



# RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

August 2005

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000) places a general duty on a wide range of public authorities, (including District Councils) to promote race equality. This duty means that, in everything they do they should have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.

Some time ago Kennet District Council established an (officer) Equalities Steering Group to do the necessary work and research to ensure that the Council was able to progress through the various stages of the CRE Race Equality Standard with the help of the Wiltshire Racial Equality Council. With the support of elected Members and through the commitment of all the staff concerned the Council has reached level three of the CRE standard.

**The Council is committed to progressing this work as part of a new "Equality Standard for Local Government" which embraces racial equality issues and addresses wider anti-discrimination issues.**

## 2 RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

The Commission for Racial Equality has published a draft '*Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality*', and under that Code the Council had to produce a Race Equality Scheme by 31 May 2002. That was done, and this is the third updated version of the Scheme.

"A Race Equality Scheme shall state, in particular -

- (a) those of its functions and policies, or proposed policies, which that person has assessed as relevant to its performance of the duty imposed by section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act; and
- (b) that person's arrangements for -
  1. assessing and consulting on the likely impact of its proposed policies on the promotion of race equality;
  2. monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality;
  3. publishing the results of such assessments and consultations as are mentioned in sub-paragraph (1.) and of such monitoring as is mentioned in sub-paragraph (2.);
  4. ensuring public access to information and services which it provides; and
  5. training staff in connection with the duties imposed by section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act."

**This Race Equality Scheme has been prepared in the light of the guidance from the Commission for Racial Equality.**

### **3 RACE EQUALITY STRATEGIC AIMS**

Kennet District Council is committed to fulfilling its duties under the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 in the performance of all its functions, duties and powers.

The Council has adopted a '*Corporate Policy on Equality*' that is reproduced in full as Appendix A to this Race Equality Scheme. The corporate policy identifies those who are accountable for ensuring that the policy is carried out, i.e. the Council's Resources Executive Committee, the Equalities Steering Group and individual Service Managers.

### **4 SPECIFIC AIMS FOR MEETING THE GENERAL DUTY FOR RACE EQUALITY**

The Authority is committed to meeting its obligations under the general duty and in order to do this aims to:

- incorporate race equality aims and objectives into all strategies and plans;
- make race equality central to the day-to-day operations of the Council;
- ensure that the Authority reflects the diverse community that it serves;
- work with the Wiltshire Race Equality Council to achieve our aims;
- utilise existing (and where appropriate create new) policies and procedures to prevent racial discrimination and to promote good race relations and equality of opportunity.

### **5 OUR RACE EQUALITY VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS, AND HOW WE WILL MEET THE SPECIFIC RACIAL EQUALITY DUTIES**

The Council's values, principles and standards with regard to race equality are set out in its '*Corporate Policy on Equality*' at Appendix A under the seven race equality objectives identified in the CRE Race Equality Standard, namely:

1. Leadership and Corporate Commitment. The Council will ensure that racial discrimination is challenged and addressed in all its activities.
2. Service Delivery and Customer Care. The Council is committed to delivering quality services designed to meet the needs of all those in its communities ensuring that they are delivered without prejudice and discrimination.
3. Consultation and Community Development and Scrutiny. The Council recognises and values the importance of engaging and working in consultation with all parts of the community, staff and stakeholder groups. It will work towards developing and strengthening all such communities with a view to enhancing quality of life and choice.

4. Employment and Training. The Council will develop employment strategies designed to ensure that discriminatory practices in recruitment, selection and employment do not take place. Strategies will be developed to ensure the full potential of all its employees is developed.
5. Marketing and Public Image. The Council will adopt good practice and also engage with other key agencies in the promotion of equality. To help achieve this goal the Council will; ensure that all potential, new and existing staff are aware of the Council's position on equality; seek out best practice wherever it may be found; and publicise its commitment to equality amongst its partner organisations and the public generally.
6. Harassment. In acknowledging the importance of the elimination of harassment, it will seek to pursue policies designed to address the elimination of harassment both within the Council and within its wider community. Staff disciplinary and grievance procedures, and indeed external complaints procedures, will emphasise the Council's intolerance of harassment on any grounds.
7. Monitoring and Review of Policy. The Council will implement procedures to monitor the implementation of its Corporate Policy on Equality and subject the policy to periodic review.

The Authority has assessed which of the Authority's functions are 'relevant' to the general duty as follows:

- All the Main functions have been listed, including statutory and non-statutory functions.
- The identified functions have been subject to a top-level review to ascertain whether or not the work and policies involve or affect members of the public in any way.
- Information from the public and employees, such as complaints, has been examined to identify whether any functions or policies are affecting racial groups differently, or whether they are regarded as discriminatory.
- Functions have also been examined to investigate opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations more effectively.

The relevant main functions were prioritised on the basis of their impact on the general duty. The impact was assessed on a scoring grid designed to reflect the above assessment process and produce self-evident priority areas as set out in the scoring grids. A copy of the assessment grids and priority identification is set out for all services at Appendix B to this Race Equality Scheme. The relevance of individual service areas has been re-examined during June and July 2005 as part of a general review of arrangements for monitoring, (See Section 9 below).

However, the assessment of relevance to the general duty, whilst useful, does not mean that where services are seen as being less relevant that no action will take place in those areas. On the contrary, every one of the Council's service areas has a '*Racial Equalities Action Plan*'. The action plans are divided into main headings which follow the heading enumerated above in the Council's '*Corporate Policy on Equality*'. This is because the Council feels that all service areas should play a part in this important aspect of the Council's work. This is also in accordance with the Commission for Racial Equalities standards.

## **6 ACTION PLAN AND TIMETABLE, AND REVIEW OF PLANS**

The Council's '*Corporate Policy on Equality*' sets out the corporate action points. As noted above, each Service Area also has a detailed action plan which sets out who is to carry out the actions, when, the resources required, measures of completion, and targets. Those action plans have been approved by the Resources Executive Committee and progress on the corporate and service action plans have to be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board each year.

For each service area the senior management team for each area will monitor progress against action plans. In addition, as an audit function, the Council's Equalities Steering Group will continue to monitor progress against action plans at its monthly meetings. The Steering Group will prepare the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board each year and, in conjunction with the Service Managers, make recommendations for amendments to plans and targets.

This '*Race Equality Scheme*' will be kept under review and amended as necessary to reflect changes arising from the review of action plans and timetables described above.

