

Disability



Strategy 2006

Forward

This strategy sets out how the Council will meet the challenge of tackling discrimination against disabled people. The Council acknowledges that disabled people face barriers not through their impairment but through environmental factors. The Council aims to tackle not just physical barriers but also institutional ones.

I am keen that this strategy will have an impact and result in real outcomes for disabled people. I would like to thank and acknowledge the support and input of disabled people in the Borough in putting together this strategy.

Councillor *Anne Winstanley*

Introduction

This strategy sets out:

- How the Council will work with disabled people and involve them in eliminating discrimination and promoting equality and;
- How the Council is meeting and will continue to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

The Council acknowledges that disabled people are disadvantaged not by their impairments but by environmental barriers. These barriers come in many forms such as inaccessible buildings through to employment practices which do not take account of their particular circumstances. Therefore in developing the Strategy the Council has consulted disabled people and asked them what barriers they face. It is the Council's view that we should be tackling these barriers so that disabled people can be full and equal participants in society.

The Strategy covers the period December 2006 – April 2010.

The Aim of the Strategy

The aim of the Strategy is to ensure that the Council in carrying out its functions will:

- eliminate discrimination;
- eliminate harassment;
- promote equality of opportunity and;
- take account of people's disabilities and where necessary treat them more favourably than other people.

Our Key Priorities will be to:

- assess and consult on the likely impact of new or existing services, policies or strategies on promoting equality for disabled people;
- remove barriers which prevent disabled people accessing services;
- make reasonable adjustments to facilitate access to job opportunities for prospective and existing employees;
- monitor our recruitment, employment and retention practices and encouraging applications from disabled people;
- to actively involve disabled people in the development of strategies, policies and service which affect their lives;
- take a community development approach to promoting community involvement and supporting community activities and;
- encourage the reporting of harassment and tackling harassment incidents.

One of the main strands to our strategy will be the implementation of an integrated impact assessment process which is being developed through the Equality and Diversity Strategy.

Appendix 1 outlines our main actions planned for the next three years.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Discrimination Act 2005

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 gives disabled people rights in the areas of employment, access to goods, facilities and services.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a duty on all public authorities to promote disability equality. This duty means that public authorities, such as the Council, must, in carrying out their functions, have due regard to:

- the need to eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- the need to eliminate harassment that is unlawful under the Act;
- the need to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons and;
- the need to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

In addition there are Specific Duties. The Specific Duties are:

- to prepare and publicise a Disability Equality Scheme;
- to implement the Scheme and;
- to publish an annual report containing information about how the scheme has been implemented.

The key themes of the new Act are:

- to build on existing equality strategies, frameworks and schemes;
- to have realistic action points and timescales;
- to have clear measurable milestones and
- the need to involve disabled people in setting priorities.

An important part of the Disability Equality Strategy will be the implementation of a process to assess the impact of the Council's policies and practices on equality of opportunity for disabled people. The Council is already implementing an assessment process to meet the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and an integrated Equal Opportunities Assessment is being developed as part of the Equality and Diversity Strategy.

Consultation and Community Involvement

The Council has involved disabled people throughout the development of this Strategy. One of the most important contributions to the Strategy has been from the Eastleigh and District Disability Forum (EDDF). The EDDF are an independently constituted group of disabled residents and representatives from disability organisations. It has been very helpful to have the Chair of the EDDF as a member of the Council's Disability Strategy Steering Group, who has produced the Strategy. The Disability Strategy Steering Group has also benefitted from contributions from a representative of older disabled people.

The Disability Strategy Steering Group has reviewed the Council's services and functions and assessed their relevance to the Disability Discrimination Act. This review is included as Appendix 2 of the Strategy.

The Steering Group has also organised an open meeting to consult disabled people and produced a postal survey.

The open meeting to consult disabled people was hosted by the EDDF and involved Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, Hampshire Probation Service in addition to the Borough Council. The open meeting focused upon four specific issues: communication, transport and mobility, customer care and employment.

The key conclusions from this event were:

- The need to have effective methods of communication to suit a range of needs;
- To ensure staff receive training on disability awareness;
- The need to ensure the impact on disabled people is taken account of during and after work on roads and pavements;
- The importance of having drop kerbs in appropriate places and to the right standards;
- The need for public sector organisations to ensure they have employment policies and practices that do not discriminate against disabled people.

