



Race Equality Scheme

1. RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

Hart District Council believes that the interests of staff and the Council are best served by the formulation and implementation of clear and consistent policies and procedures. This Scheme shows how the Council's policy on Race Equality will be implemented. It takes into consideration all legal requirements and will be applied in accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity Commitment to treat all of the people of Hart and the Council's employees with dignity and respect.

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and McPherson report, the government introduced the race relations (Amendment) Act in 2000 in recognition of widespread institutional discrimination. This new Act strengthened previous legislation and placed new duties on all public authorities. These new duties are designed to make sure that public authorities positively promote racial equality and that employment and services (including those services that are provided for them through other organisations) are fair and accessible for everyone.

Under the duty, when carrying out its functions, the Council must aim to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity, and
- promote good race relations between people of different racial groups

To meet its duty, the council was required to set out in a Race Equality Scheme on how it proposed to fulfil its duties. This document is intended to fulfil that statutory requirement and provides the Council with an opportunity to explain the values, principles and standards that guide its approach to race equality.

The drive to improve performance, openness and accountability is rapidly changing the way public authorities think and work. As the population becomes more diverse, the need to mainstream diversity and equality considerations become greater. The Council is committed to the removal of all barriers which might result in less equal treatment of any group/individual. The Race Equality Scheme will ensure the inclusion of diversity and equality issues when seeking to improve service delivery and respond to the needs and aspirations of local people. The scheme will enable us to assess whether there is any adverse impact in any of our service delivery or policies (including for staff) on the grounds of race, colour, ethnicity or national origin.

The Council's Equality and Diversity Commitment has been designed to integrate with existing initiatives to provide the Council with a consistent and systematic framework through which it can incorporate equality within all stages of its activities.

Policies relating to Race, Sexual Discrimination, Disability, Religion/Belief, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Reassignment will be driven by the Equality and Diversity Commitment and will be covered in more detail in the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy.

2. **STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 2.1 Race equality alongside other issues of equality will be an integral part of the Council's wider activities.

This means equality for all the users of its services, those requiring access to Council information and those who are or could be employed by the Council.

3. **WHAT IS A RACE EQUALITY SCHEME?**

The Race Equality Scheme is required to meet the statutory general duty and specific duties which have been placed on the Council under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The general duty as set out in Section 71(1) of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.

4. **THE GENERAL DUTY**

- eliminating unlawful racial discrimination; and
- to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups

- 4.1 There are four main principles of this duty:

4.1.1 **Obligatory**

Hart District Council aims to make race equality a central part of any policy or service that is relevant to the duty. Hart's approach involves building responsibilities into the work already undertaken, adapting plans, policies and prioritising as appropriate. This approach involves mainstreaming race equality into all areas of the Council's service.

4.1.2 **Relevant**

Race equality will always be relevant when delivering services and in working relations with contractors and partners. All functions will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis in line with Council policy, as is required by the Race Relations Amendment Act.

4.1.3 **Proportionate**

All policies and services will be reviewed. The highest priority is given to those functions and policies that have the greatest potential to affect different racial groups in different ways.

4.1.4 **Complementary**

Hart District Council will seek to meet all three parts of the general duty,

- ◆ eliminating unlawful racial discrimination
- ◆ promoting equal opportunities

- ◆ promoting good relations between people from different racial groups.

These three parts support each other and, in practice, they may overlap. However, it is important to remember that the three parts are different and that achieving one of them may not lead to achieving all three.

In practice this means making sure that the general duty is central to the way we carry out any function where race equality is relevant.

4.2.1 Over the next three years Hart District Council will screen all policies and functions in line with the three complementary parts of the general duty by conducting impact assessments.

4.2.2 Corporate Directors and Heads of Service are responsible for the review of policies and procedures in line with the general duty. The screening process includes a methodology to assess the impact of policies and services on any group or individual. Those policies and services assessed to have the greatest impact will be given the highest priority for review. A similar assessment process will be applied to all new policies and strategies as they are developing, so that race equality will become part of the process of policy development.

