

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY SCHEME

2012-2015 *in pursuit of equality for all*

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1. Introduction

1.1 Equality and Diversity are important to the workings of our Council. As a public body we have statutory duties placed upon us by the Equality Act 2010 (see Section 3 below). We recognise those duties and intend to deliver them to the best of our ability. But we want also to be recognised as a Council that provides equality of opportunity and that values the diversity of our community because that is the right thing to do for the people that we serve. Our aim is to make equality an accepted and consistent part of our everyday working lives and not seen as an addition to what we do.

1.2 This is nothing new for the Council. We have a positive track record of supporting equality and abiding by equality legislation going back over many years. This Scheme:

- replaces a previous Scheme that we introduced in 2006 and that helped us reach Level 3 (of 5 levels) of the (former) Equality Standard for Local Government in 2007 (see Section 4 below) which gave us a good rating.

- seeks to help us fulfil our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 which repealed all the previous equality legislation: and
- encourages us to link equality and diversity issues with our Council strategies and key objectives including those that are being pursued in partnership with other organisations and agencies

1.3 This revised Equality and Diversity Scheme brings us up to date, sets out our direction and assists us to improve our performance.

1.4 But we cannot make good progress in isolation. We need the involvement of our staff, our partners and other local organisations, representative groups and individual members of the community to help us make Tandridge an even better place to live, work or visit.

1.5 Your comments and suggestions on and involvement in our Scheme are important to us and would be very much welcomed. If you have anything that you want to say, please contact Seanne Giddy, Head of Personnel and Training, by e-mail at sgiddy@tandridge.gov.uk or by telephone on 01883 732979,

2. The Council's Diversity Statement

2.1 We have adopted an equality statement that sets out our broad aims in seeking to eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation, in advancing equality of opportunity and in fostering good relations amongst the diverse groups that make up our community.

2.2 The statement is set out in Appendix 1 to this Scheme.

2.3 The Council intends to pursue its equality aims through its role as a:

- provider and commissioner of services
- community leader
- major local employer.

3. The Legal Framework

3.1 We acknowledge and commit to meet in full our legal responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity. These are as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (the Act). We are mindful in particular of the Equality Duty placed by the Act on public bodies such as our Council.

3.2 The Act replaced all the previous anti-discrimination laws. It simplified the law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with its provisions. It also strengthens the law in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and inequality. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

3.3 Amongst other important matters, the Act identifies nine characteristics that are specifically protected under the provisions of the Act. Those protected characteristics are:

- Age (currently, May 2012, applies only in respect of employment)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership (applies only to the first aim of the Equality Duty - see below)
- Maternity/paternity
- Race/ethnicity
- Religion or belief (including the absence of a belief)
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation

3.4 The Act applies to all but it places an Equality Duty on public bodies.

3.5 The Equality Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions which include organisations from the private or voluntary sector that provide services on behalf of a public body. It came into force on 5 April 2011.

3.6 The Equality Duty has three aims which require a public body to have due regard, in all of its activities, to:

- **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

3.7 The Duty:

- ensures that public bodies consider, in their day to day work and in their policy development, the needs of all individuals – in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.
- supports good decision-making. It encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet, so far as we can, different needs.

3.8 By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective. The Equality Duty therefore helps public bodies to deliver the Government's overall objectives for public services.

3.9 The Equality Duty is supported by Specific Duties. These are set out in Regulations that came into force on 10 September 2011. The Specific Duties require public bodies to publish (by 31 January 2012) relevant and proportionate information to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty and to set themselves and publish (by 5 April 2012) specific and measurable equality objectives.

3.10 Publishing relevant information will make public bodies more transparent about their decision-making processes and accountable to their service users.

3.11 We also acknowledge the rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 which, with their focus on the dignity and respect of individuals, complement the provisions in the Act.

3.12 Our Scheme will help us meet our equality duties and help us recognise and respect the rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.

