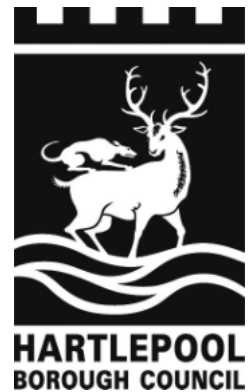


PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



Wednesday 25 April 2012

at 10.15 am

**(or immediately following Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio
commencing at 10.00 am whichever is the later)**

in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor H Thompson, Cabinet Member responsible for Performance will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

No items

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

2.1 Single Status Agreement Appeals - *Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

3.1 Equality Act 2010 – *Assistant Chief Executive*

4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items

**5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION)
ORDER 2006**

EXEMPT ITEMS

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the

grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

6. EXEMPT KEY DECISIONS

No items

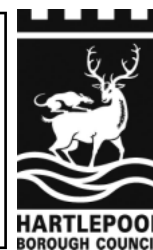
7. OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 7.1 Approval for Compulsory Redundancy (*para 4*) - *Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer*

PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

25 April 2012



Report of: Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer

Subject: SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT APPEALS

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on progress on appeals received and obtain ratification of Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low Priority Appeals.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report provides a background to the Appeals Procedure together with an update on the progress of appeals received and requests ratification of Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low Priority Appeals.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Corporate Issues.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non Key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Portfolio meeting only.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

To note progress on appeals received and ratify Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low Priority Appeals.

Report of: Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer

Subject: SINGLE STATUS AGREEMENT APPEALS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on progress on appeals received and obtain ratification of Appeals Panel outcomes in respect of High, Medium, Low and Very Low priority appeals.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Single Status Appeals Procedure was agreed at the Performance Portfolio Holder meeting on 27 June 2008. This has been reviewed in the light of experience of operating it for High Priority Appeals and a revised Appeals Procedure has been implemented following Performance Portfolio ratification.

- 2.2 The revised procedure provides:

- “The Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services will be regularly advised of appeals received and progress made in dealing with them” and;
- “All Appeal Panel outcomes must be ratified by the Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services or Governors (Governing Body, Pay Review Committee or Appeals Committee), as appropriate, prior to any changes being implemented.”

- 2.3 Appeals are prioritised in accordance with the Single Status Agreement as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1

Priority	Type of Appeal
High	Appeals received from current employees who are continuing to receive protection at 1 July 2008/Appeals which do not need an Appeals Panel to meet/ Appeals from employees who leave the Council from areas where job losses are needed/ Appeals from employees who retire from the Council due to ill health and the Teesside Pension Fund Doctor (for LGPS members) or the Council's Occupational Health Advisor (for non LGPS members) has determined that they meet the Local Government Pension Fund Tier 3

	Ill Health criteria
Medium	Appeals received from current employees who were receiving protection prior to 1 July 2008/Appeals received from current employees who do not gain initially
Low	Appeals received from current employees who gained initially
Very Low	Former employees

- 2.4 A timetable for processing all outstanding appeals by 31 December 2011 was established.
- 2.5 Provision for the ongoing costs of appeal outcomes has been made in the Council's base budget. To meet the cost of implementing any successful appeals. This provision was initially set at £400,000, inclusive of employer's national insurance and pension costs. This figure has been increased in the budget by the annual cost of living pay award, and currently stands at £100,000 following the application of funding to the appeals already approved by members. Schools have made separate provision in their own budgets for appeals by school staff.
- 2.6 In order to ensure equality of treatment, as far as possible, the revised Appeals Procedure, as detailed in 2.1 above, made provision for employees whose high priority appeals were considered under the original Appeals Procedure to
- a) receive the same documentation (i.e. Directors comments on the appeal, including the sore-thumbed factors and any subsequent clarification provided to the Appeals Panel by the Director) as appellants whose appeals have been considered since April 2011
 - b) challenge, clarify or expand upon information already provided by the Director or appellants but not provide new information in respect of appealed factors
 - c) provide new evidence in respect of the sore thumb factors
 - d) attend the Appeals Panel to present their case (in which case the Director or representative will also present their case to the Appeals Panel)
- 2.7 There is no obligation on appellants to do anything in respect of 2.6 a) - d) above. For example they may decide
- i) to do nothing
 - ii) to receive the documentation and then not submit any additional information
 - iii) to receive the documentation and submit additional written information and subsequently decide not to proceed at any

time up to the day before the Appeals Panel actually meeting to consider any additional information provided to them in writing and/or verbally and review the appeal outcome in light of the additional information provided.

