

Neighbourhood Services Equalities Action Plan

Last Updated : 6 Jan 00

This Action Plan incorporates issues and action relating to:

- **Race**, including culture, religion and language *(Race Relations Act 1976, Local Government Act 1966, Local Government Act 1988, The Children Act 1989, NHS and Community care Act 1990, CRE Racial Equality Standards 1995 : Level 2)*
- **Gender** *(Sex Discrimination Act 1975)*
- **Disability** *(Disability Discrimination Act 1995)*
- **Human Rights** *(Human Rights Act 1998)*
- **Age**
- **Access to Services**

Many of the actions contained in this Equalities Action Plan are linked to / included within the objectives detailed in the **Neighbourhood Services Strategic Plan**. To save time-consuming duplication, some milestones and target dates can be found in the relevant section of the Strategic Plan, rather than below.

Action No.	Description of Action <i>(Include outcome or product of action)</i>	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Comments
Area I Policy and Planning				
NS 1	<p>Develop a Directorate Action Plan that requires systematic activity in all sections / teams - to be approved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Managers • Members on the Equalities Panel <p>The Action Plan and all relevant policies <i>(including multi-agency strategies and protocols)</i> should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Equalities Policy - Race Relations Act - Disability Discrimination Act - CRE Codes of Practice - Stephen Lawrence enquiry recommendations • Take account of present and future needs of minority ethnic communities <i>(see NS17 below)</i> 	<p>Neighbourhood Services Equalities Sub-group</p> <p>Director and Heads of Service</p>	<p><i>First Draft:</i> October 99</p> <p><i>Plan Agreed by Senior Managers:</i> December 99</p> <p><i>Further Reviews:</i> Ongoing</p>	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area I - L2 a) & b), Area II - L1 b), L2 a) & b), Area III - L1 b) & c) ; Inter-Agency Policy on Abuse of Vulnerable Adults ; NS Strategic Plan 3.5 and 5.2</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Services Equalities Sub-Group comprises Kate Page and Jane Reed</p> <p>This Action Plan is still being developed. It will be included within the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance Plan - Quality Framework - NS Strategic Plan. <p>Action Plans will be audited to ensure they reflect the Corporate Equalities Policy, Race Relations Act, etc. <i>(Method to be discussed at Social Policy Programme Group)</i>.</p>

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NS 2	Review all relevant policies and procedures including multi-agency strategies and protocols to ensure appropriate equality statements and conformity to agreed equality standards.	Policies and Procedures Working Group	October 2000	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L1 a) & b), L2 - b) & g) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.7, 3.9, 3.13, 3.14, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.11
NS 3	Consult staff and service users on contents of our Equalities Policy and equality related objectives prior to publication of plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate any further action arising into this Action Plan 	Director and Heads of Service	June 2000	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area I - L2 d), Area II - L1 c) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.10, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.3, 3.5, 3.10, 3.13, 4.6, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.5
NS 4	Continue to use relevant external data to inform policy . Acquire a full set of legislation and guidance .	Social Policy Programme Group NS Equalities Sub-group	Ongoing March 2000	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area I - L2 e) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.10, 1.11, 2.1, 2.4, 3.2, 3.5, 3.7, 3.13, 3.14, 4.2, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.9 and 5.11 Population analysis needs to feed into Best Value reviews.
NS 5	Consult staff and review the overall need for ethnic monitoring systems within Neighbourhood Services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the effectiveness of any current monitoring • the implications of making any necessary improvements. Consult and agree corporate standards to meet the Council's needs for ethnic monitoring, including appropriate categories that can be matched to externally produced data.	NS Equalities Sub-group Corporate Policy	August 2000	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area I - L2 f), Area IVa - L2 b) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 1.10, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 4.6, 5.1, 5.3, 5.5, 5.7, 5.9 and 5.11 Ensure IT systems <i>(and supporting paperwork)</i> are capable of gathering and processing ethnic monitoring data as required. Despite evidence of widespread discrimination and being recognised as an identifiable minority ethnic group by the Commission for Racial Equality, Gypsies / Travellers are not currently included in the national CRE and Census ethnic monitoring categories.

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Area II Service Delivery and Customer Care				
NS 6	<p>Include an equality statement and relevant objectives in Neighbourhood Services Strategic Plan and service plans.</p> <p>Integrate equality principles into service delivery, Best Value and joint working processes.</p>	Director and Heads of Service	January 2000	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L1 a) & b), L2 - b) & g) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.7, 3.9, 3.13, 3.14, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.11</p> <p>Method for how this is achieved to be discussed and agreed at Social Policy Programme Group.</p> <p>To provide a clear statement on implementation and review, the standard equality statement will need to reflect Council policy and be agreed by Equalities Panel.</p>
NS 7	<p>Consider if Neighbourhood Services needs a separate Equalities Service Plan with targets, deadlines and resources</p> <p><i>(or whether all of this can be dealt with by this Action Plan and/or the NS Strategic Plan)</i></p>	NS Equalities Sub-group	January 2000	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L2 b) ; NS Strategic Plan 3.5 and 5.2</p> <p>Whatever method is used to plan the way forward, equality targets and monitoring of outcomes need to be incorporated into the Performance Management process</p>
NS 8	Set up a defined structure of responsibility for equality of opportunity within the directorate	Director	<i>Structure Agreed</i> December 99	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L2 c) ; NS Strategic Plan 3.5 and 5.2</p> <p>Structure of responsibility for equality within NS is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Director (<i>David Jones</i>) - Neighbourhood Services Equalities Sub-Group (<i>Kate Page and Jane Reed</i>) - Heads of Service

