

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>Name of Committee</b>	:	Policy & Strategy
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	:	4 March 2008
<b>Title of Report</b>	:	Annual Report on Equality & Communities of Interest
<b>Lead Officer</b>	:	James McGinlay, Head of Community Planning and Regeneration
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<b>Other Involvement</b>	:	Dave Valentine, Babs Greenwood, Shimei Fan, Libby Souter, Lesley Dunbar, Hamish Cattanach, Glo Potter and Hilda Smith. All Heads of Service and the Equalities Action Network, and Aberdeen City Alliance have been invited to contribute to the report.
<b>Consultation undertaken with</b>	:	City Solicitor, City Chamberlain, Councillors Kate Dean and Kevin Stewart, Community and voluntary sectors, Communities of Interest through Equalities and Regeneration Conference of 13 November, 2007, Equalities Action Network

### **Summary of Report**

This report addresses movement towards a single equality scheme and reporting process. It sets out the annual updates on the action plans of the Race and Disability Equality Schemes (thereby meeting our statutory duties). It provides a progress report on actions taken and those identified for the next year for all communities of interest, taking account of their needs and the Council's neighbourhood and service priorities and emphasises the need for EHRIAs (Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments) to be rolled out across the Council.

## **Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

1. Approve this report to be published as the Council's annual progress report on equality and communities of interest.
2. Note the recent and forthcoming legislative developments that will continue to inform and shape the Council's work on equality and approve the timetable for 3 year review and annual reporting.
3. Instruct officers to set out a timetabled plan for rolling out a programme of Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIAs) across the Council which is aligned to the review dates of Policies, Plans and Strategies.
4. Instruct the Heads of Service to nominate one officer within each service who is trained and competent in EHRIAs who will oversee the programme of EHRIAs for that service.
5. Instruct Directors/Heads of Service to ensure that EHRIAs are completed and accompany Committee Reports, and that completed EHRIAs are logged with Community Planning & Regeneration.
6. Instruct officers from Community Planning & Regeneration to set up a monitoring and progress reporting management system for the EHRIAs, with a 6 monthly report on progress to the Continuous Improvement Committee.
7. Instruct officers to continue to develop systems to gather and analyse disaggregated information on current and prospective service users, thus building up a customer profile.
8. Instruct the Heads of Service to work with the relevant Equalities Action Network members and others to ensure equalities actions are integrated within service and specific neighbourhood community action plans.

## **Links to the Community Plan and to Vibrant, Dynamic & Forward Looking**

There is a requirement that Community Planning is undertaken in a manner that encourages equality to be mainstreamed into all aspects of Community Planning. The inclusion of equality and community of interest actions is required at all levels in Neighbourhood, Service, Corporate and Community Plans.

Following the Best Value Audit requirement of the Local Government Scotland Act 2003, we are required to provide joint reporting of action on equality as part of the Community Planning annual reporting process.

### **From Vibrant, Dynamic & Forward Looking the partnership will**

- continue work to raise the achievement of vulnerable children and close the attainment gap across the City.
- implement masterplans, working with partners including those in the private sector.
- improve joint working with the NHS, especially in relation to the delivery of services in mental health and well-being, learning disability, care of elderly people and delayed discharge.

- review the use of street furniture on Union Street with a view to maximising the usable pavement space available to pedestrians and will widen further stretches of pavement on Union Street where this is possible.
- complete the process of adopting the new local plan, including strong policies on affordable housing, at the earliest possible date.
- increase the number of temporary homes for homeless people across the City.
- work with Registered Social Landlords to develop affordable housing including 2,000 new affordable houses.
- improve the rate of provision of adaptations (Housing).
- enhance the total environment in social housing areas.
- deliver on equal pay under the single status agreement, whilst protecting the ability to keep services in-house under best value.

## **Implementation**

The Equalities Action Network brings together senior officers of the Council, and cross party representation from Councillors, to oversee the mainstreaming of equality and the communities of interest work in the Council. The Network has been broadened to include representatives from Community Planning partner agencies. The Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Heads of Service and Elected Members have roles and responsibilities for the delivery of the requirements under equality legislation.

The individual actions will be implemented at Neighbourhood and Service level by the relevant Officers.

Strategic Leadership, Community Planning and Regeneration will oversee the publication of the report as a public document.

## **Resource Implications**

People	:	It will be necessary to provide training, coaching and support for officers to undertake Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments. It is proposed that each service nominates one officer to take responsibility for overseeing the process of impact assessment within their service. These may be the existing service representatives who are members of the Equalities Action Network. Specialist advice and support will be provided by officers in Community Planning and Regeneration.
Finance	:	Any new resources required for the financial year 2008-2009 and in subsequent years will be reported to the Resources Management Committee by the appropriate Service as the actions are defined.

<b>Systems &amp; Technology</b>	:	None
<b>Property</b>	:	None
<b>Other Equipment</b>	:	None
<b>Other</b>	:	None
<b><u>Other Implications</u> Health &amp; Safety</b>	:	None
<b>Risk Management</b>	:	<p>A failure to demonstrate actions to mainstream equality could result in litigation under a variety of human rights, equality and local government legislation. The Council has a duty to undertake equality impact assessments on its functions and policies (Gender Equality Duty, Race Equality Duty, Disability Equality Duty). The process of undertaking EHRIAs is underway, but it is necessary to make this process more robust.</p> <p>It is important that the communities of interest maintain confidence in the Council to promote equality, address unequal access to services and promote a socially inclusive city.</p>
<b>Human Rights/ Equalities/Diversity</b>	:	This report directly addresses all aspects for equal opportunities and provides a monitoring tool for the human and equality rights of the communities of interest groups in the city.
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment</b>	:	<p>There is a requirement to complete an equality and human rights impact assessment (EHRIA) on all new and revised policies and services in the Council. A summary of the EHRIA completed for this report appears as Appendix 1A. A summary of the equality and human rights impact assessments completed to date appears at Appendix 1B to this report. It is important that the impact assessment is completed before the final decision on a given policy is taken. Therefore it is necessary to have a more robust plan to ensure EHRIAs are completed in a timely manner. This plan will include adequate training and support for the relevant staff, and having an adequate monitoring and reporting system in place.</p>

<b>Sustainability</b>	:	Embracing diversity and tackling inequality will lead to healthy sustainable communities in the city
<b>Environmental</b>	:	None
<b>Social</b>	:	Promoting equality, equal access to services and social inclusion will contribute to social cohesion in the City. This will require the effective engagement of all citizens and agencies as well as communities of interest in the work outlined in this report.
<b>Economic</b>	:	Addressing inequality in employment and removing barriers, will promote the diversity of the workplace, increasing participation in training and work opportunities.
<b>Construction</b>	:	None
<b>Signature</b>	:	