- iv) to receive the documentation and submit additional written information and decide not to attend the Appeals Panel
- v) to receive the documentation and submit additional information and decide to attend the Appeals Panel.

3. CURRENT POSITION ON APPEALS

- 3.1 Outstanding appeals (including where the outcome has not yet been ratified) are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Department	Posts Appealed (and number of appellants)/Priority				
	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Total
Chief Executive's	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Child and Adults	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Schools	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)

- 3.2 As can be seen from Table 2, there is only one outstanding appeal to be ratified through this report.

- 3.3 The Outcomes of Appeals ratified previously are detailed in Table 3.

Table 3

	Pay band increased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)
Chief Executive's	8 (12)	21 (36)	1 (1)
Child and Adults	12 (25)	36 (88)	6 (7)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	22 (29)	58 (73)	7 (11)
Schools	2 (4)	8 (8)	0 (0)
Total	44 (70)	123 (205)	14 (19)

- 3.4 As indicated in Section 2, appellants whose appeals were considered under the previous Appeals procedure are being given the opportunity to have their appeals reconsidered under the current

Appeals Procedure. The current position is set out in Table 4 overleaf.

Table 4

	No. of appeals (no. of appellants) who requested copies of the additional information submitted to the Appeals Panel	No. of appeals (no. of appellants) who have indicated they wish to have their appeals reconsidered by the Appeals Panel
Priority 1	4 (6)	3 (5)
Priority 2	46 (93)	22 (50)
Total	50 (99)	25 (55)

4. PROGRESS ON APPEALS

- 4.1 Since the last report the Appeals Panel has met on 1 occasion and has considered the 1 remaining appeal relating to 1 Low Priority appellant. It had not been possible to consider this appeal previously as clarification was being sought as to whether the appeal had been withdrawn. The Appeal panel has raised further questions concerning this appeal and will therefore report the outcome in a future Portfolio Holder Report
- 4.2 A summary of the initial outcomes, of the Appeals Panels, as detailed in 4.1 above is set out in Table 5 overleaf.

Table 5

	Pay band increased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)
Chief Executive's	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Child and Adults	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Schools	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

- 4.3 In determining the appeal outcome, the Appeal Panels have considered the submissions made by the appellant as well as ‘sore-thumbing’ the original evaluation. This is essential to ensure the robustness of individual evaluations and the job evaluation scheme as a whole. Whilst there are three possible overall outcomes (pay band increases, pay band remains the same or pay band decreases), this may mask changes to particular factor levels and/or ‘tidying up’ of evaluations which does not affect overall pay bands.
- 4.4 The Appeals Panel has also revisited 2 appeals relating to 2 appellants whose high priority appeals had been considered under the previous Appeals Procedure, as detailed in 2.6 above.
- 4.5 A summary of the outcomes, of the Appeals Panels in respect of revisited appeals as detailed in 4.3 above is set out in Table 5.

Table 5

	Pay band increased when appeal revisited and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band stayed the same on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)	Pay band decreased on Appeal and Outcome Ratified (no. of appellants)
Chief Executive's	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Child and Adults	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Schools	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	2 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)

- 4.6 In reconsidering the appeals, the Appeals panel has only considered those factors potentially affected by any additional information provided by the appellants.
- 4.7 As indicated above, the Portfolio Holder is responsible for ratifying the outcomes in respect of Council employees whereas Governors are responsible for ratifying the outcomes in respect of school employees. Similarly, the Council is responsible for any changes in employee costs for Council employees whereas schools are responsible for any changes in employee costs for school employees.
- 4.8 Further details of the outcomes of individual appeals is included in the “Not for Publication” **Appendix A** attached to this report.

This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of the Council (para 1)

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder notes the progress made and ratifies the Appeals Panel Outcomes in respect of Council employees (as detailed in the “Not for Publication” schedule attached to this report).

