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Vale of White Horse District Council

Equality and Diversity Scheme

2008/09 – 2010/11

Version control

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Vale is a remarkable area in which to live work or visit. It enjoys high levels of employment, prosperity and a good quality of life. However, this cannot be taken for granted and within the district there are pockets of deprivation and people who find it more difficult to access public services.

At the Vale of White Horse District Council, our vision is to build and safeguard a fair, open and compassionate community. We are committed to the principle of equal opportunities and aim to deliver accessible services and employment opportunities which meet the needs of all our residents and employees.

Our Equality and Diversity Scheme 2008/09 – 2010/11

We have produced our Equality and Diversity Scheme 2008/09 – 2010/11 to help us deliver our vision. It also helps us to meet relevant statutory duties, including those relating to disability, gender and race equality.

Building on what we've already achieved, this Scheme states our overall commitment and approach to equal opportunities. It also sets out the things we will be doing specifically to promote disability, race¹ and gender equality. It has a detailed action plan which sets out all of the things we are going to do over the next three years to improve access to our services.

The scheme covers all of our service and employment functions as well as the partnerships we are involved in and the contractors who work on our behalf.

The beneficiaries of this Scheme will be Council staff, councillors and service users. All staff and councillors are responsible for delivering the commitments and actions in this document.

To help us develop this Scheme, we have sought feedback from representative organisations, service users and Council employees². We have also looked at performance data and the results of a corporate equalities audit we carried out in spring 2007.

In order for this Scheme to be effective, it needs to be managed as a working document. Therefore, we will review this Scheme annually and report on the progress we make against the action plan. It will be fully revised in three years time.

¹ The race equality section of this Scheme consists of the Council's Race Equality Scheme which was adopted in March 2007 (prior to the development of this Scheme).

² Consultation on our Equality and Diversity Scheme did not include the section on Race Equality (it was subject to its own consultation prior to the development of this Scheme)

Our overall approach to equality and diversity (cross cutting issues) covers:

- Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity
- Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)
- Involvement and participation
- Being a fair employer
- Support for Councillors on equality and diversity issues
- Procurement and partnerships
- Addressing complaints effectively
- Access to information about council services

In addition to these, we have set out specific disability, gender and race equality objectives.

Our priority areas for action on disability equality are:

- Improving access to information for disabled people about the services we and others deliver
- Raising awareness about our services to disabled people
- Supporting our staff to help meet the needs of disabled service users
- Making community and council events accessible for disabled people
- Improving access to our employment opportunities for disabled people
- Improving access to our local town centres
- Raising awareness about reporting disability harassment

Our priority areas for action on gender equality are:

- Raising the Council's profile as a family-friendly employer
- Maintaining our fair and equal approach to pay
- Breaking down any gender based segregation in relation to particular job areas
- Helping to address women's concerns about personal safety
- Raising awareness about transphobic harassment
- Helping to improve the health of men and women in the Vale

Our priority areas for action on race equality are:

- Understanding our new migrant communities
- Improving access to information about our services for people from ethnic minorities
- Raising awareness about our services to people from ethnic minority communities

Timescales, responsibilities and other details for all these areas for action are set out in the Corporate Equalities Action Plan 2008/09-2010/11, at the back of this Scheme

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHEME

Equality and diversity: the Council's vision and commitment

Our vision is to build and safeguard a fair, open and compassionate community

At the Vale of White Horse District Council, we are committed to the principle of equal opportunities.

We are committed to delivering our services to residents and valuing our employees equally irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, family responsibility, trade union membership, whether they are suffering from a severe illness or any other irrelevant factor.

Providing our services and employment opportunities in an equal way does not mean treating everybody in the same way. It means that we recognise and value difference and respect our staff and service users as individuals. We therefore strive to provide our services and employment opportunities in ways which meet people's needs in a positive and proactive way.

This commitment is reflected in the Council's corporate priorities to "improve and modernise access to services" and "build our capacity through managerial and organisational development."

What is an Equality and Diversity Scheme and why have we got one?

To help us achieve our vision and commitment and move from principle to practice, we have produced our Equality and Diversity Scheme for 2008/09 – 2010/11.

This Scheme builds on the positive work the Council has already done to make its services and employment opportunities more accessible for everyone. Setting out all of our equality and diversity commitments, objectives and actions in one single document, it will help us approach our work in this area in a co-ordinated way.

It helps us to fulfill our statutory duties arising from the:

- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986
- Equality Act 2006
- Equal Pay Act 1970 and Equal Pay (Amendments) Regulations 2003

- Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

In addition, the actions set out in this Scheme will help the Council provide customer focused service for everybody and an accessible and fair working environment for its employees and councillors. These outcomes will help the council achieve good value for money and high levels of customer and staff satisfaction.

Promoting disability, race and gender equality through this Scheme

In addition to stating our commitment to equal opportunities, the Scheme looks in detail at how we will ensure our services and employment opportunities meet the needs of disabled people, women and men and people from ethnic minority communities³. It does this by:

- highlighting cross cutting issues which relate to all three groups of people
- identifying examples of good practice in the way we provide our services and employment opportunities which specifically benefit each group
- setting out priority areas for action which will make our services and employment opportunities more inclusive and accessible for each group (these are set out in detail in the Corporate Equalities Action Plan at the back of the Scheme)

We are focusing on making sure our services and employment opportunities meet the needs of these groups because they are more likely to experience acute discrimination and inequality when trying to access services and employment. They are also protected in law, and we have a statutory duty to document how we will promote race, disability and gender equality in everything we do.

What functions does this Scheme cover?

Our Equality and Diversity Scheme covers all of our service and employment functions as well as the partnerships we are involved in and the contractors who work on our behalf.

³ The race equality section of this Scheme consists of the Council's Race Equality Scheme which was adopted in March 2007 (prior to the development of this Scheme).

Who is this Scheme for and who is responsible for managing and delivering it?

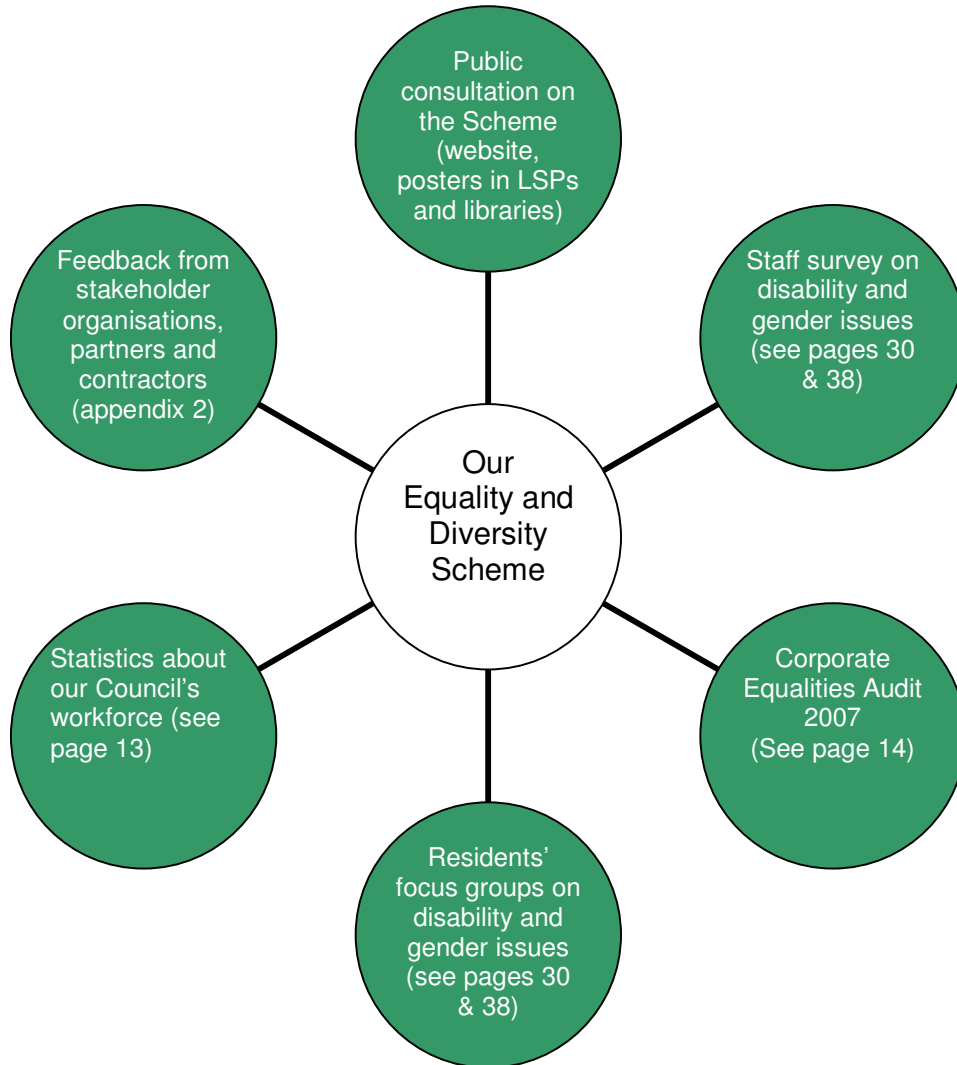
The beneficiaries of this Scheme will be Council staff, councillors and service users.