4.2.3 Strategically, to meet the general duty, Hart will:

- make services available and accessible to all members of the community
- establish the issues affecting minority groups within the community
- accept race issues are accepted as a corporate responsibility with management accountability at all levels in the organisation
- develop the awareness and understanding of all staff of race and equality issues at all levels throughout the organisation
- strengthen policies and promote practices which enable all groups to contribute effectively

Race equality alongside other issues of equality will be an integral part of the Council's wider activities. This means equality for all the users of its services, those requiring access to Council information and those who are or could be employed by the Council.

5 **SPECIFIC DUTIES**

5.1 There are two specific duties:

- policy and service delivery
- employment

5.2 Meeting the Specific Duty – Policy and Service Delivery¹

5.2.1 Hart's impact assessment will consider:

- the impact on equality of opportunity for all racial groups
- the impact on relations between different racial groups
- the elimination of any adverse impact via an action plan for change
- the reduction of any unavoidable adverse impact
- the need for further research or consultation

Our initial assessment on the level of impact of all areas of service delivery is shown in Appendix 1.

5.2.2 Specific Duty – Employment

1. The Council will seek to ensure equality of treatment and access to services for all staff and customers.
2. No person or group of persons applying for employment, services or contracts with the Council will be treated less favourably than any other person or group of persons on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, belief, disability, marital status, age, trade union membership or political beliefs.
3. The Council recognises that there is not a level playing field in employment and that different groups have not, historically, had equal access to jobs at all levels. It recognises that it is lawful and appropriate to take positive action measures (as described in the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act and the 1976 Race Relations Act) to positively encourage applications from under represented groups. Similarly, the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act obliges the Council to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can be employed. This means that we can reach the best person for the job from a wide pool of applicants.
4. The Council will recruit, retain and develop people based solely on their abilities to perform the job ie the best person for the job.
5. In hiring contractors or other bodies to work for it, the Council will highlight its own commitment to equality of opportunities and require contractors or other bodies to comply with it also, including current guidance and Codes of Practice.
6. The policies and practices of the Council will be reviewed over a 3 year period to ensure that they do not discriminate directly or indirectly against employees, potential employees, customers or grant-aided bodies.

¹ In this context "service delivery" means the full range of an Council's external functions, including regulation and enforcement.

7. From April 2002 the Council has monitored staff in post, applicants for posts and applicants for promotion with regard to ethnic background. We also monitor applications for training on the same grounds. This information – using the 2001 Census definitions – is gathered either directly from staff or from monitoring sheets issued with job application forms.

6. **ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 The likely impact of a policy or proposed policy on any group or individual will be assessed through the criteria listed below:

- existing data information
- population data
- research findings
- benchmarking with other authorities
- consultation with all relevant groups on policy or proposed policy
- investigate causes and reasons for inequalities
- consider what changes to the policy will remove any adverse impact
- where new policies are being developed this process will be followed
- any complaints will be monitored in line with our Complaints Policy

6.2 **Monitoring**

- 6.2.1 The Council will monitor existing, revised and proposed policies for adverse impact on race equality over a 3 year period. It will do this by:

- the review and improvement of data collection methodology
- analysing results
- measuring the impact of policy and services of affected groups/individuals
- taking positive action to review policies and services
- preparing management information reports
- examining complaints

7. **CURRENT STATUS**

- 7.1 Hart District Council already has a policy on equality in relation to employment. As part of this Scheme, the Equal Opportunities policy has been reviewed and adopted in February 2005. Hart District Council already monitors its workforce to ensure that all applicants, regardless of ethnic origin are treated fairly when seeking employment with the Council. This document goes further to address the issue of equality generally and to put in place a clear plan as to how it intends to achieve its goal of avoiding any adverse impact on the grounds of race.

8. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- 8.1 Hart District Council recognises that a variety of different people live and work in the district and aims to promote and achieve equality of opportunity and good race relations, including the delivery of services to the community, as one of the main employers in the district.

An equal opportunity organisation is one that uses everyone's talents and individual contribution is encouraged and differences valued. It is important that Hart is a good equal opportunities employer and an effective service provider because:

- a diverse workforce reflecting our community results in a better informed, more adaptable organisation which has closer links to our community
- improved staff morale helps us to retain staff, reducing recruitment costs
- a stable, motivated workforce achieves high productivity and is committed to the Council.