3.13 Further information about the Equality Act 2010 and the public body duties can be found at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/>

3.14 Details of the Human Rights Articles in the Human Rights Act can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/schedule/1>

Ensuring Compliance with the legislation

3.15 Implementing this Scheme and its Action Plan will help us to meet our statutory duties. In doing that we are mindful of the following:

- **The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)**

The EHRC has a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights; and to protect, enforce and promote equality across the nine 'protected' characteristics of age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

It has powers to issue compliance orders against public bodies that are considered not to be meeting their responsibilities in respect of the aims of the Equality Duty

- **The Courts/Employment Tribunals**

- Individuals can seek redress for perceived unlawful discrimination through claims brought in a county court for matters related to, amongst other things, the provision of services and the exercise of public functions and through an application to an employment tribunal for workforce discrimination. There is no requirement for a qualifying period of employment before an employee has a right to make an application to an Employment Tribunal and there is no limit to the compensation that may be awarded in successful employment discrimination cases.

- In the extreme, unlawful discrimination can constitute a criminal offence. In conjunction with Surrey Police, we will continue to monitor incidents of 'hate crime' in our district to help identify trends and potential areas in which to direct our resources.
- On our part, alleged breaches by our employees of the Council's anti discriminatory and anti harassment policies will be dealt with through internal disciplinary procedures. Serious offences, where proven, will be treated as gross misconduct. Similarly, alleged breaches by councillors will be dealt with by our Standards Committee.

4. The Equality Framework for Local Government

4.1 To support our equality work, we have adopted the principles of the Equality Framework for Local Government (the Framework). The Framework is an improvement and benchmarking tool that supports improving equality practice and producing equitable outcomes in service delivery and employment. It replaced the Equality Standard for Local Government (the Standard) in October 2009. The Standard was first introduced in 2001.

4.2 It identifies 5 performance areas:

- 1) Knowing your communities and equality mapping
- 2) Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- 3) Community engagement and satisfaction
- 4) Responsive services and customer care
- 5) A modern and diverse workforce

4.3 The Framework is not a legal requirement but has been adopted by most local authorities to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty. It helps us, therefore, to meet the statutory duty to publish information to let the community know how well we are doing in meeting the three aims of the public sector Equality Duty.

4.4 The Framework covers all of the protected characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 (see paragraph 3.1 above) and has three levels of achievement:

- Developing: understanding the importance of equality
- Achieving: developing better equality outcomes
- Excellent: truly making a difference across all of the protected characteristics

4.5 We had previously progressed to Level 3 under the Standard, an achievement that was confirmed through external validation. We commissioned an external consultant to assess our performance in 2013. The report that was accepted by the Council's Corporate Management Team in April 2013 assessed us meeting the 'Achieving' level within the Framework. We have made a decision not to apply for the length and costly formal accreditation process, as it is considered that it would not be appropriate for a medium sized district council. However, we will continue to embed equalities within all aspects of the Council's policies, procedures and functions.

4.6 The Framework builds upon the principles of quality leadership and community involvement that are a central part of modern local government. Successful implementation of the Framework depends upon effective partnership between the Council and the wider community.

5. The Tandridge community

5.1 We are working to make our services as inclusive as possible by recognising the needs and views of all different sections of the community. Our priorities may be influenced by the make up of our community and how it may change. We will work to improve it but we already have a degree of knowledge of our community across the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act.

5.2 Details which are relevant to us include:

a) Age

- Health and disability related issues are especially significant given the projected increase in the older population over the coming years and the predicted rise in the number of 'frail elderly' residents within our District. Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care service identified in 2011/12 that 15,700 members of the Tandridge community were 65 years of age or over but that that number was projected to rise by 26.1% by 2020. The projected rise in the adult population (18 to 64 years) in the same period is 1.5%.
- Young people and the lack of employment opportunities in the current economic climate and the potential consequences of young people without opportunities will also be an important consideration for us.

b) Disability

- The District Profile, incorporating information from the Census 2001, does not have any specific information concerning disability. However, 14.4% of our residents were recorded as having a limiting long-term illness. This is a higher proportion than in the wider Surrey (13.5%), but much lower than England as a whole (17.9%). Also, 6.2% of our population judged their health as 'not good'.
- There is, as yet, limited information about the reasons for these statistics but knowing the nature of the disability may have implications for the Council's allocation of resources in meeting the statutory need to make services physically accessible for those who have mobility or sensory disabilities and, similarly, to those who have mental impairments.
- We have made significant progress in increasing the accessibility of our services to disabled people not only through removing physical barriers to access but also through making information available in different formats to support those who are blind or partially sighted. We do as a standard make our documents available on request in an alternative format and

have 'Browsealoud' available through our website to make reading the website more accessible.