Everyone at Vale of White Horse District Council is responsible for providing the Council's services and employment opportunities in a fair and equal way. Therefore, all staff and councillors are responsible for delivering the commitments and actions set out in this Scheme.

Some members of staff and councillors have particular responsibilities to ensure that the Council's work on equality and diversity moves forward in a positive direction:

- The Council's Executive is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the our services meet the needs of our all our residents and employees
- Accountability for this Equality and Diversity Scheme rests with the Chief Executive
- The Council's Senior Management Team is responsible for ensuring that the Council has an effective framework in place to realise the commitments identified in this Scheme
- We aim to improve access to our services across all our teams so Service Directors also have day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that their teams deliver the actions identified in this Scheme
- The Council's Equalities Officer is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and reviewing this Scheme (with the exception of the Equality in Employment Policy, which will continue to be maintained by the Human Resources Team).

What has helped to inform this scheme?



How does this Scheme link with other Council strategies and policies?

The Council's Equality in Employment Policy is attached to this Scheme as an appendix. This Scheme also compliments the Council's Social Inclusion Policy and has a direct impact on every strategy and policy the Council develops.

Publishing this Scheme


Our Scheme will be published on our website and on our staff intranet. We will also provide paper copies upon request, in alternative formats and languages if required.

Monitoring progress

This Scheme will be reviewed annually and progress against actions in the CEAP will be reported to councillors and senior managers. It is a working document to enable us to keep our equality and diversity work relevant and comprehensive.

We will fully revise and refresh the Scheme every three years, adding additional sections when appropriate and in response to relevant legislation.

 = actions

 = support available to staff and councillors to help them promote equality and diversity

INTRODUCTION TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND OUR COUNCIL

Community fact file

The Vale of White Horse district is located in the south-western quadrant of Oxfordshire and stretches from Oxford and Didcot in the east and almost to Swindon in the west. It is bounded to the north and east by the River Thames and to the south by the Berkshire Downs. The district covers some 580 square kilometres (224 square miles) of country which is attractive and mainly rural in character.

According to the 2001 census, some 115,600 people live in the Vale (an increase of 3% since 1991). Just over half the population live in the five main settlements in the Vale: Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon (market towns) and Botley and Grove. These places provide many services for people living in the surrounding rural areas. There are more than seventy villages and small hamlets in the district.

The Vale is a remarkable area in which to live, work or visit. It enjoys high levels of employment, prosperity and a good quality of life. However, this cannot be taken for granted and within the district there are pockets of deprivation and people who find it more difficult to access public services.

ETHNICITY

	Vale of White Horse	South East	National
% of residents from ethnic minority communities (including white Irish and white other) ⁴	6.7	8.7	13.01
Number of residents from ethnic minority communities (including white Irish and white other)	7765	695,967	6,391,695
Example of an equivalent local population	Equivalent to the population in Faringdon & the Coxwells ward (7013)	n/a	n/a

⁴ In accordance with Commission for Race Equality (CRE) guidance, we have redefined our ethnic minority population to include all residents who do not classify themselves as being White British. In previous calculations, we have excluded White other. Please note that for the purpose of calculating relevant BVPIs, we do not include any white categories as ethnic minorities (in accordance with the Audit Commission's guidance)

DISABILITY

	Vale of White Horse	South East	National
% of residents who have a limiting long-term illness/disability	13.1	15.5	17.9
Number of residents who have a limiting long-term illness/disability	15,162	1,237,399	8,809,194
Example of an equivalent local population	Equivalent to the population in Faringdon & the Coxwells + Grove wards (14,431)	n/a	n/a

GENDER

	Vale of White Horse	South East	National
% of residents who are male/female	49.7/50.3	48.8/51.2	48.7/51.3
Number of residents who are male/female	57,506/58,121	3,905,155/ 4,095,490	23,922,144/ 25, 216, 687

AGE

	Vale of White Horse
% of residents who are 0-4 years	5.89
% of residents who are 5-15 years	14.65
% of residents who are 16-19 years	4.97
% of residents who are 20-44 years	33.7
% of residents who are 45- 64 years	25.38
% of residents who are 65 years and over	15.42

RELIGION

	Vale of White Horse
% of residents who are Christian	75.84
% of residents who have no religion	15.75
% of residents who are Muslim	0.48
% of residents who are Buddhist	0.22
% of residents who are Jewish	0.2
% of residents who are Hindu	0.2
% of residents who are Sikh	0.07
% of residents who belong to other religions	0.23
% of residents who did not state their religion	7.01

All the above data has been taken from the 2001 Census results:

<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadDatasetList.do?a=7&b=277088&c=vale+of+white+horse&d=13&g=481133&i=1001x1003&m=0&nc=1&domainId=16>

Workforce and Councillor fact file

The Council employs 288⁵ people, with the majority of staff working at the main Council offices in the centre of Abingdon.

ETHNICITY

2.94% of staff are from non white ethnic minority communities (not including white Irish and white European)⁶

= 6 members of staff

DISABILITY

5.64% of staff have declared that they have a disability⁷

= 15 members of staff

GENDER

42.7% of staff are male (123), 57.3% are female (165)⁸

All the above data relating to staff is from Q2 2007/08.

The Vale of White Horse District Council has 51 elected Councillors. 29 are male and 22 are female. We do not currently monitor ethnicity or disability data relating to our Councillors but have set ourselves an action to do so (please see page 21 for further details).

Our commitment to continued community and workforce profiling

In order to be an effective public service provider and employer, it is essential that the Council understands the make-up of its staff and the local community. Only by mapping this on a regular basis can we meet the changing needs of our service users and employees. We are committed to community and workforce profiling and will do this through continued employment and service use monitoring (see 'cross cutting issues'), as well as one-off research projects.

⁵ As of September 2007

⁶ As of September 2007

⁷ As of September 2007

⁸ As of September 2007

OUR OVERALL APPROACH TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (CROSS CUTTING ISSUES)

Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity

Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)

We use the following BVPI to help us measure our performance in promoting equality and diversity in everything we do:

BVPI 002a - Level of the equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms:

- Progress is measured against a set of levels (Level 1 – Level 5), with Level 5 reflecting the most comprehensive approach
- Vale of White Horse District Council has so far achieved Level 1
- We aim to reach Level 2 by the end of 2007/08 and Level 3 by 2008/09
- Only a third of district councils in the country have reached level 2 or above⁹
- Actions set out in this Scheme will help us to achieve our targets for this indicator

There are additional employment BVPIs to help us measure our performance which are specific to race, disability and gender (these are outlined within the relevant sections of this Scheme). There is also a specific BVPI relating to racial equality (see race equality section for more details).

Our Corporate Equalities Audit

In spring 2007, the Equalities Officer carried out a comprehensive Corporate Equalities Audit. She met with team managers to identify how their services contribute towards promoting equal opportunities and whether more could be done to make them more inclusive and easier to access. As a result of the audit, numerous improvements have been actioned by officers across the Council. The information recorded during these discussions has been circulated to senior managers to enable them to continue supporting their teams in meeting the needs of service users.

This 2007 audit provides us with a useful benchmark against which we can measure future progress.

Action:

- *carry out a corporate equalities audit in 2010/11 to assess council-wide progress in promoting equality and diversity*

⁹ National position (Best Value data 2005/06)

Service area equalities monitoring

As part of the Corporate Equalities Audit, the Equalities Officer also worked with managers to develop monitoring plans tailored to their service areas (an action which they had included in their 2007/08 service plans). The plans set out how they will monitor service use with regards to ethnicity, disability and gender.

Team managers have agreed to produce summaries of their equalities monitoring on a regular basis (most will be produced annually) and these will help to inform their equality impact assessments (see below) and service plans. Where necessary, any gaps or issues will be addressed by service teams taking positive action.

Once this equalities data monitoring has been embedded in the organisation, we will look to extend it to cover age and religion and belief, where appropriate. We will not monitor service use according to sexual orientation because we believe that asking service users and/or employees for this sensitive and extremely personal information would not be appropriate and there is no census data available for bench-marking purposes. However, we will seek to gain feedback on our services from the lesbian, gay and bisexual community using other mechanisms.



The Equalities Officer has produced a guidance note for staff on how to monitor how disabled people, people from ethnic minorities and women use and view our services. This is available on the Council's intranet and includes standard equalities questions which should be added to relevant application forms, feedback forms, customer satisfaction and consultation surveys.

Best Value General Satisfaction Survey

Every three years, we ask local residents how satisfied they are with the services they receive from us. We do this by carrying out a sample survey and the results help us to identify what we're doing right and what we could do better as a Council. Our most recent survey was carried out in 2006.

The results of the survey will inform our Equality Impact Assessments (see page 17) as the data is broken down according to the ethnicity, disability and gender of respondents. Any significant differences between the satisfaction of minority groups and the majority will be explored and addressed by relevant service teams.

We will use future survey results to help us measure our performance in providing high levels of service to residents regardless of their race, disability or gender.

Monitoring employment opportunities

We use the following indicators to help us measure the accessibility of our employment opportunities according to race, disability and gender:

Indicator
Applicants for employment
People shortlisted for interview
Staff in post
Applicants for training and promotion (systems for collecting this data will be in place from 2008/09)
Staff who receive training
Staff that are involved in grievance procedures
Staff that are the subject of disciplinary procedures
People that cease employment with the Council
% of top 5% of earners
Return rates from maternity leave

Human Resources will be responsible for producing an annual summary report of the progress made against the above indicators. The summary data will be included in our Corporate Governance Report and will also be made available to the public.