## Main Considerations:

### 1. **Background, legislative context and current requirements**

- 1.1 This is the third annual integrated report on progress in implementing equality and communities of interest work within the Council. This approach mirrors the national picture in bringing the different equality/communities of interest strands together and helps streamline and simplify reporting.
- 1.2 Mainstreaming is a relatively new approach to policy making in which equal opportunity principles, strategies and practices are integrated into the everyday work of government and the public bodies from the outset. It aims to make equality consideration a regular part of the Council's policy process, at a whole organisational level and within each school, community care, family centre, reception area and customer service point across the current service. It is about building in equality at the outset of the policy process rather than bolting it on to the process at a later stage.
- 1.3 The Race Equality Duty (RED), the Disability Equality Duty (DED) and the Gender Equality Duty (GED) are now in force for public authorities. All three public sector duties require a common approach, with the onus on public bodies to work proactively to promote equality and eliminate discrimination in all their functions, including their partnership activities. These duties also apply to a public authority with regard to services and functions which are contracted out.
- 1.4 Our statutory equality duties are set out in Section 10. The specific public sector duties are the roadmaps that we use to meet our general equality duties and include publishing, implementing and monitoring our Equality Schemes showing how we fulfil the general and specific duties.
- 1.5 As stated, one requirement under all three of the equality duties is to provide an annual progress report. This report fulfils this requirement. **(See Section 6 for Race Equality Scheme Annual Report and Section 7 for Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report.)**

#### **Recommendation 1**

**Approve this report to be published as the Council's annual progress report on equality and communities of interest.**

### 2. **Reporting Status of Equality Strands**

- 2.1 Whilst there is a requirement to report annual progress with regard to the three equality schemes, the review process is over a 3 year cycle. These cycles are different for the three equality duties and relate to when each duty came into effect.
- 2.2 It is proposed that an individual report is produced on each of the Race, Disability and Gender Schemes as these come to the 3-year review point under the respective equality duty. The timetable would be:

Race Equality Scheme Review due – November 2008 (start review May 2008)

Disability Equality Scheme Review due – December 2009 (start review April 2009)

Gender Equality Scheme Review due – June 2010 (start review December 2009)

- 2.3 We would continue to report on progress on the other strands of our equality and communities of interest work – age, sexual orientation and religion/belief – in our annual equality and communities of interest report. (Although there is no statutory duty to report on these equality strands, the Council has previously agreed to do this.)

**Recommendation 2**

**Note the recent and forthcoming legislative developments that will continue to inform and shape the Council's work on equality and approve the timetable for 3 year review and annual reporting.**

### **3. Progress in Mainstreaming Equality in the Council – The Achievements and Challenges**

#### **Achievements**

3.1 Significant progress has been made across the council in mainstreaming equality. In summary these are:

- Integrating the commitments set out in the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes into service and neighbourhood plans.
- More effective relationships between Link Officers (Strategists within Community Planning & Regeneration) and Neighbourhood Networks and Neighbourhood Senior Management Teams.
- Transfer of Domestic Abuse work from Community Planning & Regeneration to Adult Services, Strategic Leadership thus releasing capacity for additional equalities work.
- Audit started on mapping out all the Council's policies, procedures and practices and screening these to assess which are of high priority and high impact and should be assessed first.
- Collating existing monitoring information on our current service users and developing capacity to gather and analyse disaggregated information on current and prospective service users.
- Timetable for reviewing current/developing policies is being set out to allow for scheduling in Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments
- Providing information and promoting the equality work through pages on the Zone and website, using the Equalities Action Newsletter and in Teamtalk.
- Awareness raising sessions have been held in partnership with Grampian Police and the Gypsy/Traveller Education and Information Project on Gypsy/Traveller issues for elected members, staff and Community Councillors
- Local people with disabilities have been involved in the work to revise the Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan.

3.2 Appendix 2 shows the key achievements over the last year, and Appendix 3 shows the communities of interest forums activity in 2006-2007.



## Challenges

3.3 The Council faces a number of key challenges in mainstreaming equality. These are:

- Undertaking an extensive programme of Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments and the monitoring and public reporting of this
- Collecting and analysing disaggregated data.
- Ensuring equality is embedded in all neighbourhood and service plans.
- Giving equalities work a central place within Community Planning and reviewing the role of the Equalities Action network to meet this challenge.
- Progressing towards a single equality scheme.

## Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments

3.4 Following approval from the Extended Corporate Management Team in May 2007, we have begun training and support to staff within the Council on how to carry out Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessments. Approximately 100 officers have attended awareness raising sessions on EHRIA. Where there is a new or revised policy being reported to committee, report authors are required to undertake an EHRIA, and include the summary of the EHRIA in the section of the committee report "Other implications: Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment".

**3.5 It is our statutory duty to undertake equality impact assessments with regard to race, disability and gender.** We have taken the approach of including all six equality strands and the requirements under the Human Rights Act into one, single, Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment.

3.6 To ensure there is sufficient expertise and capacity to deliver on all the requirements with regard to EHRIAs a more robust training, support and monitoring process is necessary. It is proposed that within each service, an officer is designated to oversee a programme of EHRIAs. The task will be to alert report authors to the need for an EHRIA at an early stage, work with staff to complete the EHRIA, and ensure that these are completed and published.

3.7 The designated officer will be required to undertake training on the EHRIAs. In addition specialist advice and support will be provided by officers in Community Planning and Regeneration.

3.8 It will be necessary to put in place a corporate delivery programme of EHRIAs and ensure that all reports to Policy and Strategy Committee have the EHRIA section completed **prior** to the report being considered by committee.

3.9 A management system is required to monitor the EHRIAs with a six-monthly progress report to the Continuous Improvement Committee.

3.10 Approximately 20 EHRIAs have been completed since May 2007. These are listed in Appendix 1.

### **Recommendation 3**

**Instruct Officers to set out a timetabled plan for rolling out a programme of Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIAs) across the Council which is aligned to the review dates of Policies, Plans and Strategies.**

### **Recommendation 4**

**Instruct the Heads of Service to nominate one officer within each service who is trained and competent in EHRIAs who will oversee the programme of EHRIAs for that service.**

### **Recommendation 5**

**Instruct Directors/Heads of Service to ensure that EHRIAs are completed and accompany Committee Reports, and that completed EHRIAs are logged with Community Planning & Regeneration.**

### **Recommendation 6**

**Instruct Officers from Community Planning & Regeneration to set up a monitoring and progress reporting management system for the EHRIAs, with a 6 monthly report on progress to the Continuous Improvement Committee.**

### **Recommendation 7**

**Instruct officers to continue to develop systems to gather and analyse disaggregated information on current and prospective service users, thus building up a customer profile.**

## **Equalities Action Network (EAN) and Community Planning**

3.11 On 15 March 2007 The Aberdeen City Alliance (TACA) agreed to

- a wider participation of partners from TACA on the Equalities Action Network and formally to endorse the Network as a recognised challenge forum of TACA; and
- invite presentations from communities of interest forums at future meetings.

