

Leeds City Council
Equality and Diversity Strategy
2006 - 2008

Contents

Our Mission and Values	3
Contacting us	4
Statement of intent	5
Chapter 1 Introduction	7
- lay out of this document	
- aim of the strategy	
- why is the Equality and Diversity strategy important to you?	
- how will this strategy be used?	
Chapter 2 Context	11
- the business case for equality and diversity	
- what are our legal responsibilities?	
- improving our services	
- how do we make sure equality and diversity is in all our work?	
- policy and planning	
- community cohesion	
Chapter 3 Equality and diversity: the way forward	19
Chapter 4 Key tools for making sure equality and diversity is included in everything we do	25
- equality and diversity impact assessments	
- monitoring	
- community engagement	
- targets and plans	
- reporting back	
Chapter 5 Equality and diversity objectives	31
- Leadership	
- Service delivery	
- Consultation and engagement	
- Employment and training	
Chapter 6 Implementation of the strategy	41
Equality and Diversity Policy	45
Glossary of definitions, terms and plans and strategies	48
Useful contacts and organisations	51

Leeds City Council's Mission Statement

'To bring the benefits of a prosperous, vibrant and attractive city to all the people of Leeds'

Our Values



Looking after Leeds

We are committed to improving the quality of life in Leeds and want to inspire pride in our city and communities. We will work with our partners, build on our success and protect our city for future generations.



Putting customers first

We will make sure our services meet the needs of our customers and communities. We will communicate clearly and work hard to find out and respond to our customers' needs. We are committed to providing excellent services that are value for money.



Treating people fairly

We value the diversity of our communities and strive to ensure that everyone shares in the city's success. We will tackle discrimination and improve access to our services - especially to those with the greatest need.



Valuing colleagues

We know that the good work of our colleagues is key to providing excellent services. We will support colleagues and encourage them to work creatively.

Useful information

For enquiries about the Equality and Diversity Strategy please:

E-mail: equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk

or Telephone: **0113 247 4190**
Minicom: **0113 224 3589**

Write to:
Equality Team
Chief Executive's Department
Leeds City Council
Ground Floor
Civic Hall
Leeds LS1 1UR

Website:
www.leeds.gov.uk

For more copies:

Contact the Equality Team as above

This publication can also be made available in Braille, large print or audio tape. Please call **0113 2474190**

If you do not speak English and need help in understanding this document, please telephone 0113 247 4190 and give the name of your language. We will then put you on hold while we contact an interpreter.

We can assist with any language and there is no charge for interpretation.

.....the above phrase will be written in different community languages in the final document.....

.....add phrase regarding sign language interpretation – check with North Street

Statement of intent

The Leeds City Council Equality and Diversity Strategy 2006 – 2008 will take Leeds in a new and exciting direction. It seeks to take on board and move forward the rapidly changing government agenda in relation to equality and diversity as well as the increasing impact changing demographics are having on Leeds.

The strategy continues to apply and also builds upon the principles within our Race Equality Scheme. However it goes beyond that and seeks to cover Race, Gender, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Faith, Age and Human Rights; in fact the principles and general aims in the strategy can be applied across all equality strands.

It recognises that people do not exist in neat and clearly definable groups and most people identify with more than one equality strand at a time.

The strategy takes into account the councils Values, looking after Leeds, putting customers first, treating people fairly and valuing colleagues. It is relevant to our customers, our partners and all our staff.

Finally it sets out our approach to equality and diversity and our corporate objectives in this area. It will be used to improve information, services, accountability and our inspection results. There is a clearly defined action plan which will be reviewed regularly and our progress reported upon. Importantly the strategy is designed to be a living document which can be amended and updated as circumstances require over the period of its lifetime.

We need to embed equality and diversity at the heart of what we do, across all services, from strategic decision making to the delivery of every frontline service.

Equality and Diversity can no longer be seen as an 'add on' but has to be a daily part of our life. We believe that this strategy will assist us in achieving this.

Councillor Mark Harris

**Paul Rogerson
Chief Executive**

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter outlines the layout of the document, states the aims of the strategy and shows why it is important to you the reader.

This chapter also shows how the strategy will be used across the work of the council.

Introduction

The layout of this document

This strategy includes chapters on:

- ❖ **Context** – our business case for equality and diversity
- ❖ **Equality and Diversity: the way forward** - definitions of equality and diversity and organisational barriers
- ❖ **Key tools for mainstreaming equality and diversity** - identifies key tools we will use to make sure equality and diversity are considered throughout all our work in employment and service delivery
- ❖ **Equality and diversity objectives** - outlines our objectives and sets out the strategy's 2 year action plan that will run from 2006/07 to 2007/08
- ❖ **Implementation of the strategy** - how we intend to implement and communicate the strategy, how we will monitor progress, tell people how we are doing and review the strategy

Within this strategy there are some technical phrases. These have been explained at the end in the 'glossary of terms and abbreviations'

Any reference to the council or departments also includes Education Leeds and Arms Length Management Organisations.

This strategy references practical guidance and makes links to other relevant strategies, plans and progress reports.

Aim of this strategy

Leeds is a cosmopolitan city. It is a city of many cultures, languages, races, religions and lifestyles. It is a welcoming city to immigrants and there is a mix of very different neighbourhoods. Despite this there is still evidence of unfair discrimination against people because of their race, faith, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation and lifestyle.

Equality is about treating people fairly and ensuring that we do not unfairly discriminate against particular individuals or communities. Diversity is about understanding that each individual is unique and will have different experiences, expectations and needs.

This strategy aims to help us address inequalities and promote equality and diversity across the whole organisation and indeed more widely in the City of Leeds. It is intended to be helpful in informing service, team and individual plans and objectives.

Why is the Equality and Diversity Strategy important to you?