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Appeals Procedure is an integral part of the Single Status agreement and requires that the Executive Member with responsibility for Workforce Services be regularly advised of progress made in dealing with appeals received and ratifies the outcomes of Appeals Panels in respect of Council employees.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet report 23 December 2007.
Cabinet report 27 May 2008.
Performance Portfolio report 27 June 2008
Performance Portfolio report 26 September 2008
Performance Portfolio report 2 February 2009
Performance Portfolio report 26 February 2009
Performance Portfolio report 16 April 2009
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 14 July 2009
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 5 November 2009
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 23 February 2010
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 23 March 2010
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 30 April 2010
Finance and Performance Portfolio report 18 May 2010
Cabinet report 16 August 2010
Performance Portfolio report 26 October 2010
Cabinet report 21 February 2011
Performance Portfolio report 22 February 2011
Performance Portfolio report 23 March 2011
Performance Portfolio report 14 September 2011
Performance Portfolio report 8 November 2011
Performance Portfolio report 7 December 2011
Performance Portfolio report 18 January 2012
Performance Portfolio report 14 February 2012

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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Organisational Development Manager
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PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

25 April 2012



Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: EQUALITY ACT 2010

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Portfolio holder with an update on the progress made to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report includes details of the progress that has been made to meet the requirement to publish equality objectives.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The portfolio holder is responsible for equality and diversity matters

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key decision

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Performance Portfolio meeting of 25 April 2012

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

Information be noted

Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: EQUALITY ACT 2010

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Portfolio holder with an update on the progress made to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must
- Publish equalities information to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Duty by 31 January 2012 and then annually after that; and
 - Develop and publish equality objectives by 6 April 2012 and then every four years.
- 2.2 As reported to the Portfolio Holder meeting on 14 February 2012, the Council's equality information was published by the January 2012 deadline.
- 2.3 The Diversity Sub-group, part of the Strategic Customer Service Champions with representatives from each department, has also been working on compiling and publishing equality information.

3 CORPORATE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

- 3.1 There is no requirement under the Act to produce an equality and diversity policy. However, as work has progressed on fulfilling the duties of the act, it has become apparent that we need to have information about how we will fulfil the duties of the Act and our equality objectives.
- 3.2 Rather than produce information on a piecemeal basis, a policy provides details of our approach and ensures a consistent response to equality and diversity queries from across the Council.
- 3.3 A copy of the policy, that was agreed with each departmental management team, is attached and has been published on our website.
- 3.4 The policy also includes details of the proposed equality objectives.

4 PUBLISHING EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 By 6 April this year the Council was required to develop and publish equality objectives and review them every 4 years ensuring that the objectives were specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.
- 4.2 The guidance from the EHRC states that the approach to setting equality objectives should be proportionate to the size of the authority and the capacity it has to affect change.
- 4.3 To meet the requirements, the group reviewed Corporate and Departmental themes and outcomes included in service plans to identify objectives that had an equality and diversity focus. Each departmental management team agreed their individual equality objectives and outcomes.
- 4.4 Details of the outcomes and objectives identified are included in the Equality and Diversity Policy attached at Appendix A.
- 4.5 A report on progress against the objectives and actions will be produced reported on and published annually.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the information is noted.

6. CONTACT OFFICER

Christine Armstrong
Customer & Support Services Manager
Chief Executive's Department
Email: christine.armstrong@hartlepool.gov.uk



Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy

Contents

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How we will deliver	Page 5
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Action we will take to improve Equality as a Service Provider	Page 7
Action we will take to improve Equality as an Employer	Page 13
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Why we need an Equality and Diversity Policy

Hartlepool Borough Council recognises that some sections of the community experience discrimination due to factors such as race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, disability, sexuality, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnerships and age. The Equality Act 2010 helps us to promote equality and our Equality and Diversity Policy will shape and guide our equality work.

Our approach to equality and diversity is to value that each individual resident, visitor, partner, service provider, service user and employee is unique.

The Equality Act 2010 came into force April 2011, introducing the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- Advance equality of opportunity, between people who share protected characteristics and those who don't
- Foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We welcome our responsibilities as an employer, as a provider of services, and as a leader of public opinion, and value the legislation that supports our commitments to equality and fairness.

We believe that it is unacceptable for any sections of our communities to experience harassment or discrimination and take seriously our responsibility for promoting equality.

We first produced an equality policy in 2002. Our first Single Equality Scheme was published in 2008. We have now decided to review the policy to reflect changes in the law, the increasing differences in the town's population and changes in our responsibilities to our employees and people in our communities.

- 1.8% of the population belong to a black or ethnic minority group
- 1 in 4 of people has a disability or long term limiting illness.
- It is expected that by 2021 the numbers of people above retirement age will increase by 27%.
- Approximately 10% of the population are gay, lesbian, bisexual.

