

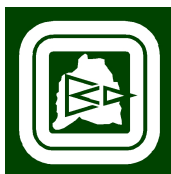
Bassetlaw District Council

in partnership with A1 Housing

Diversity and Equality Policy

2005

(refreshed August 2007)



BASSETLAW
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



**Bassetlaw District Council
Diversity and Equality Policy Programme**

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document sets out our commitment to introducing and developing a diversity & equal opportunities programme. It covers both fair employment practices and access to services provided by the Council.

As well as aiming to meet the standards we will seek to improve and develop our approach and work towards the achievement of best practice and standards required by regulatory bodies and defined in national standards such as the Equality Standards for Local Government.

We also recognise our public leadership role in the District and will work closely with the district's Local Strategic Partnership and with other major partners to promote equality and diversity.

The Council is committed to making improvements and to promoting equality throughout all our services. This policy programme is designed to help us meet and exceed our statutory obligations.

Should you have an interest in this Policy and its implementation Plan, we would like to hear from you. We can also make the material available in alternative formats and languages. Visit our website www.bassetlaw.gov.uk or contact the Head of Community Engagement and Performance on 01909 535609 or e-mail policy@bassetlaw.gov.uk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Quigley', with a long horizontal stroke extending from the bottom of the signature.

Mike Quigley
Leader of the Council

As part of the consultation process in the development of this policy, A1 Housing have assessed their obligations and strategic drivers. These are reflected in the Action Plan. These actions will be monitored by the Council.

2 DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

The Council's diversity and equality programme aims to:

- Ensure that diversity is recognised and valued within its policies, practices and operating standards.
- Promote and encourage diversity and recognise the value that respecting difference brings.
- Promote an environment where equality of treatment for all its citizens, customers and stakeholders can be continuously improved and developed.
- Ensure that quality services meet the requirements and expectations of all its diverse communities – throughout the District – regardless of their personal circumstances and background.
- Develop policies and practices, as an employer, which recruit and retain staff with the ability and skills to deliver services effectively to a diverse range of citizens.
- Promote diversity and equality issues where we work in partnership or have influence with other bodies that are service providers/contractors and with other key organisations in the district – with the overall aim of promoting the value and purpose of equality and diversity programmes.

The Council acknowledges that the existence of 'institutional' discrimination, inappropriate treatment, misunderstanding and ignorance can lead to unfairness and injustice for specific groups within our society.

The Council believes that diversity and difference should be valued, so that everyone can play a full and active part in community and social life, free from fear, discrimination and restricted opportunity. To support this we have specific local policies covering social inclusion, community cohesion, community engagement and access to services.

To further our specific commitment to promoting equality of opportunity we will review and assess the impact of existing Council policies and operational practices so as to ensure that those from diverse circumstances and backgrounds, or whose needs have been less well met in the past, have the opportunity to participate fully and are not at a disadvantage.

As a provider of important local services, we want to make sure these services meet our citizen's needs. We will carry out research and consultation to understand your needs and the impact of any service changes or new policies being proposed.

We will use this information to ensure we do not unfairly discriminate on any grounds. We are committed to reviewing and where necessary changing how we do things to address disadvantage and to continuously improve overall equality performance levels within the Council.

In order to provide high quality services, knowledgeable, skilled and motivated employees are needed, aware of the organisation's attitude to customer and community relations and with the ability to serve a range of customers from diverse backgrounds.

As an employer, we will ensure that the Council meets and exceeds all its legal requirements and becomes a workplace where equality of opportunity is a model of good practice and where discrimination is eliminated in all employment practices.

The Council's approach to diversity intends to involve everyone according to their particular circumstances and individual needs. In other words, to aim for an inclusive approach where no member of the community feels left out or unable to participate in community affairs or council activities.

The equality programme, however, does also recognise that there are individuals (and groups) who are identified within statutory legislation and/or generally accepted guidelines, as being subject to past (or perhaps existing) levels of discrimination and exclusion. Such barriers often result in an inability to fully participate in or to access specific opportunities or 'rights' and the Council has a legal duty to address them and to take appropriate action.