- ❖ **Our customers and citizens:** it tells you that the council is committed to treating you fairly and to improving our services to make them accessible to all people who need them.
- ❖ **Our internal and external partners:** it makes clear our approach to equality and diversity, what you can expect from the council and what we expect from you as our partner.
- ❖ **Our managers:** it explains to you the council's priorities and the measures we need to take to make sure we meet our core value of treating people fairly as well as our legal requirements.
- ❖ **Our staff:** it gives you reassurance that the council will treat you fairly.
- ❖ **Our councillors:** to help you meet your legal obligations as policy makers of the council and to help you meet and understand the diverse needs of the communities of Leeds.
- ❖ **Our contractors and suppliers:** it makes it clear to you our commitment to equality and diversity and our values and what we expect from them.

How will this strategy be used?

We anticipate that this strategy will be used for the following purposes:

- ❖ **Service Improvement (internal and external)** – to provide a framework that highlights the importance of equality and diversity in planning and continuously improving our services;
- ❖ **Accountability** – to enable staff, customers and community groups to use the strategy to assess and scrutinise our commitment to equality and diversity;
- ❖ **Inspection** – to enable a wide range of inspection bodies to assess whether the council and all its departments are meeting their legal requirements;
- ❖ **Information** – to enable all our stakeholders, for example: staff, customers, councillors, community groups, partner agencies, job applicants, local, regional and national agencies to have a better understanding of the council's approach and commitment to equality and diversity; and
- ❖ **Policy** – guides the way in which the council operates.

Chapter 2

Context

This chapter outlines our business case for equality and diversity, from our duties under the many equality laws and regulations, to making sure that that we provide for our customers the best possible service.

Here we give you information about our legal duties, how we will use the strategy to improve of services, how this strategy will influence our policies and plans and the links to community cohesion.

Context

Our business case for equality and diversity

Why equality and diversity?

- ❖ **Skills and productivity**
...the need to recruit, retain and motivate the talent necessary for business growth
- ❖ **Service provision**
...the need to satisfy the full range of customers
- ❖ **Legislation**
...the need to comply with an expanding range of anti-discrimination laws
- ❖ **Reputation**
...the need to show the right image to an increasingly discerning population of potential staff, customers and partners
- ❖ **Wider agenda**
...the need to promote the government agenda, through, for example, inspection and community cohesion

What are our legal responsibilities?

There is already a complex legislative framework that supports equality and diversity:

- Children's Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act Regulation 2003
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act Regulations 2000
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act Regulations 2003
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Regulations 2002
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Leeds City Council's Race Equality Scheme 2002-2005 was produced in line with the general and specific duties arising from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Since the establishment of the Race Equality Scheme, a range of new legislation has been introduced:

- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation and Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Gender Recognition Act 2004

- Civil Partnerships Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005, which includes similar general and specific duties to those of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and promotes equality for disabled people in the public sector.
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

The Equality Act 2006 will create a single equality and human rights body and extends the prohibition on religious and sexual orientation discrimination to the provision of goods and services, planning, education and the exercise of public functions. The act also introduces on public sector bodies the duty to promote gender equality and extends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to cover the provision of public functions.

The Equality Team have developed an - Introduction to Legislation booklet . This provides details of existing and emerging anti-discrimination and related legislation.

The Equality and Diversity Strategy 2006-2008, builds on the principles and activities established within our Race Equality Scheme and broadens to include: race; gender; disability; sexual orientation; religion or belief and age.

Link: Introduction to legislation booklet

Improving our services

In order to achieve its mission the Council has prioritised what it needs to do. In the council's Corporate Plan 2005-2008, these priorities reflect what local people have told us are the issues that they are most concerned about. They also reflect those areas where we believe services should be improved. In order to achieve these outcomes we need to continuously assess the way we work. We will then be able to make any necessary improvements in order to provide a good service.

We have been rated as an excellent authority with three out of four star in the equality service area by the Audit Commission, an independent monitoring organisation, in our most recent **Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)**. The CPA considers whether councils are meeting statutory requirements on human rights, race, age, sexual orientation, gender, disability and religion. Customer focus, diversity and human rights are integral elements of the corporate assessment.

Changes to the CPA have provided a greater focus on diversity issues. The assessment has become more challenging in that it will:

- Include an explicit judgment of the quality and impact of the council's efforts to promote user focus and diversity;
- Assess how well the council contributes to the achievement and shared priorities between local and central government while understanding and meeting the needs of its local communities;

- Include, within the key lines of enquiry, more explicit consideration of management and resources and the value for money when reaching judgments about capacity;
- Assess the performance of the council in leading and influencing communities, local partnerships and other local agencies, with a focus on what difference councils are making to local people.

User focus, diversity and human rights will be integral elements of the CPA. This reflects the importance the Audit Commission attaches to ensuring that the diverse needs of communities are reflected in the way that services are designed and delivered with and for local people. The Equality and Diversity Strategy is a key plan to making sure that we continually focus on, understand and meet the needs of our customers and staff.

Alongside the CPA, the council measures itself against **Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)** which we use to show our progress year on year and compare how we are doing with other councils. There are also key local indicators that impact on our corporate priorities. The Leeds **Local Area Agreement (LAA)**, a new partnership arrangement to make sure we deliver on the Vision for Leeds, has equality and diversity as a key cross cutting theme.

How do we make sure we consider equality and diversity in all our work?

Leeds City Council has adopted the Equality Standard for local government. Developed by the Local Government Employers, Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission, this standard guides us through the steps that we need to take to make sure we consider equality and diversity issues in all our work.

The Standard recognises the importance of fair and equal treatment in local government services and employment and has been developed primarily as a tool to enable local authorities to mainstream gender, race and disability into council policy and practice at all levels. Within Leeds we have extended the framework to include other equality strands, such as, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

It is set out over 5 Levels, from writing a policy and setting targets to monitoring and reviewing work that has been done. Leeds achieved Level 3 of the standard in March 2006 and we are working towards achieving Level 4 by 2008 and Level 5 by 2010.

