability Equality Scheme Scrutiny Board**

The Disability Equality Scheme Scrutiny Board have been involved in, or advised on, a number of Council activities over the last year. The Board have contributed to the West Berkshire Access Guide 2009.

Board members are also involved in the Council's:

- o Access Panel – to review planning applications with a view to identifying ways to improve access for people.
- o Home Care User Group – to review home care services provided by the Council and other agencies contracted by the Council.
- o Transport Forum – to raise awareness of issues experienced by disabled people when using public transport.

### ➤ **Including Everyone**

The Council has finalised an Including Everyone strategy to address one of our key priorities as set out in the Council Plan. This strategy draws together the themes of Equality, Community Cohesion and Social Inclusion, and becomes the overarching strategy setting our direction for equality. The strategy should be read in conjunction with this equality scheme as it includes an action plan and further examples of existing practice that contribute to our priorities relating to equality.

### ➤ **Stronger Communities Partnership**

The West Berkshire Stronger Communities Partnership was established in 2009 bringing together a number of business, voluntary and community groups from across the West Berkshire area. The partnership's approach is to build a sense of belonging, encourage community participation, reduce inequality and improve access to services for all.

More information can be found at: <http://www.westberkshirepartnership.org>

### ➤ **Improvement Initiatives**

In June this year, we worked with Reading Borough Council to review the way in which equality work was addressed in West Berkshire. A number of considerations were raised which the Council has incorporated. This included the formal adoption of equality work under the Including Everyone strategy in order to provide a clear vision and direction both to employees and service users.

### ➤ **Governance of Equality**

The Council revisited the governance arrangements for equality in light of the creation of the Including Everyone strategy. The existing corporate and directorate groups now report to the Including Everyone Programme Board which oversees all activity in relation to equality. New terms of reference for each group have been adopted to clarify the membership and expectations of each group.

### ➤ **Development of elected members and officers**

During the course of 2009, West Berkshire Council has worked with the West Berkshire Minority Ethnic Forum to arrange a number of 'Understanding British Muslim' workshops, inviting the Director of the Karimia Institute in Nottingham to present and discuss themes relating to Islam. Additionally, elected members and senior officers were invited to take part in a 'Muslim Mentoring Scheme' to share experiences and information on an individual level with members of our Muslim community.

West Berkshire Council more than doubled the number of internal equality and diversity training courses for officers in 2009 compared to previous years. This was in response to a demand for further training.



Elected members attended an equality workshop as part of their core development programme. This session focussed on understanding communities and their needs.

#### iv. **Equality Assessments**

Equality assessments allow the Council to be sure that the services we provide and the decisions we make are appropriate for the different groups of people that will be affected.

There are two key mechanisms for understanding our effect on different groups of people:

- **Function Assessments** provide a high level understanding of which areas within our organisation are relevant to equality issues
- **Equality Impact Assessments** are used to challenge specific decisions and practices to ensure that we do not discriminate, and provide us with an opportunity to look for areas where we can promote equality for our residents and employees.

The council's equality assessment guidance was reviewed in 2009. The new guidance introduces an annual function assessment process to replace the existing service area equality impact assessment process. Appendix B sets out the West Berkshire Council functions relevant to equality.

The Equality Impact Assessment process is split into two stages. The first is a screening process to understand any relevance to equality issues. This also helps to prioritise which impact assessments should be undertaken first when a number are due to be assessed.

The second stage applies to those decisions that have been assessed as relevant to equality issues. They are analysed in greater depth to fully understand and address the issues arising. The aim of the Stage Two assessment is to determine if the decision could have any adverse effects on people from different diversity groups. Changes can then be made or supplementary measures considered in order to mitigate any negative effects, or create positive effects.

#### v. **Accessible Information and Services**

##### **Access Policy**

West Berkshire Council is committed to identifying and removing any practices, procedures and physical barriers, which disadvantage people with disabilities. The Council has an Access Team who promotes and facilitates an inclusive environment for all the community.

##### **Information**

West Berkshire Council ensures that all publications are accessible to their audience by offering translation or transcription services where they are required. Guidance has been published internally to explain how to format information so that it is

accessible to the widest possible audience, with further information setting out when and how to obtain alternative formats.

### **Physical Environment**

The Council's Access Team champions disabled people in any areas where accessibility is, or could be an issue. This includes working with Council departments, developers, architects and the community, to promote and advise on physical access to buildings, transport and the environment, as well as access to information, goods and services.

### **Services**

Equality impact assessments are utilised in identifying how to improve our services to make them more accessible.

## **vi. Gender Pay Gap**

The Council is committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity in relation to income and career opportunities.

The 2009 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, produced by the Office for National Statistics, indicates an increase in earnings for both men and women compared to 2008 across the UK with women achieving a slightly greater increase than men. However women's earnings remain over 20% less than men. This is also reflected in earnings in the South East of England.

