Wolverhampton City Council
Equality Scheme
FOREWORD

This Equality Scheme sets out how the Council will meet its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and is part of an ongoing process to ensure that the Council’s services provide real equality of opportunity and help to promote good race relations in the City.

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry highlighted that inequality and disadvantage are not necessarily the result of an intention to discriminate but can be due to the absence of appropriate systems and policies or to the way that they are put into operation. Wolverhampton City Council is committed to identifying and overcoming any barriers that create disadvantage, eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting good race relations. We are also aware that to do this properly means examining all our activities and services to check whether they are helping to make this commitment a reality.

As elected Members we will take the lead in the Council in ensuring that actions in the Scheme reflect the needs and wishes of communities in Wolverhampton and are effectively implemented. With the assistance of our partners and the involvement of local people the Scheme will be developed and reviewed over the coming years. As one part of this process, please see the form at the back of the Scheme which tells you how to contact us with your comments.

Councillor Roger Lawrence
Leader of the Council

Councillor Paddy Bradley
Leader of the Conservative Group

Councillor Richard Whitehouse
Leader of the Liberal-Democrat Group
INTRODUCTION

The task of promoting, social justice, tackling discrimination and encouraging equal opportunities has been at the forefront of the list of priorities for the Council for sometime now. The Leadership Challenge, the work on developing efforts to obtain Level 2 of the CRE Standard, our revised policy statements in equal opportunities and a range of programmes aimed at encouraging diversity and participation is evidence of the Council’s commitment to improve in this area. I see, therefore, the Council’s first Equality Scheme as a real opportunity to build on this existing working in a way which will ensure that we deliver against the duty placed on us to promote race relations and equality of opportunity and foster social cohesion in the City.

Though the Scheme builds upon the issues in the Race Relations Amendment Act it responds, in equal measure, to all areas of equality. In this respect we have already undertaken some work to check whether what we have done to date has helped to improve the quality of life for all communities in the City and the Scheme details the further work needed to make rapid progress. I am personally committed to the objectives of the Scheme and as Chief Executive of the City Council will strive to ensure that it remains a live document and guides decision making at all levels of the organisation.

Derrick Anderson
Chief Executive
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Section 1

THE EQUALITY SCHEME - A PROCESS OF IMPROVEMENT

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act gives public authorities a new statutory general duty to promote racial equality. This duty is both an opportunity and a challenge. The Council has a longstanding commitment to equality of opportunity but we recognise that, despite this commitment, our progress in some areas has been slow and equality issues have not always been integrated into our work. The new statutory duty therefore not only complements the Council’s Equal Opportunities Policy (see Appendix) and work already taking place to remove discrimination and positively promote equality, it also provides us with a valuable framework for future action.

The general duty of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act requires the Council to:

• Eliminate discrimination
• Promote equality of opportunity
• Promote good race relations

We recognise that the three parts of the general duty are different and that achieving one of them may not lead to achieving all three. For example, actions we take to promote equality of opportunity may not always promote good relations between different groups in the community or in our workforce if those actions are misunderstood or badly implemented. We will consider each aspect of the general duty when reviewing our activities and taking action to meet the specific duties (see Section 3, page 17).

WHAT IS ALREADY HAPPENING?

In April 2002 the Council approved a strategy for mainstreaming* race, gender and disability equality into all its activities. This means that we are going to examine everything we do and ensure that the needs and concerns of all racial groups, women and men, and people with disabilities are being taken properly into account.
This Equality Scheme sets out the actions we will take to get the mainstreaming process underway and also meet our statutory duties. We are focusing on race, gender, and disability because those are the key areas currently covered by equality legislation i.e. the Race Relations, Sex Discrimination and Disability Discrimination Acts. However, this in no way reduces the Council’s commitment to taking action wherever discrimination and disadvantage are found and this Equality Scheme will be adapted to take account of changes in legislation and feedback from local people.

The Equality Scheme is an action plan for the future but it builds on and has important links with work on equalities which is already taking place. The Community Plan, developed this year with our partners and local people, establishes a ten-year vision for the City. The Council’s own Corporate Plan, ‘A Focus on What Matters,’ sets out how we will contribute to those local priorities over the next three years. The elimination of all forms of discrimination and the promotion of equality are central to both plans and to the Council’s vision, values and priorities.

*When we refer to ‘mainstreaming equalities’ we mean integrating equalities into all our plans, policies and services.*
The Council’s Core Values

setting high standards

equality and fairness

building partnerships

protecting the environment

honesty openness & accountability

A Council Serving and Responding to its Citizens

ONE CITY

Community Priorities for a Better Wolverhampton

a safe city

a caring city

a learning city

a green city

a city of communities & neighbourhoods

a healthy city

a wealth-creating city
INVolving the public

The Council has a long track record of consultation and community involvement. The views of local people have helped and will continue to help us to develop and improve many of our services, plans and strategies. We have learnt that we need to improve the ways in which we record and use the results of consultations and then let the community know what we have done. We also need to make sure that all our community involvement and feedback processes are inclusive of all groups who may be affected by our actions.