Alongside the Equality Standard we have a number of booklets and toolkits that provide guidance for: monitoring employment, training and service provision; assessing impact on policies and functions: and consulting and engaging with different communities. Direct links have been made to these within the strategy for ease of access through the internet and intranet.

Policy and planning

Equality and diversity is key in all of the work of the council. It is a cross cutting theme within all our policies and plans. The Equality and Diversity Strategy is part of a ‘family’ of plans that together explain what we do, why we are doing it and how we will do it.

This strategy will inform our service improvement plans which in turn will inform and influence team and individual plans relating to equality and diversity.

Document	Purpose
Vision for Leeds 2004 - 2010	This is the community strategy for Leeds. It is a long term plan to develop the city in terms of economy, culture, the environment and technology. The Vision was drawn up by the Leeds Initiative – the city’s strategic partnership.
Corporate Plan 2005 – 2008	This is the council’s most strategic document and sets out our priorities. The plan identifies how we will contribute to delivering the aspirations of the Vision for Leeds.
Annual Council Plan	By law we have to publish a statement each year showing what we are trying to achieve over the next year and what we have and have not achieved over the last year. It shows how we are performing against our indicators such as the BVPIs.
Plans and strategies	We have a range of specific policies and strategies that explain how we will deliver aspects of the Equality and Diversity Strategy. These include; the People Strategy, Customer Strategy, Corporate Communications Strategy, Risk Management Strategy, Corporate Procurement Strategy, Safer Leeds Strategy, Domestic Violence Strategy, Hate Crime Strategy, Children and Young People’s Plan and Community Cohesion annual report and action plan.
Service Improvement Plans	Each service produces plans that outline what they are going to do to deliver our priorities and improve services.
Personal Development Plans and appraisals	This scheme encourages managers to meet with staff on a regular basis to discuss performance and identify their own development and training needs. The scheme equips every individual to play their part in meeting the objectives and goals of their team, department and the council.

Community cohesion

Community cohesion is a priority for Leeds. It is an integral part of the Council Plan and the Vision for Leeds. In response to this, the council produces an annual Community Cohesion report and action plan which will be closely linked to the Equality and Diversity Strategy.

Community cohesion goes beyond the issues of tackling racial equality, discrimination and social exclusion. It is about all kinds of relationships within communities and closing the divides between them. Everyone in Leeds should feel that they have an investment in the city, they are valued and they are involved: in schools, in work, and in the place they live.

During the summer of 2001 several Northern towns and cities experienced well documented public disturbances. A number of reports were published at the time exploring the underlying causes and circumstances and Community Cohesion Guidance was published in 2002. These reports also state that the United Kingdom is a changing society which sometimes brings gains but can also cause tensions and divisions that may lead to parallel lives within and across local areas and communities.

Community cohesion is about raising awareness and understanding, breaking down barriers, developing shared values, mutual respect and trust.

The Government definition of Community Cohesion is:

- there is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods

As the national agenda on Cohesion has developed and council work has progressed, so the definition and understanding of the Cohesion agenda for Leeds has become clearer. It is:

- Builds on the principles of equality and ensures that all people, regardless of their background are respected and valued;
- Includes a focus on breaking down tensions and building relationships within and between all communities: recognising that there can be tensions of race, faith and national identities; people of all ages; urban and rural; settled and travelling communities; host and new migrant and refugee communities;

- Acknowledging that lesbian and gay people, disabled people, people with mental health problems, people who are homeless and many others can become a focus of tension;
- About dealing with 'perceptions' not just facts; recognising that perceptions and myths fuel tensions between communities; and
- About people feeling they have an investment in Leeds, they are valued and they are involved: in schools, and in work, in the place they live

We recognise that the council cannot deliver the community cohesion agenda for Leeds by itself. By working with our partners across the city, we can progress community cohesion. However, we do have a clear responsibility as a Civic leader and major service provider in the city to make sure that we set out our position and plan how we will deliver our services to support cohesive communities.

We produced for the first time in 2006 a Community Cohesion report and action plan that sets out what we have achieved and what needs to be done to make sure we meet our community cohesion objectives and responsibilities. This will be reviewed every year.

We have developed a nationally recognised tension monitoring system. A multi agency Tension Monitoring Group has been established:

- to develop effective systems for identifying and evaluating cohesion related tension risks and incidents and
- to encourage partnership working to avert and manage tensions more effectively.

We are supporting Leeds Initiative to develop a Harmonious Communities Strategy Group. When the Harmonious Communities Strategy Group is set up it will include representatives of some of the major public bodies, but the majority of members will be from the varied communities of Leeds. The group will be responsible for co-ordinating action to deliver the Harmonious Communities theme in the Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020. This includes a responsibility for community cohesion.

For more information the council's approach to community cohesion and what activities are taking place, please contact the Equality Team.

Chapter 3

Equality and diversity: the way forward

This chapter shows where we are now and where we want to be. It includes definitions of equality and diversity and outlines our approach to tackling organisational barriers across all equality strands: race; gender; disability; religion or belief; sexual orientation and age.

This chapter also provides information on our four equality and diversity objectives.

Equality and diversity: the way forward

The City of Leeds

Over the last ten years Leeds has become one of the most vibrant and successful cities in the UK. Recognised as the regional capital of the Yorkshire and Humber region Leeds has impressive shopping, cultural and educational facilities, as well as a thriving business sector. Leeds has excellent road and rail links and hosts the main airport in the region making the city a positive choice for living, for business and for pleasure.

Leeds is extremely diverse covering an area of 217 square miles and includes a main city area, surrounded by small towns, villages and countryside. It has a wide ranging population, with over 8% of residents from black and minority ethnic groups. This increases to 40% in some areas.

