

**Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report – December 2007**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Disability Equality Scheme (DES) was published on 4 December 2006. The scheme sets out the objectives and key actions for the Council over the next three years to meet the Disability Equality Duty and the needs of local disabled residents and disabled staff.
- 1.2 The Scheme's action plan contains nine priorities aimed at promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination for disabled people.

## 2. Progress

- 2.1 Below is the Council's Disability Equality Action Plan, noting the progress made in relation to employment between December 2006 and November 2007.

### Disability Equality Action Plan

				Progress in 2006/2007	
	Priority	Responsibility	Action for 2006/2007	Employment	Service Delivery
1	The Council is successful in attracting, recruiting, retaining and developing disabled people and the confidence of employees in reporting disabilities is increased	Personnel & Training	Complete implementation of disability action plan including: delivery of managers' DDA briefing sessions, provision of support for the Disabled Employees' Forum; provision of an intranet toolkit to facilitate reasonable adjustments; evaluation of the effectiveness of system for coordinating IT adjustments; and ensuring that a standard system is in place for requesting adjustments to premises.	<p>A brief for senior managers has been issued outlining key information about duties under the DDA.</p> <p>Personnel and Training provides support for the Forum through arranging monthly meetings, recording and circulating the notes of meetings, taking forward any issues arising and facilitating the involvement of forum members in any new Council initiatives.</p> <p>In February 2007 the Council surveyed the views of Forum members and found that 83% agreed or strongly agreed that the Forum has provided an effective channel to communicate the views of disabled employees and an opportunity to</p>	

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			<p>share information on solutions to improve accessibility.</p> <p>Requesting the involvement of Forum members in any new Council initiatives.</p> <p>Members of the forum have contributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's Disability Equality Scheme</li> <li>• Online equality and diversity training</li> <li>• Refresh of the Council's intranet</li> <li>• Refurbishment of County Hall Reception</li> </ul> <p>An intranet toolkit setting out the Council's approach to disability equality in employment and supporting the management of disability in the workplace has been developed. This resource is maintained by Personnel and Training to ensure that the information and guidance it provides continues to be accurate and up to date. It is a quick and easy resource for managers to tap into for disability equality information.</p> <p>Since its launch, the content has been expanded in response to issues identified through the Disabled Employees' Forum.</p> <p>The resource provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An introduction to the social model of disability and managers' responsibilities under the DDA</li> <li>• Detailed step by step guidance on disability in recruitment, making reasonable adjustments, sources of</li> </ul>	

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			<p>funding reasonable adjustments and continuing to manage disability in the workplace effectively, including risk assessment, PEEPs and retention of disabled members of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on the Disabled Employees' Forum</li> <li>• A link to the intranet reasonable adjustments toolkit</li> </ul> <p>Links to relevant Council policies and external websites which offer further guidance and support</p> <p>A budget within Property for adjustments to improve access was confirmed. No requirements for adjustments to premises have been identified through the Disabled Employees' Forum.</p> <p>Any requests for reasonable adjustments to premises received via the Disabled Employee's Forum are to be referred to the Performance Manager in CRD Property.</p> <p>The Council established a policy on reasonable adjustments and created a Register of Adjustments.</p> <p>Personnel and Training prepared a report outlining proposals for a register of reasonable adjustments which has been agreed.</p> <p>Options were explored for establishing a register of reasonable adjustments including those within CRD (ICT and</p>	

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		<p>Implementation of Corporate Equalities Training Plan including: the delivery of disability equality and awareness training by ESDA; roll-out of mandatory equalities e-learning package for all staff, dignity at work training.</p> <p>Arrangements made to address the gaps identified in employment monitoring data.</p>	<p>Property).</p> <p>In-depth face to face disability equality training which builds on the content of the online training is provided for managers and staff through the Corporate Training Plan.</p> <p>The equalities e-learning package, mandatory for all staff was rolled out in June 2007.</p> <p>Training and Development will feedback the figures from monitoring of the online training to the Human Resources Management Board.</p> <p>Lunchtime briefings were provided for managers and included the DDA and the social model of disability, disability in recruitment, and reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>100% of the managers who completed evaluations for the lunchtime briefings have agreed or strongly agreed with the statements 'The course has given me a clearer understanding of my work.' and 'I will be able to apply the learning from the course to my work.'</p>		
2	Improved systems and processes are established for communicating with disabled people	All Departments	Co-ordinate ability to produce information in a comprehensive range of alternative media.	<p>Visual and auditable information available on the ESCC website, designed for people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>Following research the Council entered into a supplier agreement with a company to provide the following services:</p>	Adult Social Care Equality and Diversity Standards and Toolkit. Pilot complete. Level One of the standards includes the social and medical models of disability and case studies which support staffs awareness and use of appropriate communication methods.