These groups include:

- Those defined by their colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin. (Including asylum seekers & travellers).
- Those affected by their gender or marital status (or sexual orientation/preference) including those with maternity or child-caring responsibilities.
- Those covered by disability legislation who have statutory rights for which public organisations must consider making 'reasonable adjustments' to enable them to access, use and participate effectively (e.g. sensory impairment/learning difficulties).
- Those who may be excluded or affected by reason of their religion (or belief).
- Those who consider that their age may be used as a defining factor (unjustifiably) resulting in treatment, which adversely affects them.
- Those whose sexual orientation may disadvantage them by reason of impact of policy, practice or attitude.

In order to achieve our aims, we will, as necessary, develop specific equality programs to address the issues raised by these specific groups, which are often known as 'communities of interest'.

Bassetlaw also commits itself fully to a programme of action set out as a **Corporate Diversity and Equality Plan**, which is an action programme devised to ensure we achieve the overall objectives of its policy. This is set out in Section 4 of this document.

3 OUR COMMITMENT

A Programme of Action

The Council is specifically committed to the following:

- Requiring all Councillors, employees and those acting on behalf of the Council to be responsible for implementing this policy and to maintain a continuing duty to challenge discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity.
- Acknowledging that in its organisational capacity, Bassetlaw District Council has a major role to play in promoting equality, diversity and community relations within the District.
- Prioritising its efforts according to the District's demographic and economic context whilst also recognising the absolute requirement to fulfil its statutory obligations under the various Acts of Parliament (and related Codes of Practice) designed to protect certain groups and/or promote equality of opportunity. For example Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as Amended) and the Race Relations Act 1976. See also Race Equality Scheme, which is a separate document.
- Improving equality practice at corporate and individual department levels:
 - providing services fairly and sensitively
 - developing and improving fair recruitment, employment and equal pay practices
- Introducing structures and systems, which will ensure progress, is continuously developed and there is commitment and ownership. This will include assessment and audit arrangements.
- Introducing effective measures to implement its objectives:
 - profiling our workforce and the community and citizens we serve;
 - introducing monitoring arrangements to enable useful information to be analysed (e.g. employment practices/service take up);
 - setting up consultation arrangements to improve our performance and review our progress.
 - developing action plans and programmes;
 - introducing realistic (and achievable) local targets and meeting national performance standards;
 - giving managers responsibility and making them accountable for results;
 - improving staff perceptions and developing their skills;
 - providing resources to improve practices and promote equality initiatives;
 - regularly publishing the results of our achievements and our progress.

Fair Employment Practices and Quality Service Delivery

(i) Employment

The Human Resources Department will take a leadership role in this element of delivering the policy. Fair employment practices will underpin the Council's general approach to equality & diversity and, as a major employer. We will consult and involve the workforce in our programme of action.

Key elements are:

- Advising management of acknowledged best practice and introducing equality objectives for its implementation (ref: National Codes of Practice).
- Developing specific equality and diversity training to improve the skills, knowledge and awareness of its managers and staff.
- Consulting regularly with Trade Unions, staff (e.g. through surveys/focus groups etc) to develop and improve feedback on performance.
- Ensuring personnel practices are capable of being monitored to assess trends.
- Setting achievable targets and objectives to help implement the policy.
- Reporting regularly on progress – highlighting achievements and areas for development and improvement.
- Evaluating the impact of any proposed new (employment) policy on the specific groups covered by the equality programme.

The employment programme will cover:

- Recruitment, retention and labour market inequality.
- Equal pay arrangements and (any) job segregation.
- Flexible working, work/life balance and family/child care and maternity issues.
- Workplace relationships and treatment including bullying, harassment and any other unacceptable practices.
- The promotion of religious & cultural tolerance.
- Re-dress, grievance and complaints (and support for those involved).
- Disciplinary rules and procedures and their outcome.
- Specific requirements of disabled employees (compliance with legislation) and related support.
- Staff training and personal development (including promotion and progression).
- Staff appraisal systems and assessments.
- Reasons for leaving and termination (including dismissal).

- Promoting a workplace culture, which acknowledges difference and appreciates and recognises the value of diversity.

(ii) Services

Our Executive and Service Managers will take the lead role in this element of delivering the policy by providing (or supporting those who provide) services which are accessible to all those who wish to use them.