## **7 RACE EQUALITY TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Council is subject to a number of national, statutory performance indicators.

Target BV2a. The level of the 'Equality Standards for Local Government' to which the authority conforms. The target for 2004/05 was to achieve level 3 and this was achieved, placing the council firmly in the upper quartile for this performance target. The target for 2005/06 is to consolidate level 3.

Target BV11b. The percentage of top 5% earners from black and minority ethnic communities. The target for 2004/05 was 5.56% and 5.0% was achieved. The target for 2005/06 is 5.0%.

Target BV17a. Percentage of minority ethnic community employees. The Council's target for 2004/05 was 2.24% and actual was 1.97%. The target for 2005/06 is 1.97%.

Target BV17b. Percentage of economically active ethnic community people in the authority area. The target for 2004/05 was 1.4% which was achieved. The target for 2005/06 is again set at 1.4%.

Target BV17X (TargetBV17a divided by Target BV17b). Ratio of KDC employees to local ethnic minority population. The target for 2004/05 was 160%, and the actual achieved 140.71%. The target for 2005/06 is 140.71%.

Target BV174. The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population. The target for 2004/05 was 1; actual was 5.38 and the target for 2005/06 is 5.38.

Target BV175. The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action to be reported. The target for 2004/05 was 100% and this was achieved. The target for 2005/06 is set at 100%.

In order to ensure compliance with targets BV174 and BV 175 as above the Council has introduced a procedure as set out at Appendix C to this '*Race Equality Scheme*'.

As noted in part 6 of this *Race Equality Scheme*, there are, in addition to the national performance targets a range of targets at Service Area level contained within the detailed service area action plans.

## **8 HOW WE DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS**

The Council has a formal complaints procedure. This is sent to complainants, and contains the following extract:

***Racial Equalities Policies:*** *If your complaint concerns racial equality the Council has formally adopted a corporate Policy on Racial Equality, a copy of which is attached.*

The Council is Committed to developing strategies and implementing policies for promoting cultural diversity through racial equality measures based upon it's adoption of the Commission for Racial Equality's Standards. The Council, in adopting such policies will ensure that they are well publicised and accessible ensuring that its Service Unit Action Plans are targeted to achieve the eight race equality objectives listed in the policy.

The policy applies to elected Members and every Member of Staff employed by the Council and is applicable for all Members of the public. Complaints about Racial Equalities matters will be pursued vigorously by the Council.

## **9 MONITORING POLICIES**

Monitoring functions and policies enables the Council to assess how they are affecting different racial groups or whether they are having an adverse impact. Service areas will test, where relevant:

- levels of participation;
- level of satisfaction;
- how effectively the service is delivered to different communities;
- how services are provided, i.e. appropriateness.

In order to monitor effectively the Council will use the following methods, as appropriate:

- measuring the level of use of services;
- measuring outcomes as between different racial groups, ( e.g. in respect of enforcement action);
- satisfaction surveys;
- data on complaints;
- discussion groups and meetings;

If the monitoring identifies that a policy has or is likely to have an adverse impact on a minority ethnic group then the Service Manager responsible for that service or policy will consider how best to eliminate this effect.

The Council has much evidence of good practice in monitoring in many services, with procedures having been introduced and developed over several years. This good practice has now been reinforced by an "Equalities Monitoring – Policy and Practice Guide" which is reproduced as Appendix E to this Scheme.

During June and July 2005 the arrangements for equalities monitoring for each service area were reviewed, recorded, and used to help disseminate best practice across the organisation.

## **10 ASSESSING AND CONSULTING ON NEW POLICIES, AND PUBLISHING THE RESULTS OF CONSULTATION**

In order to build race equality into the policy making process the Council will assess and consult on, where practicable, the likely effects of policies before they are introduced. New policies will aim to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations.

The Council has a Consultation Strategy; the relevant extracts for the purpose of this Race Equality Scheme are as follows:

### **"Introduction**

Kennet District Council is committed to making evidence based decisions that take into account the views and experiences of all those affected by them. We are dedicated to engaging with all sectors of the community and ensuring that everyone has an equal chance to have their say."



### **"Objectives**

To support a process of informed, open, honest and transparent decision-making.  
To support the Community Planning process.

To raise the standard of consultation that takes place throughout the Council.

To enable the Council to communicate with all sectors of the community, regardless of age, gender, sex, race, religion, disability."

### **"Roles and Responsibilities**

Service Managers are responsible for ensuring that all Council employees understand and apply the consultation process outlined in this strategy. Service Managers must ensure that staff consult with stakeholders when making key service and policy making decisions."

### **"Methodology**

Ensure that those consulted promptly receive feedback about actions that have taken place as a result of the consultation. This feedback must be given in a format suitable for those who have taken part in the consultation."

### **"Equalities**

All staff must consider equalities issues when undertaking consultation. All people should be considered when making Council decisions, regardless of their race, sex, religion, age, sexuality or disability."

In addition advice is given on possible barriers to consultation, and how to overcome them. This advice is reproduced as Appendix D to this Race Equality Scheme.

The Consultation Strategy demands that feedback is provided to those who take part in a consultation process. In addition the Council will produce a written report on every consultation exercise as part of the consultation recording system, and these reports will be available to anyone who requests them. Summaries of the consultation reports will also appear within the annual Best Value Performance Plan.

When the Council and its committees are considering new policies, strategies and service delivery plans, any relevant consultation, including that with minority ethnic groups, will be brought to their attention.

As regards the Race Equality Scheme, the original version in May 2002 was the subject to consultation with, and assessment by, the Wiltshire Race Equality Council, as is the case with the Council's *'Corporate Policy on Equality'* and service area race equality action plans. This revised Race Equality Scheme will be subject to the same process.

## **11 TRAINING STAFF**

All staff have had basic racial equality awareness training, and a programme of training for all staff in the Council's general and specific statutory duties is ongoing.

The subject of equalities now forms part of the Council's formal induction process for all new staff.

The Council's Intranet is used to convey all relevant aspects of race equality policies and procedures.

## **12 EMPLOYMENT**

The Council currently monitors the following by racial group:

- staff in post;
- applicants for employment;
- leavers;
- applicants for training;
- applicants for promotion;
- staff receiving training;
- staff involved in grievance procedures;
- staff who are the subject of disciplinary procedures.