3.12 A programme of presentations on the different equality themes has taken place between May and December. Religion/belief has not yet been covered. Aberdeen Inter-Faith Group is to hold an event to which members of TACA will be invited.

3.13 A conference on Equalities and Regeneration was organised on behalf of TACA on 13 November 2007. 160 people attended this November conference with representation from the community and voluntary sectors. From the issues raised and Action Plans drafted at the World Café discussion session, 3 key points on Equalities were presented to TACA at the Community Planning Stakeholders Conference on 13 December. This presentation appears as Appendix 4.

3.14 TACA members were invited to send a representative from their organisation to a meeting of the Equalities Action Network on 4 February 2008. A sub-group of the EAN, which now includes TACA representatives will produce a paper on the future role, remit and direction of the EAN. This paper will also include recommendations on how the Council might take forward its role as the lead partner in TACA to report progress on equalities within community planning. This paper will be submitted to the Council's Extended Management Team (ECMT) for consideration.

3.15 Future progress reports will give greater profile to the work of our Community Planning partners.

**Recommendation 8**

**Instruct the Heads of Service to work with the relevant Equalities Action Network members and others to ensure equalities actions are integrated within service and specific neighbourhood community action plans.**

## 4. **What's Next**

### 4.1 We will

- Continue to promote the mainstreaming of equality into all organisational activity via the Equality Schemes, action plans and the EHRIA process.
- Continue to align the 3 equality schemes with our Corporate plan (under review) and neighbourhood operational plans.
- Move towards a Single Equality Scheme, bringing together the three equality schemes through a common/framework with separate chapters on the issues in each of the three areas.
- Move towards a Single Equality Scheme, proactively undertaking work on the other equality strands, commencing with sexual orientation equality, in anticipation of a widening of equality duties.
- Review the Equalities Action Network to ensure we place equality work within the community planning partnership and deliver on the requirement in the Local Government in Scotland Act for the Council to report on progress towards promoting equality and eliminating discrimination in the community planning process. This will also strengthen engagement of the Community Planning Partners in mainstreaming equality.
- Review the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy to reflect the strengthened equality legislation and in line with best value and good practice.
- Set up a structure to report progress on Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments to the Continuous Improvement Committee.
- Continue work on bringing the different communities of interest together and ensuring their voice is heard at a neighbourhood level.
- Continue dialogue with ethnic minority communities and appropriate agencies to agree priorities for the 2008-2011 Race Equality Scheme.

## **5. Race Equality Scheme Annual Report**

- 5.1 Aberdeen City Council has, for many years, shown its commitment to promoting good race relations. We welcomed the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 that came into force on 2 April 2001, which placed a General Duty on Councils and other public bodies to promote race equality.
- 5.2 The Strategic aims of the Race Equality Scheme are to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
  - Promote equality of opportunity.
  - Promote good relations between people from different ethnic groups.

### **General**

- 5.3 In 2007 we made the following progress against our Race Equality Scheme:
- The Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Toolkit is now in place to review all policies and functions of the City Council.
  - Progress has been made to review the Services provided by the Grampian Racial Equality Council (GREC), Multi-ethnic Aberdeen Limited (MEAL) and the Aberdeen International Centre so that they underpin and contribute towards the Race Equality Scheme Action plan supported by Service Level Agreements.
  - We provided an integrated package of support and training to bilingual people from ethnic minority communities to help us meet specific actions in our Race Equality Scheme Action Plan. Our aim was to improve access to Council Services by developing and raising awareness of the Translation and Interpreting Service.
  - We continued to provide information in other languages and formats.
- 5.4 We recognised diversity through events and initiatives such as:
- Aberdeen City Council participated in a conference held by GREC on Community Planning Partnerships and the Race Equality Duty. The aim of the conference was collectively to identify issues and plan future solutions.
  - We held a European Workers fair on the 29 March 2007 to assist migrant workers integrate into the local economy and community. There were 20 outside agencies in attendance on the day.
  - The Holocaust Memorial Day 2007 was held in the Tunnels on Friday 26 January 2007.
  - We are currently developing an International Centre at the Central Library.
- 5.5 In addition, Aberdeen City Council is an active member of the Aberdeen Racist Incident Partnership (ARIP), which monitors the effectiveness of the policy and procedures on reporting hate and racial incident crimes. In March, the partnership was renewed at a launch at Archaeolink in Oyne when a revised Racist incident Monitoring Form was adopted. A new set of posters and leaflets are being prepared to raise awareness of these crimes.

## **Education**

- 5.6 Schools continue to get involved in different events such as commemorating the bicentenary of the abolishment of slavery, The Holocaust Memorial Day, The Anne Frank Award and show Racism the Red card.
- 5.7 Schools continue to sustain and enhance Race Equality Education by integrating all forms of equalities in Curriculum for Excellence, which underpins the local and national educational priorities.
- 5.8 Schools continue to engage in national and local events on equality activities and issues.
- 5.9 Two City Schools are piloting an awareness programme on Anti-Sectarianism and Anti-Discrimination in Education, funded by the Scottish Government.
- 5.10 Schools are working in partnership with Career Scotland on gender equalities in education to develop a wider range of subject choices for career opportunities by using the current Toolkit on Gender Equality in Education.
- 5.11 The English as an Additional Language Service Unit has increased its support to 1447 pupils on various levels of support. Eighty-four Pupils are now registered for SQA, ESOL examinations from different Schools across the City.
- 5.12 The Pupils' Conference was highly commended in the HMle report for involving pupils in Equality and Diversity issues.

## **Gypsies/Travellers**

- 5.13 Awareness raising sessions on Gypsy/Traveller issues organised by Grampian Police and the Gypsy Traveller Education and Information Project have taken place with elected members, Community Councillors, partners and front-line staff.
- 5.14 Work has been ongoing to identify four potential locations for short-term halting sites for Gypsies/Travellers - 2 in the North and 2 in the South of the city. The consultation exercise with the settled community and businesses around these sites has been an opportunity to challenge stereotyping of Gypsies/Travellers and present more balanced information.
- 5.15 A Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has been in position since June 2007 and has made a considerable impact in managing the unauthorised encampments.

## **Future Progress**

- 5.16 For 2008 our priority actions around Gypsy/Traveller issues will be:
  - To agree proposed locations for short-term halting sites for Gypsies/Travellers and commence the planning application process.
  - Develop a policy to manage short-term halting sites.
  - Put in place processes and mechanisms to meet the educational needs of Gypsy/Traveller children on the short-term halting sites.
  - Run a medium-scale publicity campaign to challenge myths and stereotypes around Gypsy/Traveller issues.