- Publication of data from the Census 2011 will improve our understanding of the need to prioritise support for the disabled community.

c) Gender reassignment

- Currently, the best source of information on those who have presented for gender reassignment is the Gender Identity research and Education Society (GIRES). The Society estimates that some 12,500 have presented for gender reassignment with the growth trend from 1998 being 11% per annum. It is further estimated that, for every one of those who can be counted, there are up to 40 others who experience a degree of gender variance some of whom will elect to transition in the future.
- To give something of a local feel to the limited data available, based upon GPs' consortia, GIRES has extrapolated a prevalence of roughly 32 cases per consortium and 4 new cases per annum.

Again the figures are low such that we do not regard this characteristic as having a high priority in our meeting the Equality Duty but understanding the challenges felt by those who are considering reassignment may help us to make the situation better for the those who face up to the prospect of change.

d) Marriage and Civil Partnership

- The 2001 census shows a total population of 79,267, of which 35,519 were married (which excludes those still legally married but separated) which is 44.8% of the population. There is no reliable information currently available on the number of those in the population who are in a civil partnership.
- We have, under the aims of the equality duty, a statutory responsibility to ensure only that married people are not discriminated against. With legislation now enabling civil partnerships to take place in places of religious worship, albeit subject to no religious group or clergy being forced to conduct such a ceremony, the Council may have reason to consider this in its partnership working.

e) Maternity/Pregnancy

- In Tandridge, the all school year births figure for 2008 is 925. Births in the District have been increasing for the past few years from a low point of 837 births in 2001. This data comes from the Surrey County Council Education Organisation Plan 2010.
- This gives a good indicative figure (around 900) of the number of women in Tandridge who fall into this protected group at any one year. We are not

directly responsible for children's services and the variation in numbers is not extreme. Nevertheless, it may help us understand better the needs of our partners and how we may support them.

f) Race/ethnicity

- Language barriers and cultural differences are an undoubted issue. However, the 'non-white' population of Tandridge is only 3.1% according to the most recent census figures. Publication of data from the Census 2011 will improve our understanding of the need to prioritise for this protected characteristic.
- A low representation does not suggest that providing especial support for the minority ethnic population is a high priority but Tandridge does not have the networks and other support mechanisms for such people that are more likely to be available in city areas. We will be mindful of this in prioritising our actions to improve equality of opportunity.
- We do, as a standard, offer to make available documents in alternative languages on request.

g) Religion or belief

- Based on the Census 2001 data, the main religion is Christianity which makes up 76.2% of the population. Around 15% declare themselves to have no religion. Of the minority religious groups Muslims make up the largest, the next being Hindus followed by Buddhists and Jews. The low representation of minority religions again suggests this is not a priority for us but ensuring that these religions are not discriminated against and furthering religious tolerance will be part of our practices in meeting the three aims of the Equality Duty.
- The Census 2011 data, when published, may show relevant changes in our population to make us reconsider our approaches

h) Sex (gender)

- The statistics for our district show a higher representation of females compared with males. This is reflected in the Council's workforce although an issue for us will be to review where in our organisation female workers are concentrated to help identify whether any barriers to employment and/or career advancement exist.

i) Sexual orientation

- No reliable data exists of the numbers of people in the District who identify themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). Data from a survey published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in 2010 indicated that around 1.5% of the total population identified as LGB. This equates to 481,000 people who identified as gay or lesbian and 242,000 who

identified as bisexual. This is less than the commonly cited figure of 5 – 7% of the population.