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			<p>Transcription to Audio (CD, Tape and MP3)</p> <p>Translation to Large Print</p> <p>Translation to Braille</p>	<p>Social Care Direct Equality Impact Assessment has specific recommendations relating to improving access to Adult Social Care by disabled people</p> <p>Adult Social Care establishing a disabled persons reference group with Children's Services and the East Sussex PCT's. The contract with Inclusion Enterprise has now been signed and the reference group will be established by March 2008.</p> <p>Adult Social care have commissioned and supported training for communicator guides for Deafblind people who are now located in voluntary organisations for people with sensory impairments.</p> <p>Adult Social Care BME Engagement Project is promoting better access to information and services for BME disabled people through partnership arrangements with Sompriti and Friends, Families, Travellers.</p> <p>Children's Services – Agreement established with RNID (The Royal National Institute for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People) for services for people with hearing impairment. Children's Disabled Service provides interpretation for children and young people.</p>	

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3	Disabled people, including children and young people are involved in service development	All Departments	<p>Develop a user involvement protocol.</p> <p>Coordinate capacity across the Council to involve the full range of disabled people in service development</p> <p>Development of Disabled People's Reference Group Continue to support the work of the Learning Disability Partnership Board.</p>		<p>Children's Services – Exploring with partners how to improve access to services for disabled children and young people.</p> <p>Learning Disability Partnership Board: making sure that people with learning disabilities and their carers have a say in planning and developing services and policies.</p> <p>Adult Social Care are establishing a disabled persons reference group [ as above] with Children's Services and the East Sussex PCT's. The contract with Inclusion Enterprise has now been signed and the reference group will be established by March 2008.</p> <p>Adult Social Care examples of current involvement include: Extra Care Housing development (Peacehaven). Disabled people sit on the Consultation and Community Engagement Group and the project Steering Group. These groups are defining how the community space at the development will be used and what services will be available.</p> <p>Adult Social Care have a Learning Disability Reference Group. The reference group has been involved in service and policy developments including Supporting People policies and the review of Directly Provided Services.</p>

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					Children's Services – Working with partners to develop reference groups of disabled people, including children and young people.
4	Proactive Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are undertaken on new Council initiatives	Personnel and Training - Employment	<p>The Equality Impact Assessment process will be reviewed to facilitate proactive Equality Impact Assessment and to enable the identification of good practice</p> <p>Delivery of training in undertaking and reviewing Equality Impact Assessments</p>	<p>In light of a recent review, Personnel and Training have now implemented a rolling programme to refresh employment related EIAs on a priority basis.</p> <p>Members of Personnel &amp; Training attended a session from an external consultant around the Equality Standard and best practice for undertaking EIAs.</p>	<p>Adult Social Care EIAs completed this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social Care Direct – Adult Social Care Contact Centre</li> <li>▪ Telecare</li> <li>▪ Projects for Older Peoples Partnerships – Independence First</li> <li>▪ Support for people who are Self Funding</li> <li>▪ Directly Provided Services Review – Older Peoples Services</li> </ul>
5	Due regard is given to disability equality where services and other Council functions are contracted	All Departments	<p>Review of information and assessment documentation for potential contractors</p> <p>Work with Disability Equals Business (the Equal Project) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore ways of monitoring disability equality where services and other Council functions are contracted.</li> <li>• to develop training for staff involved in contract management</li> </ul>		<p>Adult Social Care - Equality impact assessments undertaken for new service developments</p> <p>Adult Social Care - Quality monitoring team has been established within the Contracts and Purchasing Unit.</p>

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6	Disability harassment is addressed	All Departments	Monitoring of disability harassment is undertaken	<p>Investigation has shown that the Council's electronic Human Resources system (SAP) has the ability to record instances of disability harassment but further work is required to establish the workability of this.</p> <p>The Council monitors its grievance and disciplinary cases in terms of disability as well as sickness and reasons for absence from work.</p> <p>Exit monitoring forms are also monitored for any indication of disability harassment.</p>	<p>Adult Social Care - June 2007, launch of the Pan-Sussex Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.</p> <p>Adult Social Care - Equality and Diversity Standards and Toolkit. Pilot complete. Staff aware of legislation surrounding disability harassment through completion of the pilot.</p>
7	Consistent monitoring data is collected on employment, service delivery and involvement of disabled people according to DRC guidelines.	All Departments	<p>A common data collection procedure is agreed and implemented across all departments.</p> <p>Arrangements made to address gaps identified in the information that is currently collected</p> <p>Monitoring information is collated for Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA)</p>	<p>The Council's application forms include an equal opportunities section which is used by all departments and is monitored.</p> <p>Personnel &amp; Training's Workforce Planning Team collect monitoring data for employment of disabled people.</p> <p>Reporting against best value performance indicator (BVPIs) targets for disability: Percentage of top 5% of earners who are disabled – 2006/07 3.16% The Council now aims to maintain this level through 2008/09</p> <p>Percentage of Council staff who are disabled – 2006/07 3.92% The Council's target for 2008/09 is 4.25%</p>	

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8	Disability equality initiatives in service delivery are integrated into departmental and council business planning.	All departments	Specific actions to be inserted following consultation period. Monitored through departmental management teams and corporate equality group		
9	The Council is successful in promoting the participation of disabled people in public life.	Chief Executive's Department	Establish Inclusive Communications Policy	Employee awareness of RNIB 'See it Right' was raised through publicity in Equalities News, Corporate Team Brief, splash and plasma screens.  Communications Team to incorporate this Practical advice on designing, producing and planning for accessible information.	