To help us achieve our mission, meet our values and comply with legislation and inspections, we need to appreciate the diversity of Leeds. By celebrating the value of different communities, cultures and religions we will be tackling discrimination.

Where are we now?

We are one of the largest employers in the city and provider of public services to a population of almost three quarters of a million people.

In the past equality work has tended to focus on specific areas, race, disability and gender. This has been a reflection of the national picture with specific legislation and single commissions for race, gender and disability.

The introduction of impact assessments, monitoring, consultation and engagement within both the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Equality Standard has helped to identify that despite issues faced by specific groups, some inequalities are shared across groups.

Examples of how we have put equality and diversity into action:

Leadership:

Equality and Community Cohesion Champions

Originally established to drive our activities on race equality forward our champions comprise of senior managers who are part of departmental management teams. Their role has significantly changed to promote, integrate and progress all equality, diversity and community cohesion issues consistently at senior decision making levels across the council.

Employment:

Policies

- Recruitment and selection policy
- Work life balance
- Grievance and disciplinary
- Domestic violence (staff policy)

Monitoring

We collect monitoring information in all areas of employment including: recruitment and selection; sickness; grades; and leavers. Information collated is analysed and used to help identify any issues. Appropriate action can then be taken to address these, for example:

- Corporate and departmental targets set
- Positive recruitment
- Mentoring and coaching
- Training

People Strategy 2005-08

- The strategy provides direction and focus to build on the council's work to become a healthier, more effective and efficient organisation
- The Corporate Workforce Strategy is a related 3 year plan which includes the councils overall objective for achieving a diverse workforce

Training

We have specific equality and diversity training in place, for example:

- Equal opportunities – including background and responsibilities for meeting our legal duties and practical application
- Managing equality and diversity
- Recruitment and selection
- Understanding harassment and hate crime

Equality and diversity is threaded through the Leeds Leadership training, aimed at senior and middle managers.

A range of training opportunities are available to staff to enable them to work effectively and continue their personal development.

Service delivery:

All department's provide annual plans for the services they provide. Equality and diversity issues are considered to ensure the needs of minority or disadvantaged groups are taken into account. We also monitor the take up of services to find out if we are failing to meet the needs of the some sections of the community.

Customer Strategy 2005-08

- Has been developed with clear actions, targets and measures

We have set up a number of key equality services:

- The Leeds Racial Harassment Project
- Braille, tape and large print service
- Sign language interpreting service
- Corporate translation and interpretation service
- Leeds Inter-Agency Project providing services for women experiencing domestic violence

Consultation:

We consult with a wide range of groups and individuals in the community to shape our services and as a result our overall goal is to close the gap between those enjoying the wealth of the city and disadvantaged communities who experience high levels of unemployment and crime, low income and skills levels, poor health and low educational achievement.

To help us listen to the views of people in Leeds we have set up various community groups, where representatives from different communities can give their views and ask us to take action on various issues. These include:

- Area Management Committees
- The Citizen's Panel
- Race Equality Advisory Forum
- Women Speak Out
- Disabled people's Access Advisory Group
- Youth Forums

Annual survey

We have established an Annual Survey to consult and engage with our Citizens

Our staff

Listening to the views of staff is also important. We have established corporate staff groups:

- Corporate Black and Minority Ethnic Group
- Corporate Women's Staff Group
- Corporate Disabled Group
- Corporate Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Staff Group

these:

...positively promote the community they represent within the council and across the city;

...act as a consultation forum; and

...link with key decision makers.

Staff survey

Provides an opportunity for employees to have their say and tell us what the council is doing right and what we could be doing better.

Where are we going?

Our ongoing challenge is to ensure that we consistently convert our values into actions that deliver appropriate services to all sections of our community.

We can only maintain our high levels of performance if we build an explicit commitment to equality and diversity into everything we do. This can only happen if we continually refine our understanding of what equality and diversity means in practice and promote them at all opportunities

As the Stephen Lawrence enquiry and its definition of institutional discrimination has shown, discrimination is caused by failures of social organisation and is not solely related to individual attitudes and behaviour. Similarly, the Disability Rights

Commission explains that the new public duty to tackle institutionalised discrimination against disabled people is based on:

“an understanding that the poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from environmental barriers, nonetheless powerful for being unintentional. These barriers come in many forms, from inaccessible buildings to employment practices or services which fail to take into account the particular circumstances of disabled people and by so doing exclude or disadvantage them”

We believe the barriers approach to equality and diversity can also be usefully applied to all other areas of discrimination, and therefore our strategy focuses on the identification and removal of organisational barriers.

Whilst this focus on social, economic, educational and organisational barriers is very helpful, the traditional practice of associating barriers with exclusive categories such as ‘disabled people’, ‘women’, and ‘people from black and minority ethnic communities’ and so on, can itself become problematic.

We know that the population of Leeds includes an almost limitless variety of characteristics and qualities – ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, language, impairment, religion, sexual orientation, education, disability, orthodoxy and geographical location – and any one individual can be a combination of many characteristics and qualities.

This is why our strategy is not organised in terms of traditional equal opportunities groups. Instead, it focuses on:

- The effects organisational barriers can have on a diverse population; and
- Practical ways of removing or reducing those barriers.

Corporate equality and diversity objectives

There are already strategies in place, or under development, which have specific aims, objectives, targets and measures relevant to the equality and diversity agenda. Until now, these have not been brought together into a comprehensive strategy nor have they been recognised as explicitly equality driven.

In order to bring these together, and meet the requirements of equality legislation and the Equality Standard we have adopted the equality standard areas into four corporate equality and diversity objectives:

- ❖ Leadership - to provide strong leadership which enables the principles of equality to be embedded in all areas of employment and service delivery;
- ❖ Service delivery - to provide accessible and appropriate services to all the people of Leeds;

- ❖ Consultation and engagement - to engage in appropriate, effective and timely consultation processes (including feedback) with the citizens of Leeds, to inform service delivery, employment practices and improvements; and
- ❖ Employment and training - to provide fair and equitable employment.