Our aim will be to ensure there is equality of access to services or facilities, equality of treatment (equally applied) upon engagement with the organisation and equality of outcome (attainment based on objective treatment) for all users.

Users of our services can expect the Council to:

- recognise that people are different and have diverse needs.
- provide services, which are flexible in order to meet those different, and individual needs, to target appropriate to needs and, wherever possible, remove barriers, which may deny access to services.
- ensure that all customer contact areas are welcoming and accessible.
- produce a range of information about our services and make that information available in plain language and an accessible format.
- review all functions as required in light of equalities legislation such as the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- integrate equal opportunities into any service specific training including any customer care training.

The Council's **service (equality) delivery programme** will include:

- Engaging customers (and potential customers) so as to provide feedback (e.g. surveys, questionnaires, consultation).
- Setting up service monitoring in those areas where there is a potential impact on key groups covered by the equality programme (e.g. disabled people). Developing service monitoring and management information systems will enable the Council to identify and report trends and take appropriate action.
- Developing good practice in line with national or professional guidelines or related codes of practice.
- Working with “partner” bodies to improve and develop service delivery. Through working closely with key stakeholders, suppliers/contractors, partners, local groups etc. the Council will be more accountable to its citizens (this may include the setting of criteria/standards).
- Undertaking service reviews to ensure that policies and practices are achieving their objectives including promoting equality (and diversity) objectives – this will involve undertaking “Impact Assessments” (reviewing for example - design, accessibility, flexibility, sensitivity).
- Assessing the resources required to provide appropriate and accessible services and to continuously improve them (for example staffing, information/communication, new initiatives).

- Addressing identified barriers, which are unjustified and/or discriminatory for individuals (or groups) identified within the policy (institutional discrimination).
- Determining whether our customers/clients/citizens have specific or special needs, which can be met or addressed. e.g. disabled people, the elderly, ethnic minorities. Our overall aim is to improve our knowledge about the needs and requirements of **all** our citizens as well as those who are specifically covered by the equality and diversity policy.
- Setting out action plans and objectives (targets) to achieve the improvements that have been identified (within realistic timescales).
- Identifying and consulting with groups within the community whose needs are less well met by council services than other groups. We will consult users/ customers/ recipients/ beneficiaries to assess the impact of our services including priorities, delivering mechanisms and access issues.
- Intending, through our commitment to community planning, to involve and respond to all sections of the community in the planning and running of our services. Building the capacity of those communities and groups to engage with the Council will be essential to enable them to articulate their needs and views.
- Promoting inclusion and mutual respect and addressing misunderstanding and any prejudice will guide the provision of, or commissioning of, services for the District's community.

(iii) Complaints

The Council commits itself to:

- dealing with all complaints of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, seriously, promptly and confidentially
- ensuring that any person who has suffered any form of discrimination by the Council, is given guidance in making a complaint.

In relation to specific types of complaints:

General complaints by the public

Leaflets giving information on how to make a complaint are available from public reception areas of the Council. The information can also be downloaded from the Council's website at www.bassetlaw.gov.uk. We will actively encourage people to comment on our services and make suggestions, compliments or complaints through an accessible complaints system

Staff complaints

Should a member of staff have any complaint in respect of their treatment in relation to this policy, this should be taken up as per the Council's Grievance Procedure. We will monitor any complaints of harassment or discrimination carefully.

3 CORPORATE DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY PLAN

3.1 Leadership:

- The Council, its committees and sub-committees has the responsibility to ensure the equality programme is reviewed and developed.
- The Chief Executive will take overall leadership responsibility along with the Executive Directors and heads of our services.
- Co-ordination of the policy will rest with the Executive Director of Professional and Customer Services as lead officer and a corporate group focussing on equality (Equality Steering Group), which has specific terms of reference.
- Structures will be developed and refined to ensure the policy reaches all parts of the Council's functions and organisation. All departments will be expected to account for their equality programmes.
- Plans, which are developed to implement the Strategy, will be monitored¹ to ensure progress is achieved. Political "scrutiny" by Elected Members will form part of this process².

