

Blackpool Council

Gender Equality Scheme



2007 - 2010



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FOREWORD

This is the first Gender Equality Scheme (GES) of Blackpool Council. The scheme is part of an overarching corporate equality and diversity policy and delivery plan which sets out our vision to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equal opportunities for all.

The purpose of this Scheme is to take forward our statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2006 to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity between women and men. This Scheme covers the services and facilities provided by the Council as well as our role as community leader, purchaser, policy adviser, planner, regulator and equal opportunity employer.

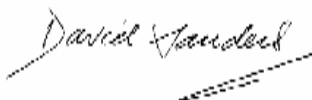
The main content of this scheme is a three-year action plan with yearly targets. The council will regularly assess the implementation of this plan through monitoring the take up rate of services and involvement with the community. In developing the action plan, we have consulted relevant stakeholders, employees, service users and others, including trade unions.

Blackpool Council has already been responding to the diversity of its local population. Blackpool's vision for the town is that of a welcoming town, a great place to visit and a better place to live and work. In the future, our services and facilities will be developed from the beginning with the aim of meeting the different needs of women and men. In this way we will ensure our policies and practices redress the historical discrimination experienced especially, but not exclusively by women and transsexual people.

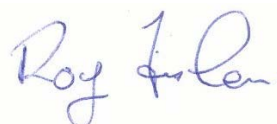
Our ultimate aim in implementing this new duty is to ensure the Council understand and address the different needs of women and men in all we do, and drive forward a culture change across the Town and in doing so move towards equality for all.



Steve Weaver, Chief Executive,
Blackpool Council



Dr David Sanders, Strategic Director
Community, Blackpool Council



Councillor Roy Fisher, Leader of
Blackpool Council



Councillor Sue Wright, Cabinet
Member, Blackpool Council

**Blackpool Council
Believes in
Access for All**

To ensure services provided by the Council are accessible, information is available upon request in a variety of accessible formats including large print, Braille, on audiocassette or computer disk.

We can also provide help for British Sign Language users and provide information in languages other than English.

Please ask for details or telephone 01253 477117.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended by the Equality Act 2006, places new duties on all public authorities to promote gender equality. These are known as 'the general duty' and the 'specific duties'. Gender Equality means making things fairer for women, men and people who have changed gender.

It aims to change the way we work in this area, moving away from reliance on individuals making complaints, to expecting the public sector to be positive and proactive in removing barriers within policy or the design of services and employment matters that have a negative impact on the lives of women and men. It is a positive duty that actively promotes equality of opportunity between women and men.

Producing a Gender Equality Scheme is one of the 'specific duties'.

What is a Gender Equality Scheme?

A Gender Equality Scheme sets out how we intend to make equality happen for women and men living and working in Blackpool. The Scheme also includes a number of things we must consider under the specific duties. For example, an Action Plan showing how we intend to fulfill the duties.

The purpose of our Gender Equality Scheme is to:

1. Show how we have consulted employees, service users and others to find out what the different needs of women and men are in the town and in setting our gender equality objectives.
2. Make sure we meet our legal obligations.
3. Tell people what our responsibilities are.
4. Explain how we plan to make things fairer in planning our services and what we do.
5. Show how the scheme links with other equalities objectives and priorities.
6. Provide information about our consultations, assessments and training arrangements.
7. Work in partnership with local organisations to prevent ignorance and prejudice in the wider community.

8. Set out our 3 year action plan on how we will put the Scheme into practice.
9. Monitor and check what we are doing each year.

What is the Gender Equality Duty?

The General Duty

This places a duty on the Council, when planning, delivering or monitoring services, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and harassment that is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and discrimination that is unlawful under the Equal Pay Act 1970
- promote equality of opportunity between women and men

This applies to all the work we do; policy-making, services, employment matters and services and functions which are contracted out.

This duty also involves making things fairer for people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or, have undergone gender reassignment. We are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment of people who have changed gender in the fields of employment and vocational training. The Council will also, ahead of legislative requirements aim to eliminate it in our provision of goods and services from April 2007.

The General Duty requires the Council to adopt a proactive approach.

The Specific Duties

- To prepare and publish a gender equality scheme showing how the Council will meet our general and specific duties and setting out our gender equality objectives.
- To consider the need to include any objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap.
- To gather and use information on how the Council's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.
- To consult stakeholders and take account of relevant information in order to determine our gender equality objectives.
- To assess the impact of the Councils current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- To implement the actions set out in the scheme within 3 years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- To report against the scheme every year and review the scheme

every 3 years.

Blackpool Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for the population it serves and the staff it employs. It takes seriously the obligations under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, both the general and specific duties. Also, its other obligations under the Equalities Act 2006 and the Equal Pay Act 1970. It also takes seriously the wider equality legislation such as the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act 1995/2005, Civil Partnership Act 2004, and the Employment Equality Regulations covering religion, belief, sexual orientation and age. The aim of our Gender Equality Scheme is to mainstream equality within Blackpool Council by incorporating it into the way we work wherever relevant. This Scheme looks at how we can close the gaps in the experiences between women and men. This scheme provides both the strategic direction and action plan, which outlines the route the Council will take from its current position to where it wants to be in the area of gender equality.

1.1 THE ROLE OF BLACKPOOL COUNCIL

Blackpool Council is a major provider of services to residents and businesses.

Vision and Values as an Organisation

Blackpool Council, in partnership with Blackpool Primary Care Trust has produced a joint Comprehensive Equality Policy, which outlines the vision and values around equalities for both organisations. It embraces the duty to promote gender equality as well as disability and race equality, and covers all six equalities strands (race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion and belief and age).