We need an equality policy because we know that prejudice and discrimination still affect the lives of many of our citizens. We know that the way organisations work often leads to unintentional discrimination against groups of people ('institutional discrimination'). This results in reduced opportunities for some of our citizens and limits their access to jobs and services.

Since we first published our policy, we have put in place policies and structures and have many examples of good practice in equality work. However, we know that we need to improve our approach to mainstreaming, making sure that all aspects of our business processes (how we plan, manage and monitor our work) take account of and reflect the different needs of the population). As a major provider of services in the town, we are committed to providing high-quality services which everyone can use.

As an employer, we value diversity and want a workforce that reflects the community that we serve. The term 'diversity' refers to the fact that we are all different. Having a diverse workforce improves our work. It makes sure that we draw from the widest available pool of talent and that we relate better to the community that we serve. Tackling discrimination helps to make sure that we attract and keep the very best workforce. Our commitment to equality is supported by a legal duty to provide all services and employment opportunities fairly and to keep to all relevant codes of practice. By law, we must promote equality and publish our plans to do so.

'Our approach to equality and diversity is to value that each individual resident, visitor, partner, service provider, service user and employee is unique.'

How we will deliver

Our equality work has the following aims.

We will:

- work to end unlawful discrimination;
- promote equal opportunities; and
- promote good relations between people from different communities.

We will make sure that any partnerships we are involved in and any contractors who carry out public work on our behalf follow these principles.

We will make sure that equality is central in all aspects of our business, at planning, delivery and monitoring stages.

The principles set out in this policy are supported by a detailed corporate equality action plan, which is incorporated into the Policy.

All our services will update and develop the action plans as necessary, setting out the particular equality issues facing their service and their arrangements for delivering improvements in relation to these issues.

‘We will make sure that equality is central in all aspects of our business, at planning, delivery and monitoring stages.’

Our Equality and Diversity Statement

Hartlepool Borough Council is committed to promoting a community and organisational culture that fully respects and values everyone's differences and needs. Equality and diversity is integral to our core business, our staff and our service users.

In working towards our commitment to equality we will:

- Work towards providing services which meet the needs of all sections of our communities.
- Ensure that respect and dignity is valued as a core principle for all.
- Promote equality and fair treatment and equal access to our services and services commissioned by us.
- Offer a range of translation and interpretation services for those whose first language is not English and also provide information in other formats such as Braille and audio.
- Actively seek the views of our customers and take account of their comments and complaints and allow a reasonable timescale for consultations
- Consult a range of communities and avoid selecting single minority ethnic organisations or individuals
- Assess and monitor the impact of new and existing policies and plans on equality groups.
- Publish an annual report that outlines progress on eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunities.
- Promote the community cohesion framework.
- Provide straight forward information about our services.
- Strive for a workforce that reflects the diversity of the population of Hartlepool.

The action we will take to improve Equality as a Service Provider

Policy and Planning

- We will publish our Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy setting out what we are doing to put the policy into practice.
- We will include equality in all our business processes (how we plan, manage and monitor our work) and have a system in place to manage and monitor this.
- We will work to make sure that we consider equality in our corporate and departmental policies and plans, including budget and service plans and service reviews.
- Where necessary, we will identify new procedures for taking equality issues forward, for example, to improve access to services for disabled people and to tackle violence against women.
- We will work with partners, as appropriate, to improve services for equality groups.
- We will make sure that third party organisations that we work with have equality policies in place on employment matters and delivering services.
- Where appropriate, we will include equality commitments in agreements that we are part of.

'Where necessary, we will identify new procedures for taking equality issues forward, for example, to improve access to services for disabled people and to tackle violence against women.'

Access to Services

- We work towards ensuring that members of the public have equal access to Council services and support, information, employment, education, transport and buildings, land, sites and other facilities.
- We have developed an Access Strategy that addresses access to:
 - Services and support
 - Information
 - Employment
 - Education (children and adults)
 - Transport
 - Buildings, land, sites and other facilities
- The aim of the Strategy is to establish an inclusive society where all Hartlepool residents and visitors
 - have equal access to all Council services and support, information, employment, education, transport and buildings, land, sites and other facilities without discrimination (except where statutory restrictions or other eligibility criteria apply)
 - are aware of what services are available/provided and how to access them
- The Strategy supports our intention to:
 - strive for delivering Council services in line with people's needs
 - ensure that Council services and support, information, employment, education, transport and buildings, land, sites and other facilities should be accessible to all and where necessary, reasonable adjustments should be made to remove barriers preventing such access

‘We believe that Council services and support, information, employment, education, transport and buildings, land, sites and other facilities should be accessible to all.’