This policy should not be looked at in isolation and is part of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy which was updated and adopted in February 2005.

9. HART'S ETHNIC MINORITY POPULATION AND THE COUNCIL'S WORKFORCE

- 9.1 The 2001 census showed that 2.32% of the population of Hart are from ethnic minorities.

75% of the population of Hart were economically active, of these 2.26% were from ethnic minorities.

The current workforce of the Council broadly reflects the above percentages. However, constant monitoring will be undertaken to ensure this continues.

- 9.2 In areas like Hart where there is a relatively small and scattered black and ethnic minority population, the isolation and lack of support networks potentially makes more difficulties for this community. Consequently, this scheme seeks to ensure that the active promotion of race equality is consistent with the Council's approach to the delivery of excellent services to the community of Hart and is an important aspect of its community leadership role as well as being a statutory duty.

With a relatively small workforce, the employment implications for race equality will focus on developing an organisational culture that values diversity and is consistent with the Council's approach as an 'Investor in People'.

10. CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 10.1 There are difficulties in collecting meaningful data in an area like Hart that has a relatively small ethnic minority population.

A range of diverse consultation methods are to be employed and a list of proposed consultees is attached at Appendix 2. We also intend to interview individual black and ethnic minority people through using a 'snowball' technique to reach them ie meeting with an individual and gaining information about other individuals. The consultation will enable us to monitor progress with promotion of race equality, together with gender and disability and other equalities issues as appropriate

Consultation methodology will be sensitive to the needs of the groups being consulted.

11. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

11.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, all members of the community have access to information and the services it provides. We signpost information that we are able to provide translation.

Translation services are provided by Language Line, a telephone interpreting service with access to over 28 languages, is available at the Civic Offices and staff have been trained to access this facility when required.

11.1 To demonstrate our commitment to openness and the promoting of racial equality, Hart will publish:

- regular progress/status reports will be published in the following ways:
- Hart District Council website (www.hart.gov.uk)
- copies available from the Civic Offices reception
- summaries in Hart News
- by inclusion on relevant Council, cabinet, committee and panel meeting agendas
- summary reports in a range of appropriate formats on request
- the Council's publication scheme

12. TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Fundamental to the implementation of the Race Equality Scheme is effective communication and training.

Council staff are responsible in varying degrees, for making sure that the Council meets its general statutory duty under race relations legislation (ie to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations between people of different racial groups).

According to their level of need, all staff are being provided with sufficient training to equip them with the knowledge and skills to perform these duties. As a minimum, all staff undergo general awareness training. More focussed training is provided for Heads of Service and Managers.

Training is also provided for Members.

All employees and elected Members will also have access to a full copy of the scheme.

13. OUR ACTION PLAN AND TIMETABLE

The Action Plan and Timetable shown in Appendix 3 summarises the actions which the Council will take following the publication of this Race Equality Scheme. The Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

14. **HOW WE WILL DEAL WITH RACE EQUALITY COMPLAINTS**

The Council will respond to complaints and will seek a speedy resolution in the first instance. An individual or group should register their complaint in accordance with the Council's complaints procedure, copies of which are available on request. Contact Corporate Support at the following address:

Corporate Support
Hart District Council
Civic Offices
Harlington Way
Fleet
Hampshire
GU51 4AE

Telephone: 01252 774454

Fax: 01252 774409

e-mail: equalities@hart.gov.uk

15. **REVIEW OF THE SCHEME**

Within three years of publishing this Scheme, a formal review will be undertaken. The scheme will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis and a formal review will be conducted to evaluate its effectiveness in complying with the Council's statutory obligations. This review will include an assessment of how the Council has complied with the General and Specific Duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and how eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good race relations have been advanced.

16. **COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC**

Elaine Cooper, The Head of Community and Customer Service, is the contact for any issues regarding the Scheme (email: elainecooper@hart.gov.uk, telephone no. 01252 774494).