Chapter 4

Key tools for making sure that equality and diversity is included in everything we do

This chapter introduces five key tools that are used to help make sure equality and diversity is included in everything we do. These form the basis of any good practice and should be used as part of action planning, evaluation and review.

The importance of each tool is explained and a link made to detailed guidance.

1. Equality and diversity impact assessments

Equality and diversity impact assessments are a way of finding out whether the plans, actions and services will affect some communities or groups of people differently. Different treatment would be a problem to services and employment if this led to disadvantage for particular groups.

In the past these assessments have focused on specific equality issues such as race, disability and women. By considering barriers that are in place we are able to identify those shared by different groups and those that are specific to a particular group.

Departments and services have used the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 as a template for an approach to carrying out equality and diversity impact assessments for all groups. They have:

- Listed their existing policies, plans and services;
- Prioritised those to assess between 2006-2007 and 2007 – 2008;
- Developed a programme for assessing all existing and new policies, plans and services;
- Developed methods for consulting with interested groups including staff and customers; and
- Considered how to publish their progress – what is being assessed, when and how, what is the impact, what action is planned and what difference will this make.

Link: Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments – a guide for assessment teams

2. Monitoring

The aim of equality monitoring is to show the extent to which the council provides a fair and equal service to all customers. This is equally important for both service delivery and employment. If we cannot show that we are meeting the needs of all our customers, we cannot be confident that we are providing the best services to the people who need them.

Monitoring helps the council to check that we are reaching the people that need our services. It helps us to set realistic targets, for instance in service plans, on how we are going to tackle the under-representation of diverse communities and what has been achieved.

Equality monitoring in employment helps to show whether the council's workforce reflects the diverse communities of the city and if human resource practices and procedures are fair to all groups. It confirms that we are complying with our legal requirements and regulations.

Once monitoring data has been collected it needs to be analysed and findings used to develop appropriate actions. At all times, communicating with people the importance of monitoring, how it will be used and the results and outcomes is very important.

Link: Equality Monitoring Guidance

3. Community engagement

Community engagement is the way we communicate with, and listen to the views of local people. Everyone must be given the opportunity to express their view and opinions about the council and its services.

Community engagement covers the whole span of activities supporting the involvement of residents, community groups, customers, carers, businesses and employees in decision-making processes

Examples of internal and external community engagement activities include focus groups, staff surveys, questionnaires, telephone interviews, open days and public meetings, area and neighbourhood forums, complaints and suggestion schemes.

As part of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children program the Children Leeds partnership have a group specifically focused around effective consultation, involvement and participation of children and young people in services and decision making processes in Leeds. More information about this can be found on the Leeds Initiative website: www.leedsinitiative.org.

Link: Corporate Community Engagement Policy

4. Targets and plans

We want to know how we are performing and how that performance compares with others; we want to continually improve and develop our performance. Targets will be set to encourage performance improvement and performance indicators used to measure how well we are doing and how we compare to others.

Most performance indicators are set by central government in consultation with local government and are collected and reported on by every local authority in the country. Some, called local key indicators, have been developed specifically for Leeds and are not required nationally. All our performance indicators, the targets for our future performance and a comparison with how other authorities are performing are published in our Council Plan every year.

Setting challenging yet realistic targets is crucial in helping the council to achieve its corporate priorities. Targets help to focus action on priority areas and services which are important to our customers and stakeholders.

Through action plans and service improvement plans, we make sure that action to deliver the targets takes place and that these are reached. The plans set out a framework for when, how, who and why targets will be monitored and reviewed.

Link: Performance management framework

5. Reporting back

Good practice and to comply with our legal responsibilities requires us to publish what we are doing.

Departments and services have a range of performance monitoring activities, formats and timescales in place. However, at present it is not easy to get a departmental or corporate overview of actions and outcomes. To improve this it has been agreed by the Equality and Community Champions that the strategy will be a standard item at their bi-monthly meeting.

Champions will be able to provide an update on progress, highlight any areas of concern and discuss possible actions to make improvements. Information gathered through these meetings will contribute to a corporate annual report that will be made widely available in the autumn of each year.

Chapter 5

Equality and diversity objectives

We have identified our equality and diversity objectives as:

- 1) Leadership
- 2) Service delivery
- 3) Consultation and engagement
- 4) Employment and training.

For each objective we have established a strategic outcome, key activities, identified what difference these will make and who has lead responsibility for achieving the actions.

These provide a framework for developing equality actions contained within either equality and diversity action plans or service plans. A detailed action plan supporting the strategy is available from the Equality Team.

Some of these actions are detailed in other strategy action plans, for example: Customer Strategy, People Strategy and Procurement Strategy.

1) Leadership

Equality and diversity objective

To provide strong leadership which enables the principles of equality to be embedded in all areas of employment and service delivery.

Strategic outcome

There is effective leadership at all levels.

Activities

- Develop creative ways of engaging councillors with equality and diversity issues.
- Publicise the work and progress of the Equality and Community Cohesion Champions.
- Increase links within departments to enable better communication between staff groups and management teams.
- Improve the way we communicate equality information to staff at all levels, using the best and most appropriate channels and media.
- Continue to support and develop the Leeds Leadership Programme and use their learning in a work environment.
- Promote the benefits of equality monitoring to our services and our workforce
- Develop further publicity about the Equality Standard to enable managers to tell others about it.
- Cross departmental working towards achieving Level 4 of the Equality Standard by 2008.
- Through Leeds Initiative, publicise our approach to equality and diversity and develop better joined up working with our partners.
- Annually review and develop the existing equality and diversity policy.
- Annually review all equality guidance and publications to ensure that they are up to date.
- Develop a range of key equality and diversity indicators to help show how we are progressing.
- Annually produce and publish a progress report on the Equality and Diversity Strategy, and department and service equality plans.

