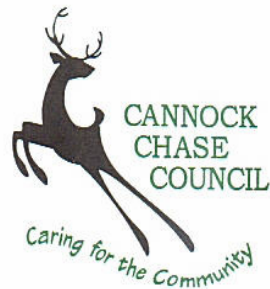


Cannock Chase District Council



Disability Equality Scheme 2006

If you require information contained in this publication in an alternative format e.g. large print, Braille, audio tape or if you would like the Scheme to be explained to you in your language please contact: The Council's PR and Marketing Team on 01543 462621.

Date: November 2006

Version: 3

Foreword

We are very pleased to introduce Cannock Chase Council's first Disability Equality Scheme (DES). The scheme is part of our overarching equality and diversity plan which aims to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equal opportunities for all people, regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, age, religious belief or sexual orientation.

The purpose of this Disability Equality Scheme for Disabled People is to promote access and equality so that all members of the community, including those with a disability, can access employment opportunities and can use the services and facilities provided by Cannock Chase Council.

The duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and non-disabled people was introduced by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 and this document sets out how we are responding to this challenge.

The Act gives us a real opportunity, as a public body, to undertake an honest self-assessment of our role as a purchaser, service provider, policy adviser, planner, regulator and responsible employer. We aim to ensure that when we deliver services we will think about how we can meet the diverse needs of disabled people. We will also continue to acknowledge the skills and abilities of disabled people who apply for jobs and are employed by the Council.

In our view the review of our services and ensuing action will not only help us embed disability equality as part of our core business but it will make it a reality for everyone. Our services and facilities should be developed from the beginning with the aim to meet the needs and requirements of disabled people.

This is very much the beginning of the process; we cannot produce a Scheme without involving disabled people. We want disabled people to tell us what we need to do better or differently and your views about this Scheme are very much welcomed.

We are firmly committed to promoting disability equality across the district and in making a positive difference to the lives of all members of the community.

NEIL STANLEY
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

STEPHEN BROWN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contents

Contents	Page
Foreword	2
Introduction	4
What is a Disability Equality Scheme (DES)?	5
The National and Local Context	6
The Council's Priorities and Targets	8
How will the Council implement the Scheme	10
• Equality and Diversity PAT	10
• Equality Impact and Needs Assessments	10
• The Action Plan	11
• Involvement	11
• Monitoring	12
• Comments and Complaints	12
• Training	13
• Publication and Review	13
• The Equality Standard	14
Three Year Action Plan	15
Appendices	
1. List of organizations involved in developing the Scheme.	30

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a statutory General Duty on all public authorities to promote disability equality. Disability equality is about making things fairer for disabled people.

The new General Duty means that we must, in carrying out our functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act (e.g. are disabled people being treated less fairly than others because of practices that act as barriers?);
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and non-disabled people (e.g. do disabled people have the same chances in accessing services and employment as others?);
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities (e.g. is there evidence of disability related hate crime or bullying?);
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people (e.g. challenge and eradicate negative stereotypes.);
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life (e.g. is there fair representation of disabled people on focus groups?);
- take steps to take account of disabled people's needs in our services and employment, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people. (e.g. do our services meet the needs of disabled people?).

"Due regard" means that authorities should give due weight to the need to promote disability equality in proportion to its relevance to disability.

The Duty covers all functions and activities, not just employment and service delivery, but also budget setting, procurement, regulatory functions and setting the framework within which the organization will deliver services. This places a positive, proactive responsibility on authorities to work towards a more equal society by thinking about the needs of disabled people when developing their services and functions, rather than making adjustments at the end.

What is a Disability Equality Scheme (DES)?

In order for the Council to meet the requirements of the General Duty, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 imposes a number of specific statutory duties. The Specific duties are:

- to publish a Disability Equality Scheme by 4th December 2006 with a three year action plan;
- to show how disabled people have been involved in developing the scheme;
- to develop methods for assessing the impact of its policies and practices, or the likely impact of its proposed policies and practices on disabled people;
- to set out arrangements for gathering information on the effect of its policies and practices on disabled people;
- to monitor, check and report annually on the steps it has taken to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

Cannock Chase Council's DES meets these requirements and contributes towards our aim of promoting good equalities practices across the district and ensures that we will meet the needs of our disabled customers and employees.