3.2 Organisation & Planning

- Defined tasks and responsibilities will be assigned and specific accountabilities for key individuals identified.
- A timetable setting out milestones for progress will be developed and reviewed regularly.
- Regular reporting mechanisms will be introduced – based on action plans and policy/performance standards requirements.
- Audit and performance management arrangements will integrate equality as a theme.
- Policy and service planning will include an equality dimension.
- Progress will be monitored and evaluated regularly as a preliminary to the establishment of achievable targets and goals.
- Resources (staff, finance and specialist facilities) will be allocated for key equality priorities.
- Self-assessment and audit arrangements will be introduced to develop ownership of the programme.

¹ We will review and monitor the commitments contained in this policy on a regular basis. We will establish monitoring systems and adopt equality performance indicators for our services. We will monitor the extent to which we are meeting the aims set out in this policy and publish the results.

² The Council has revised its approach to scrutiny. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee allocates policy, practice and operational reviews to one of 4 Select Panels plus a Health Panel. These Panels are informal and flexible in order to respond to individual reviews. The Panels produce reports which will be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, which can then refer the matter to the appropriate body (eg Council, Cabinet or external organisations). The Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee (PISC), which is also in the structure, may also refer issues to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, which would then allocate it to one of the Panels to consider and scrutinise in more detail.

- Training for managers and staff will be introduced in order to develop skills, knowledge and confidence.
- Positive action approaches will be considered when all other approaches have not achieved the required results/outcome.

3.3 National Standards and Continuous Improvement.

By adopting the EQUALITY STANDARDS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (EQSL), Bassetlaw District Council will develop a framework for the continuous improvement of our performance on equality and diversity.

We have set a target to achieve LEVEL 1 (Commitment to establishing an Equality Policy) during 2005 and LEVEL 2 (Setting equality objectives & targets) before the end of the municipal year 2005/6.

Thereafter we intend to achieve through to LEVEL 5 as soon as is practical.

Throughout this process, we intend to:

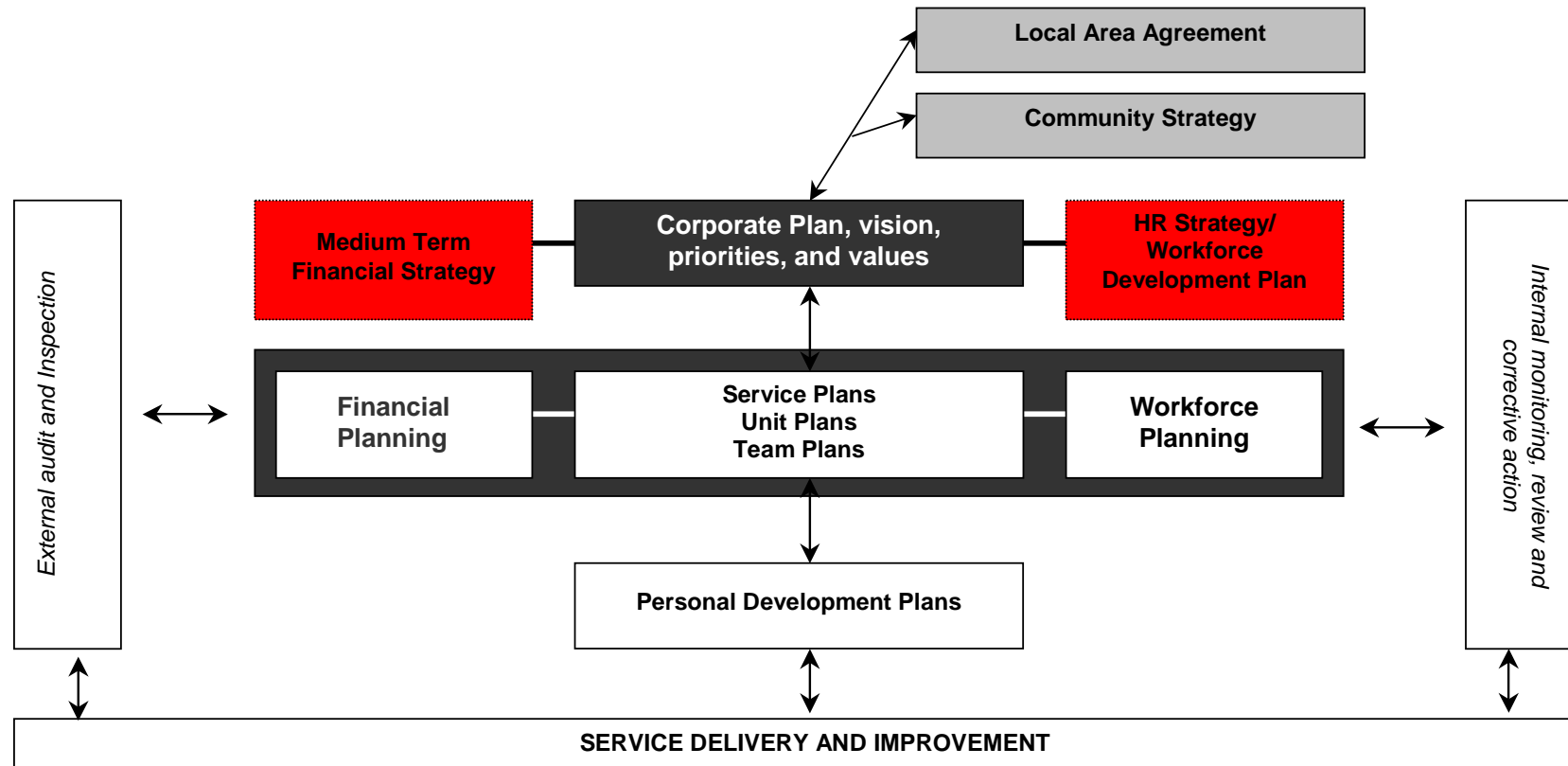
- Develop local performance indicators to address equality and diversity issues.
- Incorporate equality into our Performance Management and service review processes. Including Best Value reviews and performance improvement programmes.
- Develop and refine consultation mechanisms, which identify those groups (or individuals) from specific 'communities of interest' whose needs and requirements are currently being less well met.
- Develop techniques to assess the impact of its policies, procedures/practices and operational performance on specific groups defined within the policy.
- Empower our key stakeholders and partners and promote and develop good practice amongst suppliers, contractors, partners and others with whom it has a regular working relationship.
- Where the Council enters into partnership with others to do work, or contracts with others to do work or provide goods or services on the Council's behalf, we will:
 - Ensure that they have an equal opportunities policy. (This must be in compliance with national and EU Public Procurement legislation)
 - Ensure that services provided in partnership comply with this policy.
 - Require compliance with equalities legislation and good practice, and will take action when necessary to support the achievement of this aim.
- Work closely with our employees (and trade unions) to enhance the effectiveness of its equality programme. Developing excellent and equitable employment policies and practices.
- Report regularly on progress made in achieving our overall objectives and welcome the involvement of key stakeholders and relevant external bodies in such evaluations.
- Meet and exceed the requirements of external inspection and scrutiny regimes whilst developing internal processes for self-assessment and evaluation.

Equality Standards – Framework including levels

National Equality Standards for Local Government	Targets to achieve specific levels	Key actions required
	Achieve level 1 by October 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt Comprehensive Equality Policy to include our aims and corporate objectives • Develop and consult on corporate equality plan • Establish commitment, build capacity and resources
	Achieve level 2 by March 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish Corporate Equality Plan • Commence Impact assessments • <i>Training staff</i> • <i>Carry out systematic and co-ordinated consultation</i>
	Achieve level 3 by June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set equality objectives and targets • Use impact assessment results to inform objectives and targets • Integrate with service and performance management framework
	Achieve level 4 by March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop information and monitoring systems • Assess progress • Scrutiny of results by Select Commission and consultation groups • Act on key findings
	Achieve level 5 by March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving and reviewing outcomes • Demonstrate success • Fundamental review of policy, equality objectives, plan targets and actions • Develop new corporate equality plan

3.4 Links to other policies and Strategies

The diagram below shows how the various national and local priorities feed into and drive the Council's service delivery. The Council's equality and diversity programme and Race Equality Scheme 2005-2008 will be a key feature in our service delivery framework.



APPENDICES

Specific Statements on:

RACE

RELIGION & BELIEF

GENDER

SEXUALITY

DISABILITY

AGE

Race

The Council is fully committed to achieving racial equality. We recognise our duties under the Race Relations Acts and related Codes of Practice and undertake to strive for racial equality in service provision and employment and to promote good relations between all racial groups and organisations.