Following the success of the open meeting a survey form was produced and disseminated by various methods to disabled people. Those consulted included disabled people on the Home Choice Register, people who have had a Disabled Facilities Grant in the last twelve months, users of Shopmobility and members of disability organisations. The key areas of concern for respondents were:

- Transport issues and specifically the need for more accessible transport;
- Mobility and accessibility and specifically difficulties in accessing shops and businesses;
- Housing specifically the length of wait for appropriate housing;
- Customer care and specifically the need for staff to be aware of the needs of disabled people;
- Social and recreational facilities and specifically the need for more social activities;
- Support services and specifically more information about support in the home and help for carers;
- Medical services and specifically the lack of hospitals in Eastleigh Borough.

The results of the open day and survey have been reviewed by the Disability Steering Group and incorporated in the action plan in Appendix 1.

The Council will continue to involve disabled people over the course of the strategy. In addition to regular consultation about services and functions the Council will hold an annual consultation event. This will be an opportunity to review what actions have taken place, raise any issues of concern and identify any further priorities.

Demographic Information

Over the course of this strategy the Council will collate information about the numbers of disabled people living in the Borough. This will include information about their take up of services and their satisfaction with those services.

The 2001 Census asked people to describe their health, over the preceding 12 months as 'good', 'fairly good' or 'not good'. It also asked questions about any limiting long term illness, health problems or disability which limited people's daily activities or the work they could do. Table 1 shows how people in the Borough described their health compared with people in Hampshire, the South East Regions and England and Wales as a whole.

Table 1: Health & Disability of Resident Population

Percentage of population

| | Eastleigh Borough | Hampshire | South East | England & Wales |
|---|-------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|
| Health "Good" | 73.3 | 72.5 | 71.5 | 68.6 |
| Health "Fairly good" | 20.3 | 20.9 | 21.4 | 22.2 |
| Health "Not good" | 6.5 | 6.6 | 7.1 | 9.2 |
| Disability or long term illness in total population | 14.4 | 14.9 | 15.5 | 18.2 |
| Disability or LLTI in "working age" population (aged 18-64) | 10.1 | 10.9 | 11.3 | 14.5 |

(Source 2001 Census ONS)

This table illustrates that around 15 percent of the population are likely to have a disability or long term illness. It is anticipated that the Council will improve the range and type of information we have about disabled people and their needs over the next three years. This information will be of great assistance in carrying out impact assessments on our services.

Performance Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the strategy will be monitored by the Council's Equality and Diversity Group. A report will be submitted to the Cabinet annually outlining the progress made on the action plan. In addition an annual consultation event will be organised to which disabled people and people representing clubs and organisations for disabled people will be invited.

Conclusion

This strategy sets out how the Council will seek to meet the General and Specific Duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Council is keen to ensure that it takes a proactive approach in meeting the Duties and in promoting the equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Appendix 1 of this strategy sets out the specific actions the Council will undertake. In addition to these actions there will be actions arising from the Impact Assessments.

Appendix 2 is a review of the Councils services and functions with an assessment of their relevance to the Act.