What difference will this make?

- All our leaders are better equipped to challenge equality, promote equality and diversity and act as advocates.
- Our senior and middle managers will have the knowledge, skills and experience to meet the councils future challenges and priorities.
- Our customers, staff and partners will have access to information about our services and policies.
- There will be a greater understanding of the importance of monitoring within employment and service delivery, providing a more accurate profile of staff and customers.
- We will have a range of equality and diversity indicators that will help us to monitor our progress at a local level and check how we are doing compared to other councils.
- All departments will have clear equality and diversity action plans and targets.

Responsibility

- Councillors
- Corporate Management Team
- Equality and Community Cohesion Champions
- Equality Team
- Corporate Human Resources Services
- Departmental Equality Groups

2. Service delivery

Equality and diversity objective

To provide accessible and appropriate services to all the people of Leeds

Strategic outcome

Our customers receive excellent services, which are efficient and effective at meeting their needs

Activities

- Prioritise, list and publish all functions and policies relevant to equality and diversity.
- Develop programmes to ensure that impact assessments are embedded within service planning and the review of services.
- List, publish and justify prioritisation of impact assessments on an annual basis.
- Develop effective systems across all departments to monitor our services, then analyse this data and use the information when planning future provision.
- Develop transparent links between customer feedback and service planning.
- Encourage the return of equality monitoring data as part of the customer compliment and complaints process to help us reduce any differences between the equality groups.
- Develop outcome focused action plans that identify both shared and specific action for the different equality and diversity strands
- Consult on and publish action plans.
- Promote procurement practices and policies on equality and diversity by providing information on equality issues and treating all tenders equally.
- Develop baseline information about our suppliers and contractors.
- Develop a robust and integrated system for reporting, recording and tracking incidents of hate crime across all equality strands.

What difference will this make?

- We will meet our legal duties.
- More people will have access to our services, especially from sections of the community who need our services and do not use them at present.
- People who use our services are more satisfied, are getting the services they need at the right time and make fewer complaints.
- Staff work more efficiently.
- All our suppliers receive advice on equality issues and our contracts promote equality and diversity.
- Suppliers from all equality groups are applying for our tenders.
- Increased awareness, reporting and recording of hate crime incidents
- Improved service response to victims of hate crime.

Responsibility

- Equality and Community Cohesion Champions
- Senior Management Teams
- Equality Team
- Corporate Procurement Unit

3. Consultation and engagement

Equality and diversity objective

To engage in appropriate, effective and timely consultation processes (including feedback) with the citizens of Leeds, to inform service delivery, employment practices and improvements.

Strategic outcome

All communities are thriving and harmonious places where people are happy to live. Our customers receive excellent services, which are efficient and effective at meeting their needs.

Activities

- Support the development of a Harmonious Communities Partnership which will be part of the family of networks that make up the Leeds Initiative.
- Review existing council equality consultation groups.
- Build consultation and engagement into service planning frameworks.
- Make better use of existing internal and external networks to avoid duplication.
- Develop a council wide consultation database and network.
- Ensure that specific equality and diversity areas are covered within the council's annual survey and staff survey.
- Let our customers and staff know what has happened as a result of consultation.
- Use current and new research findings, specifically relating to the different equality strands, to influence employment and service delivery.
- Develop a framework in which the council is accountable to communities to fully challenge service delivery and employment.

What difference will this make?

- People are involved and consulted on issues that affect their lives and where they live.
- More opportunities for everyone to be fully engaged with the work of the council
- Broader involvement and representation of our staff, customers and partners in employment and service provision.
- Community, partners and staff views are considered as part of decision making and service delivery and a direct link can be seen between the two.
- Better co-ordination, consistency and effective community engagement systems and processes, including feedback.

Responsibility

- Equality and Community Cohesion Champions
- Senior Management Teams
- Equality Team
- Corporate Communications Team
- Policy, Performance and Improvement Team
- Leeds Initiative
- Our partners

4. Employment and training

Equality and diversity objective

To provide fair and equitable employment.

Strategic outcome

Our staff reflect the diverse communities of our city, perform well, are constantly learning, and are able to develop their careers through all levels of the council without discrimination.

Activities

- Raise awareness of the key objectives within the People Strategy 2005-2008 with all our staff.
- Develop programmes to ensure that impact assessments are embedded within the development and review of our employment policies and functions.
- Develop systems to better record and capture monitoring data across all equality groups.
- Consider how comprehensive equality monitoring data is presented and disseminated across departments.
- Use the monitoring information to develop employment targets for departments and service areas.
- Develop capacity within the corporate staff groups so they can increasingly run themselves.
- Share information and join up initiatives across the corporate staff groups.
- Encourage and support departmental staff groups.
- Review staff support procedures such as domestic violence, sexual and racial harassment policies.
- Ensure that equality and diversity is threaded throughout all training and review training packages.
- Make appropriate training accessible to everyone.
- Provide a range of training opportunities for example mentoring, coaching, career development programmes.
- Develop a process to record and monitor training participation and take up across all equality strands.
- Develop and implement the pay and reward strategy.
- Complete the first phase of the job evaluation programme.
- Complete the first phase of the review of local terms and conditions.

What difference will this make?

- We will meet our legal duties.
- We will build up a diverse workforce with the skills that we need now and in the future.
- Our recruitment policies will comply with the law and best practice and will ensure that we treat people fairly.
- Our recruitment processes will provide us with the right people with the right skills at the right time.
- Our staff work well, feel safe, are motivated, stay with the council and achieve our customer service aims.
- Our workforce have the chance to become involved with the staff groups at a corporate and departmental level.
- Staff know about the equality and diversity agenda.
- There is a range of training opportunities for all our staff to access.