This Scheme sets out our overall objectives for improving and addressing disability inequalities and action plans for delivering improvements to access and services. It will therefore help us to achieve a number of things to:

- meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and set out our plans to improve disability equality to employment and services;
- make sure that we are taking the needs and views of disabled people into account, for example to find out what barriers are faced by disabled people and take steps to remove them;
- continuously monitor, review and improve the ways in which we deliver our services to disabled people;
- work in partnership with other disability organizations to prevent ignorance and prejudice in the wider community;
- create a district where disabled people are afforded the same opportunities as the broader community.

The National and Local Context

The DDA 1995 defines a disabled person as anyone “who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term and adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities”

The new Disability Discrimination Act 2005 now extends the legal definition of disability to cover HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis from the point of diagnosis. In reality, disabled people are a diverse group including young and old, different races and religions/beliefs, of different genders and cultural backgrounds, gay and lesbian, transgender people and those who have different impairment.

Disability is defined by the Census 2001 as a Long-Term Limiting Illness (LLTI)

National Context

The number of people who are disabled within Britain is unclear. The Disability Rights Commission's statistics indicate that 14% of the country's population are disabled and this figure is determined from the Family Resources Survey (FRS), published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Local Context

Cannock Chase District Council was created in 1974. It was formed from the former Cannock and Rugeley Districts, together with the Parish of Brindley Heath. The district covers an area of around 3- square miles and has a population of around 92,000 people. The three primary settlements are the towns of Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley, together with a number of smaller communities including Brereton and Ravenhill, Brindley Heath, Bridgtown, Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Rawsley.

- 40% of the District is Urban with the remaining 60% being Green Belt, a large proportion of which is also an Area of Outstanding Beauty (3,000 hectares)
- 1.4% of the District's population are from black and minority ethnic groups (2001 Census)
- Within Cannock Chase District, as at January 2005, there are around 4,000 Registered Disabled Persons, representing 4% of the population and the largest proportion of Disabled persons across Staffordshire. For Staffordshire (excluding Stoke-on-Trent) an average 3% of the population are Registered Disabled. The majority, 76% of Registered Disabled persons in Cannock Chase (3,069 persons) are aged 60+; this represents 17% of the population aged 60 and over. 22% (880 persons) of Registered Disabled persons are aged 16-59 years and 2% (73 persons) are aged under-16 years.
- The majority of the registrations (3,005) in Cannock Chase, and indeed across Staffordshire are in respect of physical disabilities. The District's physical disability registrations represent 75% of all registrations, 73% across Staffordshire. 2% (51 persons) of physically handicapped registrations are aged under-16 years and 22% (670 persons)

are aged 16 to 59 years. The bulk of Registrations (2,284 persons), 76% are concentrated within the 60+ age group and have a physical disability. Moreover, just over half (56%) the District's Registered Disabled persons are aged 60+ and have a physical disability.

- The District has 168 Deaf and 329 Hard of Hearing Registrations representing 12% of total registrations. Deaf and hard of hearing registrations for the under 16s are low with just 12 persons. 35% of deaf registrations and 13% of hard of hearing registrations relate to the age group 16-59 years. Again the majority of registrations fall within the aged 60+ age group, 61% of deaf registrations and 85% of hard of hearing registrations relate to this age group.
- There are 257 Registered Blind and 263 Registered Partially Sighted persons representing 6% and 7% respectively of the total number of disabled registrations. Registrations for under-16s are small with just 10 persons. For the 16-59 years age group, there are 57 registered blind persons representing 22% of all blind registrations and 52 partially sighted, representative of 20% of partially sighted registrations. The majority of Blind and Partially Sighted registrations rest within the aged 60+ age group; 75% of blind registrations and 79% of partially sighted registrations.
- The Annual Population Survey (Apr '04-Mar '05) presents a slightly different picture, in that Cannock Chase has 11,800 Registered Disabled people of working-age which represents 20% of the resident working-age population. Comparative data is as follows: 21% for Staffordshire, 20% for West Midlands Region and GB with 19%. Cannock Chase has the 4th highest proportion of working -age disabled persons in Staffordshire, East Staffordshire shows the greatest proportion with 26%. Moreover, the District ranks 11th (within the worst third) of local authorities which show the greatest proportions of working-age disabled persons in the West Midlands Region.