Staff attitude survey

In summer 2006, the Council carried out a staff attitude survey. One of the sets of questions was about equality and diversity:

- 80% of staff said they understood the importance of equality and diversity
- 69% of staff said they thought the Council was an equal opportunities employer
- By the time the next staff attitude survey is carried out, we aim to maintain the percentage of staff who say they understand the importance of equality and diversity
- As a minimum, we also aim to maintain the percentage of staff who think the Council is an equal opportunities employer
- Actions in this Scheme will help us to achieve these targets

Action:

- *continue to collect equalities data across Council services (including employment opportunities) and ensure it informs service planning and delivery*

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

Equality Impact Assessments help us to look at how our services contribute towards race, disability and gender equality. They are also structured to cover age, sexual orientation and religion and belief equality. They give staff the opportunity to take a step back from their day-to-day work to consider whether these groups have equal access to the services they provide (in proportion with the make up of the local population). Staff seek feedback on their draft EIA findings from external consultees. They then set out any necessary actions they will need to take to improve access to their service.

We carry out Equality Impact Assessments in the following areas:

- Existing service areas/functions – we have a rolling three year assessment programme in place which covers all our current functions and services which are likely to impact on the local community or Council staff. Our current three year EIA timetable is included at Appendix 1.
- Proposed strategies, policies and functions

These assessments are carried out by the relevant service teams because they are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of their service. They are included in service plans and service directors are responsible for ensuring that they are completed.

To ensure that our EIAs bring about positive change, we feed service specific actions identified in EIAs into the relevant teams' service plans. Any corporate actions will be picked up in the annual review of this Scheme.

In addition to EIAs:

- When officers put forward recommendations to our committees, they are encouraged to consider how they may impact on certain groups in the local community or the Council. Relevant guidance is included in the committee report template.
- We consider any equality and diversity implications when we put together our annual budget, via our Strategic Service Review process.



To ensure that our EIAs are robust and clear, we have developed a user-friendly EIA workbook to guide staff through their assessments. The Equalities Officer provides relevant officers with training and support as they complete their work.

We have also produced a separate EIA workbook for officers assessing proposed strategies, policies or functions. This workbook has been designed specifically to fit in with the policy development process.

Actions:

- *Look to set up a residents panel to give feedback on EIAs*
- *Carry out EIAs in accordance with the corporate timetable*

Involvement and participation

The Council recognises the value and importance of involving local residents and its staff in helping to shape the opportunities and services it provides.

Consultation and engagement are not ends in themselves but a first step in providing people who live, work and visit the Vale with a sense of ownership and accountability for local services. This approach to consultation will help the Council achieve continuous service improvement and high levels of customer satisfaction. In the wider picture, it will help to maintain sustainable communities in the district.

We have the following mechanisms in place to give staff and residents the chance to participate in the Council's decision making process:

Vale Voice

We regularly consult a panel of people who live in the district to help make sure that our services are meeting the changing needs of the local community.

The panel has been running since 2003 and has been consulted on key Council issues including the vitality of our town centres, the effectiveness of our website and the way we provide our waste services. It is currently made up of 983¹⁰ residents. Membership of the panel is broadly representative of the district population.

Members are sent surveys on a regular basis and after each survey we send them a newsletter, summarising the results of the survey. The newsletter also sets out what the Council aims to do in response to the feedback from the panel members.

Equality and diversity bulletin

The Equalities Officer is responsible for producing a bulletin for organisations and groups supporting disabled people, ethnic minority communities, women, people from different religions and older people in the Vale. The purpose of the bulletin is to improve access to information about those Council services which may be of particular interest to these groups and their members. It is

¹⁰ As of September 2007

also a useful means of telling people about our consultations and encouraging them to get involved (so that our consultations are as inclusive as possible).

The first bulletin was distributed in August 2007 and provided information about the Dial-a-ride service (which we help to fund) and consultation on our plans for developing the district and strengthening local communities. We also asked disability groups to let us know about any major barriers which prevent disabled people from accessing our services.

We send out this bulletin three times a year.

Actions:

- *Investigate running an equality and diversity event for relevant groups and organisations*
- *Seek feedback from members of the public attending committee meetings*
- *Regularly review and update guidance for staff on how to consult with ethnic minority communities, disabled people and women*
- *Produce three equality and diversity bulletins per year, to target information to organisations and groups supporting disabled people in the Vale*
- *Actively promote the equality and diversity bulletin to all service teams*
- *Produce a checklist for staff on how to run an accessible event*



Staff can use the Equality and diversity bulletin to seek feedback on their services from groups representing people from ethnic minorities, disabled people, women, people from different religions and older people. They can also use write articles for inclusion in the bulletin to promote Council services.

The Equalities Officer and the Council's Head of Communications can provide staff with one-to-one advice about how to ensure their consultations are as inclusive as possible.

Being a fair employer

As an employer, we value our staff and benefit from the diversity and experience they bring to our organisation. We believe it is essential to have a fair and accessible recruitment and selection process so we can always employ the best person for the job. Our job vacancy advertisements actively

encourage applications from all sections of the community and we also ensure that vacancies are advertised using a variety of channels to increase accessibility.

Our pay structure is fair because we have implemented a national Single Status Agreement to harmonise the pay and other terms and conditions of all of our employees. This included assessing every post in the organisation using a common job evaluation scheme to determine its new grade.

We recognise the importance of the work/life balance and therefore offer flexible working opportunities. In addition, we are keen to support staff through any difficulties they may have in their lives (whether they are at home or in the workplace) and employ a part time welfare officer to offer confidential advice and help. We also offer compassionate leave.

It is essential to invest in our staff so we provide them with on-going support and accessible training and development opportunities. With regards to equipping our staff with the skills they need to promote equality and diversity, we run mandatory training sessions on the subject. We also provide briefing sessions to senior managers to update them on strategic issues relating to the Council's equalities work. These training opportunities help us to maintain an inclusive, tolerant and supportive culture within the organisation.

The Council has an 'Equal Employment Policy' which is maintained by the Human Resources Team. This gives more detail about how the Council ensures equality of access to its employment opportunities. A copy of this can be found at the back of this Scheme as appendix 3.

Actions:

- *Actively promote the Council's welfare service to staff*
- *Continue to train new members of staff on equality and diversity issues*
- *Provide training for managers on their specific role and responsibilities relating to equality and diversity*

Support for Councillors on equality and diversity issues

As representatives of their local communities, Councillors bring a large amount of knowledge and awareness to the Council about the needs of people living in the Vale. To help us get the most from this expertise, it is important that we:

- ensure Councillors can easily access the Council's decision making process, regardless of disability, gender, ethnicity or any other irrelevant factor

- equip Councillors with the information they need to promote equality and diversity in everything they do

We are delivering equality and diversity training to newly elected members following the May 2007 elections. In addition, we have run a training session for committee chairs and vice chairs about chairing accessible meetings.

Action:

- *Monitor equalities data relating to our Councillors so we can meet their needs more effectively*

Procurement and partnerships

We often use contractors or work in partnership with other organisations to help us deliver our services. We want to ensure that our contractors and partners are helping us to promote equality and diversity.

Procurement

The Council aims to have a fair and accessible procurement process by:

- simplifying the guidance available to potential suppliers about how we procure goods, works and services
- making information about the Council's procurement opportunities more accessible ('meet the buyer' event, information on the website)

When we use contractors, we will make sure that they strive to meet the needs of all our residents and/or employees by:

- seeking information from tenderers about their equality and diversity policies and practices and using this to help shortlist suitable candidates
- including standard equality and diversity clauses in major contracts to ensure contractors meet relevant statutory duties
- consulting our major contractors on any statutory equality and diversity policies/schemes we develop

Service delivery through partnership

We work with a number of organisations from the voluntary and community sector to provide specialist services for people living in the Vale. For example, we have service level agreements in place with the Oxfordshire Rural

Community Council and the Oxfordshire Chinese Community Advice Centre. Both these organisations provide services for people who often find it difficult to access services.

Our standard service level agreement template includes a section on equality and diversity, to help ensure that our partners are helping us to promote accessible and inclusive services for all.

Strategic partnerships

Working in partnership with other organisations often helps us to maximise our resources and better co-ordinate the services we deliver. We are key members of a number of strategic partnerships, including the Vale Local Strategic Partnership, the Vale of White Horse Community Safety Partnership, Oxfordshire Sports Partnership and the Oxfordshire Rural Transport Partnership. We will always encourage these partnerships to consider equality and diversity issues with regards to the work they carry out.

Actions:

- *inform major contractors and strategic partners of this Scheme, reiterate their responsibilities and identify any relevant support needs they may have*
- *review the equality and diversity section in the standard Service Level Agreement template to ensure it reflects the Council's current legal duties*
- *send out copies of this Scheme to partners with any new Service Level Agreements*

Addressing complaints effectively

Complaints about how we are meeting our equalities duties or other complaints about equality of access to our services will be dealt with through our established complaints procedure, which is available to all members of the public. They can find out more about this procedure by looking on our website or by talking to any member of staff at one of our Local Services Points (LSPs).