- Work with the Race Equality Education Development Officer, Grampian Police, Grampian Racial Equality Council and the Gypsy Traveller Education and Information Project to develop an awareness programme for schools.
- Carry out further awareness training sessions in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council.

5.17 Other key initiatives for the future will include:

- Supporting the Ethnic Minority Forum in holding a Community Engagement Event to bring together the local diverse communities, public bodies and other service providers to bring about the mutual dialogue on race relations with the intention of agreeing priorities for the 2008 – 2011 Race Equality Scheme in the City and North East.
- Increasing community engagement and consultation with people from all racial backgrounds by working closely with The Ethnic Minority Forum, Grec, Meal and the International Centre to help identify the needs and issues raised by the Ethnic Communities.
- Continuing to monitor and increase the number and effectiveness of EHRIAs on all council policies and functions for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality.
- ARIP will continue to monitor trends and patterns of racial and hate crime reports, and encourage people to report incidents. This robust recording and monitoring system will contribute to creating safer communities by increased confidence in the reporting of racial incidents.

5.18 We have made progress in meeting the actions within the Race Equality Scheme Action Plan, but there are more challenges ahead across the city to meet the duties of the Race Equality Scheme. The Council recognises that this will be an ongoing process and that Aberdeen City Council is committed to, building on the work completed to date and to maintain the momentum by continuing to develop actions for the Race Equality Scheme that cut across all functions, policies, procedures and services.

## **6. Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report**

- 6.1 Aberdeen City Council published its Disability Equality Scheme on 4 December 2006. This sets out how the Council will meet the requirements of the General Duty. Our aim is to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled people to learn, to work, to travel and to live independently without unnecessary barriers and social restrictions that they currently face.
- 6.2 The Specific Duty to produce the Scheme helps the Council to deliver on the General Duty, which is to:
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons.
  - Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act.
  - Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities.
  - Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons.
  - Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.
  - Take steps to take account of disabled person's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.
- 6.3 Work in progressing the actions in the Disability Equality Scheme and the Action Plan has been undertaken with the active involvement of representatives from the Disability Advisory Group, a partnership between officers from the Council and representatives of local disabled people. While we recognise that we have much work still to do, we are able to report progress on the Action Plan, which follows. We have also involved the disabled community in work to revise the Action Plan. This has been done to make it more focussed, by identifying an officer to take responsibility for each action, and to set a timetable for its completion.
- 6.4 Aberdeen City Council has made progress towards meeting the General Duty through delivery of actions for 2007 within the Action Plan. In order to ensure that disability equality is mainstreamed into the community planning process authors of all new and revised policies are required to complete the equality and human rights impact assessment tool. A number of briefing sessions have been held to raise awareness among Council staff and Elected Members of the need for, and importance of, equality and human rights impact assessments. Initial impact assessments are being conducted on selected policies across the Services. Our next phase is to consider formal training of assessors within the Services to roll out across the Council the expertise to ensure that our policies are relevant to the lives that people live today. Officers in Community Planning and Regeneration will provide specialist advice and support.
- 6.5 Involving people with disabilities is key to further progress and central to this has been our work with the Disability Advisory Group and Aberdeen Action on Disability. The constant feedback we receive informs us on the progress we are making and yet to achieve. For example, suitable parking for people with disabilities is an important factor that enables convenient access to the city centre. Together with representatives from the Disability Advisory Group and Aberdeen Action on Disability we have undertaken a review of all the City Centre on-street parking bays for disabled people, including on-site street visits to all the blue and green badge parking bays. The results from this review will be reported to the Disability Advisory Group with recommendations for further action where appropriate.



- 6.6 Equalities and Disability Awareness Training continues across the Council and with our Partners and voluntary organisations. Regular workshops on the use of plain English and accessible information are presented to staff as part of the Council employee development scheme, while Aberdeen and North East Deaf Society are running a series of training courses about deaf awareness for 100 employees on our behalf. In addition, we continue to provide interpreting by qualified British Sign Language interpreters and all our publications are available in alternative or large print formats.
- 6.7 An access audit has been carried out at every school and community centre, which forms the baseline for works to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act and maintenance programmes. This year £150,000 was spent on specific works to improve access in education. In addition to this, extra money from other sources enabled project work for students at several schools to be completed, and £300,000 of additional funding was deployed to support access. Planned improvements to physical access have been carried out and this is ongoing work with the provision of rails, ramps, lighting, anti glare film, tread alert, colour and tone and other smaller scale improvements.
- 6.8 New technologies for severely dyslexic children have allowed access to text. Specialist keyboards enable students more flexibility and virtual keyboards and wireless laptops have made it possible for some students to participate in classes where access was not possible before. Equipment and curricular resources have been deployed in schools to facilitate access to the curriculum. Examples of these are reading monitors, interactive language acquisition stations, visualisers and specialist classroom furniture. These have been piloted at various schools and with the English as Additional Language Unit and have been found to be very useful in the work of engaging with a wider range of students.
- 6.9 Within Aberdeen City, the baseline for public access to buildings was set following discussions with Aberdeen Access Panel. A building would be deemed accessible provided a disabled person could access reception and (with assistance) access services therein. During 2007 £318,000 was spent on physical improvements, including accessible car parking space, hearing loop systems, level access or ramps, wider doors and stair nosing or highlighting. In total so far, just under £1,000,000 has been committed to making improvements. The indicators for access measure the percentage of buildings, which provide "reasonable access for disabled people". On this measure, at 2006/7, 62% of Aberdeen City Council buildings are accessible. Next year 2007/2008 target has been set at 75%.

## The Disability Equality Action Plan

### (1) Leading the City

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty Number 1-6	Outcome	Responsibility/ Lead Service North South Central (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. Review the DES on a regular basis	2007 Q3 - 2009 Q4	Annual report Published  SD 1-6	Annual report published.  <b>Progress</b> Annual report published with integrated single equalities and communities of interest report.	Strategist (Central)	Within existing resources
2. To ensure that the interests of people with disabilities are taken into account in relevant decision-making. That includes their Involvement at every stage with major projects.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	People with disabilities are involved in decisions.  SD 1-6	All policies and projects take into account people with disabilities  <b>Progress</b> All new and revised policies to be subject to EHRIA. Briefings on EHRIA have been provided for Staff.	Strategist (Central)  Disability Access Officer  All Heads Of Service (N,S,C)	Within existing resources

## (2) Being Informed

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty 1-6	Outcome	Responsibility/ Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. To promote, review and implement the use of plain English and the Corporate Guidelines for accessible information and communication support.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	All ACC staff adhere to guidelines.  Annual report reviewed. Guidelines published and distributed to all services.  SD 1-6	Documents and publications are clear and accessible to all users.	Head of Corporate Communications	Within existing resources
			Training for staff to raise their awareness of guidelines.  <b>Progress</b> Guidelines have been published. Plain English workshops run throughout the year.		
2. To continue to provide information in accessible and appropriate formats including other languages.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Translation / Interpretation service available. Information provided in relevant formats as required.  SD 1-6	People have access to Information in the relevant formats as required.  <b>Progress</b> Training took place for 24 candidates to achieve their Diploma in Public Service Interpreting.	Strategist (Central)	Within existing resources