Our Joint Vision – Different but Equal in Blackpool

The Policy outlines our commitment to all service users and residents. Our main focus is putting service users and residents at the forefront of what we do and making sure that our service priorities match their own.

Our joint ambition for the town is also demonstrated in the ‘Blackpool Community Plan’, which, for the first time, commits us to achieving key equality and diversity outcomes including:

- ✓ Accessible services that meet the needs of local people and that are developed through public consultation and ongoing dialogue
- ✓ Respect, support and promote the diverse culture and heritage of Blackpool’s communities
- ✓ Promote equality of opportunity for all in employment, health, housing, education and leisure
- ✓ An inclusive community that is welcoming and diverse
- ✓ Increased public confidence and greater diversity in the take up of services

The Council has also taken these forward in it’s Corporate Performance Plan, which also includes the following key value statements:

- To improve the health and social wellbeing of the people of Blackpool and to reduce inequalities.
- To continually develop services to meet the public needs by building on the best and delivering innovation and improvement.

- To value our staff: improve their working lives and help them develop their potential
- To be open and honest with everyone – public, partners and staff.

Blackpool Councils Equality and Diversity Policy Framework is illustrated in the diagram attached at Appendix 1.

We are also guided by the following principles:

- All residents, service users, service providers, employees and partners in the community have a responsibility to promote equalities and challenge discrimination and stereotyping
- All residents and service users are able to participate fully in the life of the community and celebrate its diversity
- Every resident and service user has equal access to high quality services that meet their needs. We recognise that there are some people who may need support in receiving this entitlement
- Every resident, service user and employee is entitled to a safe environment free from discrimination and harassment
- Every employee is entitled to appropriate training and development and fair opportunities to promotion
- All residents, service users, employees and our partners in the community are encouraged to make their contribution to improving our services

The Council shall positively address areas where an adverse impact may result in non-equitable treatment between women and men, and take steps to eliminate such negative impact in meeting the general duty.

We intend to ensure that our values reflect the needs and aspirations of both the women and men in the population, and to pursue the elimination of discrimination and harassment. We would like to have a better understanding of the different needs of women and men within Blackpool to enable us to ensure that services are appropriate and sensitive at the point of delivery. Equality Impact Assessments will take this work forward (see Action Plan).

1.2 A PROFILE OF THE POPULATION OF BLACKPOOL

Blackpool, with its population of just over 142,000¹, is the most densely populated district in the northwest.

Gender:

The Census 2001 shows the gender split in Blackpool to be 48% male and 52% female. These figures reflect the county, regional and country positions with females slightly outnumbering males. There is no census data for the numbers of transsexual people in the UK. In completing the census form, transsexual women and men are able to indicate the gender they believe to be correct, irrespective of the details recorded on their birth certificate.

Ethnicity:

According to the Census 2001 Blackpool had a lower proportion of ethnic minority residents when compared to the UK average. Nearly a quarter of all Non-White people live in just two wards, Bloomfield and Park. The largest ethnic minority group, according to the Census is Chinese.

Deprivation:

A survey was conducted in 2004 to identify levels of deprivation throughout England. Over a quarter of the 94 identified areas in Blackpool were ranked in the most deprived 10% of areas in England. On the issue of income deprivation, 20% of small areas were ranked in most deprived 10% of English areas; for employment nearly a third were ranked in the bottom 10%.

Health:

Men in Blackpool live, on average, 3.7 years less than men in England and Wales. Women live, on average, 2.5 years less. Although life expectancy for both men and women in Blackpool has recently improved, for men it is still only by an average of 1.6 years compared with an England average of 2.3 years. The current rate of improvement for women (1.5 years) equates with the England average. According to the 2001 Census, both women and men had higher rates of 'not good health' than the England average².Blackpool

¹ 2001 Census

² Blackpool Figures

accounted for more than one third of all new HIV cases diagnosed in Lancashire and Cumbria in 2004.

Income & Employment:

Blackpool residents have the lowest gross household income in Lancashire. In the recent annual population survey (April 2005-March 2006) a higher percentage of working males (80.3%) in Blackpool were economically active than females (72%). The median weekly wages for full time workers are lower in Blackpool than in the North West and nationally.

Children and Young People

Numbers of children permanently excluded from school for reasons of bullying, harassment and physical or verbal assault on other pupils were 6 in 2002/03 and 12 in 2004/05.

(Source = Blackpool Children and Young people's Plan)

Teenage pregnancy is an indicator strongly linked to poor school attendance, low educational attainment, social exclusion and deprivation. The rate of teenage conceptions per 1000 15 and 17 year olds is higher in Blackpool than the national rate.

Ageing Population

This is a national issue. The proportion of older people in the population is increasing as more people live longer and the birth rate slows. In Blackpool, the proportion of older people is already high compared to the regional average.

People aged 60 years and over make up 25% of the total population, of which 56% are women. The sexes broadly balance up across the age groupings up to age 65. Beyond 65 years of age there are clear signs of more women than men. This reflects the national trend that women live longer than men.

Faith, Religion and Belief

Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other	No religion	Religion not stated
78.6%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	11.4%	8.8%

These figures were taken from the Census 2001 and show the percentages of people living in the town who have a self-declared faith. The figures also show the spread of minority faith traditions in Blackpool. With new countries becoming members of the E.U and

increasing social mobility, it is highly likely these figures will increase in the year's ahead and as a result Blackpool will continue to become even more diverse.

Gypsies and Travellers

Despite limited statistics and details we do know that Blackpool has a large number of Gypsies and Travellers who visit or are settled within the area. We believe that Gypsies and Travellers may be one of the largest ethnic groups in Blackpool.