- Although there is likely to be a higher concentration of LGB people in major cities (the above survey showed the highest concentration in London [2.2%]), applying the figure of 1.5% to the overall population of Tandridge would result in an estimate of some 1,200 people identifying as LGB in the district.
- We will be working to ensure that LGB people are not excluded from our services and that homophobic incidents are investigated.

j) Social deprivation

- Although data produced by the Government as the 'Index of Multiple Deprivation' shows Tandridge as one of the local authorities with the lowest incidence of deprivation, the fact that a minority of Tandridge residents are experiencing genuine deprivation in an area of relative affluence serves to emphasize the challenges felt by people who fall into this category that characterises some parts of the District. Our Anti-Poverty Strategy contains more information on this subject.
- Problems of distance between communities/transport etc. This issue is particularly relevant in Tandridge given the relatively high incidence of rural isolation in our community.
- The fact that not all residents have ready access to a personal computer and the internet (the 'digital divide'). Although, nationally, those having access to a computer at home has increased (Office for National Statistics published data in August 2011 which indicated that 77% of households had access) that has resulted in a greater dependency on the internet for giving and receiving information which, potentially, has accentuated the challenge for those without I.T. access.

6. Accessibility of our services

6.1 We have made significant progress in increasing the accessibility of our services not only through removing physical barriers to access but also through making information available in different formats to support those who are blind or partially sighted, those for whom English is not their main language and for those who have difficulty with reading.

6.2 As an example, our website has been designed to be as accessible as reasonably possible and we will continue to further improve access as relevant new technology becomes available.

6.3 We also subscribe to Language Line for the provision of translation services for non English-speaking customers.

6.4 When providing our services, we will consider, in a way that is reasonable and proportionate in the light of resources and agreed priorities, the need to make contact with any hard to reach groups. This issue is addressed within our Communications Strategy and associated Guidance on involving 'hard to reach' groups.

6.5 Relevant details are set out in Appendix 2 to this Scheme

6.6 Beyond this, we consider that the concept of 'accessibility' applies to all of the protected characteristics. As such, we will make efforts to identify and do what we reasonably can to reduce any barriers to access to our services and our employment opportunities that anyone may experience as a consequence of a protected characteristic.

7. Shared Ownership and Responsibility

7.1 Although driven by this Scheme and its action plan, subsequent progress on improving equality of opportunity and achieving the aims of the Equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 will depend upon working together with the wider community and should involve:

a) Councillors:

- to provide leadership and support
- to ensure resources are available
- to engage with and encourage feedback from the local community
- to provide a scrutiny role

b) Managers/staff:

- to provide support and guidance for Councillors
- to assist speedy implementation
- to organise and participate in training
- to be aware of the potential for discriminatory practices and to challenge them as appropriate.
- to engage with the local community

c) Community (organisations and individuals) and voluntary sector:

- to provide feedback on policies and practices as they affect the community
- to extend knowledge of the Equality Standard within the community.

8. Responsibilities within our Council

8.1 We require all our Councillors and employees to play a part in implementing this Scheme and in challenging discrimination. The specific responsibilities are outlined below:

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive | Providing leadership in the implementation of this Scheme. |
| b) Overview and Scrutiny | Holding other councillors and officers to account for progressing the themes of this Scheme. |
| c) Councillors | In their role as ward councillors, providing a link between the business of the council and the local community in relation to promoting and furthering equality with regard to employment and service delivery issues and supporting the pursuit of the Equality Framework. |
| d) Chief Executive | Ensuring that the corporate management of our Council reasonably and proportionately reflects our statutory responsibilities and the requirements of this Scheme and that the service planning and performance management systems incorporate specific equality objectives. |
| e) Corporate Management | Allocating specific resources to ensure the Team delivery of equality objectives.
Ensuring that employees are adequately informed, trained and supported to carry out their duties in accordance with this Scheme. |
| f) All Heads of Service and Managers | Implementing the Scheme in their respective service areas, setting appropriate equality targets for their staff and providing support to staff to enable them to contribute towards the key themes of the Scheme. The Chief Finance Officer is the Council's 'Equalities Champion.' |
| g) Personnel & Training Services (P&TS) | Advising on best practice and ensuring that the Scheme is reflected in employment, training and development initiatives. |

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| h) Staff Conference | Supporting the continuous improvement of equalities policy and practice. |
| i) All employees | Being mindful of equality issues as they go about their everyday business and upholding and implementing the themes of this Scheme. |

9. Working with our contractors

9.1 When private or voluntary sector bodies provide services on behalf of the Council they will also be subject to the public sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010 and they will be expected to comply with the Duty and provide services that are fair and free from discrimination.