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale Quarter 1-4</b>	<b>Target Meets Statutory Duty 1-6</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Lead Service (N,S,C)</b>	<b>Source of Funding</b>
7. To continue to record where loops or other aids are provided in council buildings and ensure that where provided they are operating effectively and that staff are adequately trained to operate them.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Location of loops mapped.  Map and review current provision of public buildings.  Staff training.  SD 1-6	Trained staff to operate hearing loops within council facilities for people with hearing difficulties.  All council buildings either have permanent or portable loop systems in place.  <b>Progress</b> All council buildings have permanent or portable loop systems in place. Training will continue to be provided for new staff and refresher courses where appropriate.	Disability Access/Buildings Officers	Within capital funding
20. To keep frontline staff informed of developments including guidelines	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Equalities Action Network Newsletter published quarterly.	Website briefings and Equalities Action Network Newsletter.  <b>Progress</b> Equalities Action Newsletter published quarterly. Translation and Interpreting information in council Team talk to raise awareness	Community Planning and Regeneration  Corporate Communications  Heads Of Service (N,S,C)	Within existing resources

### (3) Getting Involved

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty (SD1-6)	Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. To develop a robust community and voluntary sector infrastructure.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Number of Groups / organisations in place to improve community capacity building.	Maintain links with community groups and voluntary sector.  <b>Progress</b> Continued links with the Aberdeen Action on Disability (AAD), Disability Advisory Group (DAG) and extended invitation to Neighbourhood Community Planning Officers to attend and brief DAG on matters relating to them in the Neighbourhood Community Action Plans.	Community Planning and Regeneration  Heads of Service (N, S, C)	Within existing resources
2. To ensure that polling stations are fully accessible wherever possible.	2007 Q2	Majority of polling stations fully accessible. Communication support available, signage, etc.  SD 1-6	Systems in Place and all polling stations are accessible.  <b>Progress</b> All locations fully accessible.	Head of Democratic Services	£200,000 per annum
4. To investigate funding for provision of care cover and travel costs etc for people attending authorised meetings, training courses.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Budget review to reflect contributions provided to cover costs.  SD 1-6	Enable people with disabilities to attend meetings, training courses.  <b>Progress</b> Funding in place.	Strategist (Central)	Within existing resources

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty (SD1-6)	Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
5. Raise awareness of assistance, such as transport, crèche, communication, etc that (ACC) offers to the public to facilitate their involvement.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Groups/organisations to be informed of support services that apply to relevant needs.  SD 1-6	Greater participation in access to services.  <b>Progress</b> Information on crèche, transport facilities etc is published to promote greater public involvement.	Community Planning and Regeneration  Strategist (Central)	Within existing resources
6. To hold meetings in accessible venues.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	All meetings held in accessible venues.  SD 1-6	Greater participation in /access to meetings etc. Performance measures in place.  <b>Progress</b> All steps are taken to make reasonable access for disabled people. In 2006/7 62% of council buildings were accessible with a target of 75% set for 2007/8	Disability Access /Buildings Officers	Within existing resources
8. To support people from Ethnic Minority Groups to become involved in DAG AAD and others.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Ethnic Minority representation on DAG.	Increased participation and representation by Ethnic Minority Groups on the DAG.  <b>Progress</b> Representatives from Grampian Racial Equality Council and Aberdeen International Centre attend DAG.	Disability Advisory Group  Strategist (Central)	Within existing resources

#### (4) Neighbourhood Planning

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty 1-6	Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. To maintain and refresh community profiles to ensure services are provided according to needs identified.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Community Health and Well-Being Profiles for Aberdeen City available within Neighbourhood Profiles on the Community Planning Website.  SD 1-6	Neighbourhood profiles updated to reflect the communities.  <b>Progress</b> The 2006 Neighbourhood Profiles are detailed updates of the socio-economic profiles published in 2004 and provide information on population, age structure, housing, households, economic characteristics, education, deprivation, accidents, crime, fire and childcare.	Head of Culture & Learning (N, S, C)	Within existing resources
3. To involve the Disability Advisory Group, the Disability Access Panel and the Disability Access Officer in Neighbourhood Planning.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Neighbourhood Action Plans evidence input from Disability Advisory Group, etc.  NCPO (N, S, C) attending DAG meetings.	Disability groups involved in locality planning ensuring equality issues are mainstreamed into Neighbourhood Community Planning.  <b>Progress</b> Invitation extended to NCPO to attend DAG meetings.	Neighbourhood Community Planning Officers (N, S, C)	Within existing resources

## (7) Safety

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty 1-6	Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. To develop further the Access Panel as recommended in The Review of Access Panels in Scotland.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Access Panel meets regularly with a diverse membership.	Pro-active in developing the panel to include more community involvement.  <b>Progress</b> Access panel meets regularly	Access Panel	£10,000 from Scottish Disability Equality Forum
2. To continue to highlight obstructions with colour contrast and ensure prior consultation with DAG.	2007 Q2 - 2009 Q4	Systems in Place  SD 1-6	Consultation and monitoring with DAG to identify any new issues.  <b>Progress</b> Regular consultation with DAG.	Head of Shelter & Environment (N, S, C)	Within existing resources
3. To limit street furniture and other obstacles and to ensure that they are appropriately sited.	2007 Q3 - 2009 Q4	Systems in Place  SD 1-6	Street furniture appropriately located. Referrals to DAG on major projects only.  <b>Progress</b> Regular consultation with DAG on major projects.	Head of Shelter & Environment (N, S, C)	Within existing resources



## (8) Land Use and the Environment

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty 1-6	Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. To ensure that the Disability Advisory Group and individuals are involved in the planning process.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Disability Advisory Group members involved and have input into the planning process.	Disability Advisory Group has input into the planning process and is placed on consultation list.  <b>Progress</b>  Procedures in place.	Head of Planning and Infrastructure	Within existing resources

## (9) Contract Services

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty 1-6	Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
2. To offer access to disability awareness training for all contractors.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Contractors comply with statutory codes of practice. Advice to contractors at tender stage on availability to access training.  SD 1-6	Better equality practices within contract services  <b>Progress</b> Improved awareness of disability issues	Purchasing Manager / Training Team / Disability Access Officer	Within existing resources