Details of how we intend to involve our staff in our equality mainstreaming plans are set out in section 3, page 24.

working in partnership

The Council believes that working in partnership with other public agencies, with voluntary and community groups and with the private sector is essential if real and lasting progress is to be made in reducing inequalities in the City. The Wolverhampton Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership for the City), which brings together a wide range of existing partnerships, has signed up to the priorities in the Community Plan and has developed a policy statement on equality and social inclusion and a commitment to promoting community cohesion. A number of the partnerships are specifically focused on the promotion of race equality such as the Leadership Challenge, All Cultures One Voice (ACOV), Wolverhampton Partnership Against Racial Harassment (WPARH), the Black and Ethnic Minority Experience (BEME) project, and the BME Consortium. Others focus on specific issues such as crime and disorder, neighbourhood renewal, the economy, improving health and wellbeing, promoting sustainability and lifelong learning, improving the way we work with and support children, young people and their families. Equality and social inclusion are integral to the work of all partnerships in the
City and the Council has a key part to play in ensuring that those issues remain high on our agendas. Further details on the work of individual partnerships are given in the Community Plan and the Council’s Best Value Performance Plan for 2002.

We are also working closely with other public sector agencies on our responses to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. Although each of us is separately responsible for our action plans to promote racial equality we will work together whenever joint initiatives are likely to benefit the community. The first of our joint information sessions on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and our individual Schemes will be held at the City Action Forum on 18 September 2002.

**COUNCIL SERVICES**

Many services provided by the Council are already working proactively on improving their accessibility and responsiveness to the needs of the communities of Wolverhampton.

**Examples of work already undertaken to make services more more accessible and sensitive to the needs of community groups.**

**Regeneration & Transportation**
- has published a Black & Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy with improved allocations to meet the needs of BME communities.
- is undertaking a ‘people needs’ audit and research to establish the needs of black & minority ethnic service users.

**Social Care & Housing**
- works with a Black Elders’ Forum to support the planning and development of health and social services.
- has consulted with adults with learning disabilities, and their carers, from black and minority ethnic communities to establish their experiences of services and preferences for future developments.
- has gathered information on the ethnicity of service users with physical and sensory disabilities as part of a Best Value review.
Lifelong Learning
- has appointed a Deaf worker to liaise with the Deaf community as part of education support services.
- is providing a libraries deposit collection in temples and other community facilities in response to research into community needs.
- is working with children with disabilities on adventure playgrounds.
- has established a Disability Forum to improve participation and involvement in sports and recreation.

Law & Resources
- is piloting a Saturday burial service to meet faith/cultural needs.
- is making access improvements to markets and the Civic Centre.
- has piloted initiatives to improve access to voting for blind and partially sighted people.

Finance & Physical Resources
- has introduced leaflets in minority languages and large print, and hearing loops at reception counters.
- provides assisted wheelie bin ‘pull-outs’ for disabled and older people.
- has led a West Midlands wide initiative to agree a Standard for Racial Equality for Council contracts.

Office of the Chief Executive
- leads a forum of community faith leaders.
- has expanded consultation and involvement arrangements to reach under represented groups, including faith communities, unemployed groups and gay and lesbian groups.
Current plans for service improvements.

Regeneration & Transportation
- is planning to monitor planning applications and permissions by ethnicity.

Social care & Housing
- will be auditing services to people with physical and sensory disabilities from black & minority ethnic communities.
- will be addressing bullying as an issue in care planning and reviews for black and minority ethnic children and young people.
- will be developing a computer system accessible to service users, with software in the main Asian languages.

Lifelong Learning
- will be working to increase the attendance of Asian children and children with disabilities in play development activities.
- will be running a project - ‘Balancing the Cultural Scales’ - to increase archive deposits from all minority groups.
- will be working to increase involvement in sport and physical activities by under represented groups amongst Asian communities, the over-50s and people with disabilities.

Law & Resources
- will be making improvements in facilities at Bushbury Crematorium to facilitate cultural washing requirements.
- will be reviewing access arrangements at polling stations.

Finance & Physical Resources
- will be introducing kerb-side recycling with an assistance scheme.
- will be producing an accessible information booklet on Council Tax issues.
WHO WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE COUNCIL’S EQUALITY SCHEME?

The actions set out in this scheme will impact on everyone who lives and works in Wolverhampton. The City’s ethnic diversity is central to its character and is key to the development not only of this Scheme but most of the Council’s policies and services. The wide range of different faith communities in the City is just one of the enriching consequences of this ethnic diversity. Wolverhampton is now also host to around 2000 asylum seekers who need and use our services and contribute to the life of the City.

The following ethnic profile of the City is based on figures from the 1991 census. They will be updated when the new census figures are available in 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black Caribbean</th>
<th>Black African</th>
<th>Black Other</th>
<th>Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>197,216</td>
<td>9,979</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>2,152</td>
<td>27,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.4%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>1,982</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>1,108</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>2,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wolverhampton Council has 12,300 employees many of whom are also residents of the City. They will all be involved in working towards the goals set out in this Scheme. 12.2% of the workforce are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, 1.5% have declared that they have a disability, and 22.2% of our most senior managers are women.
HOW WILL WE MAKE IT WORK?

Decision-making Structure

The Council has 60 Councillors. Following the May 2002 local elections there are: 34 Labour, 21 Conservative, and 5 Liberal-Democrats.

A new decision-making structure was formally introduced in September 2001 and the Cabinet is now the City Council’s main policy-making body. It consists of a group of ten councillors, including the Council Leader Roger Lawrence and Deputy Leader, Peter Bilson.