Equality and diversity related complaints from members of staff are handled by the Human Resources team. We do not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying in the workplace and we will always investigate any such complaints. More detail about how we proactively tackle harassment and bullying at work is set out in our 'Bullying in the workplace' policy.

Action:

- *Develop the corporate complaints process in order to capture complainants' equalities data and systematically flag any complaints which relate to equality and diversity*

Access to information about council services

Residents can find out about our services through any of the following channels:

- the Council's website: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/>
- Vale Views, the regular Council newsletter for residents
- our Local Service Points (Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon)
- telephone – 01235 520202
- email – comments@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Council staff can find out more about the work of the Council through the following channels:

- The Horse's Mouth, a more informal newsletter for people working at the Council
- Team Brief, a bulletin which keeps service teams up to date on Council issues, initiatives and achievements
- staff Intranet

Action:

- *Develop an 'accessible information' policy for the Council which includes when/how we make information available in alternative formats and languages*

DISABILITY EQUALITY

Disability in the Vale

- According to the Census 2001 figures, 13.1% of people living in the district have classed themselves as disabled (15,162 people). This proportion is slightly lower than that in the South East region as a whole, where 15.5% of the population are disabled. However, with many people experiencing 'hidden' and/or newly classified disabilities, we would expect both the percentage in the Vale and the region now to be higher.
- 5.8% of people working at the Council have a disability. This is lower than the percentage of economically active disabled people in the district as a whole (9.07% of the local population who are economically active are disabled). Within our Council, 16.7% of the top 5% of earners have a disability.

What do we mean when we use the word 'disability'?

According to the Disability Discrimination Act, a disabled person is 'someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition includes people with the following conditions (although this list is not exhaustive):

- cancer
- diabetes
- HIV
- multiple sclerosis
- heart conditions
- poor sight, except where the person's sight can be corrected by glasses or contact lenses
- poor hearing
- a significant mobility difficulty
- mental health conditions
- epilepsy
- dyslexia
- learning disabilities

What do we mean when we use the word 'access'?

Through the implementation of this Scheme, we will take positive action to ensure that disabled residents, employees and councillors have equal access to our services and employment opportunities. When we use the terms 'access' or 'accessibility', we are talking about them in the widest sense: access to service information, physical access to services and opportunities, access to support and to excellent customer service.

The Disability Equality Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 requires all local authorities (and a number of other public bodies) to positively promote disability equality in everything they do by having due regard to:

- promoting equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminating harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encouraging participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- taking steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

We also have the following specific duties to:

- publish a Disability Equality Scheme demonstrating how we intend to fulfill the general and specific duties
- involve disabled people in the development of the Scheme
- ensure our Scheme includes a statement of:
 - the way in which disabled people have been involved in the development of the Scheme
 - our methods for impact assessment
 - steps we will take towards fulfilling the general duty (the 'action plan')
 - our arrangements for gathering information in relation to employment, and, where appropriate, our delivery functions
 - our arrangements for putting the information gathered to use, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of our action plan and in preparing subsequent Disability Equality Schemes
- take the steps set out in our action plan (unless it is unreasonable or impracticable for it to do so) within three years of this Scheme being published and put into effect the arrangements for gathering and making use of information
- publish a report containing a summary of the steps taken under the action plan, the results of our information gathering and the use to which we have put the information.

Our Equality and Diversity Scheme will help us to meet all of these duties.

What we do already to meet the needs of disabled people in the Vale

The Council is already being proactive in a number of ways to help it deliver more accessible and inclusive services and job opportunities for everybody, including disabled residents, Council employees and councillors. Some of these are outlined below:

Access to our services

Planning

- Planning officer surgeries are held on Friday mornings in Wantage and Faringdon

Economic development and tourism

- Our tourism website has a section on assistance for disabled people who are visiting the district

Support for young people

- Members of the youth forum have taken part in a session on disability awareness

Local services points (LSPs) and Council buildings

- All desks at the Abingdon LSP are wheelchair accessible. Two are fitted with a hearing loop system, as well as the cash desk
- LSP staff are trained to help people understand and complete forms (e.g. benefits)
- 100% of our buildings which open to the public have public areas which are suitable for, and accessible to, disabled people

Housing

- We offer a variety of ways to access the choice based lettings service – on the internet, via LSP, computers in VWHDC offices, paper based newsletters which are distributed to GP surgeries etc (can be posted out free of charge upon request)
- We make it clear which properties in the choice based lettings scheme have been adapted for disabled people to help disabled people make an informed decision about the properties they want to bid for
- Energy team carried out an energy survey for The Knowl (drop in centre supporting people with mental health difficulties), free of charge

Assisted travel

- We run a hospital appointments allowance scheme
- We help to fund Octabus, a Dial-a-Ride scheme which operates 5 days a week in the Vale

Benefits

- We offer home visits for people unable to come to the Council offices for benefits advice

Arts development

- We part fund 'Ithaca' arts organisation which works with disabled people and older people

Sports development

- We part fund a Disability Community Sports Coach (6 hours per week)

Parks and leisure centres

- People who are registered as disabled are entitled to our discretionary 'Access to Leisure Pass' scheme which entitles them to discounted admission prices in all Council leisure centres
- Our GP referral scheme at our leisure centres helps people access leisure activities to improve their health

Council meetings

- We hold all public council meetings in wheelchair accessible venues and proactively meet any access requirements from members of the public

Access to our employment opportunities

- We are positive about employing disabled people and have gained Jobcentre Plus' 'two ticks' symbol in recognition of this approach. We interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and have agreed to take part in the guaranteed interview scheme. In addition, the information sheet we send out to people applying/being invited for interview outlines our commitment, as an employer, to disability equality.
- Disabled members of staff have equal access to training opportunities and we provide any support which they may need in order to take part in training sessions. For example, we have provided a signer for a member of staff who is profoundly deaf.
- Our welfare officer can provide free counseling and support for staff dealing with situations which are causing them mental and/or emotional stress.
- We make reasonable adjustments to help disabled employees carry out their day-to-day work and these are discussed with the relevant employees when they are appointed. As part of this process, we seek advice from an independent medical expert about how we can best meet the needs of disabled members of staff who are joining the Council.

Staff training on disability equality issues

The mandatory equality and diversity training for staff covers a broad range of equality and diversity issues, including disability equality. In addition, we have

run several training sessions focusing specifically on access to services for disabled people.

Support for disabled Councillors

We are providing general equality and diversity training for Councillors which covers disability equality. Our training session on 'chaining accessible meetings' also addressed the role of the chair in helping to meet the needs of disabled attendees (including committee members).

All our public committee meetings are held in wheelchair accessible venues to ensure that Councillors with disabilities can attend (this also ensures access for disabled residents).

Disability equality – priority areas and actions

Although we have made significant progress towards improving the accessibility of our services for disabled people, we recognise that there is still more that we can do.

We have identified a number of priority areas for the Council to address. These are set out below, along with the actions we will take. Timescales, responsibilities and other details for the actions are set out in the Corporate Equalities Action Plan 2008/09-2010/11, at the back of this Scheme.

1. Improving access to information for disabled people about the services we and others deliver

Actions:

- *Set up a page on our website which signposts people to disability support organisations and other useful sources of information*
- *Write and circulate guidance note for staff on how to produce a 'clear print' document which is accessible for people with sight problems*

2. Raising awareness about our services to disabled people

Actions:

- *Promote the Octabus Dial-a-Ride service to residents*
- *Review the take up of our 'Access to Leisure' passes and identify any future promotion needed*
- *Develop a marketing plan for promoting the assisted waste collection service*

3. Supporting our staff to help meet the needs of disabled service users

Actions:

- *Info sheet for staff about availability of hearing loops in the Council*
- *Put together a staff handbook about understanding and meeting the needs of our service users with disabilities to ensure they can access our services and opportunities*

4. Making community and council events accessible for disabled people

Actions:

- *Ensure Local Strategic Partnership meetings are accessible*
- *Purchase of a portable hearing loop system for meetings rooms within the Council offices at Abbey House*
- *Draw up a checklist for groups awarded community grant funding to run an event(s) on 'organising an accessible event'*

5. Improving access to our employment opportunities for disabled people

Actions:

- *Encourage managers to pro-actively and regularly review the support needs of their team members with disabilities and/or caring responsibilities*
- *Review recruitment information to ensure it actively promotes the council's approach to disability equality as an employer*

6. Improving access to our local town centres

Actions:

- *Raise pavement issues with OCC through our involvement with local town centre transport schemes*
- *Raise general public awareness about inconsiderate parking in disabled bays to try and limit this abuse*

7. Raising awareness about reporting disability harassment

Action:

- *Run an initiative to encourage people to report incidents of disability harassment*

How we have identified these priority areas and actions

In addition to considering performance data and the results of our Corporate Equalities Audit, we carried out some specific consultation with service users, staff and stakeholders which helped us to identify these priority areas and actions:

- running a residents' focus group, involving members of Vale Voice (our Citizens' Panel) with direct experience of disability
- carrying out a staff survey to pick up on any issues relating to the Council's approach to disability equality as an employer
- carrying out a sample survey involving members from a group for older people in Abingdon
- asking organisations representing disabled people in the Vale for their feedback via an article in the Council's equality and diversity bulletin

Also, when we carried out the public consultation on the draft version of this Scheme, we automatically consulted on this section covering disability equality.