As part of its responsibility, as a public authority, under the **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**, the Council has produced a Race Equality Scheme, including a statement of intent, as it is required to do by this legislation.

The "General Duty" the Council is required to address includes:

- * Addressing unlawful racial discrimination
- * Promoting equality of opportunity and
- * Good relations between people from different racial groups.

Our 'Race Equality Scheme' and its implementation will be reviewed annually.

This programme is integral to the equality and diversity initiative and is available as a separate linked document, outlining our approach in more detail.

See Council's website www.bassetlaw.gov.uk or contact the Head of Community Engagement and Performance on 01909 535609.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Provide services relevant to people's needs, which respect their cultural and social identities.
- Make sure that our services are accessible and available to all members of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) organisations.
- Strive to have a representative workforce that can sensitively address the needs of all communities.
- Work with other agencies and community organisations to promote racial equality and eliminate racial disadvantage and racial harassment.
- Strive to create an environment, which is free from racial harassment and racist behaviour.
- Introduce action to encourage people from minority communities to take up employment and training opportunities in areas and levels where they are under-represented.
- Introduce development opportunities to encourage progression and take positive action to increase the level of BME staff at a senior level
- Set targets for the employment of BME people at all levels.
- Develop an internal employees forum open to all BME staff.
- Monitor the impact of our policies and practices for adverse impact.

Religion and Belief

We recognise the need for our strategy to be in line with the EC Directive (2000/78/EC) and Human Rights legislation and recent UK legislation on discrimination in employment and vocational training. (Employment Equality Regulations 2003 –religion, belief & sexual orientation)

Our strategy is to tackle unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of religion and belief and to promote good relations between people of different religions and beliefs.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Strive to create an environment, which recognises and respects religion and belief and is free from unlawful discrimination or harassment.
- Develop employment practices and services in ways, which recognise and respect religion and belief.
- Improve the understanding of religion and belief among our staff so that they can sensitively address the needs of individuals and of different faith communities.
- Work with other agencies and community organisations to promote understanding and good relations between people of different faith communities.
- Recognise that, while separate from our Race Strategy, our actions for religion and belief will be broadly similar in principle.

Gender

The BCHT is fully committed to achieving gender equality. We recognise our duties under the Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay legislation and codes of practice and undertake to strive for gender equality in service provision and employment. (This includes trans-gender equality, which is also covered under the Sex Discrimination Act and by other Regulations). It is acknowledged that career patterns and lifestyles are often affected by caring responsibilities and that these should not further disadvantage individuals –whether using or delivering our services.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Strive to create an environment that is free from harassment and sexist language and behaviour.
- Introduce action to encourage women to take up employment and training opportunities in areas and levels where they are under-represented. Introduce development opportunities to encourage progression to these.
- Set targets to achieve a better gender mix at a senior level and become involved in specific initiatives to address gender segregation in occupational areas.
- Work with other agencies and community organisations to promote gender equality and eliminate disadvantage.
- Create a flexible working environment where work and home balance requirements are recognised and supported in all areas and levels (see also Carers strategy).

Sexuality

The Council recognises the very real discrimination that people face in their lives due to their sexuality and life choices and we are committed to working to remove this unfair treatment.

We recognise the need for our own strategy to be in line with the EC Directive (20001781EC) and recent UK legislation on discrimination in employment and vocational training on the grounds of sexual orientation. (Employment Equality Regulations 2003 –religion, belief & sexual orientation).

We want to create an environment where Lesbians, Gay men, and Bisexual people are free from unfair treatment and harassment and can be open about their 'difference' if they so choose.

The Council has undertaken to make its service accessible to everyone, and we will work to ensure that our employment policies and service delivery are not based on the assumption that everyone is heterosexual.

We are Statutorily required to ensure the Council does not discriminate against employees or potential employees from these groups in our community.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Develop policies and procedures to end unfair treatment and harassment of, Lesbians, Gay men, and Bisexual staff and service users.
- Work towards the equal application of all terms and conditions of service irrespective of any employee's sexuality.
- Consult agencies and community organisations for Gay men, Lesbian, and Bisexual people on the services we provide, and, where appropriate, develop services to meet the needs of Lesbians, Gay men and Bisexuals.
- Develop an internal employees' forum open to Lesbians, Gay men and Bisexuals.