Each Cabinet Member has responsibility (or a portfolio) for each of the following service areas:

- **Economic Development** - Louise Miles
- **Education** - Helen King
- **Environmental Services** - Pat Byrne
- **Housing** - Peter Bilson
- **Human Resources** - Ian Brookfield
- **Leisure** - Bob Jones
- **Resources and Support** - Andrew Johnson
- **Social Services** - Geoff Foster
- **Transportation** - Bert Turner

Responsibility for these service areas is managed through a Cabinet Team comprised of, at least, four Members. These Teams deal with the delivery of linked services so that different services work more closely, allowing more informed and better decision-making.

We have a separate Cabinet Team for each of the following broad themes:

- **Lifelong Learning**
- **Regenerating Wolverhampton**
- **Social Care, Housing and Heath**
- **Working with Communities and Community Safety**
- **Developing and Supporting the Organisation**
Whilst the Cabinet and the five Cabinet Teams now carry out the Council’s executive role, we have a parallel structure to question, examine and review their decisions. This scrutiny role is carried out by five Monitoring and Policy Development Panels (MPDPs) plus an overall Co-ordinating MPDP. From January 2003 the Council will also operate a Health Scrutiny Panel which will examine policy development and health inequalities within health-related services. The MPDPs are made up of councillors who do not sit on Cabinet Teams as well as a range of individuals or representatives from outside groups. MPDPs are able to cross-examine officers, as well as Cabinet Members, about key policies and decisions. They also have an important policy development role. Wolverhampton residents are welcome to attend and make representations to the MPDPs, some of which are held in different locations across the City.

A diagram showing the new structure and responsibilities can be seen at the end of this Section, page 14.

The Council, together with other agencies, has established eight new Area Forums across the City. These also will give local communities the chance to have a greater say and influence the decisions that are made about services affecting their area.

Organisational Structure

The delivery of the Council’s services and decisions about how they are managed takes place through the Chief Executive’s Office and five Service Groups. Work on Public Health-related services is undertaken by the Joint Director of Public Health, appointed by the Council and the City’s Primary Care Trust.
Chief Executive - Derrick Anderson

Service Group

Lifelong Learning
Social Care, Housing and Health
Regeneration and Transportation
Law and Resources
Finance and Physical Resources

Co-ordinating Director

Roy Lockwood
Jeff Webster
Steve Boyes
Richard Roberts
Brian Bailey

A diagram showing the responsibilities of each Service Group can be seen at the end of this section, page 15.

Member and Officer Support Structures for Equalities

Members

Council Member support for the actions set out in this Equality Scheme is being provided by a cross-party Special Advisory Group. Later in the year the Council will decide whether this or an alternative structure will be the permanent mechanism for supporting and monitoring the programme.

Recommendations for policy changes to improve equality in services will go to the appropriate Cabinet Team or to Cabinet itself. Equality in employment is the responsibility of the Developing and Supporting the Organisation Cabinet Team. The scrutiny and monitoring of progress in specific services will be carried out by individual Monitoring and Policy Development Panels which members of the public are welcome to attend. We will ensure that any such meetings held to debate the Equality Scheme are well publicised to enable you to hear or contribute to the debate if you wish to do so. Further details on how we are hoping to involve the public are given in Section 4, page 27.
Officers

An Equality Steering Group, comprising senior management representatives from each Service Group, and chaired by the Chief Executive has been established to oversee the implementation of the Equality Scheme and monitor its outcomes. The Steering Group is supported in Service groups by Co-ordinating Directors and their management teams which have a key role in driving forward the actions set out in the Scheme. They will ensure that actions required to effectively mainstream equalities are included in their annual service plans. Work on equality in employment will be co-ordinated by the Council’s Chief Human Resources Officer supported by the Human Resource Managers Group.

The Council also has equality officers who provide Members and managers with advice and guidance on this Scheme and other equality strategies and policies. It is, however, the responsibility of individual members of staff to ensure that equality and fairness are integral to the work they do and the decisions they make. Our employees are at the centre of our determination to make our services sensitive to and accessible to all groups in the community and they will be provided with the support they require to make this happen.
Co-ordinating Monitoring and Policy Development Panel (MPDP)

Overall policy & strategy development

Lifelong Learning

Helping transform communities - whether defined by geography, culture or common interest - into dynamic local groups of residents, working for improvement and change.

Working with Communities and Community Safety

Delivering sustainable planning and economic development, which promotes unity, community and social inclusion. This should also contribute to competitiveness and investment in business, and should respect and enhance the environment.

Regenerating Wolverhampton

Optimising inward investment and working with others - locally, regionally and nationally - to promote the area.

Social Care, Housing and Health

Delivering and maintaining co-ordinated planning, highways and transportation policies and associated infra-structure for the whole of the area, but with particular emphasis on the City Centre and local centres.

MPDP

Providing, directly and through partnership with others, access to and distribution of social care/support services for children and their families, and housing services.

Working with others, to meet the health and welfare needs of citizens and the delivery of all health related services.

Developing

Training development & human resource policies

Strategic oversight of human, financial, technical & material resources and legal and purchasing

Responsibility for the Council's Direct Services Workforce

Markets and other trading operations

Environmental Protection, Trading Standards and Regulatory services

+ MPDP

Promoting quality education and leisure opportunities for personal achievement, fulfilment, enjoyment and fun for all people, thereby enhancing well-being, community participation and City pride.

Working with Communities, partners and other agencies, to deal with crime and the fear and consequences of crime for our citizens.