Monitoring

- We will link equality monitoring to our performance management framework (how we measure how our services are performing).
- We will assess and monitor the impact of new and existing policies and plans on equality groups and people with protected characteristics.
- Monitoring will enable us to:
 - find out if our equality and diversity policies are working
 - find out which groups are using our services
 - determine whether we are offering equality of opportunity and treatment to all groups
 - highlight areas where we are not complying with our equality and diversity policy
 - find solutions and make changes, rather than using guesswork or assumptions
 - provide evidence that we know who our users and non-users are, and that we have found out what their needs are
 - avoid what could be costly complaints of discrimination, by making sure that we identify problems and issues at an early stage
 - improve our reputation as a good and fair provider of services.
- We will, on an annual basis, publish a report containing a summary of:
 - What we have done to comply with the Equality Duty
 - What we have done to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity
 - Completed Impact Assessments

Complaints

We will record and monitor complaints to ensure there are no barriers in accessing our services.

‘We will assess and monitor the impact of new and existing policies and plans on equality groups and people with protected characteristics.’

Consultation and Communication

- We will consult with discussion groups and partner organisations including:
 - The All Abilities Forum
 - The Learning Disability Partnership Board
 - Hartlepool Access Group
 - The Champion of Older Lifestyle Group (COOL)
 - The 50 Plus Forum
 - Hartlepool Young Voices Forum
 - Hart Gables (gay, lesbian and bi-sexual)
 - Scrutiny Forums
 - Ward Surgeries and other individual elected member activity
 - Face the public events
 - Youth Forums
- We will ensure that we use a variety of techniques including postal surveys, face-to-face interviews, discussion groups, consultative forums, mystery shopping and e-consultation, via:
 - Viewpoint (citizen's panel) – postal and on-line questionnaires
 - E-consultation system (Survey Monkey)– on line questionnaires and discussions
 - General satisfaction surveys – self completion/postal questionnaires
 - Employee Surveys – postal and on line surveys
- We will continually review the process to make sure that our consultation arrangements best reflect changes in law, changes in structures and other agendas.
- We will communicate our commitment to equality to all our employees and everyone living in Hartlepool.
- We will produce documents and promotional material in plain language, other languages and in a range of other formats to suit the needs of different groups and individuals.
- We will continue to offer a Translation and Interpreting Service to meet the needs of people who do not speak English and also provide information in other formats such Braille and audio.

‘We will produce documents and promotional material in plain language, other languages and in a range of other formats to suit the needs of different groups and individuals.’

Community Cohesion

The vision for the Community Cohesion Framework is that 'by 2020 Hartlepool will be made up of cohesive communities where there is a sense of belonging for all and where people of different backgrounds, circumstances and generations have access to the same opportunities and are able to get along free from discrimination and harassment.'

The draft framework is currently undergoing consultation. Feedback from the consultation will be used to inform the proposed objectives and supporting actions and will be considered in line with our equality objectives.

'by 2020 Hartlepool will be made up of cohesive communities where there is a sense of belonging for all and where people of different backgrounds, circumstances and generations have access to the same opportunities and are able to get along free from discrimination and harassment.'

Procurement

Our Procurement Strategy is aligned with the strategic aims and objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and with other corporate and service based strategies and plans that form elements of our strategic framework. We must make sure public money is spent lawfully and is used to support and encourage equality of opportunity and good community relations.

There are four main aspects to consider in terms of ensuring equality of opportunity in relation to procurement:

- avoidance of discrimination against a provider
- the requirement on a supplier to be in line with our own equality and diversity statement and ensuring compliance with legislation
- avoidance of discrimination against users and potential users of a service, and
- our duty to promote equality.

Procuring officers should ensure that they do not discriminate against providers, who in turn should not discriminate against any of their customers on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity or religious beliefs. The wording of any documentation should not discriminate on these grounds.

We expect providers to:

- operate within employment practices and
- deliver the service or product in a way that is compliant with the legislation and in line with our equal opportunities policies and our duty to promote equality.