There is currently a lack of clarity around the presentation and analysis of statistical information in this area and it is recognised that the number of registered disabled within the District does not accurately reflect all of those who are actually disabled living within Cannock Chase. It is acknowledged that the actual number is likely to be significantly higher than that presented due to hidden and non-registered impairments. It will therefore be important to develop a much clearer picture of the Cannock Chase community in order to establish a baseline in terms of current performance and to be able to set meaningful, challenging, but realistic performance improvement targets.

- 1.29% of the total workforce of the Council are disabled people.

The Council's Priorities and Targets

Our Vision

The Council's Vision is:

"By 2015, Cannock Chase District will be recognised as a place where everyone's lives are enriched by a strong cultural identity, vibrant local economy and pride in the outstanding natural environment".

Creating a strong cultural identity, vibrant local economy and outstanding environment is dependent on all parts of the community and local organisations and agencies working together in a 'joined up' way. Since our first Performance Plan in 1999 we have used the acronym **CHASE** to identify our objectives, which will enable us to achieve our Vision:

CHASE stands for:

- **C**ulture and Sport - Increasing participation in culture and sporting activities
- **H**ealth - Developing a healthy community
- **A**ccess to Skills and Economic Development- A vibrant economy, A job for everyone, Learning opportunities for all
- **S**ocial Inclusion and Housing- Reducing Inequality, Decent Homes for all
- **E**nvironment- A clean, safe and sustainable environment

Within the Social Inclusion and Housing Objective we have identified that "We will continue to work to reduce inequality within the District and will involve more people in the work of the Council"

We have identified the following groups as being "at risk" requiring specific action to ensure that they are socially included within our society:

- Young unemployed
- Lone parents
- Long term unemployed
- Disabled
- Elderly people
- Homeless people
- People from black and other ethnic minorities

One of the most important issues is the exclusion of these "at risk" groups from the activities that many of us take for granted. We are working closely with various agencies and the voluntary sector, in particular, to tackle the problems faced by these groups and to help us build communities that promote diversity in all aspects of life. As a community leader we are building an organisation that promotes diversity in all of our services and functions.

The Council's approach is to mainstream activities across all services in order to ensure that people with any kind of disability are able to access and use services, and are not discriminated against, directly or indirectly, as a result of their disability.

Our DES sets out the framework within which we can achieve this and the following objectives are intended to support and complement this framework:

Objective 1 – We will promote equality for disabled people by:

- Recognising, accepting and supporting disabled people according to their individual needs,
- Removing barriers to accessibility, particularly in relation to access to services, information, buildings, and employment;
- Encouraging good practice in the private sector through our advisory capacity;

Objective 2 – We will tackle discrimination against disabled people by:

- Challenging patronizing or discriminating attitudes;
- Making the environment as safe as possible for disabled people;
- Challenging anti-social behaviour against, or harassment of, disabled people.

Objective 3 – We will support disabled people to achieve their full potential by:

- Supporting disabled people according to their individual needs to enable them to lead independent lives;
- Supporting the formation of groups, networks and services for disabled people as service users, residents and employees of the Council.

Objective 4 – We will work in partnership with disabled people by:

- Involving disabled people in the changes and improvements we make;
- Enabling disabled people's active participation;
- Involving and consulting with disabled people on issues that affect them.

How the Council will implement the Scheme?

- The District Council has overall responsibility for the Disability Equality Scheme.
- The Chief Executive and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the Scheme is put into action across the Council.
- Members (Councillors), employees, managers of the Council and our colleagues in partner agencies all have a role to play in helping us meet the duty to promote equality for disabled people.

Equality and Diversity Project Action Team (E&DPAT)

This Scheme proposes that the Council's E&DPAT will be responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating the Council's work on implementing the Disability Equality Scheme. The team comprises representatives from each of the Council's service areas and will be chaired by a Head of Service who is accountable to the Council's Directors Management Team.

The E&DPAT will monitor the progress of the implementation of the Scheme and carry out the annual review on behalf of the Council.

Equality Impact and Needs Assessments (EINA)

One of the key ways of embedding disability equality into the policies and activities is to systematically undertake disability equality impact and needs assessments.