Responsibility

- Equality and Community Cohesion Champions
- Senior Management Teams
- Corporate Human Resources Services
- Equality Team

Chapter 6

Implementation of the strategy

This chapter outlines how we will implement the strategy. It gives information about how we developed the strategy and consulted on the draft document, how we will publicise the strategy across the council and the city, how we will implement monitor and review the strategy and how we will engage our staff and the community in this work.

Consultation

The Equality and Diversity Strategy was developed by a steering group incorporating representatives from the Equality Team and representatives from each department. Department representatives worked within equality or diversity and identified with a specific minority group. This has ensured that all equality and diversity issues were considered from the beginning.

Throughout the development of the strategy, briefing papers were provided for the Equality and Community Cohesion Champions, the councils Human Resource (HR) Strategy Steering Group, the Joint Consultative Committee and Executive Board to continue engagement with unions, HR and key decision makers.

Consultation of the draft strategy took place over a 3 month period in early 2006. The consultation was publicised widely across the city via different community and voluntary sector networks and internally within the council.

Feedback to the strategy was generally very positive, particularly in relation to the style of the strategy and how equality and diversity issues were brought together.

Comments and contributions from the consultation process have been used to improve the strategy in particular the action plan. This has been shortened and we have developed more concise activities appropriate to the strategy. The strategy has also been checked against the general and specific legislative duties to ensure we are able to demonstrate how we will meet these.

As a key document for the council, the Equality and Diversity Strategy was approved by the Executive Board in May and formally launched in June 2006.

Monitoring our progress

The Equality and Diversity Strategy is supported by a series of documents. These will ensure that the key objectives and targets within the strategy are delivered.

Framework document	Tracking document that outlines our progress against national and local equality and diversity targets and indicators and our legal duties.
Departmental progress	Standard item on the Equality and Community Cohesion Champions agenda to monitor progress against the strategy.
Annual report	An annual position statement showing our progress on actions, against our targets and indicators and our outcomes

These documents underpin the performance management framework within which progress against the strategy will be monitored. Progress will be referenced at appropriate accountability meetings, within senior manager's appraisals and within corporate and departmental team meetings.

Policy implementation responsibilities

Elected members are responsible for setting policies that are non-discriminatory and promote equality and diversity for all employees and service users.

The Chief Executive is responsible for implementing these policies through Directors, Chief Officers and Heads of Services.

Directors, Chief Officers and Heads of Services are responsible for ensuring that all employees, customers, contractors and suppliers are aware of the policy and that the policy is implemented in all parts of the management and departmental structures. Practices within each department should be monitored and reviewed to ensure equality and diversity is promoted in all its forms and that there are no discriminatory practices which affect employees or the service they provide.

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for recruiting, training, promoting and implementing conditions of service and council policies in a manner that is non-discriminatory. They should comply with the spirit and intention of this policy in carrying out their duties and in managing staff and services.

All Employees positive contribution to equality and diversity by treating people with respect and promoting equality and diversity.

Community engagement

In line with the Corporate Communications Engagement Policy, we are using existing successful and innovative approaches and will develop new ways to inform, engage and be accountable to people about our approach to equality and diversity and how well we are doing in achieving our goals. For example:

- An executive summary will be available for wide distribution;
- Departmental newsletters, staff groups, Team Talk and the intranet; and
- Community newsletters, community networks, our partners and the internet.

Reviewing

This strategy covers an initial two year period, 2006 – 2008. This makes it possible for us to link our approach and actions with other published plans and strategies.

In the future, we intend to continue with our approach to equality and diversity by focusing on:

- the effects organisational barriers can have on a diverse population; and
- practical ways of removing or reducing those barriers.

We will do this by:

- regularly reviewing the strategy with our stakeholders;

- implementing recommendations;
- communicating our progress and areas for improvement;
- developing 3 year action plans for future areas of work;

Equality and Diversity Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

“The mission of the Council is to bring the benefits of a prosperous, vibrant and attractive city to all the people of Leeds”.

We are one of the largest employers in the city and provider of public services to a population of almost three quarters of a million people.

We consult with a wide range of groups and individuals in the community to shape our services and as a result our overall goal is to **close the gap** between those enjoying the wealth of the city and disadvantaged communities who experience high levels of unemployment and crime, low income and skills levels, poor health and low educational achievement.

Equal opportunities in the council is about making sure that everyone can fully join in the social, cultural, political and economic life of the city.

We are committed to treating our staff and the people of Leeds, fairly. We will make sure that we do not discriminate against people because of their age, impairment, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, race, religious belief, social class, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, responsibility for dependants, trade union activity or for any other reason.

We want to make sure that we take equality and diversity into account, in a positive way, at every stage of our work. We will make sure that we follow equal opportunities policies in the way that we recruit and treat our staff, deliver our services, consult the people of Leeds and work with other organisations.

Examples of how the council has put equality into action include:

Employment Policies:

- Recruitment and selection policy
- Work life balance
- Grievance and disciplinary
- Domestic violence (staff policy)

Consultation:

To help us listen to the views of people in Leeds we have set up various community groups, where representatives from different communities can give their views and ask us to take action on various issues. These include:

- Area Management Committees
- The Citizen's Panel
- Race Equality Advisory Forum
- Women Speak Out
- Disabled People's Access Advisory Group
- Youth Forums

Listening to the views of staff is also important. We have established departmental and corporate staff groups and carry out an annual staff survey.

Service delivery:

All department's provide annual plans for the services they provide. Equality and diversity issues are considered to ensure the needs of minority or disadvantaged groups are taken into account. We also monitor the take up of services to find out if we are failing to meet the needs of the some sections of the community.