The above monitoring information is reported annually to the Council's Human Resources Committee. The next report will be considered at its meeting on 15 September 2004.

## **13 HOW WE WILL TELL THE PUBLIC ABOUT OUR RACE EQUALITY PROGRESS**

All the Council's policies on racial equality require reports to elected members, and those reports will be heard in meetings open to the public and press.

Performance against national and local performance indicators are published in the Council's *'Best Value Performance Plan'*.

The Council's in-house magazine will carry information on progress made and examples of good practice.

Press releases will be made, and the Council's Internet site used to provide information to the public in this area.

The Council's consultation strategy requires feedback to be given to the participants on the outcomes of consultation.

## **KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **CORPORATE POLICY ON EQUALITY**

The Council is committed to developing strategies and implementing policies for promoting cultural diversity through equality measures based upon its adoption of the Equality Standard for Local Government. The Council in adopting such policies will ensure that they are well publicised and accessible, and that its Service Unit Action Plans are targeted to achieve the equality objectives listed below. All such policies are/will be in line with current legislation (Race Relations Act and Race Relations (Amendment) Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Equal Pay Act, Disability Discrimination Act) and Codes of Practice issued by the three equality commissions.

This policy applies to elected members and every member of staff employed by the Council, and is applicable for all members of the public. The duty of accountability for ensuring the policy is carried out lies with the Council's Resources Policy Committee and implemented through the Equalities Steering Group and individual Service Managers.

The District Council has already made a funding commitment to the voluntary sector and will continue to support ethnic minority groups through the Wiltshire Racial Equality Council and, where appropriate, other diverse groups in the future. This commitment will be supported by staff resources including a team of officers charged with addressing equalities (over and above their normal duties). Where additional resources are needed to address issues these will be sought through the service delivery process.

#### **1. Leadership and Corporate Commitment**

**The Council will ensure that all forms of discrimination are challenged and addressed in all its activities.**

- a) The Council believes that its role in promoting cultural diversity is that of openly working towards the elimination of discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different groups.
- b) Kennet District Council has adopted and will use the working definitions of the Macpherson report, as adapted, for:

*Discrimination: 'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, ethnic origin, gender or disability. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping which disadvantage people.'*

A discriminatory incident: *'Any incident which is perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person.'*

- c) The Council will actively strive to challenge discrimination through reviewing its processes, attitudes and behaviour. Staff training programmes will be developed and implemented which will seek to challenge discrimination.
- d) The Council will use record keeping and monitoring information, in relation to all forms of discrimination, in its Policy and Planning decision making process.
- e) Kennet District Council will incorporate and monitor equalities targets as part of processes such as Best Value Service Reviews, Performance Plans, and external contracts.

### **Race**

- f) The Council will work to a broad definition of black and minority ethnic groups that include diversity groups such as gypsies and travellers.
- g) In addressing the issue of institutional racism the Council will adopt an approach of taking into account the cultural differences of individuals.

### **Gender**

- h) The Council will work within the provisions and codes of practice issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

### **Disability**

- i) The Council will work within the definition of disability given by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, namely

*A person has a disability if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*

## **2. Service Delivery and Customer Care**

**The Council is committed to delivering quality services designed to meet the needs of all those in its communities ensuring that they are delivered without prejudice and discrimination.**

- a) Kennet District Council will incorporate equality principles into its communication and consultation strategies, and mechanisms for assessing community needs. It acknowledges that a quality service cannot be achieved unless it reaches all those to whom it is relevant in the community.

- b) Individual service areas will adopt the Codes of Practice relevant to that particular service delivery in relation to equalities issues.
- c) Each service area will produce an equality policy that is relevant to that service. Actions required arising from this work, including the allocation of resources, will be incorporated into Service Development Action Plans.
- d) Groups within the community whose needs/requirements are less well met by council services than those of other groups will be identified through impact and needs/requirements assessments.
- e) There will be a commitment to community profiling, monitoring of service usage, equality action planning and equality target setting within all departments and service areas. Individual service areas will undertake to compare community profiles with service user profiles, by keeping appropriate records and monitoring service usage, reviewing its methodology, analysis and reporting mechanisms.
- f) Each service area will review its policies and the outcome of these to examine the levels of potential or actual discrimination, disadvantage and harassment. In undertaking this work examples of best practice will be investigated and adopted where applicable.

### **3. Consultation and Community Development and Scrutiny**

**The Council recognises and values the importance of engaging and working in consultation with all parts of the community, staff and stakeholder groups. It will work towards developing and strengthening all such communities with a view to enhancing quality of life and choice.**

- a) The District Council will support the development of strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident communities free from unlawful discrimination.
- b) All community area planning, community strategies and corporate planning (i.e. the Four Year Strategy, Best Value Performance Plans and Annual Reports) will reflect the needs and views of, and work with, all members of the community but especially ethnic minority communities and disabled groups.
- c) All community development work (particularly that of the Community Services Directorate) will embrace minority communities within the District. Specific Service Plans/Policies will reflect the detailed implementation.
- d) The Council will actively seek to consult and liaise with diverse local communities and will ensure that this is an integral part of the Council's Consultation Strategy.

#### 4. Employment and Training

**The Council will develop employment strategies designed to ensure that discriminatory practices in recruitment, selection and employment do not take place. Policies and strategies will be developed to ensure the full potential of all its employees is realised.**

- a) In pursuing this aim the Council will adopt and subscribe to the various equalities codes of practice and will also apply best practice techniques as advanced by other agencies, e.g. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- b) In recruitment advertising, the Council will advertise in the appropriate media to ensure that it targets its audience to get the best available talent.
- c) The Council will promote its commitment to equal opportunities in staff advertisements and job packs, emphasising that the Council will welcome job applications from all, regardless of gender, ethnicity and disability etc.
- d) Kennet will acknowledge that recruitment and selection decisions should be based upon objective, measurable and reasonable selection criteria. It will develop policies and action plans designed to ensure this happens, e.g. the universal application of up to date job descriptions, person specifications and assessment-centred selection approaches.
- e) The Council will systematically review and develop training programmes for staff to both raise awareness of equalities issues and equip managers to make selection decisions for external recruitment and promotion based upon objective, measurable and reasonable criteria.
- f) The Council will continue to maintain and develop existing equality monitoring arrangements and take appropriate action as a result of its findings.
- g) The Council will monitor its Employee Development Review process to ensure that training and development opportunities continue to be open to all employees and will not be influenced by factors such as race, sex, age, etc.
- h) The Council will endeavour to prevent bullying and harassment ensuring that such episodes that may occur are dealt with within the existing disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- i) The Council will ensure that it uses an objective evaluation framework to ensure employees are rewarded fairly and equitably.