9.2 Our arrangements for engaging contractors will include assessment of the contractor's ability to meet our equality requirements and the monitoring the performance of contracts that it issues will include the need to monitor for this compliance.

10. Action Plan

10.1 To ensure that we make progress, we have developed an Action Plan below to take us through the first year of this Scheme. This can be found at Appendix 5 below.

11. Concluding statement

11.1 Through this Equality and Diversity Scheme, the Council is seeking to embed equality as a mainstream activity in its service planning, performance management and corporate governance (risk assessment) processes and, through these processes, on into service delivery and employment activities. Working through the Framework will help identify barriers that create disadvantage and gaps in the Council's performance which will make more clear the issues that the Council needs to resolve.

11.2 The Council recognises that resources are limited and subject to many competing pressures but some specific resources, proportionate to the Council's size and overall budget, will be targeted annually on progressing the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Scheme and maintaining the 'achieving' level of the Framework.

11.3 If you would like to know more or would like to help us in ensuring fairness and equality for all in our community we would be pleased to hear from you. Please contact Seanne Giddy, Head of Personnel and Training, by e-mail at sgiddy@tandridge.gov.uk or by telephone on 01883 732979.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - The Council's Equality and Diversity Statement

To work to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to further equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between people who share a particular characteristic and those who do not, the Council aims to:

- ensure that all members of the community have fair and equal access to the Council's services;
- ensure that no service user, employer or job applicant is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation;
- ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that no service user, employer or job applicant is disadvantaged by conditions, requirements or practices which cannot be shown to be just and fair;
- through partnership working, work towards providing a model of good equal opportunities practices for other organisations within the District and encourage a commitment to equal opportunities in the community at large;
- value and support diversity throughout the local community and the Council's workforce;
- identify and use opportunities to promote good relations between the different (protected) groups in the community;
- establish effective engagement mechanisms to ensure that the needs of the Tandridge community are adequately represented;
- integrate equality principles into the Council's policies and strategies;
- use its approaches to procurement as set in the procurement strategy to further equality of opportunity;
- promote a culture of fairness and respect to all employees;
- keep the Tandridge community informed on the progress it is making in achieving the aims in this statement by publishing, in accessible forms, sufficient information to enable groups or individuals to hold the Council to account for any failings;
- meet both the letter and the spirit of the statutory requirements placed upon public bodies by the Equality Act 2010 and be mindful of the articles in the Human Rights Act 1998 in carrying out its activities

- achieve and sustain the 'achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government;

Appendix 2: Our approaches to engaging with 'hard to reach' groups

Extract from the Council's guidance on involving 'hard to reach' groups:

Problem - Possible solution

Communication/literacy problems, unable or find it difficult to read and/or write.

- Contact them by telephone or arrange to meet them.
- Consider using telephone questionnaires, face-to-face surveys, or running focus groups.
- Follow good practice guidelines for written communications.

Extract from the Council's guidance on involving hard to reach groups:

Problem Possible solution

Learning disability.

- Provide information in large print, or on audio tape. Employ a sign language expert.

Physical disability, such as hearing or vision impairment.

- Some people will use software to transform text on the internet into a better format to meet their needs.

Cannot physically access the venue.

- Check venues are accessible.

English not the person's first language.

- Use a translator at a meeting, or to translate a document.
- Liaise with Personnel & training Services on the possible use of 'Language Line'.

Attitude of staff.

- Officialdom - because of past experience or fear of losing benefits/services.

Hostility towards authority or the Council in particular.

- Ensure staff are trained in equalities issues. Avoid the use of stereotypes, assumptions on behaviour or any approach which may appear patronising or discriminatory.
- Use a specialist consultant, voluntary or community group, or community representatives.

No transport available.

- Plan meetings in easily accessible locations.

Lack of adequate child care.

- Consider providing transport to the venue and also child care.

Timing makes attendance difficult or impossible – after dark, clashes with school run, during the working day, or religious festivals.

- Plan around the needs of the target group.
- Arrange events at different times.
- Check if the event coincides with relevant religious festivals.

Appendix 3: Glossary of Terminology (This list is not exhaustive)

Disability

The definition of a disability is broad: “A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when a person or group of people are treated on certain grounds less favourable than others. For example, this might occur on the basis of a person’s age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, culture, or sexual orientation. Individuals can experience less favourable treatment for more than one reason alone.