## (11) Transport and Connections

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target Meets Statutory Duty 1-6	Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. To ensure that Disability Groups feed into review of Local Transport Strategy.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	The Local Transport Strategy takes into account the needs of people with disabilities.	Involvement of DAG in the Local Transport Strategy.  <b><u>Progress</u></b> DAG has been consulted and involved in the Local Transport Strategy.	Head of Shelter and Environment	Within Existing Resources
8. To undertake an annual review of disabled parking spaces and usage.	2007 Q4 - 2009 Q4	Review of report.	Annual review undertaken  <b><u>Progress</u></b>  Work in progress, involved with Disability working group to review existing arrangements. Site visits arranged.	Community Planning and Regeneration	Within Existing Resources

## (16) Sports, Leisure and Recreation

Action	Timescale Quarter 1-4	Target/Performance/ Meets Statutory Duty1-6	Output/Outcome	Responsibility Lead Service (N,S,C)	Source of Funding
1. To provide PAMIS toilet facilities and changing and toileting facilities for people with disabilities.	2007 Q1	Systems in Place.  Meets SD 1-6	Facilities identified and provided.  <b><u>Progress</u></b> Disability Officers to continue to look for suitable locations and premises for further PAMIS toilets.	Head of Planning and Infrastructure  Head of Economic & Environmental Sustainability	Within existing resources
3. To ensure that anyone setting up events makes provision for people with disabilities, the council to provide a monitoring role and assistance where possible.	2007 Q1 - 2009 Q4	Compliance with the Events Manual.  Risk Assessments carried out for all events.  SD 1-6	Accessible provisions for people with disabilities are provided for at all ACC events.  <b><u>Progress</u></b> Risk Assessments carried out for all public events. Accessible provisions for people with disabilities are provided at all ACC events.	Events team, Head of Continuous Improvement.	Within existing resources

## **7 Progress on Gender Equality Scheme**

**7.1** Following extensive consultation and research, Aberdeen City Council launched its Gender Equality Scheme on 29 June 2007. The Gender Equality Scheme sets out actions and outcomes to address inequality and promote equality of opportunity for women and men under six priority themes of:

1. Gender pay gap and occupational segregation.
2. Employment.
3. Violence against women and men.
4. Education.
5. Increased access to services.
6. Increased participation in society for women and men.

### **Community Engagement**

**7.2** Aberdeen Women's Alliance, as one of the communities of interest, is actively involved in monitoring the progress of the Scheme. Working in collaboration with The Poverty Alliance and Close the Gap, the Campaign Group of the Alliance identified key areas for a public awareness campaign, consulting with the wider membership and different groups across the city. The Group campaign highlights gender equality, with a focus on the gender pay gap, occupational segregation, and employment.

### **Partnership Project**

**7.3** Violence against women is a priority theme in the Council's Gender Equality scheme. The council is the lead agency in the Aberdeen Domestic Abuse Partnership. A new partnership project was set up in 2007 – CYPEDAH (Children and Young People Experiencing Domestic Abuse and Homelessness). This project is managed by Aberdeen City Council's Early Years Service (Health and Care - South) and provides one to one and group work support to children living in refuge, in homeless accommodation and in the community. This project delivers on improvement outcomes in the city's Integrated Children's Services Plan "For Aberdeen's Children."

### **Training**

**7.4** The Council participates in partnership work through the Grampian Domestic Abuse Training Consortium. A successful training for trainers' programme has been developed and is now being rolled out. Over 30 trainers have delivered multi-agency level 1 training sessions to several hundred staff throughout Grampian. The Consortium will be presenting progress on its 3 year work plan at an event on 14 March 2008 in Aberdeen. Funding streams from Scottish Government support the CYPEDAH project and the training consortium.

## **8. Progress on Equality on Age, Sexual Orientation and Religion/Belief**

### **8.1 Progress on Age Equality**

**8.1.2** Some of the key achievements are summarised below.

#### **8.1.3. Young People**

- With the Youth Action Committee developed a neighbourhood youth participation structure.
- Accessed £5,000 funding for a community planning pilot scheme in the regeneration areas.
- Youth involvement in consultation on the Housing strategy, the NESTRANS transport strategy and masterplanning.
- Young people attended 5 Scottish Youth Parliament sittings.
- Gained representation on the UK Youth Parliament.
- Young people involved in schools and youth projects across the city.
- Young people represented local issues to Justice Minister.
- Young people involved in the national “Vote at 16” campaign.
- Created over 25 units in the city for the Youth Achievement Awards.

#### **8.1.4. Inter-age work**

- Youth Action Committee members delivered a text messaging workshop to 26 older people in the city. There is currently a waiting list of older people for further workshops.
- Community Councils in Neighbourhood Services Area South supported youth events.
- £180,000 funding distributed to groups through the Council’s Youth Activities Small Grants.

#### **8.1.5 Older People**

- The Older People’s Working Group held its first Annual Review of the Older People’s Action Plan
- The Older People’s Financial Inclusion Group held quarterly meetings to progress better access to services information for older people. The Point, in partnership with staff at Crown House and the Pension Service, offered four morning and weekly drop-in information service for older people.
- The Seniors in the City, Aberdeen’s City Council’s annual older people’s festival offered a text workshop for older people with young people from the Youth Action Committee sharing their texting skills.
- A Development Officer from Community Planning & Regeneration was invited to do a presentation on the recent intergenerational work in the city at the Inaugural Council meeting of the Scottish Intergenerational Practice Network at the Senior Studies Institute, University of Strathclyde.
- Aberdeen City Council was chosen to be one of four Scottish local authorities to be in Phase One of the Information Development Programme. A 4 nations action research programme to develop better access for older people on information about services.
- Aberdeen City Council was invited to host the Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice Launch Roadshow in March 2008 to promote bringing together people from different generations to build more cohesive communities.

## **8.2 Progress on equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people**

### **Community**

- 8.2.1 Support has continued to LGBT groups in the city. We supported Pride in Aberdeen Ltd to organise and deliver the Pride event in June 2007 (Grant assistance of £7,500 was provided plus support in kind).
- 8.2.2 In association with Stonewall Scotland the Council held a Pre Pride reception for community representatives and community planning partners.
- 8.2.3. In association with Terrence Higgins Trust Scotland the Council provides Community Learning & Development worker support to the LGBT Youth group. (Grant assistance of £3,000 was allocated in 2007 – 08 to the group)

### **LGBT History Month**

- 8.2.4 Representatives of a number of services in the council are working with LGBT Youth Scotland and community groups to plan local events to take place in February 2008 LGBT History Month.

### **Workforce**

- 8.2.5 The Council has improved its score – from 43 to 55 - on the Stonewall Diversity Champions' Work Place Equality Index. As a member of Stonewall's Diversity Champions the Council is part of a best practice network on work place matters for lesbian, gay and bisexual employees.
- 8.2.6 A briefing on the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme was delivered to members of the Council's Equality Action Network, senior officers and elected members.

### **Training**

- 8.2.7 The Grampian Domestic Abuse Consortium, in partnership with LGBT Youth Scotland, piloted two multi-agency training sessions – "LGBT issues and domestic abuse".