Working with communities to improve and sustain the quality of their local environment, and the range and quality of facilities available to them.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Group Primary Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIFELONG LEARNING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Improvement Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil &amp; Student Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Minority Ethnic Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leisure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Halls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Galleries &amp; Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Information Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community, Play &amp; Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport &amp; Leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Baths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldersley Leisure Village</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITY SCHEME AND THE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE RACE RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT

The Council is using the specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act as a framework for developing a comprehensive approach to the promotion of equality. The Equality Standard for Local Government will also be used to assist our progress. As required by the Act, we will ensure that actions relating to race, gender and disability equality are separately identifiable.

The specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act require us to:

1. Monitor existing functions and policies for any adverse impact and act on the results.

2. Assess and consult on the potential impact of proposed policies.

3. Publish results of the monitoring, assessments and consultations.

4. Ensure that all sections of the public have access to information about Council services and to the services they require.

5. Train staff responsible for managing and delivering the Scheme.

6. Review employment.

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THESE DUTIES

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF EXISTING FUNCTIONS POLICIES

All major Council functions and policies have been checked for relevance to the promotion of race, gender and disability equality and prioritised for an equality review or impact assessment. The aim of the assessments will be to find out whether our services are meeting the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and are appropriately taking into account the needs and concerns of people from different racial groups, women and men, and people with disabilities. They will specifically indicate whether sufficient equality monitoring information is collected on who
uses or receives the service and who does not; whether information is available on how the service impacts on people from different racial and other groups in the community and what they think about the service; and whether users, particularly from those groups which are often socially excluded, are provided with appropriate information about the service and how to access it. Where there is insufficient data available about the impact of the service on those groups, the first stage will be to establish monitoring and feedback mechanisms to obtain it on a regular basis. Equality impact assessments will wherever possible be included as part of a best value or other scheduled review.

Where gaps are found, action plans will be developed and included in the annual service plans and work programmes for the appropriate Service Group. A summary of the results of assessments will be included in an Annual Report of the Equality Scheme.

The prioritisation of our functions and policies as set out in Section 6, has been undertaken internally but we encourage and welcome comments from individuals, voluntary and community groups and other organisations about those priorities and will make amendments to the schedule if necessary.

**ASSESSING AND CONSULTING ON THE LIKELY IMPACT OF PROPOSED POLICIES**

All significant new policies must be approved by the Council’s Executive. In order to ensure that no policy is agreed without appropriate impact assessments having taken place, the Council is revising the format of all reports proposing new policies.

The Equal Opportunities Implications paragraph, currently required in all Council reports, will be made more rigorous and will in future indicate where appropriate, what consultation and/or assessments have taken place and their outcome.
We consider impact assessments, including appropriate consultation, feedback and monitoring of our services, to be at the core of the Equality Scheme and the Council’s mainstreaming programme. They will not be a ‘one off’ response to the legislation but a continuing part of our work. Training and advice will be provided for all managers on how to conduct an effective impact assessment. The Council has already distributed guidance and a resource pack on how best to involve the public and a Community and Public Involvement Strategy has been produced in partnership with other agencies and voluntary and community groups. However, the assessments will differ according to the relevance of each service to the promotion of equality and our Co-ordinating Directors will be responsible for checking that appropriate assessments have taken place and that the resulting action plans are properly implemented. Details of how we will monitor our overall performance and the results of our actions are given in Section 5, page 31.

PUBLISHING RESULTS

We intend to use a variety of ways of letting the public and our employees know what progress we are making. It is only by doing so that we will be able to get more feedback and involvement in our equality mainstreaming process. Our methods of communication will include publishing updates in

- Our Best Value Performance Plan
- Our annual Report and Accounts
- The Council’s newsletter
- Human Resources Bulletin to staff
- On our web-site

The yearly report on the Equality Scheme will outline progress on the actions we have taken during the year to promote equality. It will be presented at the City Action Forum and via other mechanisms to be decided in consultation with local people.
Detailed information on assessments, monitoring, or consultation on individual policies or services can be obtained by either contacting the appropriate Service Group or the Council's Equality Section. We will make sure that information is available in community languages and in different formats as requested.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

The Council wants all its services to be fully accessible to all groups in the community. A number of steps will be taken to make sure this happens:

• Information and access arrangements for individual services will be addressed as part of the impact assessment and community involvement processes.

• Training and written guidance to staff will focus on helping them to improve communication with and feedback from those groups which need to have better access to their services.

• An improved approach to the provision of translation, interpreting and signing will be developed.

STAFF TRAINING

The commitment, understanding, and skills of our employees are crucial to the successful implementation of this Equality Scheme. A comprehensive equality training programme therefore began in August 2002 covering our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and how to conduct effective impact assessments. All groups of staff and Members will be trained and resources have been specifically allocated to ensure the programme is adequately supported.

Members of the Council have received a presentation on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and its implications, and the Chief Executive, Co-ordinating Directors and the Equality Steering Group have also attended an initial training session.
As part of our determination to mainstream equalities into all functions and policies, the content and delivery of all staff training and development activities will be reviewed against our commitment to promote equality of opportunity.

EMPLOYMENT

The way we recruit, train and treat all our employees is central to the achievement of our objectives. The principles of equality and fairness have for a long time been integral to the Council’s employment policies and practices but we have been less successful in monitoring the results of our actions and feeding those results into policy change. This will be the focus of our work on equality in employment.