Such discrimination can be both intentional. There are instances when the law allows for people to be treated differently. This is when a particular requirement or condition is objectively justifiable e.g. where the holder of the job provides individuals with personal services and those services can only be provided by a particular gender or same racial group.

This document acknowledges that discrimination can be both direct and indirect. These terms are described below:

Direct Discrimination

This is treating a person, without justification, less favourably than another, particularly because of one’s feelings, assumptions or prejudices about the characteristics, attributes or circumstances of that person. For example bullying, harassment, derogatory remarks are deemed a direct form of discrimination.

Indirect Discrimination

This is applying, without justification, a request or condition which may be applied equally to everyone but which, in practice, forms a greater obstacle to a person, or group of people, with a particular protected characteristic and that is not reasonable.

Discrimination by Perception

Discriminating against a person because they are thought to have a particular protected characteristic when they do not.

Equality Impact Assessment

A systematic way of scrutinising policies and procedures across particular work areas with a view to suggesting proportionate amendments to make services more accessible and inclusive, including the possible introduction of future 'equality objectives' and monitoring schemes.

Equality of Opportunity

This means treating people fairly without bias or discrimination, and always within the law. This may mean treating people in a different way in order to ensure the same outcome e.g. providing information in an alternative format for those who are blind. Everyone should be entitled to the same opportunities without regard to their personal characteristics.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct, which has the purpose of violating another person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Homophobia

Discriminating against, harassing or victimising people on the grounds that they are or that they are perceived to be gay or lesbian

Institutional Racism (normally applied to 'racism' but it could apply to other forms of discrimination)

Institutional racism is defined in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report as "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping".

This could apply in respect of any of the protected characteristics. At an institutional level, prejudices become embedded in policies, practices, procedures and criteria for decision making. These discriminate with the effect of excluding some people in favour of others. This could lead to unequal treatment, inequitable distribution of opportunities, power and resources, which in turn could deprive some people of a better quality of life.

Monitoring for Equality

The process of collecting, analysing and evaluating equality profile information to measure performance, progress or change and to identify situations in which what might be considered a disproportionate number of people sharing a protected characteristic who do or do not access services and/or job Opportunities.

Prejudice

Literally means "pre-judgement", namely forming a view about a person in advance. For example, racial prejudice is having a negative opinion or attitude about an individual or group based upon their colour of skin, gender, age, religion/belief etc.

Racism

Conduct, words or practices that disadvantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In its more subtle form, it is as damaging as in its overt form.

Racist Incident

Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Social Inclusion

This is when all members of the community have equal access to health, social care and educational opportunities.

Social Exclusion

This term describes what happens to communities who are deprived of good quality housing, suffer unemployment, low incomes, poor health or live in areas of high crime.

Transgender

A situation in which a person fully accepts a gender that does not match his or her assigned gender. This includes those who are in transition or have transitioned from one gender to another but is not limited to people who fall into either of those definitions

Unwitting Racism

This can arise because of lack of understanding, ignorance or mistaken beliefs. It can arise from well-intentioned but patronising words or actions, usually stemming from unfamiliarity with behaviour or cultural traditions of people or families from black and minority ethnic communities.

Victimisation

Treating people less favourably because of action they have taken under or in connection with the new legislation – for example, made a formal complaint of discrimination or given evidence in a tribunal case.

Appendix 4 Sources of Information on equality matters

There are many sources of information but the following three are identified as being of particular relevance.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

The EHRC is a value source of information on the full range of equality issues. Its website is at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

Specifically, the EHRC has produced Equality Act Codes of Practice on:

- Employment
- Equal Pay
- Services, Public functions and Associations

These can be found on the EHRC website at:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-codes-of-practice/>

The Government Equalities Office (GEO)

The GEO, now part of the Home Office, is the main Government source of information on equality and the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Its website is at:

<http://homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/>

The Equality and Diversity Forum (EDF)

The Equality and Diversity Forum (EDF) is a network of national organisations committed to equal opportunities, social justice, good community relations, respect for human rights and an end to discrimination.

It was established in 2002 and is a registered charity.