The March 2005 edition of the Hart News drew the public's attention to the Race Equality Policy and to the draft Race Equality Scheme.

The Council's internet site is used to inform the public about the Race Equality Policy and Race Equality Scheme.

The Council's Racial Equality Policy and revised Race Equality Scheme will be drawn to the attention of the Council's partners, contractors and other stakeholders in a consultation process, see Appendix 2. It will be made clear to those bodies that the Council expects its own race equality standards to apply.

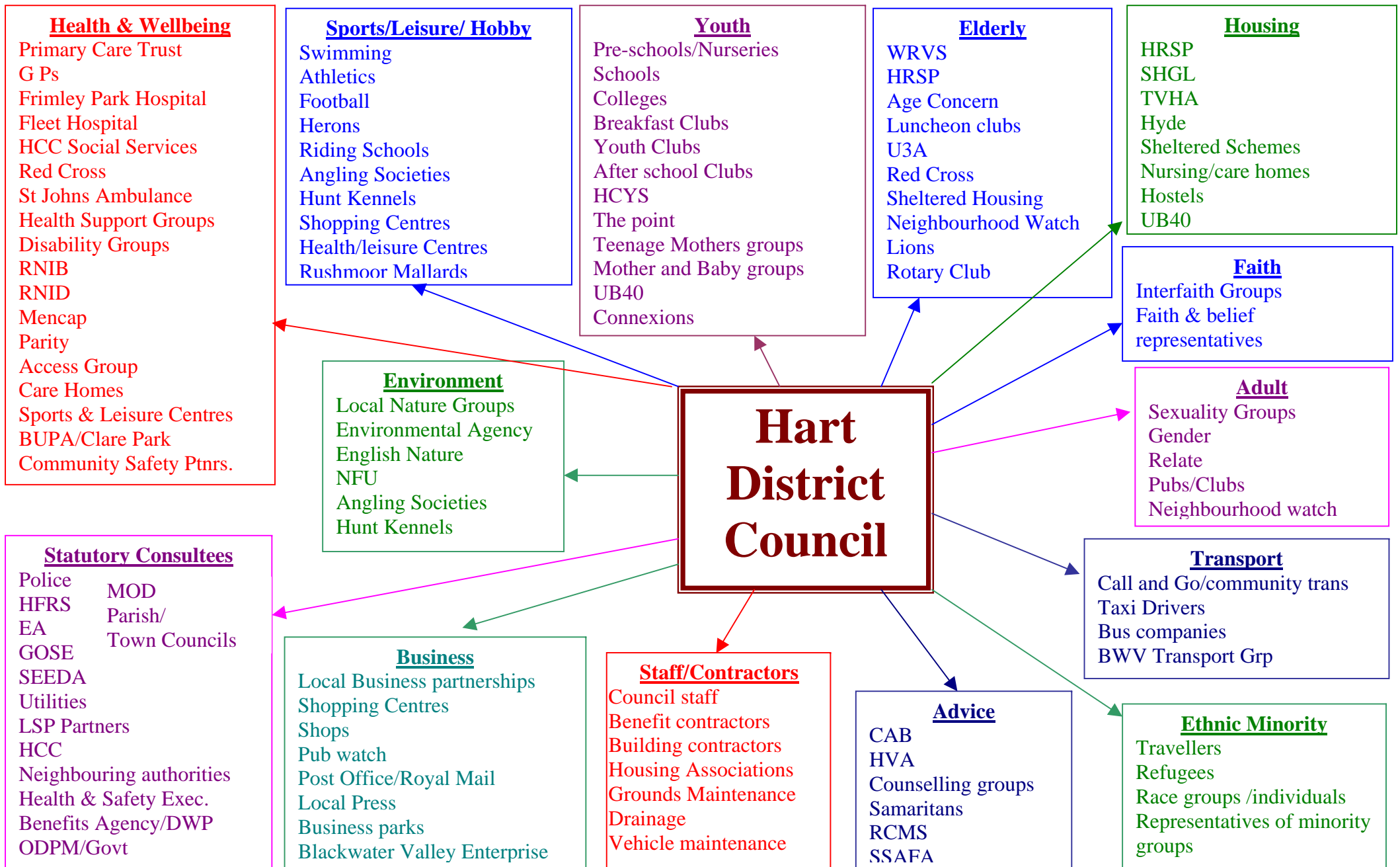
Priority	Criteria	Characteristics
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of negative outcomes on different racial and other groups • Evidence of significant public concern on how different groups are treated or services delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontline outward services which exercise considerable power/influence over different groups or individuals • Strategic planning functions with direct impact on how services are organised
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some evidence that different groups could be treated differently • Evidence of some public concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front line services with day-day-day contact with residents but where there is less scope/evidence for or evidence of discriminatory outcomes • Strategic functions, which could influence how different groups are treated
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no evidence that different groups <u>could</u> be discriminated against 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Back office” support functions, which support other Council services