### **Priority actions 2008**

- 8.2.8 The priority actions below were identified at the Aberdeen Community Planning Equality Conference in November 2007. These are:
- Raise awareness of LGBT issues.
  - All diversity and equality training for staff to include LGBT issues.
  - Provide support and training on LGBT issues for staff in schools.
  - Monitor and address homophobic bullying.
  - Challenge incorrect information in the media, and provide positive messages.
  - Promote and raise awareness of LGBT History Month, Pride, International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO), and World Aids Day.
  - Strengthen community links and support networks.
  - Make sure the community safety needs of the LGBT community are being met.

### **8.3. Progress on Religion/Belief**

- 8.3.1. The Employment Equality (Religion & Belief) Regulations 2003 provides legislation to protect and guard against harassment and discrimination on grounds of religion & belief. However, unlike ethnicity, disability and gender there is not a General and Specific Duty for public services to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of a person's religion or deeply held beliefs.
- 8.3.2. Aberdeen City Council seeks to create an environment where faith and belief are respected and valued. We will ensure that religious observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible. Harassment of people due to their faith or belief will be taken seriously and will not be tolerated in any form in relation to service delivery or employment.
- 8.3.3. This year we have:
- Supported Aberdeen Inter-faith Week
  - Held an annual Holocaust event.
  - Held a Conference on Equalities and Regeneration where the outcomes of the Faith and Religion table form part of a Joined-up Agenda for Action.
- 8.3.4. Our Priority Actions for 2008 will be to:
- Arrange for members of the Aberdeen City Alliance to attend one of the Aberdeen Inter-faith Group events.
  - Link all faith groups together and work to establish a Faith Forum
  - Map the contributions of faith groups to community development

## 9. LEGISLATION

<b>EQUALITY DUTIES</b>	
<b>Race</b>	<p align="center"><b>- General Duties</b></p> <p>Aberdeen City Council, in carrying out its functions, must have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminate unlawful racial discrimination</li> <li>• eliminate unlawful racial harassment</li> <li>• promote equality of opportunity</li> <li>• promote good relations between persons of different racial groups</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>- Specific Duties</b></p> <p>Publish a Race Equality Scheme (RES) (Education Authority to publish Race Equality Policy). The RES must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functions and policies, or proposed policies relevant to duty</li> <li>• Make arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact of policies</li> <li>• Arrangements for monitoring</li> <li>• Publishing</li> <li>• Public access to information</li> <li>• Staffing</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b>	<p align="center"><b>- General Duties</b></p> <p>Aberdeen City Council must, in carrying out its functions, have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminate unlawful disability discrimination</li> <li>• eliminate disability related harassment</li> <li>• promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons</li> <li>• take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons</li> <li>• promote positive attitudes towards disabled people</li> <li>• encourage participation by disabled people in public life</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>- Specific Duties</b></p> <p>Publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) including an Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve disabled people in development of DES</li> <li>• Make arrangements for impact assessments</li> <li>• Gather information in relation to employment, education</li> <li>• Review arrangements</li> </ul>



Gender	<b>- General Duties</b>
	<p data-bbox="472 277 1342 342">Aberdeen City Council, in carrying out its functions, must have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul data-bbox="472 376 1273 481" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination</li> <li>• Eliminate unlawful sexual harassment</li> <li>• Promote equality of opportunity between men and women</li> </ul>
	<p data-bbox="807 519 1098 562"><b>- Specific Duties</b></p> <ul data-bbox="472 566 1398 734" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme showing how we intend to fulfil the general and specific duties and setting out our gender equality objectives</li> <li>• As a listed public sector body with 150+ staff we should produce an Equal Pay Statement</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="472 768 683 799">We also have to</p> <ul data-bbox="472 804 1422 1214" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather information on how our work, services and employment affect women and men</li> <li>• Consult employees, service users, our trade unions and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Assess the different impact of policies on women and men and use this information to inform our work.</li> <li>• Identify priorities and set gender equality objectives.</li> <li>• Plan and take action to achieve gender equality objectives</li> <li>• Publish a gender equality scheme, report annually and review progress every three years.</li> <li>• Publish an equal pay statement and report on progress every three years.</li> </ul>

### **Recent and forthcoming changes in the equalities agenda**

- 9.1 Regulations came into force on 30 April 2007 prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services, premises, education in schools and the work of public authorities. There are similar protections outlawing discrimination on grounds of religion or belief.
- 9.2 It was not necessary for the council to change its existing policies to comply with the new provisions as there has been in place a comprehensive equal opportunities policy since 1997, recognising the need to address inequality on the grounds of religion and sexual orientation, and on wider grounds. Equality was one of the founding principles of Aberdeen City Council.
- 9.3 Briefing papers sent to key personnel and the Equalities Action Network Newsletter raised wider awareness about the regulations amongst staff.

### **Equalities Review**

- 9.4 The Equalities Review was published – a wide ranging independent review chaired by Trevor Phillips examining persistent and longstanding inequalities in the UK.

## **New Equality Bill**

- 9.5 The government published its consultation document, the Discrimination Law Review with proposals for simplifying, modernising and making more effective the framework of discrimination law in the UK.
- 9.6 Officers in the Council working on equality responded to the consultation agreeing that public sector equality duties be extended from the current three (race, disability and gender) to cover all six equality strands. (i.e. to add age, sexual orientation and religion or belief). The duties to be more focussed on outcomes, to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy, but to ensure that requirements were equalised at the highest possible standard.
- 9.7 Over 4,000 responses to the consultation document were received and the government will publish a formal response to the consultation in due course.

## **UK Discrimination Law**

- 9.8 The main pieces of domestic discrimination law that a forthcoming Equality Bill would bring together are;
- Equal Pay Act 1970.
  - Sex Discrimination Act 1975, including the gender duty.
  - Race Relations Act, including the race equality duty.
  - Disability Discrimination Act 1995 including the disability equality duty.
  - Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003.
  - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003.
  - Part 2 of the Equality Act 2006.
  - Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.
  - Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007.

## **Equality and Human Rights Commission.**

- 9.9 On 1 October 2007 the Commission for Equality and Human Rights was launched. The new commission brings together the work of the three previous equality commissions (Disability Rights Commission, Commission for Racial Equality, Equal Opportunities Commission) and also takes on responsibility for other aspects of equality: age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, as well as human rights.
- 9.10 The Equality Act 2006 empowers the Commission to carry out a number of functions and to enforce the law. The Commission can also issue codes of practice, to help others, including local authorities to interpret and abide by laws relating to equality and human rights. The general powers of the Commission are to provide information, advice, undertake research, and provide education and training.

## Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) was completed in respect of the Annual Report on Equality and Communities of Interest on 19 February 2008.