The purpose of an Equality Impact and Needs Assessment is to help us identify and tackle the long-term challenge of removing "institutional discrimination" and ensure that our functions, policies, procedures, services and strategies do not unfairly discriminate against disabled people. Assessments will be carried out on new policies and services, as they are developed and over time on all other existing policies and services. Disability issues will be considered alongside other equality issues such as ethnicity, gender, disability, age, religious belief or sexual orientation and will involve disabled people.

In committing ourselves to conducting these assessments and undertaking detailed work in every part of the Council, we have embarked upon a continuous journey that will build disability equality considerations into everything that we do.

The assessment of all existing functions and policies will help us to prioritise those areas where most urgent action is needed, and where we can have the greatest impact on promoting disability equality. Those functions or policies that clearly have a high impact and relevance to disability equality will be addressed first with a rolling programme developed over the period of the Scheme to address all of the other functions and policies.

This approach will also emphasise the need to take a shared approach to the action planning process. This will provide the necessary framework for both departmental and corporate planning, encourage, "joined up" working across the Council and ensure the best use of resources. By taking an organization-wide approach tangible outcomes and improvements can be achieved for disabled people.

Current guidance to officers on conducting Equality Impact and Needs Assessments will be revised and additional training provided to officers where identified. A summary of the results of the Equality Impact and Needs Assessments, Action Plans and involvement exercises will be reported as part of the annual review of the Disability Equality Scheme and will be published.

The Action Plan

The Action Plan outlines the steps we intend to take to promote disability equality over the three period of the Disability Equality Scheme.

The core of the work is improving the performance of the authority through the outcomes of impact assessments, building up the information base about performance on disability equality and actually improving and changing things for disabled people by taking forward the actions identified in our Action Plan.

Our Disability Equality Scheme is based on 8 core areas which form part of the action planning framework:

1. Making sure the Disability Equality Scheme is implemented
2. Identifying relevant functions and policies
3. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies
4. Monitoring policies for adverse impact
5. Communicating the results of assessment, involvement and monitoring
6. Making sure public have access to Council buildings, information and services
7. Employment duties – monitoring employment and supporting employees
8. Training

Involvement

It is crucial that disabled people, including disabled employees are involved from the very outset of the preparation and planning of the Disability Equality Scheme, if it is to be successful. Equally, it is just as important to ensure that this active involvement and engagement with disabled people is part of an ongoing process that is taken forward in a planned and efficient way.

Cannock Chase Council is committed to involving disabled people and giving disabled people every opportunity to comment on how our services and employment practices are provided and developed.

In developing and taking this Scheme forward we will involve members of the Council's Citizens Panel, Trade Unions, employees, disabled groups, other minority groups/organizations and individuals in order to identify the barriers faced by disabled people.

This may involve face-to-face meetings, focus groups, surveys, consultative forums, established user groups and other mechanisms identified by best practice. Wherever possible information will be made available on request in alternative formats e.g. large print, Braille, audio tape or explained in different languages. Accessible venues and equipment such as induction loops will be used and events will be arranged at reasonable times and dates to make it easier for people to attend.

Monitoring

All existing functions and policies relating to customers and employees need to be reviewed in relation to their impact on disabled people, with a view to promoting disability equality and ensuring equal access for all. Obtaining information from disabled people using the Council's services, from community organizations on the uptake of services provided by the Council and the impact on disabled people will be of assistance in assessing the Council's progress towards eliminating unlawful disability discrimination.

Monitoring will help the Council to assess whether its functions and policies are discriminating against disabled people, while the gathering of information and the statistical data will provide a reliable source of information on whether discrimination is taking place.

The Council will also gather information and monitor the effect its policies have on the recruitment, development and retention of its disabled employees.

Comments and Complaints

The Council values the contributions that comments and complaints can make in helping design and improve service delivery and welcomes the opportunity to listen to and learn from comments and complaints.

The Council has in place a system for dealing with comments, compliments and complaints. Anyone who feels that they have experienced disability discrimination or any other form of discrimination can make a complaint by either filling in a Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints leaflet either in person or by proxy (e.g. by giving the relevant details to an officer of the Council either in person or over the telephone), by use of the internet facility provided or by submitting a letter. Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints leaflets are available from all Council Offices.