Sexual Orientation

Although there are no accurate figures it is estimated that around one in 10 people in the UK are lesbian, gay or bisexual. We believe Blackpool is one of the 5 largest gay communities in England. Blackpool has a thriving gay community with a large number of gay owned and gay friendly hotels, bars, clubs and businesses.

1.3 CURRENT POSITION IN RELATION TO GENDER EQUALITY

Blackpool Council fully appreciate that the Gender Equality Scheme can only succeed if every service understands the issues and feels that it has a part to play in delivering its outcomes.

To make this happen we set up the Corporate Equality and Diversity Development Working Group in 2006, which includes staff at a senior level from the areas of policy development, service delivery and employment. This group has responsibility to oversee the Gender Equality Scheme and drive forward the action plan. This group reviewed the results of the consultation questionnaires (made available to residents and staff), considered current staff profile information and the results of an initial desktop internal mapping exercise of managers to assess our current performance on gender equality. This information was used to inform and prioritise the action plan.

Workforce profile

Blackpool Council currently employs almost 8000 staff which is divided into 73% female and 27% male. The majority of the female staff work part time, also forming the largest staff group. The gender split within services follows mainly a traditional pattern with the numbers of male employees only outnumbering women in areas such as;

- financial services
- ICT
- Operational Services
- Technical Services
- Corporate Policy
- Environmental Services
- Planning and Transportation

In 2005/6, 42% of the top 5% earners in the Council were female. An increase of 2% is predicted for 2006/7. There are more women than men at Assistant Director level. None work part-time, female or male.

1.3.1 Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment

Discrimination is to treat an individual or group differently and less favourably than others under the same or similar circumstances. The

Council will be using the joint Comprehensive Equality Policy to work towards the elimination of all forms of unlawful discrimination in the town.

This duty also covers all harassment from direct verbal abuse to comments that make an individual feel uncomfortable, intimidated or degraded.

Employment

Blackpool Council does not tolerate any form of unfair discrimination. It has a number of policies and procedures to ensure the working environment is free from discrimination and harassment. For example, the Council has, in partnership with ACAS, recently developed a new Dignity at Work policy which recognises/reinforces all employees' right to work in an environment free from harassment and bullying. It includes harassment in all its forms. The policy is supported by a training programme for managers and an extensive publicity campaign. This new policy is linked to Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy and the Grievance Procedure.

The Equality in Employment Policy is designed to ensure that unjustified discrimination in recruitment, retention, training and development of staff (on the basis of gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital or partnership status, work pattern, on the basis of having or not having dependants, home-life responsibilities) is eliminated.

The Council's Work-Life Balance through Flexible Working Policy recognises that flexible working patterns help ensure a diverse and flexible workforce. The council supports many different ways of working in order for its employees to achieve this. It recognises the needs of parents and carers and refers specifically the needs of men in those roles. The council currently has 27% of its male employees working part time. This is part of the Councils overall commitment and strategy designed to promote equal opportunities in employment. The mapping exercise identified a generally positive attitude towards the policy with experience of it working well. Many service managers described being able to accommodate a range of different work patterns within their teams including term-time only, home-working and compressed hours.

In 2006, the Council launched a number of staff equality and diversity focus groups including a women's group. The aim of the group is to ensure that staff experiences inform service development and

improvement across the council. Members of the group have been consulted during the development of this scheme and their experiences have also informed the Action Plan.

Pay Review

Blackpool council is committed to achieving a fair and equality proof pay structure; it is working on a new pay structure, which will reward employees on a fair achievement process. The new structure for the organisation will be based on 'job families'. One of the key benefits of a job family approach is to provide a transparent career pathway and flexibility for careers throughout the council.

The new pay structure will ensure individuals undertaking like-work; work rated as equivalent or of equal value, will be paid the same regardless of their gender. Blackpool is committed to resolving any potential historical pay differences that may be inherent within its current pay structure as part of this pay review.

Service Provision

The Council is committed to establishing a customer-focussed culture that provides high quality, accessible services to meet the different needs and expectations of our customers. For example, there is specified provision in the emergency night shelter for homeless people for women.

Complaint Process

Blackpool Council is always keen to improve services and to respond to any concerns regarding our behaviour towards customers. Should anyone receive treatment from representatives of the Council that does not meet our standards of customer care, a complaint can be made to any member of staff. Any complaint made will be handled under our complaints procedure, which is displayed and promoted in many public areas and on the Council website.

1.3.2 Promote Equality of Opportunity between women and men

Gender inequality exists in all aspects of society. This duty is a new aspect of the Sex Discrimination Act. In order to achieve it, it is necessary to recognise that because of their gender roles, women and men are not in the same position in society. In some circumstances therefore it may be appropriate to treat women and men differently in order to overcome previous disadvantage.

Employment

The Council is an Equal Opportunities employer, and has worked with the trade unions and other key stakeholders to put in place an Equality in Employment Policy, and People Strategy. Both documents promote equality of opportunity between women and men and work towards addressing any gender imbalance that may exist within our workforce. The Council currently employs a number of females in top profile roles and traditionally male dominated fields.

The women's equality and diversity focus group, in ensuring that staff experiences inform service development and improvement across the council promotes equality of opportunity for women.

Service Provision

The Council has begun to implement service equality monitoring procedures, which involves the collection of service user equality profiles. This includes race, gender, age, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The results of the equality monitoring will be measured against the appropriate target population to identify any disproportional access, quality or outcome for different groups within the community. As more services are included equality profiles information will also be used to identify any adverse impact.

Blackpool Council's is part of the Domestic Abuse Partnership. This is a multi-agency domestic abuse approach to producing a strategy and action plan to help safeguard survivors, offer services to reduce the impact of the abuse and hold those who commit such crimes to account. The aim is to look at current services available, what survivors of domestic abuse want and need, and produce an action plan. Local service provision is currently female-only. However, the strategy addresses the issues for both women and men in terms of developing a stronger response to Domestic Abuse and being more creative where there is unlikely to be new development of facilities. There is currently no specific provision locally for male survivors or for transsexual people to find refuge.