Current Work

The Council has a commitment to achieving a workforce which is representative of the community it serves. Regular workforce monitoring already takes place and there are recruitment targets for minority ethnic employees, women in senior posts, and people with disabilities. An Equality Targets report is produced annually and the latest figures are provided in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minority ethnic employees</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled employees</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in Senior Management</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To make sure that our records are accurate, a full workforce survey in 2000 asked all employees to confirm their ethnic origin and whether they consider themselves to be disabled (using the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition). Monitoring of applicants for jobs in the Council is also carried out and steps are being taken to improve its accuracy. As part of a recent review of our recruitment process, feedback was obtained from internal applicants from groups under-represented in the workforce. Complaints and concerns from individuals and groups in the community are also valuable pointers to where barriers or difficulties may exist.

In addition to recruitment and workforce monitoring, annual learning and development plans record equality information on employees who attend internal and external training and development activities and we keep a regular check on the impact of our redeployment policy and procedures on different groups of employees. Such monitoring information is essential but we are aware that progress will only be made if we use the results of our monitoring to develop action plans for improvement. We have already taken some actions to attract more young people to work for the Council; to encourage and welcome people with disabilities; and to assist the personal and career development of black and minority ethnic employees and women. However we also recognise that there are likely to be different reasons for under-representation in different types of jobs across the Council. A special Working Group has been established to look more closely at this issue and its work will be a key part of our improvement plan.

The Council’s recently approved Human Resources Strategy fully incorporates our commitment to equality and one of its four key themes is ‘Valuing Diversity’. The action plan, which is set out below, includes developing a comprehensive approach to race, sex and disability monitoring of all our employment activities.
Action Planning for Equality in Employment

Valuing Diversity (an extract from our HR Strategy)

We will ensure that our workforce is representative of the community we serve and that no groups of employees or prospective employees will be disadvantaged by our employment policies and practices.

Actions

1. Consult with staff and members of the community from target groups about our advertising and recruitment practices.

2. Develop our capacity, systems and processes to ensure effective equality monitoring outcomes for recruitment, training, promotion, grievances and disciplinaries, leavers.

3. Development of focused action plans at corporate and Service Group level to deal with specific issues raised/barriers found.

4. Ensure that equality principles are firmly embedded in all employment policies and procedures.

5. Introduction of a comprehensive equality training programme for managers and employees.

6. Review of all current learning and development programmes and practices to ensure that understanding of equality and diversity issues is a key component and that all those delivering can transmit that understanding to participants.
The results of the monitoring of all our employment activities will be included in the annual report to Members which, from November 2002, will be expanded to include action plans for all aspects of Equality in Employment.

There will be a fundamental review of our recruitment processes with a particular emphasis on how they are perceived and used by people from different racial groups and those with different disabilities.

Our recruitment target plans will focus on: promotion of minority ethnic staff to senior posts within the organisation; the recruitment of members of the Asian community; improved communication with and from all under-represented groups about our job opportunities and our recruitment processes.

We will develop a Disability Employment Strategy with actions to improve and support employment opportunities for people with disabilities both within and outside the Council.

A staff survey will be undertaken in 2003 to obtain feedback on how our employees feel about working for the Council and how they could be helped to improve the way our services are planned and delivered. The responses of different groups of employees will enable us to see if there are any issues we may need to investigate further.

Our work on Single Status and job evaluation, will address inequalities in pay and conditions for all groups of employees.

Procedures for recording racist incidents involving members of staff will be reviewed and improved.

Together with the Trade Unions and Human Resources Managers we will develop appropriate ways of involving all groups of staff in the implementation of this Scheme and our HR Strategy.
As with functions and policies relating to the Council’s services, all employment activities will be scrutinised to ensure that they contribute to the equality mainstreaming programme and meet our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.

THE RACE RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT AND SCHOOLS

The City’s schools, as public bodies, have a responsibility under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations. They are required specifically to:

- Produce a race equality policy
- Assess the impact of all their policies on pupils, staff and parents from different racial groups. In particular the impact on their pupils’ attainment levels.

The Council’s Education Service, through its Race Equality Strategy, will provide support and guidance to schools on how to meet the general duty. For information about what the school in your area is doing please contact the Headteacher.
Section 4

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

HOW WE WILL DEAL WITH YOUR COMPLAINTS

Complaints, and of course compliments, about the Council’s services or the way they are provided are a valuable source of feedback about our performance. If you contact us about your concerns we will try to resolve the problem informally at first. If this is not possible or if you wish to register a more formal complaint you can do so by telephone, letter, e-mail, fax, in person, or by completing a complaints form. The forms are available at all Council receptions. All complaints are fed back to those who need to know and you will be given a response in writing.

Monitoring the nature of the complaints and compliments we receive helps us to check whether our services are impacting in a negative way on any particular groups or are operating less well in some parts of the City. The Complaints Procedure was reviewed as part of the Council’s Best Value review programme in November 2000. The purpose of the review was to establish whether the Council provides best value in terms of managing complaints (formal and informal), compliments and appeals across the Council, identify actions for continuous improvement and explore alternative options. A five year action plan was developed to improve the existing procedure. A further review of the procedure is scheduled for 2006.

IN Volvement IN THE EQUALITY SCHEME

We welcome feedback on our plans and services at all times in the development and implementation of this Equality Scheme. There are however at least three stages at which the involvement and views of local people would be particularly helpful to our progress.

1. The actions set out in this Scheme are those which the Council believes will enable it to meet its statutory duties and its own equality mainstreaming objectives. We do not view them as ‘one off’ events but
arrangements which will be part of the ongoing work of the Council. We will therefore check with our partners and local people whether any changes need to be made either at this stage or in the future as the Scheme develops.