The Council has grievance and disciplinary procedures in place and a policy on dealing with complaints of harassment relating to employees.

A "Whistleblowing" procedure and policy also exists to protect employees who want to report bad practice without fear of being victimised.

The Council takes all complaints very seriously and will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour.

The Members' Code of Conduct and Standards Committee deals with complaints about the conduct of elected members

Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see whether we are meeting our equality duties.

Training.

It is essential that all Council Members and employees have a good understanding of the principles surrounding equalities and in promoting equal opportunities for all people, regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, age, faith or sexual orientation.

Last year all employees received customer care training which included reference to all equality and diversity principles, including disability discrimination.

It is recognized that this, however, is an ongoing process and as such actions will be contained within our three year plan to review and evaluate the original Equalities and Diversity Training Strategy and Plan, developed as part of the Council's Race Equality Scheme.

Publication and Review.

The Disability Equality Scheme will be published on the council's website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk, distributed to representative organizations and made available in all accessible information points throughout the District including other Council offices and Libraries.

One of the strengths of the Disability Equality Scheme is the transparency it brings in reviewing our actions in promoting disability equality. By regularly publishing the results of our assessments, and our performance against targets, we will ensure that local communities are informed of and have the opportunity to comment upon our progress.

We will publish assessments of progress against the Scheme and the Action Plan in our Annual Report on the Disability Equality Scheme, as well as in our Best value Corporate Performance Plan.

This yearly review, which will be conducted by the Council's Equality and Diversity PAT will summarise the consultation and involvement carried out with disabled people and show what has changed as a result of this involvement and as a result of our Action Plan.

The Council will conduct a full assessment and review of its Disability Equality Scheme every 3 years. This review will look at how the Council's current and proposed functions and policies impact on the promotion of disability equality. The Council will involve disabled people both internally and externally as to how effective the Scheme has been, particularly in mainstreaming disability equality, removing barriers to accessibility in relation to access to services, information, buildings, and employment; and in fulfilling the requirements of the DDA.

We will inform the public and employees about this information through:

- Publications such as the Corporate Performance Plan, Council Newspaper and a large number of information leaflets;
- The Council website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk
- Relevant voluntary organizations, community groups and representatives;
- Answers to general enquiries provided by individual service departments;
- Participation in events such as conferences, seminars, Community Forums, focus groups and consultation meetings on specific topics;
- Use of media for advertising, informing and press articles

The Equality Standard for Local Government.

In order to deliver our overall commitments on equality and diversity, the Council has adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government.

The Equality Standard provides a framework through which local authorities can meet their legal obligations under anti-discrimination legislation. There are five levels of the Standard, with Level 1 being the lowest and Level 5, the highest.

Level 1 – Commitment to a comprehensive Equality Policy

Level 2 – Assessment and consultation.

Level 3 – Setting Equality objectives and targets

Level 4 – Using Information systems and monitoring against equality targets.

Level 5 – Achieving and reviewing outcomes.

The Standard is about making equalities part of our day-to-day activities and the Council is working towards achieving the higher levels of the standard and the outcomes of our assessment against the Equality Standard will provide information for the E&DPAT to review the Disability Equality Scheme.

Further Information and enquiries

Enquiries on the Disability Equality Scheme can be directed to:

Mike Edmonds Chair of Equality and Diversity PAT

Cannock Chase Council, Civic Centre, PO Box 28, Beecroft Road, Cannock, Staffs, WS11 1BG

Or by E-Mail to: mikeedmonds@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

This Action Plan contains:

What disabled people have asked for so far, through involvement?

The objectives, priorities and targets for Cannock Chase Council;

The requirements of the Code of Practice – “Duty to promote Disability Equality” published by the Disability Rights Commission. For example, we must include measurements of progress for disabled people in the areas of employment and access to services as well as a number of other requirements such as our approach to Equality Impact and Needs Assessments.

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCILS - DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

1. Making sure the Disability Equality Scheme is put into practice

Purpose: To ensure compliance with our duty to promote equality of opportunity for all by ensuring disability equality is mainstreamed into all functions and policies of the Council.