We have set up various key equality services:

- The Leeds Racial Harassment Project
- Braille, tape and large print service
- Sign language interpreting service
- Corporate translation and interpretation service
- Leeds Inter-Agency Project providing services for women experiencing domestic violence

Equality Standard for Local Government

This is a national standard designed as a way of mainstreaming equality into all the work of the council including the services we provide to the public and all policy decisions we make. There are five levels to the standard and the council hopes to achieve all five by 2010.

The Equality Team

The Equality Team is responsible for leading and co-ordinating the Council's equality and diversity policies and community cohesion strategies.

The aim of the Equality Team is to ensure that the principles of equality, diversity and community cohesion are integrated into all the work the council undertakes. This is achieved by supporting council departments, senior managers, service managers, other staff, elected members and local partnership agencies to deliver strategies that promote and enhance equality of opportunity and community cohesion in service delivery, employment and community engagement.

The Equality Team also enables the Council to meet its legal duties under current equality legislation, to consider its response to future initiatives and to build on best practise. The Team aims to be at the forefront in promoting the equality and diversity agenda in an innovative and forward thinking manner

Glossary of definitions, terms and plans and strategies

Arms Length Management Organisations	An organisation that the council is responsible for, which is allowed more autonomy, e.g. area housing organisations
Best Value	The government's framework for improving public services
Discrimination	Being treated less favourably than someone else because of your race, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, religion or faith, or age. This can be direct or indirect discrimination.
Education Leeds	Education Leeds is a not-for-profit company formed in April 2001 by Leeds City Council
Harassment	Any unwanted or unwelcome term, comment or behaviour such as looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is abusive, offensive insulting or undermining to the recipient or as a result of which an intimidating environment is created.
Performance Management Framework	The Performance Management Framework (PMF) is the name given to the structure and processes in place within the council to monitor and manage performance. It also includes our planning structure and the way in which our various plans link together.
Sexual orientation	A persons sexual preference regarding relationships with people from the same sex or of the opposite sex.
Stakeholders	Individuals, groups or organisations who have a stake or interest in how the Council carries out its functions and delivers its services.
Trans	An all embracing term for people who identify as transsexual or transgender

Useful contacts and organisations

Leeds City Council

Equality Team

Chief Executive's Department
Ground Floor
Civic Hall
Leeds
LS1 1UR

Telephone: 0113 247 4190
Fax: 0113 247 4768
Textphone: 0113 2243589

Email: equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk

Central Interpretation and Translation Unit

Telephone: 0113 2409710 or
0113 2409957

Braille, Tape and Large Print Service

Shireview
72 Headingley Lane
Leeds

Telephone: 0113 214 4540

Local and National

Age Concern

188a Woodhouse Lane
Leeds
LS2 9DX

Telephone: 0113 2458579

Arbitration Conciliation and Advice Service (ACAS)

The Cube
123 Albion Street
Leeds
LS2 8ER

Telephone: 08457 47 47 47
08456 06 16 00 - Textphone users

Website: www.acas.org.uk

Care First ~ Employee Assistance Solutions

Counselling, information and advice
Legal helpline
Health information line

Telephone: 0800 174319
Telephone: 0800 413631
Telephone: 0800 413666

Commission for Racial Equality

5th Floor, Maybrook House
40 Blackfriars Street
Manchester M3 2EG

Telephone: 0161 835 5500
Fax: 0161 835 5501

Email: info@cre.gov.uk

Website: www.cre.gov.uk

Department of Trade and Industry
Enquiry Unit

Telephone: 020 7215 5000
Minicom: 020 7215 6740

Website: www.dti.gov.uk

Disability Rights Commission (D.R.C) Helpline

2nd Floor, Arndale House,
Arndale Centre, Manchester M4 3AQ

Telephone: 08457 622 633
Textphone: 08457 622 644
Fax: 08457 778 878

Website: www.drc-gb.org

You can speak to an operator at any time between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday

Equal Opportunities Commission

Arndale House,
Arndale Centre
Manchester
M4 3EQ

Telephone: 0845 601 5901
Fax: 0161 838 1733

Email: info@eoc.org.uk

Website: www.eoc.org.uk

An independent, non-departmental public body, funded primarily by the government. The EOC deals with sex discrimination and inequality related to gender, including good practice in the fair and equal treatment of men and women.

The Leeds Faith Forum

Contact the Secretary, c/o Leeds Church
Institute,
20 New Market Street, Leeds. LS1 6DG

Tel: 0113 245 4700;
Fax: 0113 391 7939

Email:
davidrhorn@leedschurchinstitute.org

Leeds Centre for Integrated Living

Armley Grange Drive
Leeds
LS12 3QH

Tel: 0113 214 3599 (voice)
Minicom: 0113 214 3598
Fax: 0113 214 3595

Email: info@leedscil.org.uk

LCIL provides services developed by disabled people, for disabled people.

Leeds Older People's Community Care Forum

Voluntary Action Leeds
Stringer House
Lupton Street,
Hunslet
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Telephone: 0113 270 0777

Leeds Racial Harassment Project

Telephone: 0113 2935100
Fax: 0113 293 5102

Email: info@lrhp.org.uk
Website: www.lrhp.org.uk

Leeds Racial Equality Council

Telephone: 0113 2438421

Police

(Non emergency)

Telephone: 0845 6060606

West Yorkshire Police Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Community Relations

Telephone: 01924 292523

Press for Change

BM Network
London
WC1N 3XX

Email: letter@pfc.org.uk

Website: www.pfc.org.uk

A political lobbying and educational organisation which campaigns to achieve equality, civil rights and liberties for all transgender people in the UK, through legislation and social change.

Stonewall

46 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0EB

Telephone: 020 7881 9440
Fax: 020 7881 9444
Minicom: 020 7881 9996

Email: info@stonewall.org.uk

Website: www.stonewall.org.uk

Women and Equality Unit

1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Telephone: 0845 001 0029

Email: info-womenandequalityunit@dti.gsi.gov.uk