2. The appropriate involvement of people from different communities in the planning and improvement of individual services will be reinforced through equality impact assessments.

3. Information on our overall progress will be collected regularly and published annually, as will outcomes against equality-related targets. (See Section 5, page 31). These results will form the basis of consultation and feedback on how we are doing and how we might improve our results and our monitoring.

We do however recognise that all public bodies in the City will need to consult the community on their plans to meet the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and that it would not be reasonable for each of us to unnecessarily consult the community separately. It has therefore been agreed that we will share our information and have a joint approach to involving the public wherever possible.

Copies of this Equality Scheme will be made widely available and information sessions will be provided for groups and organisations across the City. We will also use information from our partners and community and voluntary organisations about how best to involve people from all racial and other groups in its development and implementation.
Section 5
MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

It is essential that we are able to check not only that the actions set out in this Scheme are being properly implemented but also, crucially, whether those actions are improving our services to different groups of people.

**Monitoring the Equality Scheme’s Action Plan**

The Special Advisory Group of Members will receive regular reports on overall progress via the Equality Steering Group and Co-ordinating Directors. Feedback from consultations, complaints and compliments, employees, Members’ surgeries, Area Forums etc. will be used to help us to check how we are doing and where amendments to our plans may be necessary.

**Monitoring the Results of our Actions**

The results of our actions on different groups in the community will be measured by an agreed set of performance indicators and will form part of the Council’s performance management arrangements. A number of equality performance measures, as set out at the end of this Section, are already used as part of Best Value, Ofsted, and other inspection and auditing processes. They will be used to track our progress in making a real difference to equality in the City and will be added to by the Council over the coming years as we improve the equality monitoring of our key services. Results of our progress in respect of the following and any agreed additional indicators will be published in the Council’s annual Performance Plan.
EQUALITY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

As the equality scheme develops these performance measures will be changed and improved to appropriately reflect progress made in all our major services.

• The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms.

• The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population.

• The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action.

• The percentage of citizens satisfied with the level of overall service provided by their authority (broken down by ethnicity, gender and disability).

• The percentage of those making complaints satisfied with the handling of those complaints (broken down by ethnicity, gender and disability).

• The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women.

• The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities.

• The percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition compared with the percentage of the economically active disabled people in the authority area.

• The percentage of Council employees from minority ethnic communities compared with the percentage of the economically active ethnic community population in the Council area.

• The percentage of Council buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.

• The percentage of residents by targeted group satisfied with the Council’s cultural and recreational activities.
• Users/carers who said that matters relating to race, culture or religion were noted by Social Services staff.

• The number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population which are provided or supported by the authority.

• Does the authority follow the Commission for Racial Equality’s code of practice in rented housing?

• Satisfaction of tenants of Council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord broken down by black and minority ethnic tenants.

• Satisfaction of tenants of Council housing with the overall service provided by the landlord broken down by non-black and minority ethnic tenants.

• User satisfaction survey covering issues of accessibility, staffing issues such as helpfulness and communications and information including issues such as clarity or adequacy and timeliness of the information.

• The percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people.

• Widening participation in adult learning:
  % of male learners
  % with learning difficulty and/or disability
  % from minority ethnic groups
  % aged 60+

• The number of African-Caribbean boys and mixed race pupils excluded from schools.

• Education attainment levels of minority ethnic pupils

• Education attainments levels of male and female pupils in identified areas.
Section 6
OUR ACTION PLAN

Most of the following actions have been referred to in the different sections of the Equality Scheme. They focus mainly on ensuring we have the arrangements in place to tackle discrimination and promote equality and good relations between different groups in the Community. Action plans and equality targets in specific services will emerge from the impact assessments and make a major contribution to our progress.

All the actions listed will be part of our work programme from September 2002.

To improve Equality in Services the Council will:

- Undertake equality impact assessments of all our relevant policies and services.

- Develop action plans as appropriate to ‘mainstream’ or integrate equalities into those policies and services.

- Publish the results of the assessments annually.

- Provide information sessions about this Equality Scheme and discuss with groups in the community their involvement in its development.

- Ensure that actions and performance measures cover race, gender and disability equality issues.

- Ensure that all our public involvement activities include people from all groups which may be affected by our actions.

- Publish the results of assessments and public involvement in the development of new policies or functions which are relevant to race, gender or disability equality.

- Develop equality performance measures for each of our key services.

- Improve the provision of translation, interpretation and signing services.
• Provide all Members and staff with guidance and training on how to improve the way our services are planned and delivered to different groups in the community.

• Ensure that complaints from all sections of the community are dealt with effectively and fed into service improvement.

• Include progress against the actions in this Equality Scheme and agreed equality performance measures as part of the Council’s performance management arrangements.

• Produce an annual progress report on the above actions and their results.

**To improve Equality in Employment the Council will:**

• Consult with staff and members of the community from groups under-represented in our workforce about our advertising and recruitment practices and develop specific plans for improvement. Areas for focus will include the recruitment of black and minority ethnic staff to senior posts and the recruitment to posts across the Council of men and women from the Asian communities.

• Develop our capacity, systems and processes to ensure effective equality monitoring outcomes for recruitment, training, promotion, grievances and disciplinaries, and leavers.

• Ensure that equality principles are firmly embedded in all employment policies and procedures.

• Review of all current learning and development programmes and practices to ensure that understanding of equality and diversity issues is a key component and that all those delivering can transmit that understanding to participants.