The Hay Job Evaluation Scheme (Local Government version) is used within the Council to ensure roles are graded, and rewarded, appropriately according to predetermined scales. It is considered non-discriminatory as it assesses the role, not the person in the role. In addition, the Council undertakes to carry out a review across the pay and reward structure which will inform us of any areas to be addressed.

## **vii. Action Plan**

West Berkshire Council has set out a number of actions that will be undertaken over the next three years. These are set out in Part 3.

Our action plan is live, and will be updated throughout the year with activity to address issues as they arise. On an annual basis, we will report on our progress against our action plan.

## Part 2

### Diversity within West Berkshire

The following information provides a summary of the diverse nature of West Berkshire's residents alongside a comparison with our employees.

Further details of the profile of the district are available in our District Profile at [www.westberks.gov.uk/research](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/research)

### Age Equality

The 2001 Census shows that the age profile in West Berkshire is very similar to the profile across the United Kingdom as a whole. The age profile of the area is:

#### *Age profile of West Berkshire*

	West Berkshire	England and Wales	West Berkshire Council
0 – 14 years	19.4%	18.9%	n/a
15 – 29 years	17.7%	18.8%	12.5%
30 – 44 years	24.4%	22.7%	33.9%
45 – 64 years	25.2%	23.8%	51.5%
65+ years	13.3%	15.9%	2.2%

*Source: 2001 Census*

*(Please note that West Berkshire Council's employee age profile does not directly compare to resident profiles due to younger and older residents being outside working age.)*

There are slightly fewer people of retirement age than the national average and slightly higher proportion of those under 16 years of age. Figures from the Office for National Statistics show that there is a higher than average proportion of children under the age of 16 living in Thatcham, Greenham and Bradfield wards, and a slightly higher proportion of residents of retirement age living in Northcroft and Speen wards.

A crucial issue facing the district is the growth in the numbers of people of retirement age. The mid-2007 population estimates do not show any significant change to these figures, although 17% of the population are now estimated to be of pensionable age. The increase in the older population continues to put pressure on Council services especially in the area of social care.

## Disability Equality

Although the residents of West Berkshire enjoy relatively good health when compared to the UK as a whole, the 2001 Census reported that just over 12% suffered from a long term limiting illness and a further 5% stated that their health was “not good”.

	West Berkshire	England and Wales	West Berkshire Council
Declared a disability using the DED definition	n/a	n/a	3.15%
Limiting long-term illness	12.4%	18.2%	n/a
General Health ‘not good’	5.5%	9.2%	n/a

Source: 2001 Census

*Please note: there is no direct comparison between employees and residents with a disability. This is partly because there is no universal definition. For example the definition used by the Disability Equality Duty (DED) includes people with mental health problems, whereas other surveys only count people with physical impairments.*

We know that disability affects many more people than the 3000 adults to whom we provide social care services. We also understand that some people do not necessarily consider themselves to be disabled, although they meet the definition of disability under the legislation. Such people may have hidden disabilities, for example mental health problems, dyslexia, or learning difficulties. Others may be affected by progressive conditions, such as multiple sclerosis or cancer.

## Gender Equality

The 2001 Census showed the split between men and women in West Berkshire to be almost exactly equal, with 49.6% being male and 50.4% being female.

	West Berkshire	England and Wales	West Berkshire Council
Male	49.6%	48.7%	24.5%
Female	50.4%	51.3%	75.5%

Source: 2001 Census

The percentages remain roughly equal from birth until the age of 70, when there is a marked and progressive increase in the female population, due to higher mortality amongst men.

## Race Equality

Evidence indicates that the local ethnic minority population increased by over 75% between the years 1991 and 2001. Despite this increase, the 2001 Census found the ethnic minority population to be only 2.63%, which is smaller than the other Berkshire unitary authorities and considerably smaller than the average across England & Wales, which was approximately 10%.

Although 2.63% is small proportion of the total West Berkshire population, it amounts to some 4,000 residents. Forecasts expect this trend to continue as second and third generation immigrants move to the District and as local employers recruit staff from abroad to fill labour shortages. Furthermore, a relatively small ethnic minority population can make the provision of culturally sensitive services and care more challenging.

	West Berkshire	England and Wales	West Berkshire Council
White	97.4%	90.9%	83.4%
Mixed	0.9%	1.3%	0.3%
Asian or Asian British	0.7%	4.0%	0.9%
Black or Black British	0.5%	2.1%	1.2%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	0.6%	0.9%	0.5%

Source: 2001 Census

Note: 13.7% of West Berkshire employees have chosen not to provide this information.