Leisure Services currently provides a number of women only fitness and aerobic classes. It also supported the Teenage Pregnancy team with a Passport to Leisure initiative providing targeted support for services for young women and so promoting equality of opportunity.

2.0 IMPLEMENTING THE GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

How we will meet the general duty

The delivery structure for implementing the Scheme is included as Appendix 2.

The steps which the Council has already taken or will be taking in order to comply with the duty are as follows:

- Gathering and analysing information
- Consulting stakeholders
- Carrying out impact assessments
- Prioritising and implementing gender equality objectives
- Reporting and reviewing

2.1 GATHERING INFORMATION

Gathering and using evidence forms part of the process to achieve greater equality between women and men. The Council recognise that it is vital to have a clear and accurate picture as a baseline about how we are currently performing on gender equality to provide the basis for the scheme and to enable us to measure progress.

As part of the development of this Gender Equality Scheme the Council has undertaken a review of evidence currently available around services and employment practices and the extent to which the different needs of women and men are taken into account. This evidence has included:

- Census Data – local & national
- Staff profile data
- Equalities Standard
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment audit
- Regular staff opinion survey results
- Staff profile information
- Customer Satisfaction surveys by Customer First
- Manager Mapping exercise
- Complaints and Compliments
- Best Value Performance Indicators

Using the above evidence we have recognised that an important element of the year 1 action plan will be to strengthen the

mechanisms for gathering evidence. This will need to include looking at barriers and outcomes to determine the different effect the Council's policies and practices may have on women and men. We will continue to work in partnership with our stakeholders to identify and measure the experiences of women and men to inform service development activities. We recognise that asking women and men how our services affect them is an invaluable way of finding out if we are treating them equally. We will continue to use a range of methods for gathering information on the impact of our services including;

- Gender profile of staff, service users and any other people affected by our decision-making and policy functions
- Staff and customer surveys
- Staff Focus Groups
- Analysis of complaints
- Questionnaires

2.2 USING INFORMATION

Blackpool Council and Blackpool Primary Care Trust Corporate Equality and Diversity Development Working Group will be the central point where both quantitative and qualitative information will be reported and considered to inform the action plan. This group will be responsible for investigating the reasons why trends or patterns emerge, and determining those, which require inclusion on the action plan.

This information can also be used to inform the impact assessment process. The Council will ensure that information is published internally on the intranet to enable access by all staff undertaking impact assessments of their services or policies.

2.3 CONSULTING STAKEHOLDERS

The Council has consulted relevant stakeholders in preparing this Scheme. Employees, service users and others (including trade unions) who appear to the authority to have an interest in the way we carry out our functions.

In consulting stakeholders, the Council carried out the following actions:

- Asked gender equality questions of the Citizens Panel

- Published a leaflet outlining the new duty and a reply slip including a selection of questions. This was distributed across Blackpool including to the Area and Equalities Forums and local voluntary sector organisations such as Women's Refuge and a local support group for transsexual people.
- An online survey asking a range of gender equality questions which was publicised through the leaflet. This survey will continue to be accessible throughout the duration of the Action Plan. The results will be reviewed regularly.
- The survey was publicised internally through staff focus groups and the Intranet Staff Notice board.
- Considered the results from the 2006 Staff Survey

The information gathered was used to determine the priority objectives in the action plan.

2.4 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

This section outlines the arrangements that are in place to assess the impact of all the Council's policies and procedures on gender equality within the period of this scheme. The process is designed to make sure that any new or existing policies, processes or functions do not affect women, men or transsexual people in an adverse way.

Blackpool Council is already required by the Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 to carry out race and disability Impact Assessments of its work. In 2005, Blackpool Council implemented an equality impact assessment (EIA) system, which considers 6 equality strands (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief). Since then all our functions, policies and strategies have begun to be assessed and reviewed to ensure that, where appropriate, they effectively contribute to promoting equality under all strands. They will now also be assessed to ensure that in addition, they contribute to meeting our general duties under the Gender Equality Duty.

Formal training on Impact Assessments was commissioned in 2004/5 and a toolkit developed to assist managers to undertake Impact Assessments. (A copy of the toolkit is available from the FED Unit on request). Impact Assessment Officer groups have been established in some identified priority service areas to undertake the process.

As part of the process that was commenced in 2005 existing policies, services and functions have started to be impact assessed at the review date for each policy. The impact assessment system is also used in the development of new policies, services and functions.

2.5 PRIORITISING AND IMPLEMENTING GENDER EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

In setting our objectives we have attempted to focus on achieving *outcomes* - specific identifiable improvements in policies, in the way services and functions are delivered and in the gender equality outcomes for service users and employees.

The priorities have been selected in consultation with service users and employees, taking into account all relevant information. In selecting the priorities we have attempted to address the most significant problems.

2.6 ANNUAL REPORT

To demonstrate our commitment to making progress on equality between women and men, the Council will publish annually on our website (other formats available on request) a summary of:-

- The action taken to implement our scheme objectives (action plan) and action taken during the previous year to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.
- The results of the information and evidence gathering – what information we have gathered and how it has informed or reprioritised the action plan.

The Corporate Equality and Diversity Development Working Group will assess progress against the scheme annually. We will ensure that this published information is readily accessible to everyone.

3.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan (Appendix 4) provides a framework and a focus for the delivery of our Gender Equality Scheme. It is intended to assist our staff, the public and other key stakeholders to understand the Councils approach to meeting both its general and specific duties under the Gender Equality Duty. The action plan is a 'live' document and will be reviewed at least annually.