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NS 9	<p>Co-ordinate the establishment of ethnic, gender and disability monitoring systems for service delivery and needs assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree classification of ethnic origin to be used by all services. • Identify key services for monitoring. • Agree on appropriate PIs • Ensure all IT systems are compatible. 	<p>Social Policy Programme Group</p> <p>NS Equalities Sub-group</p>	March 2000	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L 2 d), Area IVa - L 2 b) ; NS Strategic Plan 3.5 and 5.2</p> <p>Need to incorporate monitoring systems and PIs in Neighbourhood Services Strategic Plan and service plans.</p> <p>Develop a programme for phased introduction.</p> <p>Once monitoring systems are in place then targeted reviews / assessments will take place to identify cultural need</p>
NS 10	<p>Develop and use consultative machinery in appropriate formats to establish needs and satisfaction levels of targeted service users and carers. In particular, ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Carers needs are fully taken into account • the views of Older People are gathered and their needs acted upon • there is culturally appropriate consultation with Travellers • services are responsive to the needs of people who live in rural areas • 'hard to reach' groups are consulted • social exclusion and deprivation issues are fully taken into account • people with Mental Health problems are consulted • people with a Disability are consulted my methods that suit their needs 	<p>Corporate Policy</p> <p>NS Equalities Sub-group</p>	Ongoing	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L 2 e) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.1, 1.10, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.10, 3.13, 4.4 and 5.1</p> <p>Learn from good practice. Develop and publicise mechanisms that could be appropriate including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of best practice • Advocacy for people who currently do not have a voice. • Better access to transport • MKC contacts that can enable access to particular communities, <i>eg. Multi-Agency Education, Health and Social Exclusion Working Group for Travellers.</i> • Consultative Forum for Social Exclusion
NS 11	<p>Ensure service information is available in appropriate formats to enable all potential service users to have access to all services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate translation and interpreting services according to need (<i>for people with a disability as well as people from minority ethnic groups</i>). • Ensure relevant information is available in alternative formats (<i>audio tape, large print, etc.</i>) according to need. 	<p>Corporate Policy</p> <p>NS Equalities Sub-group</p> <p>Dianne Taylor</p>	Ongoing	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L 2 f) ; NS Strategic Plan 2.2 and 2.3</p> <p>Need to ensure that use of the Community Language Service becomes an integral part of the assessment process.</p> <p>Need to produce guidance for users, backed-up by a publicity campaign to promote internally.</p>

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NS 12	<p>Review arrangements for access to services for people with disabilities and other special needs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical access to buildings • Speed of access to appropriate support (<i>eg. interpreter or signer</i>) • Suitability of telephone and internet access (<i>eg. text-phones, call centres, web sites, e-mail, etc.</i>) <p>Develop a programme of improvements so that people with a disability or special needs can access a full range of services.</p>	Heads of Service	April 2000	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L2 f) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.10, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.5, 3.6, 3.9, 3.10, 3.13, 3.14, 4.6, 5.7, 5.9, 5.10 and 5.11</p> <p>Need to link to Disability Discrimination Act requirements</p>
NS13	<p>Review equality of service delivery and charges, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.10: Charges and service levels for Travellers • 2.3: Emergency and Out of Hours services • 2.3: Access to Personal Files • 2.7: Charter Standards • 3.3: Inspection and Regulation • 3.4: Access to Adaptations for Disability • 3.10: Services in Rural Areas • 4.4: Alternatives to Residential Care • 5.3: Eligibility Criteria 	Heads of Service	August 2000	<p><i>Links to:</i> NS Strategic Plan 1.10, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9, 3.10, 3.13, 4.4, 5.3 and 5.5</p>
NS 14	<p>Review contractual arrangements with all agencies, organisations or companies delivering services on behalf of Neighbourhood services to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – there is a requirement to deliver an effective and appropriate service, fairly and without unlawful discrimination. – their advertisements and recruitment literature positively reflect racial equality and cultural diversity – there are checks to ensure no racially discriminatory criteria or unwelcoming images <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend any existing contract that does not comply at the earliest opportunity. • Ensure that all new contracts comply. 	Heads of Service	March 2000	<p><i>Links to:</i> CRE Area II - L2 g), Area V - L2 a) & b) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.5, 1.7, 1.10, 1.11, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.1 and 4.4</p>

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Area IV a Employment (Recruitment and Selection)				
NS 20	Take steps to encourage applicants from minority ethnic groups in areas where they are under represented.	Heads of Service	Ongoing	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area IVa - L2 a) ; NS Strategic Plan 2.2, 3.5 and 5.2
NS 21	Review Job Descriptions and Person Specifications , as each post becomes vacant. Review all remaining posts.	Heads of Service	November 00 November 01	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area IVa - L2 d) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.8, 1.10, 2.2, 3.5 and 5.7
Area IV b Employment (Developing and Retaining staff)				
NS 22	Organise a Seminar for women managers	NS Equalities Sub-group	April 2000	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area IVb - L3 b) & c) ; NS Strategic Plan 3.5 and 5.7
Area V Marketing and Corporate Image				
NS 23	Advertisements and recruitment literature should positively reflect equality and cultural diversity in text and illustrations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure reliable checks to ensure no racially discriminatory criteria or unwelcoming images 	Human Resources NS Equalities Sub-group	April 2000	<i>Links to:</i> CRE Area V - L2 a) ; NS Strategic Plan 1.8, 1.10, 2.2, 2.3, 3.5 and 5.7 Image depends on what we do, not bits of paper. Need to share good practice and use Citizens' Panel/Focus Group to test MKC's image.