## Religion or Belief Equality

79% of West Berkshire residents regard themselves as having some religious affiliation. Whilst many of these people will not be actively involved in the worship activities, a substantial number are committed members of faith groups whose teachings to a greater or lesser extent guide their values and beliefs. Of those who answered the 2001 Census question on religion, 76% identified themselves as Christian - making this the largest faith community in the area. However there are over 2,000 people who identified themselves as belonging to another religion. Almost 1 in 6 people did not affiliate themselves to any religion.

The following table shows the other religions active in the District. In 2005 the first Mosque was opened in West Berkshire. This is part of the Bangladeshi Welfare Centre and based in Newbury. However, most ethnic minority groups worship outside the District. There are mosques in Reading, Bracknell, Basingstoke and Oxford. There are synagogues in Reading, Maidenhead, and Oxford, and Sikh Gurdwaras in Maidenhead and Basingstoke.

	West Berkshire	England and Wales	West Berkshire Council
Christian	75.9%	71.8%	n/a
Buddhist	0.2%	0.3%	
Hindu	0.2%	1.1%	
Jewish	0.2%	0.5%	
Muslim	0.4%	3.0%	
Sikh	0.1%	0.6%	
Other Religions	0.3%	0.3%	
No religion	15.7%	14.8%	
Religion not stated	6.9%	7.7%	

Source: 2001 Census

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### Sexual Orientation Equality

Various sociological and commercial surveys have produced a wide range of estimates about the number of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the United Kingdom but there remains no definitive figure. The Government estimates that between 5% and 7% of the adult population are lesbian, gay or bisexual (DTI, Final Regulatory Impact Assessment: Civil Partnership, 2004). This estimate is accepted by Stonewall, the national gay rights organisation.

Assuming the population of the District is consistent with national average, the number of gay adults in West Berkshire is approximately 8,000 people.

The gay and lesbian community face particular difficulties in relation to harassment and prejudice, as well as having specific needs in terms of services. The Council wants to ensure that no person is discriminated against on grounds of their sexual orientation, particularly in terms of accessing Council services or whilst employed by the Council.

The Council currently has little information to understand the specific issues in the West Berkshire area. The action plan associated with this scheme sets out our plans to address this.

In line with our Equality Statement, all service units are required to consider this strand of equality, in particular when carrying out annual service area function assessments, and will encourage disclosure to inform our services and employment practices.

## Part 3

### West Berkshire Council Equality Action Plan 2010 - 2013

The below action plan sets out the activities that West Berkshire Council will undertake over the next three years in order to address the requirements of current equalities legislation.

The actions relate to:

- How we communicate with, and understand the needs of our communities;
- Addressing issues in the West Berkshire area that have been raised through our consultation processes;
- Our internal processes, training and awareness raising.

Actions will be monitored on a quarterly basis with an annual report prepared and published stating our progress and noting any new activities that have been identified.

<b>Key:</b>	A	Actions relating to Age
	D	Actions relating to Disability
	G	Actions relating to Gender (including transgender)
	R	Actions relating to Race
	Re	Actions relating to Religion or Belief
	S	Actions relating to Sexual Orientation

<b>Action One:</b>									
<b>Maintain and develop improvements to accessibility of information and services</b>									
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
1	The equality statement is produced on all public documents to indicate information can be provided in alternative languages and accessible formats	Heads of Service	Ongoing	A	D		R		
2	To establish and monitor on a quarterly basis a number of performance measures in relation to access for disabled people.	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Mar-11		D				
3	Raise awareness of appropriate ways to provide accessible information, utilising existing corporate guidance.	Corporate and Directorate Including Everyone Groups	Ongoing	A	D		R		

4	Education Services to provide additional support and intervention for minority ethnic children for whom English is an additional language	School Improvement Advisor	Ongoing					R		
5	Education Services to provide targeted adult learning to specific groups e.g. travellers, Muslim women	School Improvement Advisor	Ongoing					R	Re	
6	Library Service to monitor the use of library stock, particularly material in foreign languages, to ensure that it reflects demand from all user groups, including materials for the partially sighted and World Fiction in popular languages	Library Services Manager	Ongoing		D			R		
7	Increase numbers of BME people accessing older people services.	Service Manager Acc, Ass & Rev	Mar-11					R		
8	To replace a minimum of 25 stiles across the district with more accessible structures over the next 12 months	Senior Rights of Way Officer	Mar-11	A	D	G				
9	Review annually the requirement for improvements to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tilehurst Footpath 7 (between Sulham Lane and Little Heath Road);</li> <li>▪ Newbury Footpath 28 (Kennet &amp; Avon Canal towpath west of West Mills) – resurfacing with a bound surface;</li> <li>▪ The section of towpath at Lock Island, near the town centre – resurfacing with a bound surface.</li> </ul>	Senior Rights of Way Officer	Ongoing	A	D	G				
10	Improvements to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cold Ash Footpath 27 (between Drove Lane and Bucklebury Alley – due by July 2010;</li> <li>▪ Streatley Footpath 24 (Thames Towpath south of Goring Bridge) – due by end of summer 2010.</li> </ul>	Senior Rights of Way Officer	Sep-10	A	D	G				
11	To keep under review the feasibility of enabling disabled people to use their concessionary bus passes before 9am.	Mike Trevallion (Transport Services Manager)	Ongoing		D					