Objective	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
To implement the Disability Equality Scheme.	Prepare draft Disability Equality Scheme	Draft Disability Equality Scheme	Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from October 2006
	Circulate Draft DES for consultation	Involvement and comments to be incorporated into final scheme	Head of Policy and Performance	October/ November 2006
	Participate in Staffordshire wide Disability Equality Consultation and working groups	To gain involvement from a broad range of partners. Develop a consistent approach to promoting disability equality.	Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from October 2006
	Conduct impact needs assessment against proposed DES and incorporate findings into action plan and consultation strategy	Scheme pays due regard to the impact of all proposals	Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from October 2006
	Submit DES to Social Inclusion and Housing Select Committee for comment	To involve Members in the development of the scheme	Head of Policy and Performance	9 th November 2006

	Publish and promote final Disability Equality Scheme	Scheme includes priorities of Disabled people and is widely publicised	PR & Marketing	4 December 2006
	Submit DES for Council approval	Adoption of Disability Equality Scheme	Head of Commercial Operations	13 th December 2006
	Prepare action plan(s) to screen and review functions and policies for adverse impact on disabled people.	Completion of action plan(s) Implementation of Disability Equality Scheme Increased awareness of disability equality	Heads of Service	Ongoing from October 2006
Clarify managers' responsibility regarding the implementation of the Disability Equality Scheme.	Include requirement to promote disability equality as part of managers' competencies.	Increased emphasis given to disability equality.	Head of Organisational Development	Ongoing from April 2007
To provide assistance in the implementation of the Scheme at a corporate level	Chief Executive to attend Equality and Diversity PAT Guidelines and advice to be developed and disseminated	Senior Level support for Disability Equality Scheme. Increased awareness of disability equality and the implementation of the Disability Equality Scheme	Chief Executive Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from October 2006 Ongoing from October 2006

Raise the standard of disability equality across the Council.	Annual review with full review of the Scheme conducted every 3 years	Revised Scheme	Equality and Diversity PAT	Annual assessment and monitoring with full review in 2009
To raise public awareness of the Scheme	Scheme made available via the Council's website.	Increased awareness of the Council's commitment to eliminate discrimination.	Head of I.T.	Ongoing from October 2006
To monitor the implementation of the Scheme	Annual monitoring, review and reporting on the Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan with involvement of Disabled people	Successful progress towards the implementation of the Disability Equality Scheme. Review of the Scheme	Equality and Diversity PAT	Annual Assessment, monitoring and reporting to Directors Management Team. First report required December 2007
	Use the Equality Standard for Local Government as a means of assessing progress towards achieving equality (inclusive of disability equality)	Achievement of Level 1 of the standard by April 2007 and Level 2 by 2008	Equality and Diversity PAT	April 2007 April 2008
	Integrate equalities action planning, monitoring and review into service level business plans and corporate plans	Successful progress towards the implementation of the DES – to achieve mainstreaming of equalities.	Equality and Diversity PAT DMT and Heads of Service	Ongoing from October 2006

2. Identifying Relevant Functions and Policies

Purpose: To ensure appropriate priority is given to the promotion of disability equality when carrying out functions and policies.

	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
To meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005	Produce a timetabled programme of Equality Impact and Needs Assessment	All functions and policies are screened and reviewed in accordance with priorities identified in the Schemes Action Plan.	Equality and Diversity PAT Heads of Service	Ongoing from December 2006.
	To review all of the Council's new and existing functions and policies according to our duty to promote disability equality (the Scheme)	All new functions and policies are reviewed as they are developed. Application of the Scheme across all departments.	Heads of Service	Ongoing from December 2006

3. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies.

Purpose: To determine how policies, functions and procedures affect disabled people in service delivery and employment and whether they are having an adverse impact on some groups or individuals.

Objective	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
To ensure that arrangements are made to monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of disability equality and other equalities.	Service areas to develop plans to introduce equality monitoring in relation to disability and other equalities areas	Information systematically and consistently collected to measure gaps in service delivery.	Heads of Service Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from December 2006
	Investigate any such gaps and take action to remove any disparities or disadvantage.	Identifiable improvements in service delivery	Heads of Service	Ongoing from December 2006

4. Monitoring Council Policies for adverse impact.

Purpose: To build disability equality into the policy-making process and to make that process transparent.

