

EMPLOYMENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

7 JANUARY 2010

DRAFT SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME, INCLUDING DRAFT FAIR ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY

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Performance and Partnerships

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Summary

This report sets out the draft Single Equality Scheme. This document will replace existing corporate equality policies and plans, and includes the draft Fair Access and Inclusion Policy. The action plan accompanying the Single Equality Scheme will be the mechanism for measuring compliance with statutory requirements and performance against equality and diversity targets at a strategic level.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 It is within the Committee's terms of reference to make recommendations on matters regarding employment. This includes consideration of policies that cover more than only personnel issues. Final approval of the Single Equality Scheme is a matter for Cabinet.
- 1.2 Currently, the council has legal duties relating to race, disability and gender. The council's commitment to fairness and inclusion underpins the provision set out in the Council Plan and the Local Area Agreement. The legislative framework is changing and the Equality Act is imminent, in response the Council is developing a Single Equality Scheme (see Appendix 1) to reflect those anticipated changes. The purpose of the Bill is to simplify equality legislation, covering existing strands of diversity race, gender and disability and extending legislation to cover additional strands including age, religion/belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. In doing this, the council aims to meet the requirement to review and refresh the Disability Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme and, also, to fulfil the Race Equality Duty.

- 1.3 In light of inspection feedback, new legislation and existing requirements, the council is taking this opportunity to bring together its equality policies, documents and action plans into one scheme. Medway Council is currently in a good position to respond to these changes because the six strands of diversity that are currently recognised in law have been included in our diversity impact assessment process for a number of years. In addition, the new duty around socio-economic status, should it come into law, has remained high profile through the work of the Social Regeneration team and areas of Children and Adult Services.
- 1.4 This also presents a timely opportunity to fundamentally review the Equal Opportunities Policy as planned and to ensure that our corporate equality statement continues to be fit for purpose. As a result, it is recommended that both are replaced by the draft Fair Access and Inclusion Policy and statement (included in Appendix 1 of this report).
- 1.5 The draft Single Equality Scheme and draft Fair Access and Inclusion Policy were reported to Corporate Management Team and to Directorate Management Teams in October and November 2009. Actions relating to this work fall within existing budgets. Work is ongoing on the draft Scheme to ensure that it takes account of consultation feedback that is still being received.

2. Background

- 2.1 In the recent past, the council has been working to the requirements of the statutory Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. The development of the Single Equality Scheme will streamline current monitoring processes as the relevant actions in the scheme will be embedded in service plans (2010/11) and monitored through the council's performance management system (Covalent). This will make it possible for service managers, Directorates and Corporate Management Team to monitor progress regularly, without any additional bureaucracy, and to report progress accordingly.

3. Advice and Analysis

- 3.1 In recognition of its role as a community leader, service provider and an employer, the Scheme sets out what Medway Council aims to achieve:

'Improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living, working, learning, playing and visiting in Medway is what we want to be known for, and this means understanding the changing needs of our community and working together, so we narrow any gaps we identify and make a positive difference for everyone in the local community, for visitors, and for our workforce.'

- 3.2 To deliver this and the agreed target of the 'achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government (the new national framework for assessing the council's achievement in relation to equality), the Single Equality Scheme must accurately set out the equality and

diversity priorities for the council and it must also reflect the priorities identified by services and stakeholders. Regular and timely monitoring will be important to ensuring the delivery of the identified equality objectives.

- 3.3 The action plan in the draft Scheme is in two parts. The first part uses the Equality Framework headings and shows those actions that are common across all the equality strands. The second part shows those actions that are specific to individual strands. The aim is to ensure that the council takes a joined-up and coherent approach to promoting and delivering fair access and inclusion, without diluting or overlooking issues that affect particular groups or communities. The action plan identifies high-level objectives that are cascaded down into related strategic plans (eg the Workforce Strategy) directorate equality plans, service plans and team targets. At these levels, the actions are more detailed and reflect the remit/activities of individual services.
- 3.4 The Modern and Diverse Workforce section of the action plan sets out the equality and diversity objectives for Organisational Services for the next three years. These have been informed by ongoing feedback regarding staff and service development needs. One objective is the delivery of the Workforce Strategy, which is essential for moving the organisation forward. The Strategy identifies key priorities around building a diverse and representative workforce; improving leadership and management skills and practice; and equipping teams and individuals to deliver effective services that are tailored to local needs.
- 3.5 Both the Workforce Strategy and the objectives for Organisational Services in the draft Scheme build on the work that has been taking place over the past few years to improve the awareness and skills of staff and managers at all levels across a range of key competencies, including equality and diversity.