3.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVES

The overall objective in meeting the gender equality duty is to ensure that the Council understands and addresses the different needs of women and men and promotes gender equality across all of our functions. We aim to build gender equality into the core business thinking and processes of the organisation.

The Council aims to make gender equality central to the way that we work.

The rationale for the choice of objectives in the Action Plan was based on the following information:

The major findings of the information gathering exercise

- Lack of monitoring data
- Pay review needs consideration
- General lack of awareness of the different needs of women and men and transsexual people

The major findings of the consultation exercise

- Increase opportunities to be involved in the shaping of services
- Awareness raising for staff on transsexual issues
- More family friendly facilities within services
- Wider advertising of job opportunities

The framework for the action plan covers all aspects of our responsibilities as a local authority. It is divided into the following objectives:

Leadership

To promote a culture that is based on positive attitudes to enable provision of services that are responsive and appropriate to the different needs of women and men.

Mainstream Equality & Diversity

To review and assess the impact of all policies and services provided by the council, which have an impact on gender equality.

Services

To ensure planned actions take account of the issues expressed by both women & men, alongside those priorities identified by the council. To also ensure that relevant gender equality considerations are built into the procurement process, to ensure the council's functions meet the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty

Workforce & Employee Development

To ensure planned actions take account of the issues expressed by female and male staff, alongside those priorities identified by the council. To also ensure staff are trained in the requirements of relevant legislation to support their role in providing services and managing staff.

Empowering People

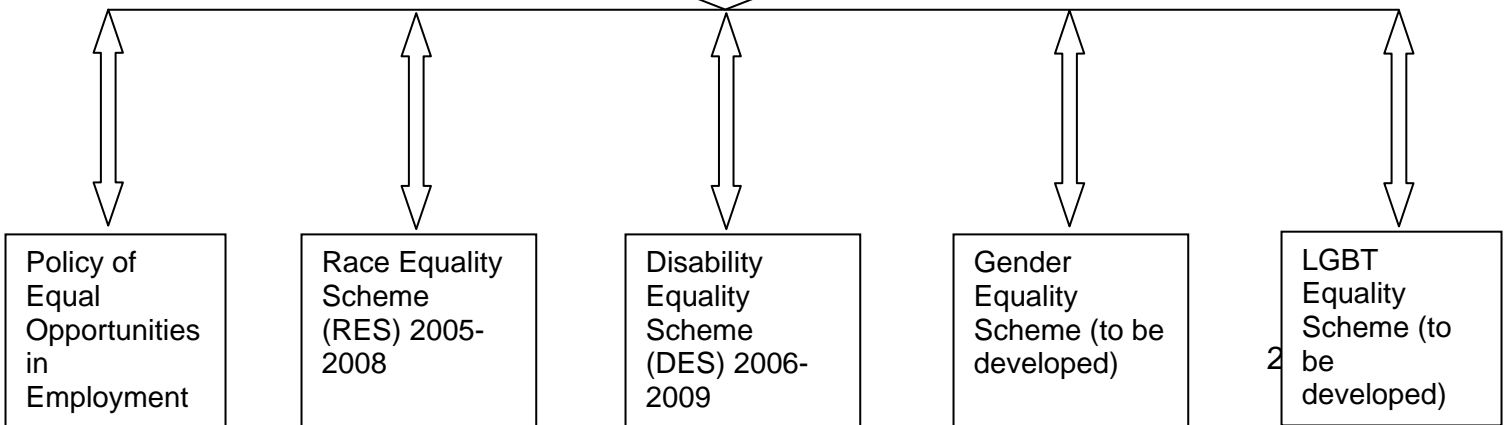
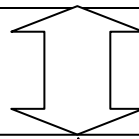
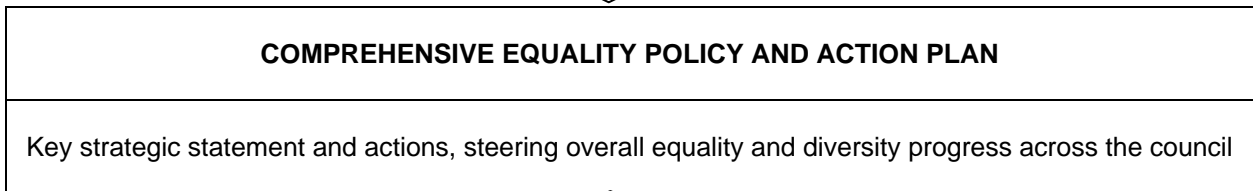
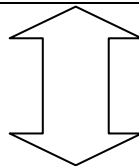
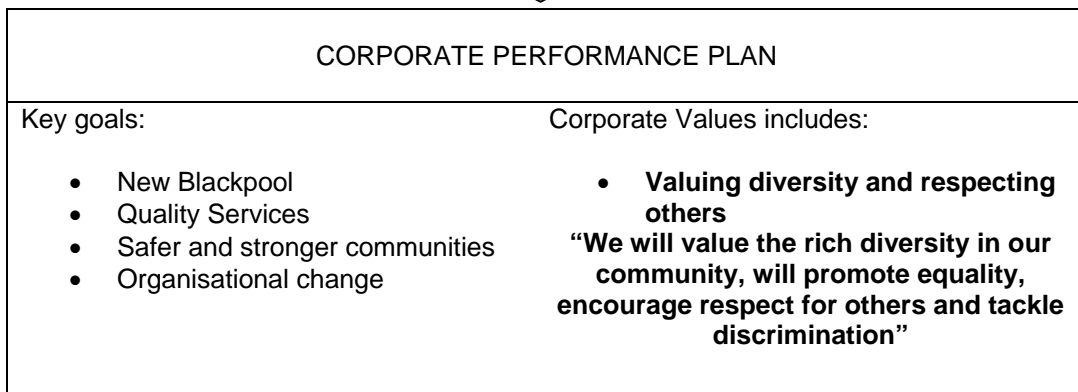
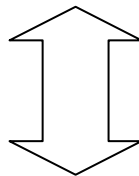
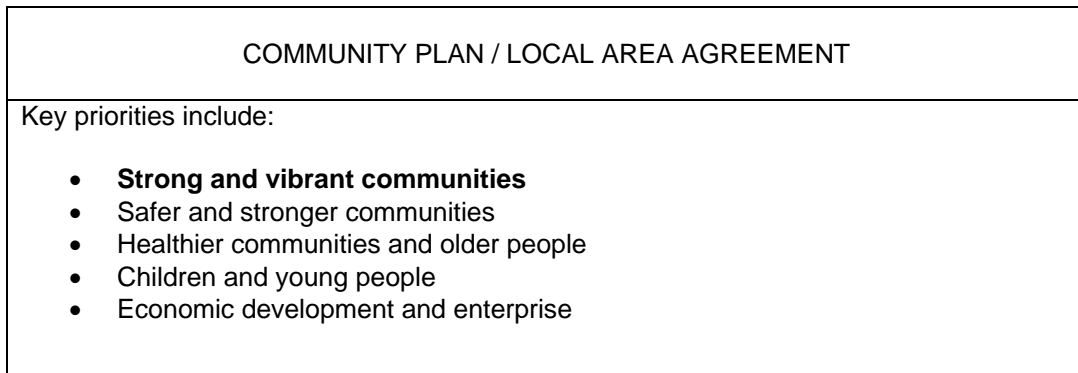
To increase staff and public involvement in the development, implementation and monitoring of services. To also increase the number of women and transsexual people having an input into local services.