Potential providers are therefore provided with a questionnaire about their equal opportunities practice at the selection stage of the Council's tender process. Additionally equality clauses are inserted into the standard Contract Conditions, to which providers must comply.

Procuring officers must consider the impact that the purchase will have on all users or potential users of the product or service, no matter what gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage or civil partnership, race, disability, age, sexual orientation and/or religious beliefs. It must not be more difficult for a person to use the product or receive the service because of these reasons.

'Procuring officers should ensure that they do not discriminate against providers, who in turn should not discriminate against any of their customers on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics.'

The action we will take to improve Equality as an Employer

Monitoring & Setting Objectives

We will assess the effect of new and existing policies and practices. This will allow us to measure the effect of our actions and make sure that they do not discriminate against any group or person.

We will set objectives and take action to meet those objectives.

We will continue to monitor and report our performance in terms of our workforce profile and recruitment statistics and aim, over time, to meet the Equality and Human Rights Commission's expectations in respect of workforce equality reporting.

Positive Action

We recognise that inequalities within society prevent certain groups from competing effectively for jobs. We have developed and continue to explore the further development of positive action schemes to provide relevant training for people in target groups before they apply for jobs.

We have been awarded the two tick symbol by Job Centre Plus as we have made commitments to employ, keep and develop the abilities of disabled staff and we are also a Mindful Employer.

We have entered into a partnership arrangement with Hartlepool College of Further Education to increase the number of Apprenticeship opportunities within the Council.

Employee Development & Training

We have developed training schemes across the council to reinforce our commitment to challenge prejudice and discrimination, and promote equality when providing council services. Through induction, we will make sure that all employees understand our equality policy and their responsibilities. We will make sure that everyone who is responsible for recruiting and managing employees receives appropriate training and guidance on our equality and employment policies and understands their responsibilities.

'We will strive for a workforce that reflects the diversity of the population of Hartlepool.'

Complaints

Discrimination and harassment in the workplace is not acceptable. To directly confront harassment and victimisation, we have developed a dignity at work policy. If an employee or person applying for a job feels that they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against, they can make a complaint in line with the agreed procedures.

'We have been awarded the two tick symbol by Job Centre Plus as we have made commitments to employ, keep and develop the abilities of disabled staff and we are also a Mindful Employer.'

Key Outcomes

We have identified a number of key outcomes from our Corporate and Departmental plans that will contribute towards the equality objectives and actions that encompass the following themes: -

Jobs & Economy	Hartlepool has increased employment and skills levels with a competitive workforce that meets the demands of employers and the economy.
Lifelong Learning & Skills	To promote opportunities for all children and young people to reach their full potential by accessing good quality teaching and curriculum provision which fully meets their needs and enables them to participate in and enjoy their learning.
Health & Wellbeing	Vulnerable adults are supported and safeguarded and people are able to maintain maximum independence while exercising choice and control about how their outcomes are achieved.
Community Safety	Hartlepool has reduced crime and repeat victimisation.
Housing	Housing Services and housing options respond to the specific needs of all communities within Hartlepool.
Culture and Leisure	People enjoy equal access to leisure, culture, sport, libraries which enrich their lives, improve the places where they live, and strengthen communities.
Strengthening Communities	Local people have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services
Organisational Development	Deliver effective customer focussed services, meeting the needs of diverse groups and maintaining customer satisfaction 32. Deliver effective Member and Workforce arrangements, maximising the efficiency of the Council's Democratic function

2012-16 EQUALITY OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS

Theme	Jobs & the Economy	
Outcome	Hartlepool has increased employment and skills levels with a competitive workforce that meets the demands of employers and the economy	
Equality Objective	Ensure that young people have equal access to employment and skills levels that meet the demands of employers and the economy	
Action		Lead Officer
Implement the Going Forward Together model and NEET strategy to target young people classified as the highest risk of becoming Not In Education, Employment or Training (NEET).		Patrick Wilson/James Sinclair
Provide support for vulnerable young people to enable them to be economically active		Tom Argument/Mark Smith
Ensure access to high quality learning opportunities that increase the skills and qualifications of local residents via implementing Adult Education Service Plan.		Maggie Heaps
Increase the take up of Apprenticeships by liaising with local employers to increase opportunities.		Maggie Heaps
Submit a bid for the new Innovation Fund to help address youth unemployment		Antony Steinberg