• Develop a Disability Employment Strategy.
• Conduct a Staff survey with a strong emphasis on equality in employment.

• Review and improve procedures for recording racist incidents involving members of staff and the public.

• Develop appropriate ways of involving different groups of staff in the implementation of the Equality Scheme.

The Council will make available the necessary resources to ensure that we meet our statutory duties and successfully implement the actions set out in this Scheme.
# Section 6

**EQUALITY REVIEW SCHEDULES - SERVICES**

**IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BE CARRIED OUT ANNUALLY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Service Group</th>
<th>Policy/Service</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **REGENERATION & TRANSPORTATION** | Economic Regeneration Action Plan  
|                             | Regeneration Zone Action Plan  
|                             | Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy  
|                             | Centre for Engineering Excellence Business Plan  
|                             | St John’s Urban Village Business Plan  |
| **SOCIAL CARE & HOUSING** | Community Care Plan  
|                             | Administration of Blue Badge Scheme  
|                             | Children’s Services Plan  
|                             | Quality Protects Management Action Plan  
|                             | Youth Justice Plan & Operational Policies  
|                             | Strategy for Older People  
|                             | Wolverhampton Health Improvement Programme  
|                             | Health Scrutiny Function  
|                             | Health and Social Care Partnership  
|                             | Health Action Zone  |

Joint performance assessment arrangements with Health Community Partners via Health & Social Care Partnership.
### Lead Service Group Policy/Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Service Group</th>
<th>Policy/Service</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE</td>
<td>Community Strategy</td>
<td>Annual monitoring +3 yearly review</td>
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<td>Corporate Plan</td>
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<td>Partnership Working</td>
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<td>Best Value Review Monitoring</td>
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<td>Public Involvement/Consultation Strategy</td>
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<td>Emergency Plan</td>
<td>6 monthly review</td>
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<td>MPDP Stakeholder &amp; Partnership involvement</td>
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### IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN 2002/3

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<td>Learning Disability Joint Investment Plan</td>
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<td>Strategy for adults with physical and sensory disabilities</td>
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<td>Assessment and Care Management</td>
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<td>Supporting People Strategy</td>
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<td>Housing Benefit Operations</td>
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<td>Homelessness and Housing Advice</td>
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<td>Asylum Seekers Support Operations</td>
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<td>REGENERATION &amp; TRANSPORTATION</td>
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<td>Local Agenda 21 Strategy</td>
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<td>Canalside Quarter Implementation Plan</td>
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<td>Unitary Development Plan</td>
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<td>Wolverhampton City Centre Strategy</td>
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<td>Development Control Practice Guidance</td>
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<td>LIFELONG LEARNING</td>
<td>Annual Library Plan</td>
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<td>LAW &amp; RESOURCES</td>
<td>Corporate Procurement Strategy</td>
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### IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN 2003/4

#### Lead Service Group Policy/Service

| SOCIAL CARE & HOUSING | Services for People with Mental Health Needs  
|                       | Children’s Service Operational Policies  
|                       | Housing Strategy  
|                       | Housing Capital Programme  
|                       | Housing and Support Needs of Young People  
|                       | Tenant Participation  
|                       | Home Sales  
|                       | Rent Management  
| FINANCE & PHYSICAL RESOURCES | Council Tax Collection  
|                       | Debt Management Strategy  
|                       | Banking Services Strategy  
|                       | Cashiering Services Strategy  
|                       | Risk Management Strategy  
|                       | Asset Management Plan  
| LAW & RESOURCES | Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages  
|                       | Electoral Registration and Management of Elections  
|                       | Legal Services  
| REGENERATION & TRANSPORTATION | Building Control  
|                       | Private Sector Housing Strategy  
<p>|                       | Housing Grants Policy |</p>
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<td>West Midlands Sub-Region Economic Development</td>
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<td>Bilston Town Centre Regeneration Strategy</td>
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<td>Supplementary Planning Guidance</td>
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<td>Crime Reduction and Community Safety Strategy</td>
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<td>Voluntary &amp; Community Sector Strategy</td>
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<td>Voluntary Sector Budget and Co-ordination of Grants</td>
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<td>Local Transport Plan</td>
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<td>LIFELONG LEARNING</td>
<td>School Improvement Service Documentation</td>
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<td>Education Development Plan</td>
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<td>Ofsted Inspection Action Plan</td>
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<td>School Organisation Plan</td>
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<td>School Admissions &amp; Transfer Policies</td>
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<td>Early Years Development &amp; Childcare Strategy</td>
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<td>Nursery School Development Plan</td>
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<td>Sure Start Delivery Plans</td>
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<td>School Governor Appointment Procedure</td>
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<td>Behaviour Support Plan</td>
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<td>Youth Safety Strategy</td>
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<td>Adventure Play &amp; Play Development</td>
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<td>Parks and Open Spaces Strategy</td>
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<td>Play Area Development Plan</td>
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<td>Allotments Development Plan</td>
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<td>Sport and Recreation Strategy</td>
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<td>Acquisitions &amp; Disposals - Archives &amp; Local Studies</td>
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<td>Acquisitions &amp; Disposals - Art Galleries &amp; Museums</td>
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**IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN IN 2004/5**