We are very grateful to all the people who gave us feedback and information which has helped us to shape this section of the Scheme.

Monitoring progress on promoting disability equality

In addition to the generic indicators and targets we will use to measure our overall progress in promoting equality and diversity, we will use the following key indicators to help us measure our performance in promoting disability equality:

Indicator	Current performance	Target performance	How will we measure this?	When?
Percentage of disabled people who are (net) satisfied with Council services	41% (compared with 44% of non disabled people)	Equivalent to non disabled people	BVPI general satisfaction survey (or similar survey)	2009/10

Equality and Diversity Scheme 2008/09 – 2010/11

Percentage of employees with a disability (BVPI 16a)	5.8% (Q1 2006/07)	5.9% (2008/09 & 2009/10)	HR employee data	2008/09 & 2009/10
Percentage of top 5% of earners with a disability (BVPI 11c)	16.7% (Q1 2006/07)	16% (2008/09 & 2009/10)	HR employee data	2008/09 & 2009/10

GENDER EQUALITY

Men and women in the Vale

- 49.7% of people in the Vale district are male and 50.3% are female, according to the Census 2001 figures. In the South East region as a whole, 48.8% of the population male and 51.2% are female.
- The gender split for Council staff is 42.7% male/57.3% female¹¹.
- Within our Council, 21.4% of the top 5% of earners are women¹². This is lower than the percentage of women working in the Council as a whole.
- 24.9% of the Council's workforce work part time. Within this group, 82.9% are women.
- There are no service areas in the Council where women are significantly underrepresented. This is the same for male employees, with the exception of the Local Service Point where the majority of officers are female.

The Gender Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2006 requires all local authorities (and a number of other public bodies) to positively promote gender equality in everything they do by having due regard to need:

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

These legislative changes also include the elimination of discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment.

The gender equality duty upholds legislation against discrimination defined as unlawful within the Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act, in the areas of:

- sex discrimination
- sexual harassment
- on grounds of pregnancy and maternity leave
- against married persons and civil partners
- victimisation

We also have the following specific duties to:

- prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme (GES) outlining how the gender equality duty will be met
- identify objectives that specifically address the causes of any gender pay gap
- consult stakeholders (service users, employees, trade unions etc) in identifying broader and specific gender equality objectives

¹¹ As of September 2007

¹² As of Q1 2007/08

- gather and use relevant information on policies and practices in relation to gender equality
- assess the impact of current and proposed policies and functions on gender equality and difference
- develop and implement an Action Plan alongside the GES that is reported on annually and reviewed every 3 years

Our Equality and Diversity Scheme will help us to meet all of these duties.

The gender pay gap

The new gender legislation has a particular aim to address and ultimately help resolve the evidenced pay gap between men and women. Nationally, the gender pay gap (the difference between men's and women's median full-time hourly earnings) is 12.6%.

According to the Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice¹³, the three main causes of the gender pay gap are:

- discrimination (including pay discrimination and pregnancy)
- the impact of women's disproportionate share of caring responsibilities
- the concentration of women in particular occupations

The gender pay gap at the Council stands at 7.5% (based on basic salary) which is better than the national figure. We are confident that this gap does not indicate any gender based pay discrimination because we have adopted a single status agreement to ensure that salaries are in no way dependent on gender. In addition, we will have carried out an equal pay review by the end of 2006/07. Any actions arising from this review will compliment this section of our Equality and Diversity Scheme.

Instead, we believe that the gap is a result of more women being employed in lower grade jobs in the Council than men.

Gender reassignment issues

The Equal Opportunities Commission defines 'transsexual' as a term 'usually used to describe a person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery)¹⁴. There are estimated to be about 5000 transsexual people in the UK.

¹³ 'Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice, England and Wales' - page 34

(http://www.eoc.org.uk/PDF/GED_CoP_Draft.pdf)

¹⁴ 'Meeting the gender duty for transsexual staff - guidance for public bodies working in England, Wales and Scotland' – page 2

(http://www.eoc.org.uk/Docs/Meeting_the_gender_duty_for_transsexual_staff.doc)

Transsexual people may experience discrimination or prejudice at work or in life generally. There can be hostility in the workplace where an individual is known to be undergoing the gender reassignment process. Transsexual people can also face transphobia in the community, where they are harassed because they have undergone gender reassignment.

There is a lot of ignorance around transgender issues, and people from this group may often find themselves without support from or inclusion with either gender: they can face rejection from both men and women.

Gender and health

In 2006, life expectancy for women in Oxfordshire was 82.1 years and men 78.3 years¹⁵, both above the national levels.

Health issues vary between men and women. According to the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust¹⁶:

- men typically develop heart disease 10 years earlier than women
- women are 2.7 times more likely to develop an auto immune disease such as diabetes than men
- women are more likely to suffer from arthritis and rheumatism than men
- men are twice as likely as women to both develop, and die from, the ten most common cancers affecting both sexes

The National Health Service leads on health matters but as a community leader and responsible employer, it is important that the Council recognises gender related health issues.

What we do already to meet the needs of men and women in the Vale

The Council is already being proactive in a number of ways to help it deliver more accessible and inclusive services and job opportunities to everyone, regardless of their gender. Some of these are outlined below:

Access to our services

Planning

- With the Grove development, the planning policy team carried out numerous events to enable local people to have their say in the planning

¹⁵ 'Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010' – Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust
(<http://www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/patient-matters/equality-and-diversity/documents/OxfordshirePCTGenderEqualityScheme0710.pdf>)

¹⁶ 'Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010' – Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust
(<http://www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/patient-matters/equality-and-diversity/documents/OxfordshirePCTGenderEqualityScheme0710.pdf>)

process. These included afternoon and evening workshops which were held in the local community

Economic development

- The economic development team grant funds Faringdon Enterprise Gateway, helping under represented groups get started in business. They recently ran a project to encourage more women to set up their own businesses

Car parks

- We have introduced parent and toddler bays in the multistory car park
- Staff are offered free personal safety alarms from the car parks team

Community safety

- We part fund an outreach worker to help women suffering from domestic violence in the district

Housing

- We help homeless families find suitable accommodation by introducing them to private landlords and guaranteeing the deposit

Benefits

- We offer home visits for people unable to come to the Council offices for benefits advice

Sports development

- The sports development team has set up and run numerous sporting opportunities to encourage more women to take up sport e.g. women's netball initiative

Parks and leisure centres

- Single parents are entitled to our discretionary 'Access to Leisure Pass' scheme which entitles them to discounted admission prices in all leisure centres

Access to our employment opportunities

- We operate a flexible working hours scheme for staff. This provides employees with a degree of flexibility in determining their starting and finishing times to suit their travelling arrangements and other personal needs or circumstances. It also allows time to be accrued and carried forward.

- Childcare vouchers are available to all employees and can be used to pay for a wide range of childcare. The scheme enables staff to be paid a portion of their salary in childcare vouchers. Salary taken in the form of childcare vouchers is exempt from Tax and National Insurance.
- We have a policy and procedure in place to specifically to ensure that every employee understands that they have the right not to be sexually harassed and the right to complain about it should it occur.
- When an employee is on maternity leave, they are sent copies of the staff newsletter to help keep them informed of developments at the Council so that their return to work is as easy as possible.
- We can grant up to 10 days in any one leave year for 'compassionate' purposes

Gender equality – priority areas and actions

Although we have made significant progress towards improving the accessibility of our services for everybody, regardless of gender, we recognise that there is still more that we can do.

We have identified a number of priority areas for the Council to address. These are set out below, along with the actions we will take. Timescales, responsibilities and other details for the actions are set out in the Corporate Equalities Action Plan 2008/09-2010/11, at the back of this Scheme.

1. Raising the Council's profile as a family-friendly employer

Actions:

- *Promote family friendly aspects of VWHDC employment to all job applicants*
- *Research how good practice councils deal with covering childcare costs for interviews*
- *Encourage managers to pro-actively and regularly review the support needs of their team members with caring responsibilities*

2. Maintaining our fair and equal approach to pay

Action:

- *Carry out an Equal Pay Review every three years*

3. Breaking down any gender based segregation in relation to particular job areas

Action:

- *Lobby chartered institutes about encouraging more women into sectors where they are significantly under represented*

4. Helping to address women's concerns about personal safety

Actions:

- *Regularly promote the free personal security alarms which are available to all members of staff*
- *Support the actions of the Oxfordshire Domestic Violence Steering Group*

5. Raising awareness about transphobic harassment

Action:

- *Promote Thames Valley Police's 'Tru-Vision' reporting scheme (where people can report transphobic crime)*

6. Helping to improve the health of men and women in the Vale

Actions:

- *Article in the equality and diversity bulletin about Council sport initiatives for women*
- *Promote Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust services which aim to tackle gender based health inequalities to Council staff and residents*

How we have identified these priority areas and actions

In addition to considering performance data and the results of our Corporate Equalities Audit, we carried out some specific consultation with service users, staff and stakeholders which helped us to identify these priority issues and actions:

- We ran two residents' focus groups, involving members of Vale Voice (our Citizens' Panel). One was for women and one was for men so participants felt comfortable to talk about the difficulties they face in accessing Council services because of their gender.
- We carried out a staff survey to ask employees if they experienced any difficulties in accessing employment opportunities due to their gender.
- We asked organisations representing women in the Vale for their feedback via an article in the Council's equality and diversity bulletin

We are very grateful to all the people who gave us feedback and information which has helped us to shape this section of the Scheme.