Disability

Bassetlaw is fully committed to achieving disability equality by eliminating both unlawful discrimination on the grounds of disability and the disadvantage experienced by people with a disability, wherever reasonably possible.

People with a disability are disadvantaged both by an environment and by social attitudes, which reflect principally the needs of non-disabled people. We fully acknowledge that improvements in the operation of our services can reduce this disadvantage.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Recognise our responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, EU Directives and other relevant legislation and will follow the relevant codes of practice for employment, premises and services.
- Strive to provide services, which are relevant to the needs of people with disability. Making 'reasonable adjustments' wherever possible to ensure participation / access.
- Make sure that all our services and all documentation and premises are accessible and available to people with a disability.
- Whenever possible modify our procedures or equipment to make full use of an individual's ability and adapt our facilities as necessary to accommodate people with a disability.
- Regularly "audit" our premises, services and processes to make sure DDA requirements are met.
- Train managers and staff in awareness and confidence to support people with a disability where needed. Consult with disabled people, their carers and representative organisations to help improve our performance.
- Guarantee people with a disability an interview for any employment vacancy for which they meet the minimum essential criteria.
- Provide systems, which seek to maximise access to employment and development by people with a disability.
- Continue employing, whenever practicable, employees who become disabled during their employment, and assist in their retraining.
- Develop an internal employees' forum open to all employees with a disability.

Age

Bassetlaw is committed to opposing unjustified age discrimination. We recognise the need for our own strategy to be in line with the EC Directive (2000/78/EC) and forthcoming UK legislation on discrimination in employment and vocational training due to be implemented from 2006.

We recognise that age discrimination can affect all age groups and both genders, that age is no indicator of effectiveness in most work activities, that employment decisions should not be based on age alone (with the current exception of retirement ages), and that services should be sensitive to the needs of all age group. We will value people regardless of age.

We will seek to ensure that our employment policies are relevant and fair to all age groups. We will work to create an environment where people are judged on their talents, skills and experience, rather than on misconceptions and prejudices based on age.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Follow the Government's Voluntary Code of Practice for Age Diversity in Employment.
- Remove age-related criteria in our employment practices. (subject to present retirement ages).
- Provide recruitment, promotion and training on the basis of business and operational need, regardless of age.
- Work to ensure that older workers are enabled to leave the organisation with dignity and flexibility in timing and working arrangements and are prepared for retirement effectively.
- Seek to ensure that all our services are appropriate to users regardless of their age and have non- discriminatory outcomes.
- Work with other agencies and community organisations to eliminate age discrimination
- Provide services which meet the specific needs and requirements of particular age groups when this is appropriate e.g. leisure arrangements for children, transport for older people.

For further information on this policy, please contact:

**Head of Community Engagement and Performance
Bassetlaw District Council
Queen's Building
Potter Street
Worksop
Nottinghamshire
S80 2AH**

Tel: 01909 535609

Email: policy@bassetlaw.gov.uk

If this is in relation to A1 Housing please contact:

**Customer Services Manager
A1 Housing
Carlton Forest House
Hundred Acre Lane
Worksop
Nottinghamshire
S81 0TS**

Tel: 01909 534484

Email: customer.services@a1housing.co.uk

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

LEVEL 2

1. Leadership and Corporate Commitment

Key Objectives	Activity	Responsible Dept/Officer	Target Date	Progress Made	Outcome Achieved (Yes/No)
Publish draft Corporate Equality Plan (CEP)	Publish draft CEP	Head of Community Engagement & Performance	December 08	Draft in place	
Demonstrate corporate engagement in EIA process	Engagement in EIA's across authority	Head of Community Engagement & Performance/Heads of Service	Complete	Evidenced in SDP's. EIA documents	Yes
Develop corporate mechanism for assessing development of service level equality objectives and targets	Establish performance management mechanisms for equality and diversity targets	Head of Community Engagement & Performance	Complete	Evidenced in SDP template	Yes
Create corporate structures for overseeing the development of information and monitoring systems	Establish structure for corporate information and monitoring	Director of Corporate Services	October 07	Initial meeting. Draft structure to be approved. Programme of events to be agreed	
Ensure mechanisms for responding to harassment are in place	Formal harassment procedures in place	Head of Community Engagement & Performance – Residents Head of Human Resources - Employees	December 07	Employment side – complete. Harassment and Bullying Policy in place	