The Annual Report is intended to increase equality of opportunity on the issues and needs as identified by the communities of interest groups are reflected within the plan. The communities of interest forums contribute to the development of Action Plans and to the statutory equality schemes.

The positive impacts of the Action Plan include improving services and access to services for the communities of interest groups.

### Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments – Status report at 28 January 2008.

We have references to 22 Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (these are either in progress, noted for action or completed)

#### Completed

13 recorded as being completed as follows:

<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	<b>Resources Management</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Services – South Area</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Services – North Area</b>
Policy on management of unauthorised Gypsies/Travellers' encampments	Taxi tariff review	Taxi card	Burnside Day Centre
Introduction of short term halting sites	Corporate data protection policy and procedures		
Youth Activities Small Grants	Acquisition of communications data		
English as an Additional Language Service support for immersion			
Eviction of Gypsies/Travellers on unauthorised sites			
International Twinning Budget			
The Local Plan			
Strategic Housing Investment Plan			

## Appendix 2

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS- 2007

	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
Stonewall Diversity Champion – 43% Baseline												
Holocaust Memorial Event – delivered by GREC with sponsorship from ACC												
Delivered successful International Women's Day Event												
Gender Equality Scheme published on website												
EHRIA launched at ECMT												
Briefing SMTs and providing support on EHRIA process												
Training on carrying out EHRIA												
Supported PRIDE in Aberdeen in delivering annual PRIDE event												
Awareness Training for staff, Councillors and Community Councillors on issues around Gypsies/Travellers												
Programme of Presentations from Communities of Interest to The Aberdeen City Alliance:												
Gender												
LGBT												
Age												
Gypsies/Travellers												
Race/Disability												
5 <sup>th</sup> Annual Newsletter of EAN												
The Aberdeen City Alliance Equalities & Regeneration Conference												
Disability Equality Scheme Audit												
Race Equality Audit – Audit Scotland												
Interpreting and Translation ESF Audit												

# Communities of Interest Consultative Forums 2006 – 2007

Name	No of members/average attendance	No of meetings	Main issues addressed
Ethnic Minority Forum	Attendance: 10	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Race Equality Scheme</li> <li>- Events</li> <li>- Holocaust Day, Bicentenary Slavery Event</li> </ul>
Disability Advisory Group	Members: 90 Attendance : 25	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urban Realm</li> <li>- Disability Discrimination Act</li> <li>- Public Transport</li> <li>- Blue Badge Scheme</li> <li>- Housing</li> </ul>
Youth Action Committee	Membership 55/ average att.20	62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intergenerational Bullying</li> <li>- Student Forums Youth Facilities</li> <li>- Housing Alcohol and violence</li> <li>- Masterplanning</li> <li>- Community Planning</li> </ul>
Women's Alliance	Members: 234 Attendance: 124	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- gender pay gap and occupational segregation</li> <li>- women's involvement in decision/ policy making</li> <li>- affordable childcare</li> <li>- domestic abuse and violence against women</li> <li>- women's poverty</li> <li>- women's education</li> <li>- women's access to services</li> <li>- women's work and life balance</li> <li>- organising consultation on the Gender Equality Scheme and International Women's Day Events</li> </ul>
Pride in Aberdeen (LGBT)	Board – 6/4 Pride Event Meetings – 10- 20 Annual Pride events – 1000 – 2000	Board 5 Meetings Pride Event – 11meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- organisation of annual pride event</li> <li>- information about civil partnership registrations and ceremonies</li> <li>- homophobic bullying in schools</li> <li>- International Day Against Homophobia</li> </ul>
Older People's Working Group	20	4	<p>Themes from Older People's Action Plan including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- involvement in local democracy</li> <li>- health and social care</li> <li>- transport</li> <li>- age equality</li> <li>- information services</li> <li>- financial inclusion</li> </ul>
Gypsy/Traveller Information and Education Project	Members: 20 Attendance: 16	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unauthorised encampments</li> <li>- health and welfare needs</li> <li>- education needs</li> </ul>

**EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY PLANNING**

- Make equality visible in community planning
- Ensure we deliver on our responsibilities to mainstream equality
- Put in place the right structures and processes to make the mainstreaming of equality possible

## Equality and Community Planning – The issues

### **What is our vision for the city? And where does equality fit in the picture?**

In the city we are trying to achieve:

- a more equitable, just and inclusive society
- social cohesion – good community relations, strong and inclusive communities
- **and, closing of the inequality gap(s) – in learning, in health outcomes, gender pay gap etc**

Encouraging equal opportunities is an important part of the process to deliver all of the above.

**And Community Planning Partners have responsibilities under the legislation and duties, for example, the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 states that we need to**

**Identify** our action to encourage equal opportunities

**Impact Assess** all policy proposals for equalities

**Engage** with equalities groups / interests

**Build** up our own capacity and the **capacity** of community bodies / equalities groups to participate in community planning

**Share information** about equalities groups

**Monitor and evaluate and report on our performance on equal opportunities**

So within community planning in Aberdeen, **how are we doing** in regard to these responsibilities? And how do we need **to take this** forward?

This year TACA has received a series of presentations on the key equality issues, mostly presented from the perspectives of the city wide community of interest forums.



And, in November a conference on Equality and Regeneration was organised in the city on behalf of TACA. This was a very successful day and a report will be presented to TACA early next year. It would have been good to have more representation from TACA at that Conference to inform the discussions.

Equality needs to be highly **visible** in the community planning structures. We need to raise awareness on equality, and demonstrate we are learning from good practice.

**Community engagement needs to be more joined up.** We made a start with a joint public sector consultation in preparation for our Gender Equality Schemes. We should look for further opportunities to engage jointly in consultation to reduce the risk of consultation fatigue and to target our resources better.

**We need to engage in community capacity building –** communities need to be supported so that they can engage meaningfully in consultation.

**How can structures help the work on equality?**

The voices of equality find it difficult to be heard through the current structures – although the Civic Forum does draw together representatives of the communities of interest groups with the representatives from the neighbourhoods.

The Challenge Forums deliver the Community Plan for the city and targets are set in each challenge area. It is fair to say that most of the challenge forums make reference to equality, but are there **specific targets and action points?**

**How should TACA take on responsibility** for overseeing equality in our Community Plan? Should responsibility be given to each challenge forum? Or is there a better way?

However it is done - we have to place equality within the Challenge Forums, within neighbourhood networks, and throughout our entire community planning process.

**In conclusion**, strong **visible leadership and top level commitment to equality** is essential. This, with **the right structures and processes** will add value to the work of community planning, ensure we meet our **statutory responsibilities**, and create the vibrant and **socially inclusive** Aberdeen we all desire.  
(slide to be projected behind as you speak for 3 minutes)

#### EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

- Make equality visible in community planning
- Ensure we deliver on our responsibilities to mainstream equality
- Put in place the right structures and processes to make the mainstreaming of equality possible