Monitoring progress on promoting gender equality

In addition to the generic indicators and targets we will use to measure our overall progress in promoting equality and diversity, we will use the following key indicators to help us measure our performance in promoting gender equality:

Indicator	Current performance	Target performance	How will we measure this?	When?
Percentage of top 5% of earners who are women (BVPI 11a)	21.4% (Q1 2006/07)	14% (2008/09 & 2009/10)	HR employee data	2008/09 & 2009/10

RACE EQUALITY

This section consists of the Council's Race Equality Scheme (RES) which was adopted in March 2007 (prior to the development of this over-arching Equality and Diversity Scheme).

The RES can be downloaded from the Council's website at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/community%5Fand%5Fliving/equality%5Fand%5Fdiversity/raceequalityscheme.asp>. Paper copies are also available upon request.

To effectively integrate our RES into this Equality and Diversity Scheme, we will revise and refresh it in line with the rest of the Equality and Diversity Scheme. Actions on race equality are also included in the corporate equalities action plan at the back of this Scheme.

The public consultation on our draft Equality and Diversity Scheme did not include this section on Race Equality as it was subject to its own consultation in early 2007.

CORPORATE EQUALITIES ACTION PLAN 2008/09 – 2010-11

2008/09

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
1	Improving access to information for disabled people about the services we and others deliver	Set up a page on our website which signposts people to disability support organisations and other useful sources of information	Web page live	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability
2	Understanding our new migrant communities	Monitor the development of new migrant communities in the Vale	Relevant ethnicity data in equalities monitoring summaries from service teams is reviewed	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Race
3	Involvement and participation	Actively promote the equality and diversity bulletin to all service teams	Article in team brief	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
4	Partnerships and procurement	<i>Inform major contractors and strategic partners of this Scheme, reiterate their responsibilities and identify any relevant support needs they may have</i>	Letter and scheme sent to major contractors and strategic partners	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty, Mike Mackay and Lorna Edwards	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
5	Partnerships and procurement	<i>Review the equality and diversity section in the standard SLA template to ensure it reflects the Council's current legal duties</i>	Review completed	End of June (Q1)	Lorna Edwards and Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
6	Making community and council events accessible for disabled people	<i>Ensure Local Strategic Partnership meetings are accessible (asking for people to let us know about special requirements)</i>	Invitations to LSP meetings ask people about any special requirements	End of June (Q1)	Lorna Edwards	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
7	Partnerships and procurement	<i>Send out copies of this Scheme to partners with any new SLAs</i>	Copies of this Scheme sent out with new SLAs	End of September (Q2) onwards	Lorna Edwards	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
8	Supporting our staff to help meet the needs of disabled service users	<i>Put together a staff handbook about understanding and meeting the needs of our service users with disabilities to ensure they can access our services and opportunities</i>	Handbook produced and circulated to staff	End of September (Q2)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability
9	Improving access to our employment opportunities for disabled people and carers	<i>Encourage managers to pro-actively and regularly review the support needs of their team members with disabilities and/or caring responsibilities</i>	Briefings/ meetings held between HR officers and managers	End of September (Q2)	Alan Burnett	Within existing resources	Disability Gender
10	Promoting the right work/life balance to help people manage caring responsibilities	<i>Promote family friendly aspects of VWHDC employment to potential staff and new staff (via 'working at the Vale' info sheet)</i>	'Working at the Vale' info sheet updated to highlight family friendly aspects of VWHDC	End of September (Q2)	Jakki Breeze	Within existing resources	Disability Gender
11	Raising awareness about our services to disabled people	<i>Promote the Octabus Dial-a-Ride service to residents</i>	Promotional article in Vale Views	End of September (Q2)	Ben Watson	Within existing resources	Disability

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
12	Equality Impact Assessments	<i>Look to set up a residents' panel to give feedback on EIAs</i>	Proposal paper produced for consideration by Organisation Change	End of December (Q3)	Katharine Doherty	Proposals may have cost implications	Disability Gender Race
13	Involvement and participation	<i>Produce a checklist for staff on how to run an accessible event</i>	Checklist produced and made available to staff	End of December (Q3)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
14	Improving access to information about our services for people from ethnic minorities	<i>Carry out a council wide survey about requests for translated material/ interpreters</i>	Survey completed and results shared with communications	End of December (Q3)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Race
15	Helping to address women's concerns about personal safety	<i>Regularly promote the free personal security alarms which are available to all members of staff</i>	Article in The Horse's Mouth Posters displayed in Council offices	End of December (Q3)	Katharine Doherty and Beverley Mizen	Within existing resources	Gender
16	Access to information about council services	<i>Develop an 'accessible information' policy for the Council which includes when/how we make information available in alternative formats and languages</i>	Policy developed and made available to all staff and councillors	End of December (Q3)	Nikki Malin and Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Race

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
17	Improving access to information for disabled people about the services we and others deliver	<i>Write and circulate guidance note for staff on how to produce a 'clear print' document which is accessible for people with sight problems</i>	Guidance note produced and made available to all staff	End of December (Q3)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability
18	Helping to improve the health of men and women in the Vale	<i>Article in the equality and diversity bulletin about Council sport initiatives for women</i>	Article included in bulletin	End of December (Q3)	Jo Paterson	Within existing resources	Gender
19	Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity	<i>Produce an annual equality and diversity report regarding access to our employment opportunities</i>	Summary report produced	End of Q4 (to be included in Corporate Governance Report)	Gill Lay/Ruth Fisher	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
20	Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity	<i>Continue to collect equalities data across all relevant Council services to help inform service planning and delivery</i>	Summary reports produced & used for EIAs and service planning	End of March (Q4)	Service managers	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
21	Improving access to our local town centres	<i>Raise pavement issues with OCC through our involvement with local town centre transport schemes</i>	Accessible pavements issue flagged during relevant transport meetings	End of March (Q4) onwards	Gordon Willcox	Within existing resources	Disability

Action number	Cross cutting/ priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
22	Equality Impact Assessments	<i>Carry out EIAs in accordance with the corporate timetable</i>	EIAs completed	End of March (Q4)	Relevant Deputy Directors	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
23	Involvement and participation	<i>Review guidance for staff on how to consult with ethnic minority communities, disabled people and women</i>	Guidance reviewed and updated as necessary	End of March (Q4)	Nikki Malin and Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
24	Involvement and participation	<i>Produce three equality and diversity bulletins per year, to target information to organisations and groups supporting disabled people, people from ethnic minorities and others in the Vale</i>	Bulletins produced and sent to relevant organisations	End of March (Q4)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
25	Support for Councillors on equality and diversity issues	<i>Monitor equalities data relating to our Councillors so we can meet their needs more effectively</i>	Survey of Councillors carried out	End of March (Q4) Tbc Carole N.	Carole Nicholl	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
26	Complaints	<i>Develop the corporate complaints process in order to capture complainants' equalities data and systematically flag any complaints which relate to equality and diversity</i>	Corporate complaints process reviewed and improved	End of March (Q4)	Joshua White and Nikki Malin	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
27	Raising awareness about our services to disabled people	<i>Review the take up of our 'Access to Leisure' passes and identify any future promotion needed</i>	Review carried out and any future actions for promotional activity identified	End of March (Q4)	Chris Webb	Within existing resources	Disability
28	Raising awareness about our services to disabled people	<i>Develop a marketing plan for promoting the assisted waste collection service</i>	Plan produced	End of March (Q4)	Dave Wilson and Nikki Malin	Within existing resources	Disability
29	Making community and council events accessible for disabled people	<i>Purchase of a portable hearing loop system for meetings rooms within Abbey House</i>	Portable hearing loop system purchased	End of March (Q4)	Andrew Morgan	Within existing resources	Disability
30	Improving access to our employment opportunities for disabled people	<i>Review recruitment information to ensure it actively promotes the council's approach to disability equality as an employer</i>	Recruitment information reviewed and updated if necessary	End of March (Q4)	Jakki Breeze	Within existing resources	Disability

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding	Equalities strand
31	A fair employer	<i>Run equality and diversity training courses for new starters</i>	Staff training sessions delivered	End of March (Q4)	Sandra Varney and Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
32	Raising awareness about our services to people from ethnic minority communities	<i>Embrace partnership project</i>	3 newsletters produced	End of March (Q4)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Race
33	A fair employer	<i>Run equality and diversity training courses for managers</i>	Manager training sessions delivered Article in team brief to inform all staff that sessions have been held	End of March (Q4)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
34	Helping to address women's concerns about personal safety	<i>Support the actions of the Oxfordshire Domestic Violence Steering Group</i>	Relevant 2008/09 actions completed	By the end of March (Q4)	Liz Hayden	Within existing resources	Gender

2009/10

Action number	Cross cutting/ priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding needed	Equalities strand
35	Understanding our new migrant communities	<i>Monitoring the development of new migrant communities in the Vale</i>	Relevant ethnicity data in equalities monitoring summaries from service teams is reviewed	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Race
36	Supporting our staff to help meet the needs of disabled service users	<i>Info sheet for staff about availability of hearing loops in the Council</i>	Information sheet produced and made available to staff	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability
37	A fair employer	<i>Actively promote the Council's welfare service to staff</i>	Article in team brief, posters on staff notice boards	End of June (Q1)	Ann Cox	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
38	Tackling incidents of transphobic harassment	<i>Promote Thames Valley Police's 'Tru-Vision' reporting scheme (where people can report transphobic crime)</i>	Information and link to Tru-Vision's website on our website	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Gender