## 5. Marketing and Public Image

**The Council will adopt good practice and also engage with other key agencies in the promotion of equality. To help achieve this goal the Council will; ensure that all potential, new and existing staff are aware of the Council's position on equality; seek out best practice wherever it may be found; and publicise its commitment to equality amongst its partner organisations and the public generally.**

- a) All staff, applicants and new recruits are provided with copies of the authority's equality policy statement.
- b) The Council's corporate policy on equality will be communicated through the medium of 'Kennet News' and through press releases to local media and/or by advertisement in the local media and the Internet.
- c) The Council's commitment to equality in employment and in service delivery will be reinforced in staff induction programmes for new staff.
- d) Translation facilities (including Braille and audiotapes) in respect of any key documents provided to the public will be offered where available. This would include such documents as the annual summary Best Value Performance Plan, Council Tax leaflet etc.
- e) The Council will share good practice via the Equalities Steering Group, 'Kennet News' and the Council's Intranet.
- f) The Council will publicise its commitment to equality amongst its partner organisations, contractors, agents and suppliers making it clear that the Council expects the people with whom it enjoys a formal relationship to also adhere to the spirit of the Council's equality policies.
- g) Promotional material published by the Council will more accurately reflect the diverse nature of the District.
- h) Include, as a regular item on departmental team meetings, the issue of equalities. This is with a view to developing specific action plans for each service designed to further the corporate equality policies and objectives of the Council at service level. Progress made against action plans will be monitored at team meetings.
- i) Best Value Fundamental Service Reviews will specifically address equalities issues.

## 6. Harassment.

**In acknowledging the importance of the elimination of harassment, it will seek to pursue policies designed to address the elimination of harassment both within the Council and within its wider community. Staff disciplinary and grievance procedures, and indeed external complaints procedures, will emphasise the Council's intolerance of harassment on any grounds.**

- a) The Council's disciplinary procedures will continue to identify all forms of harassment as a disciplinary issue.
- b) The Council's grievance procedures will clearly identify harassment as a matter that can properly be the subject of a grievance. Where a grievance is justified, then action will be taken under the Council's disciplinary procedures.
- c) The Code of Conduct will be reviewed together with the associated 'whistle blowing' policy to ensure that racial harassment issues are properly addressed, and that harassment is clearly identified as being unacceptable and should be the subject of whistle blowing.
- d) The Council's complaints' procedure makes it clear that instances of harassment or inequality in the delivery of services should be a subject of complaint to the Council. Any complaints are dealt with in the same way as any other form of complaint to the Council.
- e) Maintain records and publish statistics and de-personalised examples of complaints and incidents received, the outcomes and action taken, to ensure that lessons are learnt.

### Race

- f) The Council will continue to work with its Community Safety Partners to ensure that reporting of racial harassment incidents should be encouraged and should be channelled to the relevant organisation(s) by means of a pre-determined protocol/procedure.

## 7. Monitoring and Review of Policy.

**The Council will implement procedures to monitor the implementation of its Corporate Policy on Equality and subject the Policy to periodic review.**

In addition, the Council will, through the Equalities Steering Group:

- a) Determine target dates for implementing the action points under each main policy statement and monitor progress against targets through the medium of the officer Equalities Steering Group.



- b) Require the Equalities Steering Group to report progress against current targets to the Resources Policy Committee. That report will also make proposals to amend the policy where appropriate in the light of experience. It will also propose new action designed to improve the Council's racial equality performance with target dates for completion.
- c) Use surveys to assess the impact of the policy on the awareness of the Council's staff and others of equality issues.
- d) Consult relevant organisations on current policies and what actions could usefully be taken to ensure that the policies are implemented effectively.

## ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANCE TO THE GENERAL DUTY TO PROMOTE RACE EQUALITY - METHODOLOGY

### Public authorities must publish a R.E.S which:

- states the functions and policies they have assessed as being relevant to the general duty to promote race equality; and
- sets out their arrangements for meeting the duty by:
  - ☆ monitoring their policies for any adverse impact on race equality;
  - ☆ assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policy;
  - ☆ publishing the results of their assessments, consultation and monitoring;
  - ☆ making sure that the public have access to information and services; and
  - ☆ training their staff on the general duty.

The general duty says that public authorities must:

- tackle racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good race relations.

What public authorities need to do:

1. Identify which functions are relevant to race equality
2. Prioritise these functions
3. Assess all relevant functions and policies for their impact on race equality
4. Consider and make changes to your policies, if necessary, to meet the general duty

The R.E.S. must set out which of the current and proposed functions and policies are relevant to the general duty to promote race equality.

To meet this duty, you will need to:

- list all your functions and policies;
- decide how you will assess whether a function or policy is relevant; set up a procedure for assessing all policies for their relevance to the general duty and give them an authority based on this assessment;
- set up a procedure for regularly reviewing the relevance of the functions and policies to the general duty; and
- set out the arrangement in the R.E.S. and put them in to practice.

How will we know if a function is relevant to the general duty?

- the basic question is: ‘ How does this function affect different racial groups in the community we serve?’
- for each function you should ask yourself the following questions:
  - which of the three parts of the general duty – eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good race relations – is relevant to this function?
  - is there any reason to believe that people from some racial groups are being, or could be, adversely affected by this function?

**How should we decide how relevant a function is?**

- To decide how relevant functions are, you should ask two questions:
  - how much evidence do you have – none, a little, some or a lot (for example, from research, consultation, complaints or ethnic monitoring)?
  - Is there public concern that certain functions are discriminatory or racist?

**ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANCE TO THE GENERAL DUTY TO PROMOTE RACE  
EQUALITY - RESULTS**

a	Which of the three aspects does it relate to: 1 = eliminating discrimination, 2 = promoting EOP, 3 = promoting good race relations.
b	Is there evidence or reason to believe some racial groups could be differently affected? Which racial groups?
c	How much evidence do you have? 0 = none, 1 = a little, 2 = some, 3 = a lot.
d	Is there any public concern that functions/policies are being operated in a discriminatory manner? 0 = none, 1 = a little, 2 = some, 3 = a lot.