Its website brings together a wide range of equality and human rights information and resources provided by EDF and other organisations. It can be found at:

<http://www.edf.org.uk/blog/>

Appendix 5 Strategic Approaches to Equality and the Equality Scheme Action Plan

Our strategic approaches to implementing the aims in our Equality Statement and to meeting our statutory duties

Our purpose is to make sure, in ways that are reasonable and proportionate to our circumstances, that all of the Council's services, other activities and employment opportunities are available to all of those who live in, work in or visit the District regardless of their personal characteristics.

Our approach has 6 themes which are relevant to all our roles as identified in Section 8 above. They are:

1. Knowing the community. We will:

- using different techniques, continue to gather information about the characteristics of our community with particular focus being given to the characteristics protected by legislation.
- where local data is not available we will use national data to extrapolate relevant information about our community
- use our councillors' knowledge of their ward communities to help us keep our knowledge of our communities up-to-date
- consult with and otherwise engage with our community to learn more about community needs

2. Community leadership. We will

- work with our Strategic Partners to promote our approaches to equality and diversity and to share good practice with our Strategic Partners and, where necessary, to encourage our partners to adopt good practice
- similarly, work other partners to demonstrate the business case for equality
- seek to influence others to change where we become aware of challenges to the delivery of equality of opportunity in our District over which we have no direct responsibility

3. Consultation and engagement. We will:

- when seeking to engage with the community/workforce, work to ensure that all categories of people in our community/workforce can contribute their thoughts and ideas
- seek to reduce challenges related to their personal characteristics that any member of the community/workforce may face when they try to engage with us

4. Promoting equality. We will:

- publish data on our website and through our Tandridge Magazine and any other relevant publication to raise the profile of equality and the benefits of ensuing equality for all
- make sure that, as relevant and in a way that is reasonable and proportionate to our circumstances, all of our policies, procedures and practices reflect our approaches to equality of opportunity and valuing diversity
- Promote to those who provide services on our behalf (our contractors) the need to apply sound equality principles that reflect our own approaches when providing our services
- use our procurement procedures to ensure that those who want to provide goods and services adopt appropriate reasonable and proportionate equality practices

5. Meeting mandatory requirements. We will:

- recognise and apply the letter and the spirit of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010
- we will take steps to make sure that our employees and councillors are familiar with the three aims of the public body statutory Equality Duty so that they can consider and apply the Duty, as appropriate, in all of their activities on behalf of the Council
- undertake as necessary accessibility audits to make sure, so far as we reasonably can, that our services are available to all. Where appropriate this will require an Equality Impact Assessment
- carry out periodic equal pay audits to be satisfied that our approaches to rewarding our staff do not have the affect of discriminating against any of the protected groups

6. Knowing how well we are doing. We will:

- extend the equality monitoring of our staff and, where it will help us to understand that our equality approaches are working, develop equality monitoring of users of our services
- aim to maintain the 'achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government (see paragraph 4.5 in our Equality Scheme) as a measure of our progress and consider and keep under review whether or not it is in the best interests of the Council and the community to work towards the 'excellent' level of the Framework.
- provide relevant feedback to our residents on our progress such that they are able to let us know how well they think we are doing

To implement this Equality Strategy we will be mindful of:

Resourcing. We will:

- work to ‘mainstream’ equality into all of our activities. By this we mean that it will be an integral part of our thinking in developing and applying policies and not an added on activity that requires additional resources. In that way all of our councillors and all of our employees will have responsibility for progressing the three aims of the Equality Duty in their areas of responsibility
- seek out sources of external funding to enable us to make changes of direction or to re-enthuse our work towards equality of opportunity

Delivering the strategy. We will:

- use our Equality Scheme 2012 to 2015 and its action plan as the main tool for delivering our strategic approaches to equality
- through promoting our approaches, expect our contractors to contribute to the achievement of this strategy
- in everything that we do to implement this Scheme, undertake our work in a way that is reasonable and proportionate to our size and circumstances

Specific Equality Scheme Action Plan

- To ensure that Tandridge District Council meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- To conduct an audit of the Authority’s activities that could be regarded as supporting the requirements of the general equality duty in the Equality Act 2010
- To assess the Authority’s current performance against the ‘Achieving’ level of the Equality Framework for Local Government