Action number	Cross cutting/ priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding needed	Equalities strand
39	Involvement and participation	<i>Investigate running an equality and diversity event for relevant groups and organisations</i>	Levels of local interest gauged Examples of good practice sought Potential topics for the event identified	End of September (Q2)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
40	Involvement and participation	<i>Seek feedback about the accessibility of Council meetings from members of the public attending committees</i>	Survey carried out and results used to inform service delivery	End of September (Q2)	Carole Nicholl	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
41	Making community and council events accessible for disabled people	<i>Draw up a checklist for groups awarded community grant funding to run an event(s) on 'organising an accessible event'</i>	Checklist produced and sent to relevant groups	End of September (Q2)	Katharine Doherty and Lorna Edwards	Within existing resources	Disability
42	Improving access to our local town centres	<i>Raise general public awareness about inconsiderate parking in disabled bays to try and limit this abuse</i>	Article in Vale Views	End of September (Q2)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding needed	Equalities strand
43	Promoting the right work/life balance to help people manage caring responsibilities	<i>Research how good practice councils deal with covering childcare costs for interviews</i>	Research completed and findings circulated to head of HR and Equalities Officer	End of September (Q2)	Jakki Breeze	Within existing resources	Gender
44	Raising awareness about reporting disability harassment	<i>Run an initiative to encourage people to report incidents of disability harassment</i>	Initiative run	End of December (Q3)	Liz Hayden and Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability
45	Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity	<i>Produce an annual equality and diversity report regarding access to our employment opportunities</i>	Summary report produced	End of Q4 (to be included in Corporate Governance Report)	Gill Lay/Ruth Fisher	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
46	Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity	<i>Continue to collect equalities data across all relevant Council services and ensure it informs service planning and delivery</i>	Summary reports produced	End of March (Q4)	Service managers	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
47	Equality Impact Assessments	<i>Carry out EIAs in accordance with the corporate timetable</i>	EIAs completed	End of March (Q4)	Relevant Deputy Directors	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding needed	Equalities strand
48	Involvement and participation	<i>Produce three equality and diversity bulletins per year, to target information to organisations and groups supporting disabled people, people from ethnic minorities and others in the Vale</i>	Bulletins produced and sent to relevant organisations	End of March (Q4)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
49	A fair employer	<i>Run equality and diversity training courses for new starters</i>	Staff training sessions delivered	End of March (Q4)	Sandra Varney and Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
50	Breaking down any gender based segregation in relation to particular job areas	<i>Lobby chartered institutes about encouraging more women into sectors where they are significantly under represented</i>	Letters sent to relevant institutes	End of March (Q4)	Gill Lay	Within existing resources	Gender

2010/11

Action number	Cross cutting/ priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding needed	Equalities strand
51	Understanding our new migrant communities	<i>Monitoring the development of new migrant communities in the Vale</i>	Relevant ethnicity data in equalities monitoring summaries from service teams is reviewed	End of June (Q1)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Race
52	Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity	<i>carry out a corporate equalities audit</i>	Audit completed. Results recorded and circulated to senior management	End of September (Q2)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
53	Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity	<i>Produce an annual equality and diversity report regarding access to our employment opportunities</i>	Summary report produced	End of Q4 (to be included in Corporate Governance Report)	Gill Lay/Ruth Fisher	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
54	Measuring our performance relating to equality and diversity	<i>continue to collect equalities data across all relevant Council services and ensure it informs service planning and delivery</i>	Summary reports produced	End of March (Q4)	Service managers	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race

Action number	Cross cutting/priority area	Action	Deliverable(s)	Completion date	Lead officer(s)	Funding needed	Equalities strand
55	Involvement and participation	<i>Produce three equality and diversity bulletins per year, to target information to organisations and groups supporting disabled people, people from ethnic minorities and others in the Vale</i>	Bulletins produced and sent to relevant organisations	End of March (Q4)	Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
56	Addressing any gender based discrimination in the workplace	<i>Carry out an Equal Pay Review</i>	Equal Pay Review completed	End of March (Q4)	Gill Lay	Within existing resources	Gender
57	Equality Impact Assessments	<i>Carry out EIAs in accordance with the corporate timetable</i>	EIAs completed	End of March (Q4)		Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
58	A fair employer	<i>Run equality and diversity training courses for new starters</i>	Staff training sessions delivered	End of March (Q4)	Sandra Varney and Katharine Doherty	Within existing resources	Disability Gender Race
59	Helping improve the health of men and women in the Vale	<i>Promote Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust services which aim to tackle gender based health inequalities to Council staff and residents</i>	Article in Team Brief, information posters on staff notice boards	End of March (Q4)	Julia Singh	Within existing resources	Gender

APPENDIX 1

Equality Impact Assessment timetable 2007/08 – 2009/10

2007/08		
Service Area	Service block	Function to be assessed
ODS	Communications	Consultation (including citizens' panel)
Planning & Community Strategy	Community Strategy	Community Funding/ Grants
Housing and Community Safety	Housing	Disabled Facilities Grants
ODS	Contact Services	LSPs - Customer advice and information/enquiries Cash transactions
Environmental Health	Environmental Protection	Environmental protection
Environmental Health	Food/Health and Safety	Food safety (including education) Health and safety
Finance	Ridgeway Shared Services	Community taxation
Housing & Community Safety	Housing	Housing advice, homelessness and temporary accommodation
Housing & Community Safety	Housing Register	Housing register and choice based lettings
ODS	Human Resources	Recruitment and selection
ODS	Human Resources	Training and development
Contracts and Procurement	Sport and Recreation (facilities)	Leisure facilities (sports)
Environmental Health	Licensing	Licensing (including taxi licensing)
Planning & Community Strategy	Development Policy	Development Policy
Planning & Community Strategy	Development Control	Applications, decisions Enforcement

2008/09		
Service Area	Service block	Function to be assessed
Finance	Ridgeway Shared Services	Benefit advice/information Applications Decisions Payments

2008/09		
Service Area	Service block	Function to be assessed
		Fraud
Finance	Ridgeway Shared Services	Concessionary fares Assisted travel
ODS	Human Resources	Health & Safety Welfare Employee relations (including liP)
ODS	Communications	Corporate communications (including the website)
Planning & Community Strategy	Economic Development and Community	Community Strategy & partnership working
Planning & Community Strategy	Economic Development and Community	Support for young people
Planning & Community Strategy	Economic Development and Community	Economic development and tourism advice
Commercial services	Direct Services Organisation	Emergency Planning
Environmental Health	Environmental Protection	Council burials
Commercial services	Direct Services Organisation	Direct Services Organisation (including emergency response – land drainage and flood prevention, drain blockages, sewage treatment, septic tanks)
Estates	Property Services	Property and facilities management (including construction of public buildings AND civic hall & guildhall facilities)
Housing & Community Safety	Energy Team	Fuel Poverty/ HECA /discretionary grants
Legal & Democratic Services	Legal/local land charges	Local land charges
Contracts and Procurement	Arts Development	Arts Development
Contracts and Procurement	Sport Development	Sports Development
Housing & Community Safety	Enabling Housing Function	Housing enabling Regulation
Housing and Community Safety	Community Safety	Community Safety CCTV
Contracts and Procurement	Parks and open spaces Landscaping	Parks, Open spaces and landscaping

2008/09		
Service Area	Service block	Function to be assessed
	Services	
Planning	Car parking	Car parks
Contracts and Procurement	Waste Management	Unwanted and abandoned vehicles Dumped waste
	Waste management	kerbside refuse collection kerbside recycling collection provision of bring banks bulky waste collections garden waste (?) waste minimisation
Contracts and Procurement	Waste Services	Public conveniences

2009/10		
Service Area	Service block	Function to be assessed
Planning and Community Strategy	Transport policy	Transport policy
Legal and Democratic Services	Elections	Elections and electoral registrations
Planning & Community Strategy	Health Development	Health Development
Contracts and Procurement	Waste Services	Street cleansing service Dog waste
ODS	Organisational Change	Risk Management Data management
Audit and performance management	Audit	Internal Audit
Finance	Ridgeway Services	Income/morgages
Commercial services	Building Control	Building Control
ODS	Communications	Postal Service
Legal & Democratic Services	Committee Management	Committee management Member services Liaison with town and parish councils
Finance	Ridgeway Services	Accountancy and payments
ODS	Organisational Change	Help desk and administration Applications Security and Disaster Recovery Technical and Network Business Support Information Technology Strategy
Legal Services	Legal	Legal Support and advice (internal)
ODS	Organisational	Performance Management and

2009/10		
Service Area	Service block	Function to be assessed
	Change	Best Value
ODS	Organisational Change	Policy Development
Planning & Community Strategy	Planning Policy	The Council's Agenda 21 Statement
Planning & Community Strategy	Planning Policy	Environmental Planning and Conservation
Planning & Community Strategy	Planning Policy	Countryside Conservation

APPENDIX 2

List of consultees

Oxfordshire Chinese Carers Group

Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre

Oxfordshire Older Chinese People Centre (HAPPY PLACE)

OXS RAD

Oxford Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre

Oxford Diocesan Council for the Deaf

Oxfordshire Council of Disabled People (OCDP)

Oxfordshire Association for the Blind (OAB)

Dialability

Autism Family Support

Multiple Sclerosis Society (Oxford & District)

Age Concern Oxfordshire City & County

Oxfordshire Dyslexia Association (ODA)

South and Vale Carers' Centre

Abingdon Cancer Support Group

Abingdon Family Centre

African-Caribbean Community Action Network

Alzheimer's Society (Oxfordshire)

Asian Cultural Centre

Faringdon Family & Childrens Centre

Oxford Synagogue & Jewish Centre

Oxfordshire Racial Equality Council

Oxfordshire MIND

Berkshire Women's Aid

The Oxfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

Members of staff

Service users who attended our focus groups

Members of the Evergreen club, Abingdon

We are very grateful to everybody who gave us feedback to help us develop our Equality and Diversity Scheme 2008/09 – 2010/11.