**Finance Services**

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
<b>Council Tax/NNDR</b>				
Billing	1	No	0	0
Collection	1	No	0	0
Recovery	1	No	0	0
<b>Cashiers</b>				
Cashiering	-	-	-	-
<b>Corporate Finance</b>				
Accountancy	-	-	-	-
Audit	-	-	-	-
Exchequer	-	-	-	-
Creditors	-	-	-	-
Debtors	-	-	-	-
<b>Benefits</b>				
Claims	1 & 2	Yes – access to info etc	1	0
Disc Housing Payments	1 & 2	As above	1	0
Overpayment recovery	1	No	0	0
Home visits	1 & 2	As above	1	0
Fraud Investigations	1	No	1	0

(Survey completed by only 5 persons from ethnic groups)

**Housing**

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
Housing Enabling	2, 3	Design important for some cultural/religious groups	1	0
Housing Needs	1,2,3	Yes. Some evidence nationally that BME population disadvantaged by systems	2 (ethnic monitoring)	0
Partnership Working (on housing etc)	1,2,3	Some health problems disproportionately affect ethnic minorities	0	0

		Racial harassment may occur	2	0
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### Legal and Democratic Services

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
Local Land Charges	-			
Office Administration	-			
Conveyancing	-			
Advocacy	-			
Debt Recovery	-			
Legal Agreements	-			
Legal Advice	-			
Committee Servicing	-			
Elections	-			
Electoral Registration	-			
Boundary Reviews	-			
Procedural Advice	-			
Street Closures	-			
Twinning Administration	-			

- = not relevant

### Human Resources

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
Recruitment and Resourcing	Very relevant 1,2,3	Application forms show name and this could lead to discrimination.	0	0
Training and Development	Relevant 2,3	No	0	0
Employee Relations	Relevant 1,2,3	No	0	0
Health and Safety	Relevant 3	No	0	0

## Information Services

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
<b>Business Unit</b>				
Business	-			
Software	-			
Web Development	1,2,3	No	0	0
<b>Admin &amp; Procurement</b>				
Procurement	-			
Administration	-			
<b>Infrastructure</b>				
Infrastructure	-			
<b>Desktop Support</b>				
Desktop Support	-			
Training	-			
<b>Tourism</b>				
Promotion	2,3	Non-English speakers	1	1
Policy & Management	1	No	0	0
<b>Tourist Information Centres</b>				
Accommodation Bookings	2	No	0	0
Accommodation Registration	1,2,3	No	0	0
Tourist Information	2,3	Non-English speakers	1	1
General Information	2,3	Non-English speakers	1	1

- = not relevant

## Planning Services

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
<b>Development Control</b>				
Planning Applications	1			
Appeals	1			
Enforcement	1			
Admin	-			

**APPENDIX B**

<b>Building Control</b>				
Building Regulations applications	1			
Administration	-			
<b>Conservation</b>				
Advice on applications for Listed Building Consent	-			
Applications for works to trees	1			
Public advice	-			
<b>Forward Planning</b>				
Statistics and research	-			
Preparation of policy	-			

- = not relevant

**Environment and Amenity Services**

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
<b>Support Services</b>				
Procurement	-			
Administration	-			
<b>Works Section</b>				
Drainage	-			
Grounds Maintenance	-			
General Gang	-			
<b>Cleansing</b>				
Waste and Recycling	1,2,3	No		
Street Sweeping	-			
Public Conveniences	-			
<b>Design/Parking and Markets</b>				
Engineering Design	-			
Parking	1,2,3	No	0	0
Markets	1,2,3	No	0	0

- = not relevant

**Policy Support Services**

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
<b>Policy Unit</b>				
Corporate Policy guidance and advice	1,2,3	Very little	0	0
Best Value	1,2,3	Very little	1	0
Consultation Development	1,2,3	Very little	1	0
Performance Management	1,2,3	Very little	1	0
Community Planning	1,2,3	Very little	1	0

**APPENDIX B**

<b>Community Development</b>				
Market Town Regeneration	1,2,3	No	0	0
Rural Economic Regeneration	1,2,3	No	0	0
Community Planning	1,2,3	No	0	0



## Leisure Services

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
Arts Development	Very relevant 1,2,3	Offers good opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity.	None	None
Leisure Development	Relevant 1, 2, 3	Experience elsewhere noted from CRE Leisure Services Code of Practice	None	None
Leisure Centres	Relevant 1, 2, 3	Experience elsewhere noted from CRE Leisure Services Code of Practice	None	None
Grants	Relevant 1, 2, 3	None	None	None

## Environmental &amp; Protection Services

Function	Is it relevant to the general duty?		What is the degree of relevance?	
	a	b	c	d
<b>Housing and Pollution</b>	1,2,3	No	0	0
Animal Welfare				
Housing Grants				
Pest Control				
Noise Nuisance				
Pollution				
Water Supplies				
Environmental Protection				
Contaminated Land				
Affordable Warmth				
Energy Conservation				
<b>Food and Health Safety</b>	1,2,3	No	0	0
Food Safety				
Health Education Training				
Health and Safety at Work				
Infectious Disease Control				
Health Promotion				
<b>Administration</b>	-			
<b>Community Safety</b>	1,2,3	No	0	0
<b>Community Health</b>	1,2,3	No	0	0

- = not relevant



## PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ON RACIAL INCIDENTS BV 174 AND BV 175

The Authority is required to report on the number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population (BV 174). "Racial Incidents" are any incidents regarded as such by the victim or anyone else. The indicator applies to all an authority's services including employment by the authority.

There is a further indicator (BV 175) requiring the percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action to be reported. Subsequent action must be recorded in writing and would entail such things as:

- i) detailed investigations e.g. interviews with alleged perpetrator(s)
- ii) referral to the police or other body (CRE, Cab etc.)
- iii) mediation
- iv) warning to the perpetrator which if oral must be recorded at the time
- v) relocation of the victim
- vi) removal of graffiti.

The following procedure has been drawn up to ensure that data is collected from every service of the Council and collated centrally.