Objective	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
Provide guidelines and training to conduct Equality Impact and Needs Assessments	Review current procedures relating to Equality impact and Needs Assessments and develop guidelines for drawing out disability equality issues.	Procedures, guidance and training available.	Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from December 2006 – By April 2007
	Train managers on how to use the revised guidelines and incorporate findings into business planning		Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from December 2006 – By April 2007
	Publish revised guidance and templates on corporate Intranet.		Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from December 2006 – By April 2007
To assess the likely impact of proposed policies on the promotion of disability equality.	Service Areas to undertake Equality Impact and Needs Assessments.	Qualitative research is provided to identify likely and existing impact, on disability equality	Heads of Service	From April 2007
	Ensure that findings arising from the conduct of Impact Assessments are	To mainstream disability equality into service delivery.	Heads of Service	From June 2007

	<p>incorporated into the function or policy and any additional actions arising are incorporated into business plans.</p> <p>Publish outcomes of Impact Assessments.</p>	To mainstream disability equality into service delivery	PR & Marketing Head of Policy and Performance	From September 2007
Annual monitoring of adverse impacts identified in Disability Equality Impact and Needs Assessments and other feedback mechanisms	<p>Collection of adverse impact information considered by each service area across the Council.</p> <p>Compilation of information and consideration of impact on council service delivery.</p>	Annual monitoring report to be produced and fed into Annual report of Disability Equality Scheme	Heads of Service Equality and Diversity PAT	Annual Assessment, monitoring and reporting to Directors Management Team. First report required December 2007

5. Communicating the results of assessment, consultation and monitoring.

Purpose: To ensure that monitoring, assessment and consultation activities, and the results are clear and plain to our customers and employees.

Objective	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
Development of accessible communication channels	To identify arrangements for publishing results of assessments, involvement and monitoring.	Results are published using a variety of media and formats, internet, intranet, reports and Council newspaper. Publicly available records of progress	Equality and Diversity PAT PR & Marketing	Ongoing from April 2007
Development of employee guidance on how to produce accessible information.	Involve disabled people in the development of corporate guidelines for service areas to follow in producing accessible information in all forms of communication.	Corporate and Service Area information easily accessible across the Council.	Equality and Diversity PAT PR & Marketing	Ongoing from April 2007
Monitor effectiveness of communication channels and accessibility of information	Conduct user and employees surveys	Increased accessibility of information within the Council and across the District	Equality and Diversity PAT Head of Organisational Development Head of Policy and Performance Management	Annual Assessment, monitoring and reporting to Directors Management Team. First report required December 2007

6. Making sure the public has access to Council buildings, information, services and functions.

Purpose: To ensure that disabled people know about particular services, encourage people to use services and remove the barriers to access so that our services are equally available to everyone in the community.

Objective	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
To identify service needs of disabled people and barriers to accessing services.	Use information from Equality Impact and Needs Assessments, monitoring arrangements and involvement to identify need.	Improved access, greater service take-up and increased satisfaction levels	Heads of Service	Ongoing from December 2006
	Identify and contact disabled groups within the Cannock Chase Council area with a view to setting up and training a core group of consultees. (E.g Disability Awareness conferences)	To involve disabled people in assisting the Council with developing accessible services.	Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from December 2006
To provide information in accessible formats.	Ensure that all employees who have contact with the public are aware of procedures to accommodate people with language and accessibility needs	Improved access, greater service take-up and increased satisfaction levels.	Heads of Service	Ongoing from December 2006

	Explore opportunities for sourcing cost effective translation and transcription services	Improved access, greater service take-up and increased satisfaction levels	Head of Efficiency and Risk Management	Ongoing from December 2006
To continue to comply with all appropriate legislative requirements for building accessibility for all District property.	Continue existing programme of maintenance for all District buildings and any new build projects (e.g. Chase Leisure Village)	A more easily accessible environment	Access Officer Heads of Service	Ongoing

7. Employment Duties – monitoring employment and supporting employees.

Purpose: To ensure information from monitoring is used to develop schemes to lead a workforce that further represents the profile of the communities of the District.