12	Ensure information about 100% of services is available electronically.	Applications Development Manager	Oct-10	A	D	G	R	Re	S
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**Action Two:****Utilise WBC communications channels to raise awareness of, support and promote equality issues**

Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
13	All Heads of Service have a specific objective in their appraisal to promote the Single Equality Scheme and implement local activity	All Directors	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
14	Identify and support key events related to equality and diversity ensuring they meet the needs of our communities - e.g. Holocaust Memorial Day, Black History Month, etc.	Corporate Including Everyone Group	Dec-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S
15	Provide staff training on how to challenge and report inappropriate language or behaviour and hate crime	HR Manager Policy, Information and Development	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
16	Maintain informative intranet space for staff at all levels to access information, material and resources relating to current equality issues.	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
17	Quarterly bulletins issued to senior officers and members on equality legislation and related best practice	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
18	Council publications to reflect West Berkshire's diverse community	Print Supervisor	ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
19	Reporter and A Great Place To Live to promote equality through its articles	Public Relations Manager	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
20	Issue news releases to the media, where opportunity arises through activity of the Council and its partners that promote equalities.	Public Relations Manager	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S

21	Education Services to investigate possibility of West Berkshire joining the 'Linking Schools Network' Note the network links children from very different school communities through visits and joint working.	School Improvement Advisor	Mar-11				R	Re	
22	The Phoenix Centre, which specialises in providing services to people with learning disabilities, will continue to run events that raise awareness about cultural diversity.	Service Development Coordinator	Ongoing				R	Re	
23	Education Services to support training programmes within WBC schools to tackle bullying / hate crime	Principal Educational Psychologist	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
24	The identity and care needs of children in care, who are from black and minority ethnic communities, are respected, valued and enhanced	Locality Manager West/Central	Ongoing				R		
25	Library Service to run an ongoing range of programmes and activities ensuring that they reflect the cultural diversity of the community, involving as wide a range as possible and publicised to a wide range of groups representing all sectors of society. For example, VIP book group and Sunday Funday.	Library Services Manager	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S

<b>Action Three:</b>									
<b>To engage with communities regarding key decisions taken by West Berkshire Council</b>									
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
26	Service units to monitor and record take up of services according to race and take action as appropriate and evidence in annual Service Unit EIAs	Heads of Service	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
27	To investigate a mechanism for providing support and communication channels for employees, for example staff networks	Corporate Including Everyone Group	Mar-13	A	D	G	R	Re	S

28	To continue to support the West Berkshire Minority Ethnic Forum and consult the Forum on key issues.	Head of Policy & Communication	Mar-11					R		
29	To promote the consultation toolkit as the best practice guide to effectively consulting with different communities on key decisions and policy changes within West Berkshire.	Principal Policy Officer (Res & Consult)	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
30	To encourage the greater use of the community panel as a means of accessing the views of sections of the community, who may be difficult to identify and / or whose views may difficult to elicit.	Principal Policy Officer (Res & Consult)	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
31	To promote and facilitate access to different (non-WBC) consultative forums – through the LSP Public Involvement Board (PIB).	Principal Policy Officer (Res & Consult)	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
32	To update and promote Consultation Finder as a single repository of all consultation findings, ensuring that relevant and related findings are actively published in one place, reducing the duplication of effort in developing findings.	Policy Officer (Performance & Consult.)	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
33	To update and promote the District Profile as a single repository of all key research information, ensuring that relevant and related findings are actively published – and readily available - in one place.	Principal Policy Officer (Perf. Mgt.)	Jan-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
34	Maintain external scrutiny & engagement with representatives from disabled and carer groups	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Ongoing		D					
35	Obtain feedback from young people of BME background as to their experiences of local youth justice services to inform planning	Youth Offending Team Manager	Ongoing					R		
36	Improve flexibility of Community Mental Health Services to deliver culturally sensitive services by including this in a major review of the delivery of day services for people with Mental Health problems	Locality Manager	Mar-11					R	Re	

37	Community Services to maintain regular communications with service users regarding changes to community care by developing a co-ordinated user led organisation which can contribute to the development and scrutiny of services, and influence future commissioning	System Transformation Project Manager	Mar-11		D				
38	Transport Services Manager to meet with DES Board prior to annual review of travel concessions for consultative input.	Transport Services Manager	Ongoing		D				
39	Implement a schedule of audits to influence works and increase the percentage of buildings that meet current DDA requirements.	Head of Property	Ongoing		D				