1. **Every individual department is responsible for collecting information on racial incidents occurring within their service. Each department will appoint an Equal Opportunities Representative, who will collate and report on racial incidents to the Equalities Steering Group on a quarterly basis at the Group's January, April, July and October meetings. The name of the EOR is to be notified to the Equalities Monitoring Officer.**
2. **Each department will use two types of forms:**
  - a. **The Racial Incident Log**
  - b. **The Racial Incidents Record**

**The Racial Incidents Log will record in detail any racial incident that is deemed to have occurred with reference to the above definitions. This will be kept for internal Service records by the EOR. The EOR is to notify their Line Manager and/or Service Manager of such an event as soon as possible. The EOR is also responsible for ensuring that any racial incident is also noted on the Racial Incidents Record to be passed immediately to the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Officer in Human Resources.**

**The Service Manager is responsible for ensuring that any appropriate action is taken. In the event of his/her absence this duty falls to the Line Manager. Likewise, the Service Manager or Line Manager is responsible for checking that the EOR has sent the Racial Incidents Record to Human Resources.**

- 3. The Community Safety Officer will collect data on racial incidents reported directly via the Victim Support leaflet.**
- 4. Human Resources would collate data on any issues relating to employment.**
- 5. The Press and Public Relations Officer will collect details of any racial incidents reported through the Council's complaints' procedure, recently modified to identify these.**
- 6. All incidents will be reported to the Equalities Steering Group and an overall figure compiled by the Human Resources Section as part of their reported performance indicators. This will form a standard item for the agenda for meetings of the Equalities Steering Group. Human Resources are not responsible for compiling the initial figures, but for collating them together into one set of figures for the Policy Unit.**
- 7. The Equalities Steering Group will report performance annually to the Resources Policy Committee.**

## APPENDIX D

### CONSULTATION - OVERCOMING BARRIERS FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

<b>Rural communities</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use local buildings as a venue</li> <li>• Consider providing transport</li> <li>• Attend local community events</li> <li>• Tap into networks established by other Services (e.g. Leisure's LinC scheme)</li> </ul>
<b>People with disabilities and special needs</b>	
People who are deaf and hard of hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish specific groups</li> <li>• Consider the use of portable loops</li> <li>• Use private rooms for one to one discussion</li> <li>• Use sign language interpreters</li> <li>• Use well lit, visually and acoustically quiet areas</li> <li>• Consider training for staff in deaf awareness and communication methods</li> </ul>
The visually impaired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish specific groups</li> <li>• Link into existing representative groups such as the RNIB</li> <li>• Contact the Policy Unit to provide literature on audio tape or Braille</li> <li>• Develop links with the local talking newspaper</li> </ul>
People with physical disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go direct to the people concerned</li> <li>• Use appropriate access and facilities to and within buildings</li> <li>• Provide special transport</li> </ul>
People with learning disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link with established groups via social services or the health authority</li> </ul>
People with low literacy levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the use of drawings, cartoons, audio and video cassettes and local radio</li> </ul>
<b>Women facing barriers deriving from child care, other caring commitments or access to transport</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the timing of meetings - during school time or after children's bed time</li> <li>• Provision of crèches or baby sitting expenses</li> <li>• Use shopping centres</li> <li>• Use established women's groups</li> </ul>

## CONSULTATION - OVERCOMING BARRIERS FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

<b>People from ethnic groups</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Translate literature into different languages</li><li>• Set up specific focus groups for specific ethnic minorities/languages, run by people from the same ethnic group/language</li><li>• Recruit participants through members of the ethnic community and existing contacts or through word of mouth and outreach work</li><li>• Talk to different ethnic groups about how best to consult with them!</li></ul>
<b>Young people</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop links with the County Youth Service and schools</li><li>• Set up youth forums, student councils</li><li>• Use Tomorrow's Voice</li><li>• Set up specific focus groups, heavily publicised in schools and other places where young people go. Ensure people who know how to communicate with young people run them.</li></ul>

**APPENDIX E**

**KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**EQUALITIES MONITORING**

**POLICY AND PRACTICE GUIDE**

**March 2005**

## **Introduction**

The Council is committed to developing strategies and implementing policies for promoting cultural diversity through equality measures based upon its adoption of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

The Council's 'Corporate Policy on Equality' relates to the statutory obligations placed upon it by the Race Relations Act and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, and the Disability Discrimination Act

The Council's 'Corporate Policy on Equality' promotes the practice of equalities monitoring in the following terms:

“There will be a commitment to community profiling, monitoring of service usage, equality action planning and equality target setting within all departments and service areas. Individual service areas will undertake to compare community profiles with service user profiles, by keeping appropriate records and monitoring service usage, reviewing its methodology, analysis and reporting mechanisms.”

Community profiles can be derived from the 2001 Census. Summary profile material is given at Appendix A. Profiles at Parish and Community Area level can be derived for the Census reports on the Open Directory under the heading of Census.

## **Why Equalities Monitoring is Important**

The initial aim of equalities monitoring is to give an indication of the extent to which the Council provides a fair and equal service to all citizens. This is particularly important for service delivery; if you cannot demonstrate that you are meeting the needs of all of your clients, you are not providing the optimum service.

Equality does not mean providing the same service for all your clients or treating them all in the same way. It is about adapting the service, when and where appropriate, to meet the needs of diverse groups of people. If the Council does not know who its customers are, it will not know whether, for example, women, minority ethnic people, older people or the disabled are using the service equally or at all.

Equalities monitoring enables the Council to assess if a service is discriminating against certain groups and whether people are getting what they want and need. It is a means of ensuring high-quality, appropriate services.

## **What is Equalities Monitoring?**

Equalities monitoring is not a bureaucratic data gathering exercise. The reason for gathering information on service users is so that the Council can; analyse the use and experience of service delivery by different groups; take necessary and appropriate action to improve services for particular groups. Data alone will not explain why a service is under or over used. However, it will provide a starting point for asking questions and highlighting issues. It is the analysis and interpretation of these issues that will lead to a more detailed overall picture of the service and how it works. In short, gathering equalities data is merely equalities record keeping. Interpreting the data and taking action is effective equalities monitoring.

## **What Equalities Monitoring Can Reveal**

Equalities monitoring can:

- Show the numbers of particular groups using the service and what outcomes they experience
- Show over or under-use of a service by a particular group



- Reveal discrimination or demonstrate that services are not discriminatory
- Measure the effectiveness of service changes
- Identify the need for new or changed services.