| Area | Action | Time Scale | Lead | Related Links | Financial Implications |
|--|---|---|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Leadership and Partnership working | | | | | |
| 1.1 Ensure that the Local Strategic Partnership takes a lead on diversity and equality issues. | Ensure that the Eastleigh and District Disability Forum is able to actively participate in the LSP Advisory Group. | Community Advisory group for LSP to be established by October 2006. | Change and Development Team. | KLOE 5.1 | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 1.2 Actively and publicly celebrate diversity and tackle discrimination. | Lead the Council in achieving level three of the Equality Standard. | Achieve level two by March 2007 and level three by March 2008. | Equality and Diversity Group | KLOE 5.1 BV2a BV2b | Funding for external evaluation to be considered as part of budget process. |
| | With partners encourage the reporting of harassment and tackle discrimination. | Support the Police in promoting the True Vision initiative on hate crime. | Health and Community /Community Safety | BVPI 174 BVPI 175 | Funded from existing budgets |
| 1.3 Champion diversity and equality issues with our partners and contractors | Ensure that our agreements and contacts reflect the needs of all sections of the community and that we have evidence of this. | Ensure that all service level agreement and contracts include clauses relating to diversity by March 2008 | Equality and Diversity Group | KLOE 5.1 | Funded from existing budgets |
| 2. Access to Services | | | | | |
| 2.1 ensure the that disabled people receive appropriate and good quality services. | An integrated impact assessment process to be introduced. | Training to commence by May 2007 and a rolling programme of assessments to start. | Equality and Diversity Group. | KLOE 5.1 BVPI 156 | Funded from existing budgets. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|----------------------------------|--|
| | Develop a mechanism for customer profiling. | Ref: Access to Services Strategy. | Compass Project. | KLOE 5.2 BVPI 157 KLOE 5.2 | Funded from existing budgets. |
| | Monitor the customer satisfaction with Council of specific groups. | Customer profiling information to be included in Citizens Panel by December 2006. Customer profiling information to be included in all Council customer satisfaction surveys by March 2007 | Change and Development Team. Health and Community Team | | Funded from existing budgets. Funded from existing budgets |
| | Ensure that the availability of information in accessible formats is advertised and available (within a reasonable time) upon request. | Poster and leaflet giving information on accessible formats to be produced and information to be included on the Council's website by March 2007. Produce guidance to staff on accessible formats by March 2007. | Health and Community Team. Health and Community Team. | | Funded from existing budgets. Funded from existing budgets. |
| | Ensure that all Council buildings remain accessible and carry out an impact assessment if any changes in physical. | Carry out a review Access Audit of Council premises by 2008/2009. | Property Services. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| | To produce an audio version of the Borough News on a trial basis. | Conduct pilot in 2006/2007. | Communications and Civic Team. | BV170 (KK to advise) | Funded from existing budgets. |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--------------------|---|
| 3. Community Development and Involvement | | | | | |
| 3.1 Ensure that the Council takes a community development approach of working with groups who are often excluded. | <p>Ensure that disabled people are able to participate in consultation and involvement processes.</p> <p>Hold an annual consultation event for disabled people and disability organisations.</p> | Ensure that the Council has effective links with all groups specifically mentioned in this Strategy who are often excluded. | <p>Health and Community Team.</p> <p>Health and Community Team.</p> | KLOE 5.2 | <p>Funded from existing budgets.</p> <p>Funded from existing budgets.</p> |
| | Raise awareness of the "Getting Through the Maze" publication and ensure each disabled person is able to have a copy if required. | Contribute £500 towards the cost of re-printing in 2007/2008. | Health and Community Team. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 3.2 Ensure disabled people are able to participate in public meetings. | Ensure venues for public meetings are accessible. | <p>Produce guidelines on holding accessible meetings by December 2006.</p> <p>Review hearing loop system in meeting rooms by April 2007.</p> | <p>Health and Community Team.</p> <p>Property Services.</p> | | <p>Funded from existing budgets.</p> <p>Funded from existing budgets.</p> |
| 4. Employment Issues | | | | | |
| 4.1 Review recruitment and employment policies and practices to remove any barriers for disabled people. | Conduct full Integrated Impact Assessment. | 2007/2008 | HR | BVPI 16 BVPI 17 | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 4.2 Ensure all staff are trained in their responsibilities under the DDA. | Devise an integrated diversity training course. | Implemented by April 2007. | HR | | Funded from existing budgets. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------|
| 4.3 Ensure all relevant staff are trained to carry out the Integrated Impact Assessment. | Develop a training programme in coordination with the time table of Impact Assessments. | Produced by April 2007. | HR/Health and Community Team | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 5. Access to buildings | | | | | |
| 5.1 Planning process. | Consult the Disability Access Group on all appropriate planning applications. | Continue consultation. | Development Control. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 5.2 Shops and Businesses. | Support the Eastleigh Accessibility Scheme. | Continue support for the Eastleigh Accessibility Scheme and investigate opportunities to extend the scheme across the Borough during the period of the Strategy. | Change and Development Team/Health and Community Team. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 5.3 Shops and Businesses. | Produce an advisory leaflet on access for shops, businesses, community groups and other service providers. | Produce leaflet by December 2007. | Health and Community Team. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 5.4 Shopmobility. | Support the Shopmobility Scheme. | Service Level Agreement in place. | Change and Development Team. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 6. Transport and Highways | | | | | |
| 6.1 Clear parking arrangements. | Ensure parking regulations and information is available in leaflet form and on Council website. | Leaflet available and on website. | Property Services. | | Funded from existing budgets. |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 6.2 Ensure effective consultation with disabled people. | Consult disabled people at the design stage of developments in highways and transport. | Establish contact arrangements with EDDF and Engineering Services. | Engineering Services. | | Nil |
| | Request that HCC staff consult disabled people at the design stage of development of highways and transport. | Ensure that HCC staff have contact details of EDDF and any other relevant groups. | Health and Community Team. | | Nil |
| 6.3 Support for Accessible bus service. | Support the development of accessible buses across the Borough. | Support for raised kerbs for buses. | Engineering Services. | | Nil |
| 6.4 Support an increase in accessible taxi and private hire vehicles. | Work with the licensing team and Taxi Forum to increase the number of accessible vehicles. | Work towards implementation of accessible taxis as outlined in Government Guidelines. | Legal and Democratic Services. | | Nil |
| | Produce information to disabled people about accessible taxis and private hire vehicles. | Produce leaflet and publish information on Council website by December 2007. | Legal and Democratic Services. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 6.5 Dial A Ride. | Support the Dial A Ride service. | Services Level Agreement in place 2005-2008. | Change and Development Team. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 6.6 Support the provision of drop kerbs across the Borough. | Liaise with HCC to increase provision of drop kerbs. | Ongoing | Health and Community Team. | | Nil |
| | Support the EDDF in working with HCC to develop accessible routes across the Borough. | | Health and Community Team. | | Nil |