<b>Action Four: To maintain the Transport Forum to ensure the involvement of disabled people in the provision of transport in West Berkshire</b>									
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
40	Needs re Bus Shelters to be raised initially with the Public Transport Officer within Transport Services who will liaise where appropriate with the Town and Parish Councils.	Senior Public Transport Officer	Ongoing		D				
41	The installation of Kassel Kerbs to continue as part of the Bus Infrastructure and Interchange improvement programme funded from Section 106 contributions. This is subject to annual review.	Senior Public Transport Officer	Ongoing		D				
42	Work with local bus operators to ensure 100% wheelchair accessible (low floor) bus fleet, having regard to the changing dimensions of wheelchairs	Transport Services Manager	Ongoing		D				
43	Transport Services to work with Newbury Buses to continue to ensure bus drivers receive disability awareness training and are informed of their duties under the DDA	Transport Services Manager	Ongoing		D				

44	Bus drivers continue to be trained in equality and diversity (Road Passenger Transport NVQ Level 2) to prevent racism	Transport Services Manager	Ongoing					R		
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**Action Five:**

**Undertake equality impact assessments on all key decisions taken by West Berkshire Council.**

Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
45	Equality Impact Assessments to be carried out on all new and revised policies, and other decisions requiring approval.	Heads of Service	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S
46	Revised equality impact assessment guidance to be implemented across WBC	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Jun-10	A	D	G	R	Re	S
47	Establish and publicise internally, a system for consistent publication of equality impact assessments	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Dec-10	A	D	G	R	Re	S

**Action Six:**

**To consider the need for action in relation to differences between the pay of men and women that are related to their sex.**

Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
48	Review our pay and reward structure to ensure that it is able to deliver an effective and efficient workforce to meet the future needs of the Council	Head of HR	Mar-11			G			
49	Take account of the requirements of the Equality Bill with regard to equal pay activity.	Head of HR	Mar-12			G			

<b>Action Seven: To ensure all elected members, employees, and contractors are aware of their responsibilities under equalities legislation</b>									
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
50	Develop and implement on-line refresher training on equality and diversity for employees.	HR Manager Policy, Information and Development	Mar-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S
51	Conduct annual member awareness training as part of the member core development programme.	Democratic Services and Equality Officer	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S

<b>Action Eight: To maintain this Equality Scheme</b>									
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S
52	Conduct an annual review of this equality scheme and publish results.	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Mar-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S
53	Review content of this action plan on an annual basis to include new actions identified during the previous year.	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Mar-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S
54	Provide training and development activities for diversity champions to enable them to fulfil their role of supporting their directorates and the Council as a whole.	Principal Policy Officer (Equal and Div)	Jun-10	A	D	G	R	Re	S
55	Establish links with communities in relation to age, religion or belief and sexual orientation in order to identify actions for future revisions of this action plan	Corporate Including Everyone Group	Mar-13	A				Re	S

<b>Action Nine:</b>										
<b>To utilise diversity monitoring to understand our internal and external communities.</b>										
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Re</b>	<b>S</b>	
56	Conduct an analysis of the diversity of service users including any trends, and to progress any necessary improvement activity	Heads of Service	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
57	Devise and implement a policy for diversity data collection (including qualitative and quantitative), assessment and use in corrective action as necessary to cover both employment and delivery of services. Set out categories to be used in data collection for consistency	Corporate Including Everyone Group	Mar-12	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
58	Routinely capture diversity data alongside customer and staff feedback to enable analysis of issues relating to diversity.	Corporate Including Everyone Group	Mar-13	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
59	Put in place actions to ensure compliance of contractors and suppliers to meet the WBC Equality in Employment policy. Monitor and review these actions	Corporate Contracts & Procurement Officer	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
60	Review recruitment procedures to identify and remove any barriers to particular groups of people.	Recruitment Manager	Ongoing	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
61	Monitor the educational achievement of all BME children and report to schools on areas for action or review. (Note the Council is an associate authority for the National Strategies Black Children's Achievement Programme)	School Improvement Advisor	Ongoing				R			
62	Human Resources to monitor & publish equality related HR indicators, including on applications, recruitment, and career progression, in future Annual Employment reports and use data to inform the refreshed Workforce Strategy	HR Manager Policy, Information and Development	May-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
63	Collect accurate data on equality and diversity in the workforce through self-service HR, when module becomes available, and use this to monitor impact of various staff policies and practices	HR Manager Policy, Information and Development	Mar-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S	

<b>Action Ten: To meet the requirements of the Achieving status of the Equality Framework for Local Government</b>										
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
64	Self assess against the Equality Framework for Local Government indicators and identify areas for action to ensure West Berkshire Council meets the 'Achieving' status.	Corporate Including Everyone Group	Mar-11	A	D	G	R	Re	S	