Enquiries regarding this scheme should be made to:

Faith, Equality & Diversity Unit

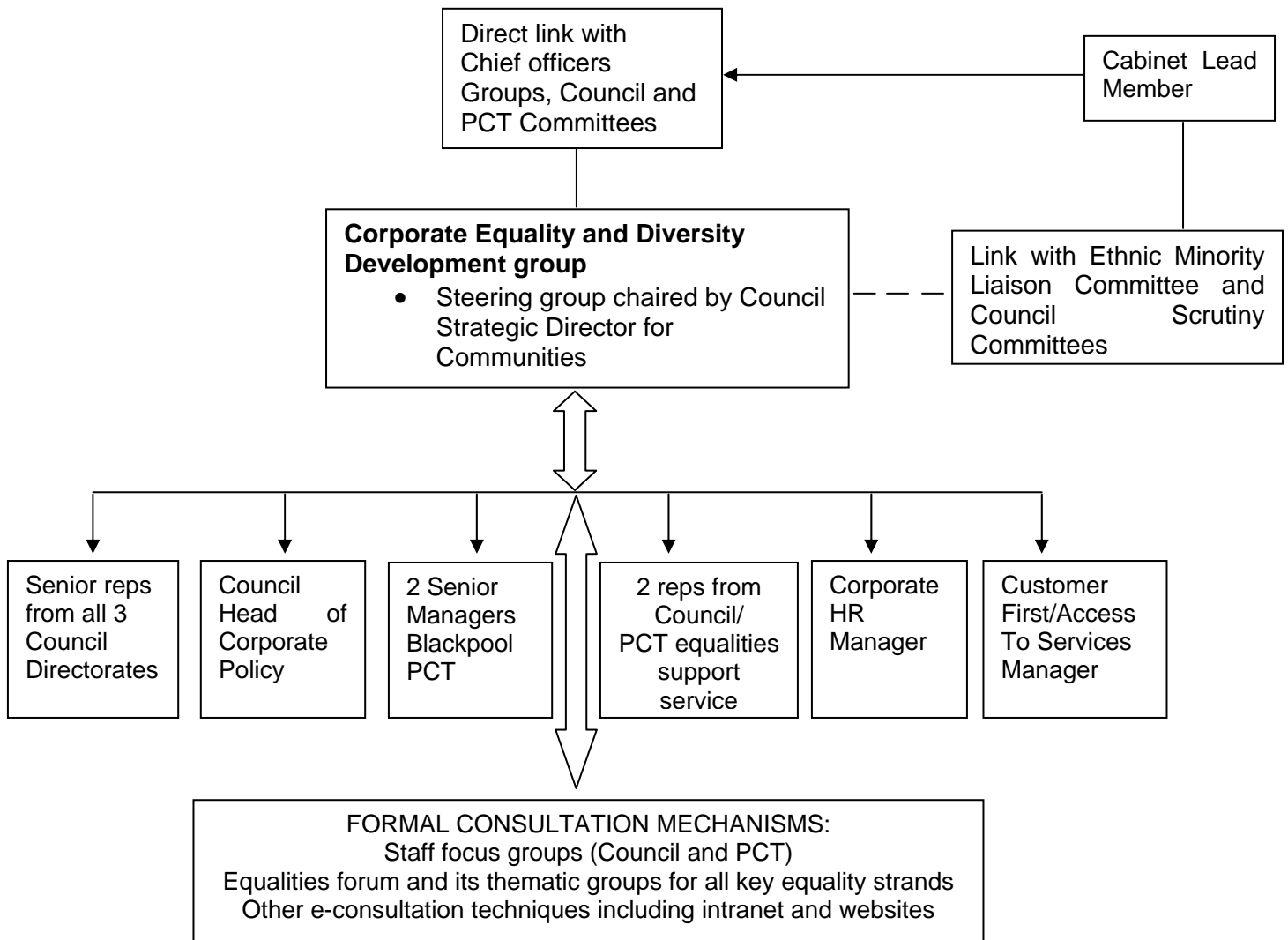
Telephone Number 01253 477117

Appendix 1. Policy Framework
Policy Framework for Equalities – Blackpool Council



Appendix 2: Delivery Structure

Decision Making and Involvement Structure at Blackpool Council



Appendix 3

Blackpool Council Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan 2007- 10