| 7. Housing | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------|--|--|
| 7.1 Identify adapted housing stock. | Work with Housing Associations to identify adapted housing properties. | Ongoing | Housing Services. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 7.2 Homechoice | Continue review of the cases of all disabled applicants in the urgent and needing band on Home Choice Register. | Ongoing | Housing Services | | Funded from existing budgets |
| | Continue to fund the Specialist Housing OT. | To be reviewed 2007/2008. | Housing Services | | Review in 2007/2008 |
| 7.3 OT Support | Consider an increase in the budget for Disabled Facilities Grants. | Consider increase in 2006/2007 budget. | Housing Services. | | Increase to be considered as part of budget process. |
| 7.4 Disabled Facilities Grants. | Reduce waiting times for Disabled Facilities Grants. | To continually review waiting times fan customer feedback. | Housing Services. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 7.5 Cross Authority Liaison. | Investigate the feasibility of a cross authority protocol for housing disabled people. | To commence operation by Spring 2008. | Housing Services. | | Funded from existing budgets. |
| 7.6 Housing Stock. | Seek to develop policies on lifetime homes and wheelchair accessible housing. | To commence in 2006/2007. | Housing Services. | | Funded from existing budgets. |

Appendix 2 Review of Policies and Functions (as relevant to General Duty)

| Function/ Policy | Relevant to promoting equality of opportunity between disabled and non disabled people | Relevant to eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment | Does the policy or services take into account peoples disabilities | Relevant assessment priority High / Med / Low | Timescale for review |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| Arts | Y | N | Y | L | Yr 1 |
| Building Control | Y | N | Y | L | Yr 3 |
| Change and Development | Y | N | Y | L | Yr 2 |
| Communication and Civic | Y | Y | Y | H | Yr 1 |
| Countryside and Recreation | Y | N | Y | H | Yr 1 |
| Development Control | Y | N | Y | M | Yr 3 |
| Direct Services | Y | N | Y | L | Yr 1 |
| Economic Development | Y | Y | Y | M | Yr 2 |
| Engineering | Y | N | Y | L | Yr 1 |
| Environmental Health | Y | N | Y | M | Yr 1 |
| Housing Services | Y | Y | Y | H | Yr 1 |
| Human Resources | Y | Y | Y | H | Yr 3 |
| IT Services | Y | Y | Y | L | Yr 3 |
| Key Initiatives | Y | Y | Y | H | Yr 2 |
| Legal & Democratic Services | Y | Y | Y | M | Yr 2 |
| Planning Policy & Design | Y | N | Y | L | Yr 3 |
| Property Services | Y | N | Y | L | Yr 1 |
| Revenue & Benefits | Y | N | Y | M | Yr 2 |

Key

Yr 1 2007/2008

Yr 2 2008/2009

Yr 3 2009/2010