<b>Action Eleven: To utilise positive action initiatives to address known inequalities</b>										
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
65	Service units to take active steps to attract potential applicants from diverse backgrounds	Recruitment Manager	Mar-12	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
66	Establish positive action initiatives in retention and progression through the Council.	Recruitment Manager	Mar-12	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
67	Encourage the recruitment of foster carers and adopters from ethnic minority communities in order to provide the same cultural (or faith) placements. This will include ensuring recruitment campaigns for foster /adoptive carers reach BME communities.	Children's Services Manager	Ongoing				R			

<b>Action Twelve: To monitor corporate performance in relation to equalities through the use of performance indicators</b>										
Ref	Activities	Owner	Timescale	A	D	G	R	Re	S	
68	To review and revise Corporate Health Indicators for implementation in April 2010	Corporate Including Everyone Group	Apr-10	A	D	G	R	Re	S	



<b>Action Thirteen:</b>									
<b>To support people into work and maintain and monitor the accessibility of development opportunities</b>									
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Re</b>	<b>S</b>
69	Review existing work placement policies and procedures with involvement of outside agencies and consider actions to extend the range of work placements and how these can lead to paid employment	Recruitment Manager	Mar-11		<b>D</b>				
70	Analyse promotion data and career progression for staff with disabilities, and use this to report on and monitor opportunities for disabled people.	Recruitment Manager	Mar-12		<b>D</b>				
71	Analyse data on applications for training and number of disabled people trained and use this to report on and monitor impact.	HR Manager Policy, Information and Development	Mar-11		<b>D</b>				
72	Monitor communication about and provision of training and development opportunities to ensure suitability and accessibility	HR Manager Policy, Information and Development	Ongoing		<b>D</b>				
73	Monitor impact through biannual Employee Attitude Survey	HR Manager Policy, Information and Development	Ongoing		<b>D</b>				
74	Undertake feasibility study to determine the viability of implementing a final phase of the Timelord, i.e. enabling all staff at Market Street and Faraday the opportunity to work flexibly.	Timelord Programme Coordinator	May-10	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>G</b>		<b>Re</b>	
75	Assuming the feasibility study finds that the proposals are viable and members approve, implementation of Phase 3 will take place over 12 months June 2010-June 2011	Timelord Programme Coordinator	Jun-11	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>G</b>		<b>Re</b>	

<b>Action Fourteen: To undertake activity that promotes independence, particularly for vulnerable communities</b>									
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Re</b>	<b>S</b>
76	Report on the time taken to obtain way leaves for positioning street lights on buildings thereby allowing the removal of lighting from footpaths.	Principal Engineer (Projects)	Mar-13		<b>D</b>				
77	Continue to support appropriate organisations to provide refuge and outreach services for women and children experiencing domestic abuse	Contracts and Commissioning Manager	Ongoing			<b>G</b>			
78	Review the new draft Gypsy and Traveller policy one year after its implementation.	Head of Housing and Performance	Mar-11				<b>R</b>		
79	WBC to liaise with RSL partners to consider feasibility of including a target percentage of all new affordable housing to be built to wheelchair accessible standards	Housing Strategy Manager	Dec-11		<b>D</b>				
80	Consider establishing a link between licensing and planning to coordinate the approval of licences with disabled access to premises.	Environmental Health and Licensing Manager and Head of Planning and Trading Standards	Mar-11		<b>D</b>				
81	Promote and monitor Lifetime Homes policy within WBC	Head of Planning and Trading Standards	Ongoing		<b>D</b>				

## Appendices

### Appendix A – The Legislative Framework

#### Age

Age discrimination in employment became unlawful on 1st October 2006, under the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

The Regulations:

- Apply to everyone either in employment or seeking employment or vocational training.
- Apply equally what ever your age. This is not just about older people.
- Prohibit direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment on the grounds of age, or perceived age.
- Cover the whole of the employment relationship, from recruitment and selection through pay and benefits (including pensions and insurance) and training and promotion to termination, redundancy and retirement.

Any difference in treatment relating to age will need to be objectively justified or be proven to be a genuine occupational requirement.

Age discrimination can occur at any age, for example, young people may not be considered seriously for highly responsible roles, older people may not be considered as suitable candidates for training courses, and people in their middle years may fall foul of being too old in some situations but too young in others.

Age discrimination legislation does not currently cover the provision of goods or services.

#### Disability

The Disability Equality Duty came into force on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006. The general duty requires public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

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

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended in 2005 defines a person with a disability as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry our day to day activities.

This definition includes:

- People with cancer, HIV, and multiple sclerosis from the point of diagnosis.

- ⇒ People with progressive conditions are included from the point at which the condition has an effect on the person's ability to carry out day to day activities.
- ⇒ People who have a hearing or sight impairment (except where the person's sight can be corrected by glasses or contact lenses) or a significant mobility difficulty.
- ⇒ People with severe disfigurements are also covered by the Act.
- ⇒ People with hidden disabilities such as diabetes, epilepsy, dyslexia and people who have mental health conditions or learning difficulties.