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
1. Leadership To promote a culture that is based on positive attitudes to enable provision of services that are responsive & appropriate to the different needs of women & men	1.1 Encourage commitment to gender equality and diversity at the highest level	Review of Corporate Equality & Diversity Development Working Group Chair and membership	June /July 2007	Chair of Corporate Equality and Diversity Development Working group	Profile and coordination of decision making for equality raised within the Council Commitment to Gender equality demonstrated at the highest level
		Corporate Equality & Diversity Development Working Group workshop to establish key issues / agenda for moving towards level 3 of the Equality standard	April/May 2007		

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	1.2 Develop knowledge and awareness of gender equality issues & highlight responsibilities of elected members in the development of the scheme	Design and deliver training package for elected members on equality and diversity issues (including gender issues) and highlight the council's legal duties with respect to these.	Design and deliver training package by Autumn 07	Strategic Human Resources Manager	Greater awareness of equalities issues by members Commitment demonstrated at the highest level
	1.3 Equality & diversity issues to be included on agendas of all senior managers, departmental & team meetings	Provide briefings & updates from the Corporate Equality & Diversity Development Working Group & through Blackpool Brief	March 2008	Corporate Equality and Diversity Development Working Group	All staff are kept informed of equality & diversity issues

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	1.4 Examine gender imbalance issues for school governors	Organise a focus group of male governors to discuss the barriers to men becoming governors	During 2007-8	Executive Director of Children's Services	An increase in the numbers of male school governors. Current balance: 57% female, 43% male
	1.5 Examine gender imbalance issues for Local Strategic Partnership	Organise a focus group of female members to discuss barriers to & ways to encourage more female members.	2007-10	Partnerships Manager	More representative membership. Current balance: 61% male, 39% female
	1.6 Examine the gender issues raised through the Managers Mapping exercise.	Group to identify the key issues & agree an agenda for moving forward effectively.	2007 - 10	Corporate Equality and Diversity Development Working Group	All key issues are actioned within the timescale.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
2. Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity To review & assess the impact of all policies & services provided by the council, which have an impact on gender equality	2.1 Embed Equality Impact Assessments into corporate policy development & reviews.	Programme of Equality Impact Assessments to take place across all Departments on all relevant key policies identified by the screening process.	Impact Assessments to be carried out for all priority policy/plans coming on stream during 2007/08	Faith Equality & Diversity (FED) unit Corporate Equality & Diversity Development Working Group	All key policies and strategies to have been impact assessed with evidence of assessment available within the timescale.
	2.2 Integrate gender equality into all corporate and service level plans	Ensure all relevant actions from this plan are incorporated into Business and Service plans when reviewed and include gender specific targets and actions, where appropriate.	Revise corporate and service plans by Dec 07	Assistant Director Policy & Communications	All key equality and diversity actions are mainstreamed & actioned through corporate and service planning processes. Actions implemented within the timescale.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
<p>3. Services To ensure planned actions take account of the issues expressed by both women & men, alongside those priorities identified by the council. To also ensure that relevant gender equality considerations are built into the procurement process, to ensure the</p>	<p>3.1 Record and respond effectively to Hate crime and other incidents such as assaults on staff</p>	<p>Review and reform current Hate Crime incident monitoring scheme to include Transsexual issues and publish & promote town wide to community and partners.</p> <p>Develop corporate FAQ's cards for all call centre staff and reception points to ensure effective response to incidents; provide awareness sessions for Customer First staff</p>	<p>New monitoring scheme to be implemented during 2007/08</p>	<p>FED unit in conjunction with: Corporate Equality & Diversity Development Working Group/ Hate crime Group / Access to Services Manager</p>	<p>Ensure the Transsexual community are aware of how to report incidents, and provide a more accurate overall picture of Hate Crime/ incidents.</p>

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
councils functions meet the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty.	3.2 Ensure services are accessible to the whole community	Customer First & other public-facing services to examine specific gender issues such as family friendly reception areas, provision of single sex services etc.	Commenced by March 2008	Access to Services Manager	Services are accessible to the whole community. Promotes equality of access to all services for both women & men.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	3.3 Ensure services are accessible to & free from discrimination for transsexual people	<p>Raise awareness of transsexual issues amongst public-facing service providers. Involve transsexual people in service developments.</p> <p>Produce new advice booklet on appropriate use of language for all staff. Consult with transsexual people on its development.</p>	<p>Commenced by March 2008</p> <p>March 2008</p>	<p>Access to Services Manager</p> <p>Access to Services Manager</p>	<p>Promotes equality of opportunity & eliminate discrimination & harassment of transsexual service users.</p> <p>Corporate standards in the use of appropriate language adopted in all reception areas, and with all staff with direct public interface. Ensure equality of service delivery.</p>

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	3.5 Ensure services are developed to create equality of employment opportunity for women	Implement the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI). Monitor & review especially for priority groups such as lone parents & women into self-employment & training	Review LEGI progress March 2008	Head of Economic Development	Develop a more enterprising community, sustainable growth & connecting local people to employment & business opportunities.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	<p>3.6 Review procurement procedures to ensure gender equality issues considered. Adhere to Equal Opportunities Commission guidance about procurement arrangements.</p>	<p>Review council terms and conditions of procurement contracts & adopt measures to ensure all contracted companies have an effective equality and diversity policy. Stipulate, in the terms and conditions of the contract, council's commitment to equality and diversity. Specify appropriate performance conditions for contractors. Gender equality issues to be considered in all SLA's, contractual requirements and monitoring.</p>	<p>Review commenced by March 2008</p>	<p>Head of Procurement</p>	<p>All contracted companies for the council will have a clear and enforceable equality and diversity policy including gender equality issues.</p>