2. Consultation and Community Development and Scrutiny

Key Objectives	Activity	Responsible Dept/Officer	Target Date	Progress Made	Outcome Achieved (Yes/No)
Ensure that the draft CEP has been circulated to designated community, staff and stakeholder groups within consultation timetable and is published in an appropriate range of languages and formats	Consultation with stakeholders on CEP	Head of Community Engagement & Performance	October 07		
Review equality content of Community Strategy	Undertake EIA on the new Community Strategy	Head of Community Engagement & Performance	December 07 ?		
Engage in consultation with designated community, staff, stakeholder groups and the wider community on all aspects of equality policy External	Consultation with stakeholders on CEP	All Heads of Service co-ordinated by Head of Community Engagement & Performance	January 08		
Engage in consultation with Members, employee representatives, departments and service areas on EIA's and all aspects of the CEP Internal	Undertake thorough consultation with all stakeholders on the CEP	Head of Community Engagement & Performance	January 08		
Each department/service area to engage in consultation with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups on its EIA's and its service delivery	Departmental consultation with stakeholders on EIA's and service delivery	All Heads of Service co-ordinated by Head of Community Engagement & Performance	March 08		

Key Objectives	Activity	Responsible Dept/Officer	Target Date	Progress Made	Outcome Achieved (Yes/No)
Each department/service area to engage with equality self-assessment, scrutiny and audit on its service delivery	Departmental participation in self-assessment, scrutiny and audit processes	All Heads of Service co-ordinated by Head of Community Engagement & Performance	March 08		
Seek to ensure that the equality policy and objectives are incorporated in partnership arrangements engaged in by the authority	Ensure equality policy and objectives incorporated into partnership arrangements	Director of Corporate Services	March 08		

3. Service Delivery and Customer Care

Key Objectives	Activity	Responsible Dept/Officer	Target Date	Progress Made	Outcome Achieved (Yes/No)
Engage in department/service area EIA's	Start undertaking EIA's	All Heads of Service	Complete	EIA programme in place. 3 year programme	Yes
Engage in development of department/service level equality objectives and targets	Setting of equality and diversity targets at departmental/service level	All Heads of Service co-ordinated by Head of Community Engagement & Performance	Complete	SDP	
Each department/service area to establish planning groups for monitoring and information systems	Departmental planning groups to be established	All Heads of Service co-ordinated by Project Board	December 07		

4. Employment and Training

Key Objectives	Activity	Responsible Dept/Officer	Target Date	Progress Made	Outcome Achieved (Yes/No)
Develop fair employment and equal pay policy element of CEP	Produce an equal pay policy	HR Service	Complete	EPP in place	
Engage in employment equality assessment of the Local Labour Market Area	Undertake assessment of local labour market in relation to equality and diversity	HR Service	March 08		
Engage in workforce profiling and an equal pay review	Research profile of workforce and undertake an equal pay review	HR Service	December 07		
Adopt procedures to ensure that publicity for vacancies does not unfairly restrict the range of applicants	Develop procedure to ensure that recruitment advertising is inclusive	HR Service	Complete	Recruitment and Selection Policy – December 06	
Produce a standard range of application forms and job descriptions that are clear and explicit	Produce a standard range of application forms and job descriptions that are clear and explicit	HR Service	Complete		
Review personnel information system for monitoring suitability including supporting the Council's statutory ethnic monitoring duties	Review personnel information system	HR Service	December 07		
Develop a programme of equality training to support the CEP and departmental service objectives	Develop a programme of equality training for all levels of staff	HR Service	March 08		
Ensure that the training programme is consistent with the training requirements in the Council's RES	Review training programme to ensure consistency	HR Service	March 08		

Key Objectives	Activity	Responsible Dept/Officer	Target Date	Progress Made	Outcome Achieved (Yes/No)
Make all employment procedures consistent with current legislation and all relevant Codes of Practice	Review employment procedures in light of current legislation and Codes of Practice	HR Service	Complete		