### **Monitoring Guidance**

Appendix B to the policy sets out guidance on equalities monitoring in practice. Appendix B will also be attached to the Council's Communications Strategy, and is a companion document to the Council's Race Equality Scheme.

### **Workforce Monitoring**

The Council carries out extensive workforce monitoring as an integral part of its Human Resources practices and procedures.

Through workforce monitoring the Council can check that personnel practices are fair to all groups. It also indicates whether or not the Council is recruiting a diverse workforce that is representative of the community that it serves; and identify and address any obstacles to equality of opportunity that could be unlawful. In particular, it can help the Council to check that our equal opportunities policies are effective.

Monitoring of our workforce can help the Council to collect information about whether:

- there are differences in the pay rates of different groups
- the likelihood of being selected for training, transfer or promotion is different for different groups
- disciplinary procedures are applied in the same way to all staff
- people from one group are more likely than others to leave our employment.

A report has to be made each year to the Council's Human resources Committee on the summary data collected and any conclusions and actions necessary in the light of that data.

### **Application of the Equalities Monitoring Policy and Guidance**

The equalities monitoring policy and guidance will be applied to all services which have been identified as relevant within the Council's Race Equality Scheme. It will also support the Wiltshire Compact and in particular the code of good practice on equality and diversity.

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Equalities Steering Group  
March 2005

***The authors are indebted to the London Borough of Lewisham for providing content for this document.***

**APPENDIX A**

**KENNET COMMUNITY POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS**

Source: Census 2001

**Total Population: 74,838**

**Gender:**

Male 37,550  
Female 37,288

**Age Structure:**

0-4 4,633  
5-7 2,957  
8-9 1,903  
10-14 4,793  
15 1,002  
16-17 1,963  
18-19 1,837  
20-24 3,867  
25-29 4,432  
30-44 17,225  
45-59 14,769  
60-64 3,687  
65-74 6,106  
75-84 4,134  
85-89 1,052  
90 plus 478

**Ethnicity: (All racial equalities monitoring should use the following racial groups as standard.)**

White	British	72,091
	Irish	415
	Other White	1,285
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean	138
	White and Black African	50
	White and Asian	159
	Other Mixed	109
Asian or Asian British	Indian	93
	Pakistani	19
	Bangladeshi	32
	Other Asian	39
Black or Black British	Caribbean	79
	African	31
	Other Black	26
Chinese of Other Ethnic Group	Chinese	123
	Other Ethnic Group	149

**Health:**

People with a limiting long-term illness 10,524

People of working age population with a limiting long-term illness 4,454

N.B. The Council works within the definition of disability given by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, namely:

“A person has a disability if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

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### EQUALITIES MONITORING GUIDANCE

#### What and when to monitor

Equalities monitoring should only be undertaken where there is a possibility of gathering useful information that can be acted upon. People should not be asked equalities questions unless the information is used to improve services or reveal possible discrimination. That being said, most services will need to carry out equalities monitoring so they have accurate information on the particular groups using their service.

Generally, equalities monitoring should be undertaken to help meet our duties under legislation covering equal opportunities and their respective Codes of Practice. Compliance with these is now monitored through nationally set indicators and frameworks.

In addition, individual service units have a duty to reflect the Council's equal opportunities commitment to the people of Kennet through its equal opportunities policies; service specific initiatives to achieve this should also be monitored. These, along with our duties under national legislation, should continue to be monitored and the results, together with results from other processes such as consultation, surveys etc., analysed and used to address any glaring disparities highlighted from the data gathered. Where no significant disparities are highlighted, the data can be used to support claims that service, employment or community involvement opportunities are provided equally, and monitoring will continue to ensure that they stay that way.

Equalities monitoring reports should then be produced in accordance with the Council's current reporting cycle and made available to the wider public. This will ensure transparency is maintained and the Council's residents are informed.

#### What types of monitoring are there?

In general, there are four main monitoring methods.

##### Ongoing contact

This measures people's experience - over a period of time - of the processes that the Council uses to deliver its services. It shows how different groups are treated at different stages of a process, from when they first contact the Council through to a range of possible outcomes. An example of where this method may be used is in the processing of housing applications where it is likely that service groups would like to find out whether or not:

- there is a difference in outcomes of applications for different equalities groups;
- there is a difference in the perception of service delivery for different groups;
- all groups are accessing the service equally;
- any action that has been taken to improve the service is working.

##### Episodic contact

This looks at what happens when contact between the Council and the service user is fairly short-term, limited and occasional. An example of where this method may be used is in the processing of planning applications. It is likely that service groups would like to find out whether or not:

- there are any particular equalities groups that are using the service more than others;
- all groups are accessing the service equally;
- there are differences in the outcomes of applications for different equalities groups;
- there is a difference in the perception of the service for different groups.

##### Usage

This type of monitoring is used to draw up profiles of service use and needs for different groups. This can help to assess and allocate the resources needed in the future; and to develop service delivery methods

that meet the needs of different groups. An example of where this method may be used is in the leisure centres where service groups may like to find out if:

- there are differences in the frequency of service usage by different equalities groups;
- there are differences in the ways that different equalities groups use services;
- the services and the way that they are delivered are meeting the needs of the communities they serve;
- there is anything the service can do to increase usage by those groups that under-use the service.

### **Satisfaction or complaints**

This kind of monitoring can be carried out by adapting routine customer satisfaction surveys and records of service complaints to include a question that asks the respondent to indicate which equalities group they belong to. This will help to assess whether satisfaction varies between equalities groups and, if so, why. Using this method service managers may want to find out if:

- there are differences in the satisfaction levels or complaint rates for different equalities groups;
- there are particular areas of their service that cause a problem for different equalities groups;
- whether or not different equalities groups have different expectations of their service;
- there is an underlying cause or barrier that means that different equalities groups are receiving a better service than others.

Once a decision to carry out equalities monitoring has been made, and a method has been chosen, a strategy for implementation should be developed. The strategy should detail:

- who is to do what and when
- how information will be constructed
- against what the information is being compared
- how and when information will be analysed
- how the results will be distributed
- who will be responsible for taking action/and when.

### **Officer briefing**

Officers should be briefed prior to equalities monitoring being introduced. They should be clear about the reasons for introducing equalities monitoring and be able to explain these reasons to service users in a clear and precise manner. This is essential, as the way in which service users perceive the purpose of monitoring can reduce or increase the response rate.