Theme	Lifelong Learning & Skills	
Outcome	To promote opportunities for all children and young people to reach their full potential by accessing good quality teaching and curriculum provision which fully meets their needs and enables them to participate in and enjoy their learning	
Equality Objective	Promote opportunities for all children and young people to reach their full potential by accessing good quality teaching and curriculum provision which fully meets their needs and enables them to participate in and enjoy their learning	
Action		Lead Officer
Provide challenge, intervention and support in schools not meeting targets to reduce gaps between looked after children, children eligible for free school meals, and children identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) and their peers.		Caroline O'Neill

Theme	Health and Wellbeing	
Outcome	Vulnerable adults and children are supported and safeguarded and people are able to maintain maximum independence while exercising choice and control about how their outcomes are achieved	
Equality Objective	Ensure there is equality in access to social care by offering more choice and control to meet the diverse needs of current service users including extending the use of personal budgets and improving care placements and planning for children and young people.	
Action		Lead Officer
Increase the number of people with mental health issues accessing personal budgets		Geraldine Martin
Improve children and young people's participation in the Care Planning and Case Review Process		Sally Robinson

Theme	Community Safety	
Outcome	Hartlepool has reduced crime and repeat victimisation	
Equality Objective	Aim to reduce the number of repeat domestic violence incidents.	
Action		Lead Officer
Deliver the domestic violence strategy action plan to be monitored by the domestic violence forum		Lisa Oldroyd
Monitor number of repeat incidents of domestic violence – check what collecting		Sally Forth
Develop a co-ordinated approach to meeting the needs of victims of crime & disorder and introduce restorative practice across Safer Hartlepool partners to give victims a greater voice in the criminal justice system.		Sally Forth

Theme	Housing	
Outcome	Housing services and housing options respond to the specific needs of all communities within Hartlepool	
Equality Objective	Ensure housing services and housing options respond to the diverse needs of all communities within Hartlepool	
Action		Lead Officer
In partnership with BME housing advisors improve the range of information and advice available to people from BME groups – specifically information on shared ownership, disabled adaptations grants; welcome packs for refugee groups.		Karen Kelly

Theme	Culture and Leisure	
Outcome	People enjoy equal access to leisure, culture, sport, libraries which enrich their lives, improve the places where they live, and strengthen communities.	
Equality Objective	Ensure equal access to leisure, culture, sport and libraries which enrich lives, improve places where people live and strengthen communities.	
Action		Lead Officer
Work closely with key partners and groups to deliver programmes of activity to meet the sport and physical activity needs of the Hartlepool community increasing participation by 1%		Pat Usher
Deliver new Renaissance programme to improve access to museum services and develop new audiences.		David Worthington

Theme	Strengthening Communities	
Outcome	Local people have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services	
Equality Objective	Work towards local people having an equal say and influence over decision making and the delivery of services	
Action		Lead Officer
Refresh the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Strategy and combine with the Compact		David Frame
Implement revised Neighbourhood consultation mechanisms		Clare Clark
Develop parents forums within Early Intervention localities that inform service design and planning		Tracy Liveras
Support children and young people (0-19) to participate in service design and democratic processes		Mark Smith
Empower and support the Young Person's Council to be a widely recognised voice of and lobby for children looked after in Hartlepool.		Sally Robinson

Theme	Organisational Development	
Outcome	Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation	
Equality Objective	Ensure that the Council's Commissioning and Procurement Strategy meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties of the Equality Act 2010	
Action		Lead Officer
Review the Council's Commissioning and Procurement Strategy		David Hart
Outcome	Deliver effective customer focussed services, meeting the needs of diverse groups and maintaining customer satisfaction	
Equality Objective	Ensure all customers, regardless of characteristics, have equal access to services when contacting the authority by implementing appropriate actions of the Customer Services Action Plan.	
Action		Lead Officer
Undertake Access to Services Impact Assessment (IA) across all customer service areas		Christine Armstrong
Review existing Access to Services' contracts to ensure they meet customer requirements and offer value for money		Christine Armstrong
Evaluate the customer services training being piloted with community services staff in Child and Adult Services		Leigh Keeble
Outcome	Deliver effective Member and Workforce arrangements, maximising the efficiency of the Council's democratic function	
Equality Objective	Continue to apply and develop the Single Status Agreement and other equality in employment arrangements by undertaking an equal pay audit and addressing all identified equal pay concerns	
Action		Lead Officer
Undertake 2012 Equal Pay Audit and develop action plan by March 2013		Wally Stagg