Achievements include:

- Equalities Working Group established to enable Members and staff Forum representatives to meet annually. Next meeting scheduled for 21 January 2010.
- Improved workforce monitoring and equality reporting for 2007/08 and 2008/09.
- Improved (corporate) diversity training offer for staff and managers, with a new, targeted and action-focused approach being delivered since April 2009.
- Delivering diversity impact assessment workshops for 104 staff since March 2009, plus eight external delegates representing two partner organisations.
- Delivering 33 apprenticeships for 16-24 year-olds since the end of October 2008. Six of those have concluded, of which five apprentices have gained employment with the council (four on a permanent basis; 1 on a temporary basis) and one left for personal reasons.
- Working in partnership with the Kent Equalities Network to develop an improved approach to equality monitoring and to raise

awareness among procurement/commissioning staff of the existing and forthcoming equality duties.

- Embedding diversity impact assessment into policy development and review processes in Organisational Services.

We are not complacent. There is still more to do and this is reflected in the objectives and actions set out in the draft Scheme.

4. Diversity Impact Assessment

- 4.1 On 16 October 2009, an Expert Panel was convened to carry out the diversity impact assessment on the Single Equality Scheme and the Fair Access and Inclusion Policy. There was representation from Medway Human Rights & Equalities Council, Medway Access Group, voluntary agencies in Medway, LSP partnership and Medway Council, amongst others. Suggestions for minor improvements were made but it was agreed that there are no adverse impacts arising from the draft Scheme or draft Policy. The diversity impact assessment is set out in the first appendix of the draft Scheme (attached).

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 This operates at two levels, strategically this area of work has been identified in the Strategic Risk Register, this is being monitored quarterly. Also the council has legal obligations to not only prevent discrimination, but also to actively promote equality. The Diversity Impact Assessment process is in place to address this and the Single Equality Scheme sets out how these obligations will be delivered.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Consultation has taken a variety of forms. Internally, the draft Scheme and draft Fair Access and Inclusion Policy have been discussed at all Directorate Management Teams and at the Equalities and Access Group. In addition, key members of staff had individual meetings. Both the draft Scheme and draft Policy have been shared with the council's recognised trades unions and were discussed at the December 2009 meeting of the Corporate Consultative Committee. The newly formed LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans staff) Forum has responded positively. Externally, a disability equality conference was held in June 2009 and the views captured there have informed the development of the draft Scheme. In total, representatives of over 40 different groups have been consulted. The Scheme also contains actions from the council's three existing schemes that had not yet been completed/achieved and/or continue to be priorities.
- 6.2 More generally, as an authority, we know that findings from internal and external reviews have highlighted the following areas as requiring continued attention. These are addressed in the action plan and performance managers are already working with managers to embed these in service plans:

- need for robust service and directorate monitoring
- improved use of equality data to inform service planning and delivery
- integration of the diversity impact assessment process and findings into service planning.

Improving in these areas will help the council to provide more responsive services and to deliver value for money. This work will provide an evidence base, identifying who our customers are, what services they need and the most effective way(s) of providing them. In turn, and in conjunction with other workforce planning activities, this will highlight the skills, development and support our staff need to be able to deliver high-quality, tailored services and excellent customer care.

- 6.3 Consultation on the draft Scheme and draft Policy continues. The Black Workers Forum and the Disabled Workers Forum are due to respond shortly. In addition, findings from the current Residents' Opinion Poll will be used to inform the final Scheme. Set out in the appendix of the Scheme is a summary of the key themes arising from the consultation. Between now and publication, these links will be further developed and the themes will be shared with managers and mapped to ensure they are adequately reflected in the action plan. The consultation findings that are not appropriate for inclusion in the scheme will be used to inform service planning. In addition, meetings are being arranged for residents with learning disabilities to make sure the documents are relevant and address the issues which have most impact on their lives. The intention is to produce an easy-read version by the time the Scheme and Policy are considered by Cabinet on 26 January 2010.