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	3.7 Provide relevant training to all staff involved in the procurement process. To ensure they fully understand the provisions of relevant legislation & the impact assessment process.	Provide relevant training &/or guidance.	After completion of review – 2008/9	Head of Procurement	Procured services are fully aware of requirements in order for the council to meet its duties under gender equality legislations.
	3.8 Ensure positive attitudes are promoted around gender issues in schools	To take forward actions around attainment to identify gender differences & other gender specific issues that have been identified.	From September 2007	Executive Director of Children's Services	Positive attitudes towards gender issues are promoted in schools to ensure equality of opportunity for boys and girls.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
<p>4. Workforce and Employee development To ensure planned actions take account of the issues expressed by female & male staff, alongside those priorities identified by the Council. To also ensure staff are trained in the requirements of relevant legislation & to support their role in providing services & managing staff.</p>	<p>4.1 Improve accuracy of recording and analysing all equalities data.</p>	<p>New equality monitoring form for all new applicants and existing employees, promotion, training & development, grievance, disciplinary and leavers. New form to include gender, age, ethnicity, religion and belief, disability and sexual orientation.</p>	<p>By May 07</p>	<p>Strategic Human Resources Manager</p>	<p>Accurate information is available about the people employed by the council & of their experiences.</p> <p>All staff have equal access to development opportunities</p>
		<p>Publish annual staffing report on Council website and intranet.</p>	<p>By March 2008</p>	<p>Strategic Human Resources Manager</p>	<p>Reliable information is available on the numbers & experiences of people accessing services.</p>
		<p>Investigate possible use of same form for services users & complaints.</p>	<p>By March 2008</p>	<p>Access to Services Manager</p>	<p>Reliable information is available on the numbers & experiences of people accessing services.</p>

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	4.2 Ensure senior managers are aware of their responsibilities under the Sex Discrimination Act and other gender equalities legislation.	Identify core competencies for senior managers and deliver equality and diversity training as core component of management training.	During 2007/08	Strategic Human Resources Manager	Training attended, evaluations evidenced. Managers able to manage gender diversity & equality issues in the workplace.
	4.3 Ensure managers are able to respond positively to transsexual staff issues.	Develop guidance for managers on transsexual workplace issues	During 2007/08	Strategic Human Resources manager	Managers are aware of transsexual issues & respond positively & support staff in the workplace.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	4.4 A corporate package of equality and diversity training is developed	<p>Identify resources and roll out training programme to all staff, starting with management level. Also include Induction training in programme</p> <p>Specific training exercise for officers leading Impact Assessment work piloted.</p>	<p>Commence Managers training programme from April 2007</p> <p>March 2007 & during 2008/09 dependant upon demand.</p>	<p>Strategic Human Resources Manager</p> <p>Corporate Equality & Diversity Development Working Group</p>	<p>Training attended, evaluations evidenced Staff are aware of the implications of relevant legislation & can competently provide services that take account of the different needs of women & men. Promotion of positive attitudes towards transsexual people from all staff.</p>

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
		Equalities training for trainers including diversity resource pack	2009/10	Strategic Human Resources Manager	All staff who deliver training observe & promote positive attitudes towards diversity & gender equality issues
	4.5 Address any potential Equal Pay Liability the council currently has	Delivery of Equal Pay compensation strategy & corresponding events	Phase 1 by 31 March 2007	Assistant Director Human Resources	Deliver compensation arrangements consistent with ACAS guidelines & scrutiny.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	4.6 Going forward to address any gender pay gap & its causes	To work with the Trade Unions to undertake a comprehensive Pay Review	31 st March 2008	Assistant Director Human Resources	Provide a new framework for pay which will objectively evaluate equal pay & eliminate pay discrimination.
5. Empowering People To ensure staff & public involvement in the development, implementation & monitoring of services. To also	5.1 Develop and support Women's Focus Group for staff	First year cycle of focus groups held & issues reported to the Corporate Equality & Diversity Development Working Group for action.	May 2007 October 2007	Corporate Equality & diversity Development Working Group / FED Manager	Staff group established. Provides a clear voice and mechanism for female staff to raise equalities issues.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
increase the number of women & transsexual people having an input into local services.	5.2 Reform the Equalities Forum to create a structure of key community led groups for each of the main equalities strands	Explore the scope for establishing a Women's Forum/Community Group under the Equalities Forum structure.	By March 2008	Equalities Forum / FED Manager	A women's forum providing gender equality focussed participation in the Forum structure and meetings.
	5.3 Support the launch and development of the LGBT Forum.	Ensure the LGBT Forum is accessible to Transsexual people & Lesbians.	During 2007/08	LGBT Forum/FED Manager	The LGBT Forum is open and accessible to Transsexual people & Lesbians.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTIONS	TIMESCALES	LEAD	OUTCOME
	5.4 Develop the equality consultation & engagement structure to ensure it captures different views of women & men	<p>Consult, where appropriate, Citizens Panel, Area Forums, Equalities Forum, articles in Your Blackpool, staff focus groups</p> <p>To carry out equalities monitoring of all relevant consultations & other involvement forums</p>	<p>During 2007/08</p> <p>2007-10</p>	<p>All departments</p> <p>All departments</p>	<p>The different views of women & men inform service development</p> <p>Reliable information is available on the gender of people consulted</p>