Whilst the name of a given disability may be the same and there may be some common issues, the effect of the condition on each individual may be quite unique depending on any number of variables. We must therefore endeavour to always place the needs of the individual first when considering the best way to support them.

## **Gender**

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to place a statutory duty on all public authorities when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need:

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

This is the general duty and came into effect on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2007.

The General Duty as set out above protects men and women including transsexual people.

## **Race**

The Race Relations Act 1976 was amended in 2000 giving a duty to public authorities to promote race equality. The general duty states that we must:

- ⇒ eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- ⇒ promote equal opportunities
- ⇒ promote good relations between people from different racial groups

When talking about race, we must also recognise the recent changes in the dynamics of different racial groups, such as the impact of incoming communities and transient communities.

## **Religion or Belief**

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 provide protection to people against direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment on the grounds of religion or belief. This applies to all aspects of employment.

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 amends the Public Order Act 1986, to create offences involving stirring up hatred against persons on religious grounds. The legislation ensures that protection is provided to people against harm because of their religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs. The Act came into force in February 2007.

The Equality Act 2006 introduces provisions to protect people on the grounds of religion and belief in the area of goods, facilities and services. This replicates similar legislation in the areas of race and disability.

It is important to remember that legislation also includes belief systems that are not religions, for example atheism or agnosticism.

### **Sexual Orientation**

On 1 December 2003, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 came into force. This bans discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment and vocational training. Specifically it bans direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

The law protects everyone no matter what their sexual orientation: lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and heterosexuals. It also applies if discrimination is suffered because of a person's perceived sexual orientation whether the perception is correct or not.

The Equality Act 2006 provides for regulations to make it illegal to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation.

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## Appendix B – West Berkshire Council Functions and Policies relevant to Equality

<b>Chief Executive’s Directorate</b>
<b>Benefits and Exchequer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Payment of accounts (including housing benefit)</li> <li>⦿ Accounts receivable services</li> <li>⦿ Provision of Housing &amp; Council Tax Benefits admin service.</li> <li>⦿ Cashiers – provide facilities for receipt of monies</li> <li>⦿ Council Tax &amp; NNDR services</li> <li>⦿ Homecare finance service support</li> </ul>
<b>ICT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Availability &amp; suitability of the WBC &amp; WBC schools’ ICT business infrastructure &amp; systems</li> <li>⦿ Provision of technical assistance, training and support to WBC staff through the ICT Help Desk &amp; schools’ staff through the Schools ICT Help Desk</li> <li>⦿ Supporting the delivery of ICT and business projects</li> <li>⦿ Defining and enforcing policies including WBC’s ICT Policy, Business Continuity &amp; Information Security and developing and delivering the Council’s ICT Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Legal and Electoral</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Local Land Charges</li> <li>⦿ Electoral Services</li> <li>⦿ Registration Service</li> <li>⦿ Legal Services</li> </ul>
<b>Property</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Repairs and Maintenance</li> <li>⦿ Procurement, Contract Monitoring</li> <li>⦿ Estate Management</li> <li>⦿ Energy Management</li> <li>⦿ Asset Management Planning</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⦿ Maintaining and supporting operational services with advice on finance,</li> </ul>

accountancy, audit, & insurance

- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Procurement Strategy 2007 – 2011

### **Human Resources**

- Development of HR policies, procedures and associated management guidance
- Commissioning and provision of training
- Maintaining & encouraging good employee relations
- Maintaining HR records, including job descriptions and evaluation of grades
- Providing recruitment and selection service
- Provision employee counselling service (via external)
- Developing Workforce Strategy and contributing to the corporate equality schemes

### **Policy and Communications**

- Policy and Scrutiny Work
- Management of the Local Strategic Partnership
- Parish Planning
- Voluntary Sector Support
- Economic Development
- Consultation Toolkit and advice provided for exercises
- Specific consultations undertaken by the research & consultation team
- Public Relations
- Information (including complaints handling)
- Democratic Support
- Drafting and revising the Council Plan (sets out corporate priorities)
- The Sustainable Community Strategy
- The Council's Equality Policy and related Schemes

### **Safer Communities Partnership Team**

- Coordination of the West Berkshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team including commissioning of local drug treatment services
- Coordination of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership including the generation of an annual Partnership Strategic Assessment and Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Coordination of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme
- Coordination of the Anti-social Behaviour Panel and monitoring of ASBOs and ABCs

- ⇒ Coordination of Domestic Abuse Reduction
- ⇒ Management of the Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme
- ⇒ Management of the West Berkshire CCTV system
- ⇒ Analysis of community safety related data and management of the Partnership Intelligence Monitoring and Mapping System
- ⇒ Coordination of crime reduction initiatives
- ⇒ Coordination of the Shop Safe Scheme and monitoring of Exclusion Orders