**Lead Service Group Policy/Service**

| REGENERATION & TRANSPORTATION | Tourism Strategy  
|                              | Slum Clearance Programme  
|                              | Policy on Houses in Multiple Occupation  
|                              | Local Area Forum Support  
|                              | Neighbourhood Management Support  
| LAW & RESOURCES              | Vehicle, Public Entertainment and Other Licensing  
|                              | Environmental Health  
|                              | Trading Standards  
|                              | Switchboard and Main Reception  
|                              | Civic Centre & Buildings Management  
| LIFELONG LEARNING            | Admission and Exclusion Appeals Procedure  
|                              | Special Educational Needs Plan  
|                              | Local Learning Plan (Post - 16)  
|                              | Student Services  
|                              | Wolverhampton Adult Education Service  
|                              | Strategic Plan  
|                              | Arts and Cultural Strategy  

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN IN 2005/6
Lead Service Group  Policy/Service

| LAW & RESOURCES | Corporate Marketing and Advertising  
|                 | Corporate Reprographics            
|                 | Democratic Support Services        
|                 | Markets Service                     
|                 | Catering and Cleaning               
|                 | Public Conveniences                
|                 | Bereavement Services & Centre       
| FINANCE & PHYSICAL RESOURCES | Information and Communication Technology Strategy |
### EQUALITY REVIEW SCHEDULES - EMPLOYMENT

**IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN IN 2002/3**

*Lead Service Group Policy/Service*

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**IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN IN 2003/4**

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**IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN IN 2004/5**

*Lead Service Group Policy/Service*

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**IMPACT ASSESSMENTS TO BEGIN IN 2005/6**

*Lead Service Group Policy/Service*

| LAW & RESOURCES                  | Early retirement           |
Appendix

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

Wolverhampton Council believes and recognises that the diversity of our population is one of our greatest strengths and assets.

As one of the biggest employers and provider of a wide range of services for local people, the Council is committed to challenging inequality, discrimination and disadvantage. It is also committed to achieving the highest standard of service delivery and employment practice. Equality of opportunity for all sections of the community and workforce is an integral part of this commitment.

The Council will not tolerate less favourable treatment on grounds of: sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, responsibility for dependants, age, trade union or political activities, religious beliefs, or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

The Council seeks to provide a positive role model for other organisations in the community. To achieve these aims the Council will continue to:

• Recognise the varied needs, expectations and culture of local people and reflect these differences in the range, sensitivity and relevance of its services.

• Develop measures to assist older people, those who are unemployed or on a low income, people with HIV and Aids and other socially excluded groups as part of its equality strategy.

• Recognise and challenge institutional racism

• (as defined in the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report by Macpherson) and other forms of institutional discrimination.

• Take action wherever covert and overt racism, harassment, discrimination or disadvantage is found in order to ensure equality of access to employment and services for all.

Appendix

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement
• Apply equal opportunities principles to work undertaken for the Council by all external contractors and other organisations in receipt of Council funding.

• Ensure that all Council employees and customers are informed of the Council’s Equal Opportunities policies.

• Use the Race Relations (1976 and Amendment) Acts, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Human Rights Act 1998, other appropriate legislation and the Commission For Racial Equality (CRE), the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and other Codes of Practice as a framework for action to support initiatives within the workplace and for all sectors of the community.

• Recognise that a representative workforce provides greater sensitivity to and understanding of community needs.

• Ensure that Members give consideration to equal opportunities in the decisions they take.

The Council fully recognises that elements of its procedures and practices may potentially be institutionally racist and discriminatory.

The Council will challenge and overcome racism and discrimination, both within its own organisation and the wider community. It will undertake audits and reviews to identify and rectify those elements of its own practices with the potential for discrimination or prejudice.

The overall responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy rests with the Chief Executive and Policy Co-ordinator, but all Co-ordinating Directors, Managers and Service Group Personnel Officers are responsible for ensuring equality is effectively integrated, implemented and monitored within their own service areas.
With the assistance of feedback from our employees, community groups and service users, the Council will annually monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of its employment and service policies, and its equality programmes.

If monitoring indicates a gap in our policies, the Council will take action to address this.

Definition of institutional racism is contained within the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report by Macpherson at the Central Library, reference section. Definition also in the Council’s Corporate Personnel Manual, Appendix G29.1

Leader of the Council

Chief Executive & Policy Co-ordinator
HELP US TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

This is our first Equality Scheme and it will be revised annually in the light of consultation and feedback from voluntary and community groups, partner organisations and individual members of the public. If you wish to be involved further or have comments and suggestions on this Scheme please contact Val Brook, Delva Campbell, or Sarah Bidwell in the Equality Section on:

01902 554068/554080/554081 (voice);
01902 554086 (minicom);
policy.and.equality@dial.pipex.com (e-mail)
via our website: www.wolverhampton.gov.uk

or write to us using the tear-off slip below:

Your name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: __________________________________________________________

E-mail Address: ______________________________________________________________

Comments or suggestions on the Equality Scheme
(please use more paper if necessary).

___________________________________________________________________________

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Return this form to:
Equality Section
Law and Resources
Civic Centre
St Peter’s Square
Wolverhampton
WV1 1RG
Wolverhampton City Council’s Equality Scheme in other Languages and formats

The Council’s Equality Scheme sets out what the Council will do to eliminate discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations.

If you would like a copy in your language please tick the box to the right, fill in your name and address and post to the equality Section at the address below.

- Punjabi
- Urdu
- Gujerati
- Hindi
If you require the information in one of the following formats please tick the relevant box and return your details to the address below:

In braille  ❑  On audio tape  ❑

Return this form to:

Equality Section
Law and Resources
Civic Centre
St Peter’s Square
Wolverhampton
WV1 1RG