Objective	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
Annual employment monitoring	Publish analysis of information on effect of functions and policies on disabled people in particular on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment, retention & development of disabled employees • Number of disabled applicants, • Number of disabled applicants in post • Number of disabled people who leave 	Annual reporting and dissemination of employment monitoring information	Head of Organisational Development	Annual Assessment, monitoring and reporting to Directors Management Team. First report required December 2007
To eliminate any possible discrimination in the recruitment and selection process	Review & amend existing processes to comply with legislative requirements and make the application process accessible to all. (Application Forms, Job	Equality of opportunity throughout the entire recruitment and selection process. Increase in the representation of disabled employees.	Head of Organisational Development	Ongoing from October 2006

	Adverts etc)			
To engage the community and representative groups in the development of approaches for increasing workforce representation	Develop involvement mechanisms to discuss how to improve and increase the representation of disabled employees within the Council (e.g. mystery shopping, involve carers etc)	Long-term increase in the number of disabled people employees within the Council.	Head of Organisational Development	Ongoing from April 2007
	Work closely with the Employment Service (Access to Work) in order to assist employees with disabilities within the workplace	The Council meets its obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabilities within the workplace	Head of Organisational Development	Ongoing from November 2006
	Explore opportunities for provision of work experience placements for disabled people	To encourage greater representation of disabled people within the workplace and assist with access to paid employment opportunities.	Head of Organisational Development	From April 2007

8. Training.

Purpose: To ensure that employees working in this area and Members have the necessary skills to ensure that the council meets its duty to promote disability equality.

Objective	Action(s)	Outcome(s)/PI	Responsibility	Timescale
To incorporate the requirements of Disability Equality Scheme into current Equality and Diversity training strategy for both employees and Members	Ensure trainers (external and internal) include, where appropriate, Disability equality awareness training. Include disability equality awareness training in Member Development Programme.	Training reflects the requirements of the Disability Equality Scheme. Annual statistics for disability training to employees	Equality and Diversity PAT Head of Organisational Development.	Ongoing from December 2006
To ensure that employees have the relevant information about the Scheme commensurate with their post.	Managers to cascade information and arrange appropriate training – using the PDR process to determine specific equalities related training.	Raised awareness of the Disability Discriminations Act requirements.	Heads of Service	Ongoing from December 2006
Continual update and dissemination of employee guidelines and new disability and equality legislation.	Review of existing information available within the Council and production of up-to date guidelines, made available on the intranet.	Increased awareness among all employees of legislative requirements. Employees made aware when new legislation is passed.	Equality and Diversity PAT	Ongoing from October 2006

<p>To ensure that employees are aware and understand the needs of disabled people</p>	<p>Develop specialized training for staff directly involved in service delivery to disabled service users (e.g fitness instructors should understand special needs)</p>	<p>Improvements in delivery of service to disabled service users.</p>	<p>Heads of Service</p>	<p>Ongoing from October 2006</p>
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Appendix 1

Who will be involved in developing the Disability Equality Scheme?

The list is not exhaustive and only includes the initial groups involved in developing the Scheme.

- Disabled individuals (Service users and employees) who have requested to be involved in developing the Scheme
- Staffordshire County Council
- Trade Unions
- Mid Staffs Mind
- Arthritis Care (Cannock)
- Sportsabilty
- Transport Abbots Bromley
- Chase CVS
- Hillsprings Clinic, Pain Management
- Rugeley Physically Handicapped Association
- Cannock Carers Group
- Cannock Special Needs Toy Group
- Chase Day Service
- Cannock and District Branch Multiple Sclerosis Society
- National Ankylosin Spondylitis Society
- Rugeley Macmillan Cancer Support Committee
- Rugeley & District Stroke Club
- NHS Community Development Team
- Mencap Education & Employment Service Staffordshire
- Autism Support Group (Rugeley)
- Dystonia Society
- Headway Mid-Staffs
- The Stroke Association
- M.E. Self Help Group Rugeley
- YAPPERS
- Cannock & District Access Group
- The Thursday Club Cannock
- Epilepsy Support Group (Stafford & District)
- Cannock & District PHAB Group
- Rugeley & District Cancer Relief
- Headway Cannock & Rugeley
- Alzheimers Support Group
- Carers Association Southern Staffs
- Dog Aid
- Young Arthritis Care