APPENDIX 3

Equality in Employment Policy



EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT POLICY

1.0 Our Policy Statement

- 1.1 Vale of White Horse District Council believes that all employees and prospective employees should be treated equally, fairly and with respect. We are committed to the principle of equal opportunities and believe we should value those who work for us or want to work for us equally irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, family responsibility, trade union membership, whether they are suffering from HIV or AIDS or any other factor irrelevant to their employment. This policy covers all aspects of the Council's role as an employer including recruitment, promotion, transfers, training, health and safety, dismissal, terms and conditions, pay and benefits probationary, grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- 1.2 We want to attract talented people to work for the Council, stay with the Council and perform effectively while they are employed by the Council. Recruitment and selection criteria, procedures and practices will be kept under regular review to ensure that individuals are selected or promoted on the basis of the requirements of the job and their ability to do it. Where appropriate, special training will be given to assist employees to progress within the Council.
- 1.3 The Council will pursue a programme of action to make this policy fully effective and will regularly review its effectiveness. The Council will set target figures for the representation of different groups throughout the organisation.

2.0 Why We Have a Policy

- 2.1 As a community leader and large employer, the Council aims to be an exemplar organisation in the application of equal opportunity principles and practice.

- 2.2 The Council recognises that, as it moves towards a workforce which is representative of the whole community, it becomes better able to identify and deliver services to the whole of the community it represents and serves.
- 2.3 This policy helps the Council meet a number of the objectives supporting its Vision, which is to:-

'build and safeguard a fair, open and compassionate community'.

The Vale of White Horse District Council aims to:

Strengthen local democracy and public involvement through access to information, consultation, and devolution of power so that everyone can take part in our community and contribute to the decisions which affect our lives.

Create a safer community and improve the quality of life among Vale residents.

Encourage a strong and sustainable economy which benefits all who live in, work in or visit the Vale.

Help disadvantaged groups and individuals within the Vale to realise their full potential.

Provide and support high quality public services which are effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of people within the Vale.

Protect and improve our built and natural environment.

- 2.5 The policy helps the Council put its values into action to ensure the organisation is fair, open and compassionate and that people are valued and respected.
- 2.6 The Council wishes to ensure it has the best employees and that they work to their full potential by recognising each individual's contribution, developing their capability and allowing them to use their talents.

3.0 The Law and Equality

- 3.1 The policy addresses the Council's legal duties under the Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986, Race Relations Act 1976, Equal Pay Act 1970, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 and the Equality Act 2006. It also assists the Council in complying with various non-statutory codes of practice.
- 3.2 The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Race Relations Act 1976 oblige employers and employees not to discriminate on the

grounds of sex (against men or women) or marital status or race (including colour, nationality and ethnic origins). The Acts also give councils a duty to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

3.3 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 makes it unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person in any aspect of employment for a reason connected with their disability. It defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities". A Disability Equality Duty has been introduced.

3.4 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires local authorities to ensure that every appointment of a person to a paid office or employment shall be made on merit.

3.5 The Equality Act 2006 introduces a gender equality duty requiring unlawful sex discrimination to be eliminated and the promotion of equality of opportunity between men and women.

3.6 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 allows employers to discriminate on the grounds of gender and disability in certain circumstances when undertaking risk assessments and establishing the necessary controls. An example might be where manual handling tasks could not safely be undertaken by a person with a particular form of disability. Such discrimination should be exceptional and justifiable. Where necessary, reasonable modifications to workplaces or systems of work should be undertaken to ensure that no discrimination takes place.

4.0 Objectives of Our Policy

4.1 To prevent unjustifiable direct and indirect discrimination in the selection and employment of people.

(a) Direct discrimination is treating a person from a particular group less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same circumstances.

(b) Indirect discrimination is the application of a requirement or condition (intentional or unintentional) which has a discriminatory effect on people from a particular group.

- 4.2 To stimulate equality of opportunity by the elimination of conditions, requirements, procedures and practices which are unjustified.
- 4.3 To recruit and retain the best person for the job and to develop them within that job regardless of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, family responsibility, trade union membership, whether they are suffering from HIV or AIDS or any other factor irrelevant to their employment.
- N.B. The usual retirement age for Council employees is 65 years but under the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 employees may request to continue working beyond their 65th birthday.
- 4.4 To achieve a workforce which reflects the overall composition of the community the Council is seeking to serve.

5.0 Responsibilities and Roles

- 5.1 This policy applies to all Members and employees of the Council. It has particular relevance to those in a position of responsibility with control over other employees and those responsible for recruitment and selection.
- 5.2. The Chief Executive is responsible for the overall implementation and operational effectiveness of the Policy.
- 5.3 Each Director is responsible for the implementation of the policy within their directorates.
- 5.4 The Human Resources Manager is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy; ensuring its communication to all job applicants and new employees, ensuring that the Council's personnel policies and procedures comply with it, identifying areas for further action and providing specialist training and advice.
- 5.5 PRAC is responsible for considering the effectiveness of the policy and progress towards the achievement of targets on an annual basis and is responsible for reviewing these targets as appropriate.
- 5.6 Each and every employee, irrespective of their job or level within the organisation has a personal responsibility to comply with this policy. Anyone discriminating unfairly will be guilty of misconduct and dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

6.0 Specific Measures

6.1 The Council will develop new procedures to enable compliance with this policy to be monitored and to ensure unfair discrimination is prevented.

6.2 A separate Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy has been adopted by the Council aimed at ensuring that the Council complies with the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

6.3 A separate HIV and AIDS Policy has been adopted by the Council aimed at preventing unfair discrimination against those with HIV and AIDS.

6.4 A separate Sexual Harassment Policy has been adopted by the Council aimed at ensuring that sexual harassment does not occur and that any instances are properly dealt with.

6.5 A separate Access Policy has been adopted by the Council aimed at preventing Disability Discrimination .

6.5 The Council will keep its recruitment advertising practices under review to ensure the level of local, regional and national coverage is appropriate.

7.0 Monitoring and Review

7.1 The Council will seek evidence of systematic change contributing to the achievement of the Council's aims. The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed.

7.2 The Council will therefore:

- (a) monitor the characteristics of those applying for its jobs at each stage.
- (b) Monitor the characteristics of its workforce.
- (c) Identify trends to assist in policy planning.
- (d) Identify indicators of possible discrimination.
- (e) Monitor the targets set for achieving equality in employment.
- (f) Require that thorough recruitment and selection procedures be operated and monitored.

- (g) Require that adequate records are kept on training, development, conditions of service, reasons for leaving, and disciplinary cases.
- (h) Communicate centrally held data to Directors and Managers to enable them to respond effectively.

8.0 Training for Equality

- 8.1 All Members and employees will be made aware of this policy.
- 8.2 Training to support the provisions of this policy will be provided to all Members and employees as appropriate and in particular to all those in a position of responsibility with control over other employees and those responsible for recruitment and selection.
- 8.3 The provisions of this policy will be included in the induction of all new Members and employees.
- 8.4 The Council will consider providing training as deemed appropriate to assist relevant groups of employees to enter occupations within the Council where they are currently under-represented.

9.0 Resources

- 9.1 In striving to be an equal opportunity employer, the Council will seek to make available appropriate resources to achieve the aims set out in this policy.

10.0 Complaints under Our Policy


- 10.1 Any employee who has a complaint about the operation of this policy or believes that the Council has unfairly discriminated against them shall follow the process outlines in the Council's grievance procedure or shall take the matter up with the Human Resources Manager.
- 10.2 Any Member who has a complaint about the operation of this policy or believes the Council has unfairly discriminated against them shall in the first instance take the matter up with the Chief Executive.
- 10.3 Any job applicant who has a complaint about the operation of this policy or believes the Council has unfairly discriminated against them shall, in the first instance, take the matter up with the recruiting officer, who will deal with it in accordance with the Council's Comments and Complaints Procedure.

You can get our Equality and Diversity Scheme in alternative formats, upon request. These include large print, computer disk and email.

This document is also available in alternative languages, upon request

本文件可以應要求，製作成中文 (繁體字) 版本。

Please contact Katharine Doherty (Equalities Officer) at Vale of White Horse District Council.

 01235 520202

 equalities@whitehorsedc.gov.uk