7. Financial and Legal Implications

- 7.1 Public authorities have legal responsibilities relating to race, disability and gender. The council is required to develop and publish an equality scheme and actions for each of these strands under its statutory duties to promote race, disability and gender. From 2007, the Commission for Equality and Human Rights has had the power to conduct formal assessments and to issue compliance notices in connection with a breach of the general duties; ultimately, these are enforceable in court.
- 7.2 The Single Equality Scheme will enable the council to meet its general and specific equality duties. Having a scheme in place would mitigate against the risk of enforcement action and litigation.
- 7.3 There are no financial implications of the recommendations set out in the report.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That the Employment Matters Committee considers the draft Single Equality Scheme and the draft Fair Access and Inclusion Policy, and recommends any improvements to the final versions of these documents (to be presented to Cabinet for approval on 26 January 2010).

Background Papers

Medway Disability Equality Scheme 2006

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/council/equalops/disabilityequalityscheme.htm>

Medway Council's Gender Equality Scheme

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/council/equalops/60409.htm>

Medway Council's Race Equality Scheme 2008-11

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/council/equalops/raceequalityscheme.htm>

Annual Equality Report to Cabinet, 27 January 2009

http://www.medway.gov.uk/cabinetdecisions-past_issues.asp?ID=1405

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Medway Council

Single Equality Scheme 2009-2012

Medway Council has a vision of Medway as a city of learning, culture, tourism and enterprise, and a Core Value to put the customer – *all* our customers - at the centre of everything we do.

Improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living, working, learning, playing and visiting in Medway is what we want to be known for, and this means understanding the changing needs of our community and working together, so we narrow any gaps we identify and make a positive difference for everyone in the local community, for visitors, and for our workforce.

As Medway's Fair Access and Inclusion policy states:

We will know we are succeeding when, as a service provider:

- Everyone is treated with dignity and respect, in line with our customer service standards
- The services we provide are high-quality and meet the needs of the people of Medway
- Medway people participate in the design and delivery of council services and their views shape improvements
- Equality is fundamental to our procurement and commissioning of services

And when, as a community leader:

- Local people from different communities have similar life opportunities, enjoy positive relationships and take pride in Medway
- The views of all residents are sought after, listened to and respected
- Everyone benefits from the social, economic and physical regeneration of Medway

And when, as an employer:

- Our workforce reflects the diverse nature of Medway's population, understands the value and strength of diversity and respects personal dignity and difference
- We promote fair and inclusive employment practices
- All staff benefit from learning and development opportunities

We will do this

- By knowing our community
- Through leadership and partnership
- With the participation and engagement of local people
- By providing responsive services and high quality customer care
- With a knowledgeable, skilled and representative workforce
- By learning from our mistakes
- By monitoring our practices and policies so we promote equality and diversity
- By fostering open dialogue, communicating effectively and leading by example
- By complying with all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including equal pay.

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The following things will tell us whether we are making a real difference:

- Positive customer feedback and satisfaction
- Improved performance and efficiency
- Our workforce is representative of Medway's diverse communities
- Improving satisfaction with Medway as a place to live

Fair access and inclusion is at the heart of what we do. This document celebrates some of our successes and describes how we will respond to the needs of Medway's diverse community over the next three years.

Medway Council's Single Equality Scheme reviews our progress to date, broadens our approach to incorporate all equality strands and integrates our equality plans into one document. In so doing, it reflects the council's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity through the responsibilities it shares with its Local Strategic Partners.

The Context of Medway's Single Equality Scheme

As a public authority, Medway Council has the following duties under existing legislation in the areas of race, disability and gender.

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - Promote equality of opportunity
 - Promote good relations; and
 - Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- (See Appendix 2 for further details)

This Single Equality Scheme replaces Medway Council's existing Race, Disability, and Gender Equality Schemes (RES, DES, GES), builds on their associated action plans and extends the council's commitment to the other strands of diversity, namely religion/belief, age, gender identity and sexual orientation. It also includes the additional strand of socio-economic status.

The Equality Bill which is due to become an Act during this parliamentary session is expected to simplify equalities legislation. This legislation will set out what the Scheme must address.