Item	Priority – High, Medium, Low		Item	Priority – High, Medium, Low
Human Resources			Engineering & Transport	
Recruitment	High		Highways	Low
Training/development	Medium		Flooding	Low
Access to information	High		Car Parking	Medium
Harassment procedure	High		Capital Programme	Low
Health & Safety	Low		Emergency Planning	High
Staff policies and procedures	Medium		Building Maintenance	Medium
Employee Relations	Medium		Community Transport	Medium
Advice and Guidance	Medium			
Regulatory Services			Performance & Innovation	
Environmental Health	High		Performance meeting/continuous improvement	Medium
Licensing	Low		External Funding	Low
Pest Control	Low		Special Projects	Medium
Building Control	Medium		Audit	High
Cemeteries	High		Corporate Plan/BVPP	Medium
Dog Warden	Low		Risk Management	Medium

Item	Priority – High, Medium, Low		Item	Priority – High, Medium, Low
Housing			Legal & Democratic Services	
Housing Association	High		Legal	Low
Affordable Housing	High		Monitoring	High
Careline	High		Member Support	Medium
Private Sector Housing	High		Elections	Medium
Homelessness	High		Reprographics	Low
Public Spaces			Revenues & Benefits	
Refuse	Medium		Council Tax	High
Recycling	Medium		Business Rates	Low
Grounds Maintenance	Low		Housing Benefit	High
Parks & Open Spaces	Medium		Benefit Fraud	High
Countryside	Low		Concessionary Travel	High
Public Conveniences	Medium		Meals on Wheels	High
Finance				
Accountancy	Low			
Payments	Low			
Insurance	Low			
Financial Advice	Medium			

Item	Priority – High, Medium, Low		Item	Priority – High, Medium, Low
Leisure			Planning	
Leisure Centres	High		Policy	Low
Sports Pitches	High		Development Control and Enforcement	Low
Community Centres	High		Landscape & Conservation	Low
Tourism	Medium		Economic Development	Low
Health	Low		Agenda 21	Low
			LSP Environmental Land Charges	Low
Community & Customer Services			Information & Communication	
Community Support/access to services	High		Data Protection	Low
Partnerships (inc voluntary sector, LSP)	Medium		Freedom of Information	Low
Grants	High		E-Government	Low
Town/Parish Councils	Low		Press, Public Relations	Medium
Community Safety	High		Marketing	Medium
Customer Services	Medium		Voice Communications	Medium
Reception	High		Technical/IT support/development	Low
CCTV	Medium		Project Management	Medium
Youth	High		Business Systems	Low
			Communication and ICT Strategy	Medium
			Internet/Intranet	Medium

APPENDIX 2 - LIST OF PROPOSED CONSULTEES



HART DISTRICT COUNCIL RACE EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

The purpose of this document is to set out the action which the Council is taking to ensure compliance and implement best practice in accordance with the duties placed on it by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. **It is the Race element of the Equality and Diversity commitment Action plan**

Policies, practices and procedures

Activity	Action Required	Resource	Timescale	Status
<p>Establish a written Race Equality Scheme.</p> <p>The Scheme should reflect the corporate Race Equality Policy, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and relevant CRE Code of Practice.</p> <p>The Policy has been the subject of consultation with service users.</p>	Individual service plans and service/best value reviews to incorporate equalities and race equality components throughout. RES to be produced	Equalities Working Group	March 2005	Completed
All new policies to be assessed for impact on ethnic minority groups and individuals.	Systems in place to ensure new policies are monitored and inclusive.	Human Resources	July 2004	Completed
Using service-planning procedures, identify all Council functions and assess against standard questionnaire, the level of impact on race equality and actions needed.	All functions reviewed.	All Heads of Service	March 2006	Initial level of impact identified. Further impact assessment and actions to be identified by March 2006.