### **Publicity**

The introduction of equalities monitoring should be publicised by the service. More targeted publicity, aimed particularly at the groups you wish to monitor, should also be considered, as good publicity can help to improve response rates. Additionally, improvements to services and any initiatives for service development resulting from equalities monitoring should be widely promoted.

### **Providing an explanation**

When requesting equalities information, an explanation must always be given. The explanation should state why the information is being requested and what will be done with it. It should also emphasise confidentiality. You also need to explain that we need people's consent to record their personal or sensitive data. If someone is unhappy about answering a particular question, they do not have to. It is also useful to include the name, job title and telephone number of a specific officer who could be contacted if there are any further queries as to why the information is needed. A possible explanation is as follows:

*'Kennet District Council provides a wide range of services that affect the daily lives of Kennet residents. We are determined to make Council services responsive to the needs of all members of our community. This means we must take account of the different needs and requirements of people from a variety of*

*backgrounds. We want to make sure that Council policies and practices do not directly or indirectly discriminate against people on the basis of colour, ethnic origin, gender, age or disability. In order to turn these commitments into action we must have accurate information on the composition of our service. Therefore, may we have your consent to collect this information from you? The records collected will be kept confidential and will only be used to enable the Council to monitor the delivery of its services. Thank you for your co-operation.'*

## **Questions**

Questions should be as user-friendly as possible, with the aim being to elicit self-classification by the respondent. Personal identity is a subjectively held conviction, therefore, it is necessary to adhere to the principle of self-classification to ensure consistency of data quality. Only in exceptional circumstances should staff classify or prompt the respondent to a particular category as this may lead to inaccurate classification.

It is important to keep in mind that the analysis of the situation will be more representative and the consequent positive actions recommended will be better suited to the groups you are monitoring if there is a high response rate. Therefore, obtaining a high level of response is crucial; if the response rate is low, a strategy should be developed to address the situation.

The strategy could include improving awareness and understanding amongst respondents of the reasons for monitoring; training employees so they are more able to encourage response; redrafting and/or relocating the equalities questions; and re-publicising the monitoring and the reasons why it is being undertaken. One example of how to increase the response rate is to not say anything in your explanation of the equalities query that might encourage people not to answer. For example, do not say 'this question is entirely voluntary', or offer a 'would rather not say' option.

## **Storing the information**

The Data Protection Act 1998 sets out certain requirements for the collection and storage of personal information. Obviously, the data gathered in an equalities monitoring exercise falls into this classification. Consequently, the data collected from your monitoring must be stored in a secure manner and access to the information should be restricted to key staff only so as to maintain confidentiality. You must also only gather data for lawful and specified purposes. This highlights the need to ensure that the statement explaining how and why the equalities data will be used is comprehensive.

Additionally, you should not publish the data in any way that makes it possible for an individual to be identified, without that individual's permission. As such, it is important to note that some monitoring analysis may make it possible to identify individuals.

The information collected should be analysed regularly and, whenever possible, shared with officers and relevant community groups and individuals so that their views can inform the analysis of the data. Any issues that arise from the interpretation of the data will need highlighting if the monitoring is to be useful.

Also, the system set up for recording and collecting information on equalities should be merged into existing service management systems, as the equalities information will need to cross-relate to key activities/stages in the service being monitored. Decisions will also need to be made regarding where information is stored, who has access to it and how confidentiality is maintained.

Your equalities data could possibly be used in a number of ways.

## **You can! Undertake statistical significance testing**

Statistical significance testing is a way of assessing differences between various groups. Statistical tests are used to assess how likely it is that difference could be down to chance. For instance, in the case of planning applications, if the proportion of an equalities group observed in a sample is ten percentage points less than the 'successful group', this would suggest that this is a 'real' difference (as opposed to 'down to chance') that needs to be investigated.

It is important to remember that 'real' differences between groups are not in themselves evidence of discrimination. Rather, they indicate that further analysis of the results is needed in order to find out why these differences occur and to develop strategies to overcome any possible barriers.

### **You can! Undertake consultation**

Consultation is integral to the 'usage' type of monitoring and is also a means of flagging up possible causes of the 'real' differences identified through statistical significance testing. Service providers know a great deal, but it is fair to say that the true experts on the needs of the various equalities groups are the equalities groups themselves. Therefore, consultation or some form of public involvement is crucial to ensure that services are appropriate. Moreover, by consulting with service users, changes to service delivery should be more easily implemented, as users will understand why this is being done and, to some extent, feel that they have been involved in the decision making process.

A full range of consultation techniques is available in the consultation area of Kennect.

Generally, a consultation exercise should aim to find out:

- what people think of the service
- if they know about the service
- whether people's experience of the service is different for different groups of people
- if they know how to get and use the service
- if all users are treated equally.

### **You can! Undertake target setting**

Equalities monitoring is an important mechanism for improving the Council's services, but it is a means to an end, not an end in itself. It is essential that action is taken following the analysis of the data and changes are made to improve services. To ensure that service improvement occurs, service areas can set targets. These should be:

- legitimised by the analysis of the data;
- achievable, so that expectations are not raised too high;
- realistic, so that they are capable of changing the service; and
- time-scaled, so that it is something which needs to be reached by a certain point in time.

### **You can! Include data in your performance indicators**

Targets are an indication of what type of service the Council is aiming to deliver. Performance indicators are about what is currently being delivered. For example, if equalities monitoring indicates that a service is discriminatory towards women, then a target could be to increase female usage of the service by ten per cent. The indicator will be the number of women using the service. This can then be an indication of the extent to which the target is met.

### **You can! Use it in Best Value**

Best Value is a good mechanism for integrating equality principles into the Council's mainstream policies and practices. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, local authorities have a legal obligation to ensure that Best Value delivers service improvements for all.

Secondly, Best Value cannot be achieved unless equality is an integral part of the Council's approach to meeting its duties under Best Value. If the Council fails to respond to the diversity of its users or employees or fails to maximise the potential for diversity at all levels of the workforce, it will not, by definition, be an excellent service provider or employer. If the Council integrates equality objectives into its corporate priorities and Best Value reviews it will be more capable of delivering high quality services that reach everyone. This will help to improve the perception of the Council by equalities groups and may in turn increase their desire to be involved as service users, potential or actual employees, voters, members and/or contractors. Consequently, this increased involvement is likely to improve services and employment practices.