### **Children and Young People Directorate**

#### **C&YP Directorate overall and the Children's Trust**

- ⇒ Berkshire Safeguarding Boards Child Protection procedures
- ⇒ Children and Young People Plan
- ⇒ Children in Care Policies

#### **Children's and Youth Services**

- ⇒ Safeguarding & Child Protection Services
- ⇒ Services to Vulnerable Children (inc disabled, children in need, UASC)
- ⇒ Family Placement Services (fostering, adoption)
- ⇒ Services to children in care
- ⇒ Youth Offending services

#### **Children's Commissioning and Quality**

- ⇒ Family Conferencing Services
- ⇒ Parenting Strategy
- ⇒ Restorative Community Conferencing
- ⇒ Child Protection Conferencing services
- ⇒ Research & Evaluation Services
- ⇒ School Profiling Service

#### **Customer Services**

- ⇒ Community Information Centres
- ⇒ Contact Centre
- ⇒ Customer Service Strategy



- ⇒ Council’s website (internet and extranet)

### **Education Services**

- ⇒ Access (funding, admissions, transport etc)
- ⇒ Adult and Community Learning
- ⇒ Support for Traveller & Asylum Seekers
- ⇒ School improvement strategies (including for BME)
- ⇒ Inclusion of SEN and looked after children
- ⇒ Alternative Curriculum Services (PRUs)
- ⇒ Early Years and Childcare
- ⇒ School Governor Support, Information and Training
- ⇒ Schools Admissions Policy
- ⇒ Adult & Community Learning Plan
- ⇒ Traveller Education Development Plan
- ⇒ Anti Bullying Policy

### **Community Services Directorate**

#### **Adult Social Care**

- ⇒ Assessment and care management services for adults with a learning disability in need of social care
- ⇒ Assessment and care management services for older people and adults with a physical disability in need of social care
- ⇒ Mental Health Act Assessments & Mental Capacity Assessments for adults in need of social care
- ⇒ Commissioning care services that will support Adults with a learning disability and mental health problems to remain in their own home
- ⇒ Commissioning care services that will support Older People and Adults with a physical disability to remain in their own home.
- ⇒ Provision of services to adults with a learning disability and mental health problems to enable them to maintain independence and improve quality of life.
- ⇒ Provision of services to support individuals maintain independence and improve quality of life
- ⇒ To lead a partnership for improving health & well-being through AUN2K and P2E
- ⇒ West Berkshire Partnership Health and Well Being Strategy

- Commissioning strategies for LD and MH services
- Care Management in West Berkshire Principles and Standards
- Service Plans
- Local Services for Local People
- Putting People First in West Berkshire Strategy
- Preparing for the Future plan

#### **Cultural Services (arts & leisure, heritage, tourism, libraries)**

- To improve access to existing cultural services and/or provide support and signposting to other service providers
- Operation of Leisure Centres
- Sports and Arts Development Programmes
- Operation of Library Services, including mobile services
- Tourism Information
- Museum
- Shaw House
- Archaeology

#### **Housing and Performance**

- Management of Common Housing Register & Choice Based Letting
- Homelessness prevention, assessment, and options
- Tenancy support to vulnerable households at risk of homelessness
- Enabling new affordable housing
- Homelessness Strategy
- Supporting People Strategy
- West Berkshire Allocations Policy
- Client financial services
- Staff Development and Training
- Safeguarding Adults against Abuse
- Providing Performance and Management Information
- Quality Assurance of social care services
- Public Information about adult social care services
- Contracts Management for adult social care services

<b>Environment Directorate</b>
<b>Countryside and Environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Countryside Management (including gypsy &amp; traveller liaison service)</li> <li>➤ Environmental Health &amp; Licensing</li> <li>➤ Grounds Maintenance</li> <li>➤ Waste Management</li> <li>➤ Gypsy &amp; Traveller Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Highways and Transport</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provision of highway maintenance, lighting, street works and highway structures</li> <li>➤ Car parking</li> <li>➤ Highways Development Control</li> <li>➤ Procurement of transport services</li> <li>➤ Traffic management and road safety</li> <li>➤ Delivery of Highway improvements.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning and Trading Standards</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Planning &amp; Trading Standards Services</li> <li>➤ Trading Standards – Enforcement</li> <li>➤ Local Transport Plan</li> <li>➤ Building Regulation Service – Applications and enforcement</li> <li>➤ Development Control Service – Applications and enforcement</li> </ul>

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**How to comment on this Scheme**

The Council welcomes comments on this Scheme. Please send any comments to Elaine Walker at:

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**If you require this information in an alternative format or translation please contact Elaine Walker at [ewalker@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:ewalker@westberks.gov.uk)**