Activity	Action Required	Resource	Timescale	Status
Service delivery				
Use Equalities Assessment Framework to assess current performance against corporate and service priorities in all best value reviews and for impact assessment under the Race Equality Scheme	Any and all service reviews at service level must take into account race equality issues.	All services	March 2007	On Schedule
Implement and maintain equalities monitoring schemes to monitor national performance indicators and service usage on race	Monitor against appropriate Best Value performance indicators	All	From June 05 ongoing	On Schedule
Complaints procedure to record racist incidents and monitor profile of complaints	Racist incidence reporting form to be made widely available	Corporate Support	June 2005	Pilot Scheme to be trialled from June 2005
All published information to be accessible to ensure wide accessibility of information and access points for services.	Process to ensure signposting of availability of information in other languages (and formats)	Head of Customer & Community Services Head of Information & Communication	January 2007	On Schedule
Develop use of information technology to publish information as a way of increasing access to information (e-government)	HDC website. Corporate programmes link with Corporate Directors Freedom of Information and Customer Relations Management	Head of Information & Communications	January 2007	On Schedule
Use interpretation facilities, Language Line and plain English.	Customer service/information/storage Ensure all staff aware of how to access language line	Community & Customer Services	June 2005	On schedule

Activity	Action Required	Resource	Timescale	Status
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Contracting

Partnership, contractual and tendering arrangements to include race equality measures, including requirement to have an equal opportunities policy and recognition that the requirement to promote race equality devolves to contractors	Clauses in all new or renewed contracts	Democratic & Legal Services	March 2005	Completed
Develop systems to monitor compliance	Establish monitoring procedure	Democratic & Legal Services	March 2006	On schedule
Job descriptions to include accountability for race and other equalities	Standard clause	Human Resources	2002	Completed
Exit interviews to be conducted and results recorded.	Ongoing	Human Resources	2003	Completed
HR database able to produce data on applicants, disciplinaries, grievance actions, leavers, training etc.	Reports will be set up on new HR information system.	Human Resources	September 2005	On Schedule
Annual workforce data audit to update information to all staff on race equality	Staff profiles will be distributed on an annual basis via HR information system and amendments made	Human Resources	Sept 2005	On Schedule

Training and Development

All staff and Members to receive training to	Training programme to be produced by March	Human Resources	September	On Schedule
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Activity	Action Required	Resource	Timescale	Status
understand their role in implementing race and equalities issues	2005 and implemented by September 2005		2005	
Induction programme to include equalities responsibilities and duty to promote race equality	All new employees to gain awareness of equalities responsibilities	Human Resources	May 2004	Completed
Ensure links with Investors in People	Annual review to include race and other equalities issues	Human Resources	July 2004	Completed
Work with other public bodies and voluntary organisations to develop opportunities for minority ethnic community groups to include race with decision-making process.	To be included in all elements of partnership liaison undertaken and to be written into the programme of social inclusion work at the Hook One Stop Shop	Community & Customer Services	December 2005	On Schedule
Where there is no minority ethnic representation, work with partners, including local strategic partnerships (LSP) to enable this to happen.	To actively seek engagement through the corporate consultation process and to establish appropriate mechanisms for two-way communication.	Community & Customer Services	December 2005	On Schedule
Ensure that consultations undertaken should gather race and other equalities monitoring data of respondents.	Corporate Consultation Policy including monitoring data of respondents.	Corporate Directors	December 2005	On Schedule
User satisfaction questionnaires to include questions relating to fair service access eg minority ethnic residents.	Corporate Consultation Policy User satisfaction surveys	Corporate Directors	December 2005	On Schedule