All staff, managers and volunteers involved with the council have a role in helping to put our Scheme into practice, as do other people and organisations, including our Local Strategic Partnership partners and our contractors, the voluntary sector and other agencies. Our Single Equality Scheme has been written to strengthen commitment both to equality priorities that we share with our statutory partners, Medway PCT, Police and Fire & Rescue and to highlight actions that are our sole responsibility.

In Medway the Single Equality Scheme is not about form filling; it is about taking practical steps to promote equality and human rights, to make sure all our customers can fairly access and benefit from services that meet their needs. It is about our employment practices, how we deliver services, how we commission them, how we work in partnership with others and how we embed and include equality in everything we do.

This document is a 'live' document which means that it is expected to be developed, reviewed and enhanced on a regular basis. The importance of consulting and

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engaging people, from inside and outside the council and from all equality strands at key points in the development of services, strategies and policies is central to our approach. The Single Equality Scheme, for example, was informed by consultation with over 40 representative groups, organisations and individuals across the equality strands, undertaken during August and September 2009. Appendix 1 lists the groups consulted.

We welcome the participation of interested individuals and organisations and encourage them to help to review this statement, as well as to shape the Scheme in future.

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- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services and customer care
- A modern and diverse workforce

Action Plans

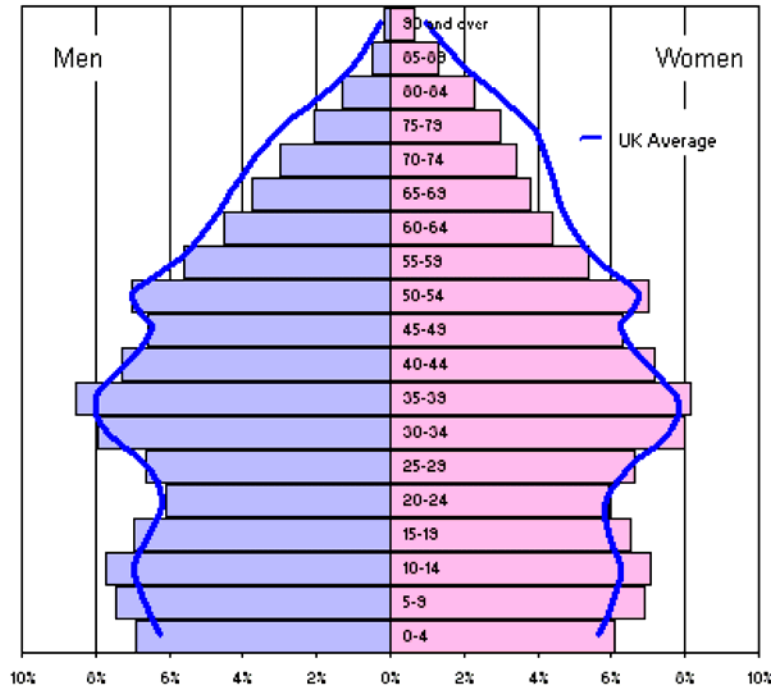
- Council-wide Equality Action Plan 2009 – 2012
- Equality Strand Action Plans: 2009 - 2012

Appendices

About the population of Medway

Medway has the largest population of unitary authorities in the southeast, with an overall resident population (according to Mid-year estimates 2008) of 253,500.

The basic population breakdown (2001 Census figures) is shown in the pyramid diagram below:



By comparison with both regional and UK national figures, Medway is a “young” borough with proportionally more young people (0-15 years) and fewer elderly people (65+ years).

Medway’s population is predicted to increase to 300,000 (subject to confirmation) within 20 years. River and Strood Rural are both areas that are marked for significant development: the population of River ward is projected to almost triple in size between 2001 and 2026 - the population of Rural Strood is likely to almost double in size.

In terms of ethnicity, according to Mid-year estimates 2007 Medway’s population is 92% White and 8% Black Asian and minority ethnic (BAME). 3.7% of Medway’s population identify themselves as being a member of an Asian ethnic group. 1.5% of people are from mixed ethnic groups while both Black and Chinese & other ethnic groups each make up 2.7% of the population.

In terms of the religion or beliefs of people who live in Medway, 72% are Christian, 1.22% are Sikh and 1.05% are Muslim according to the 2001 Census.

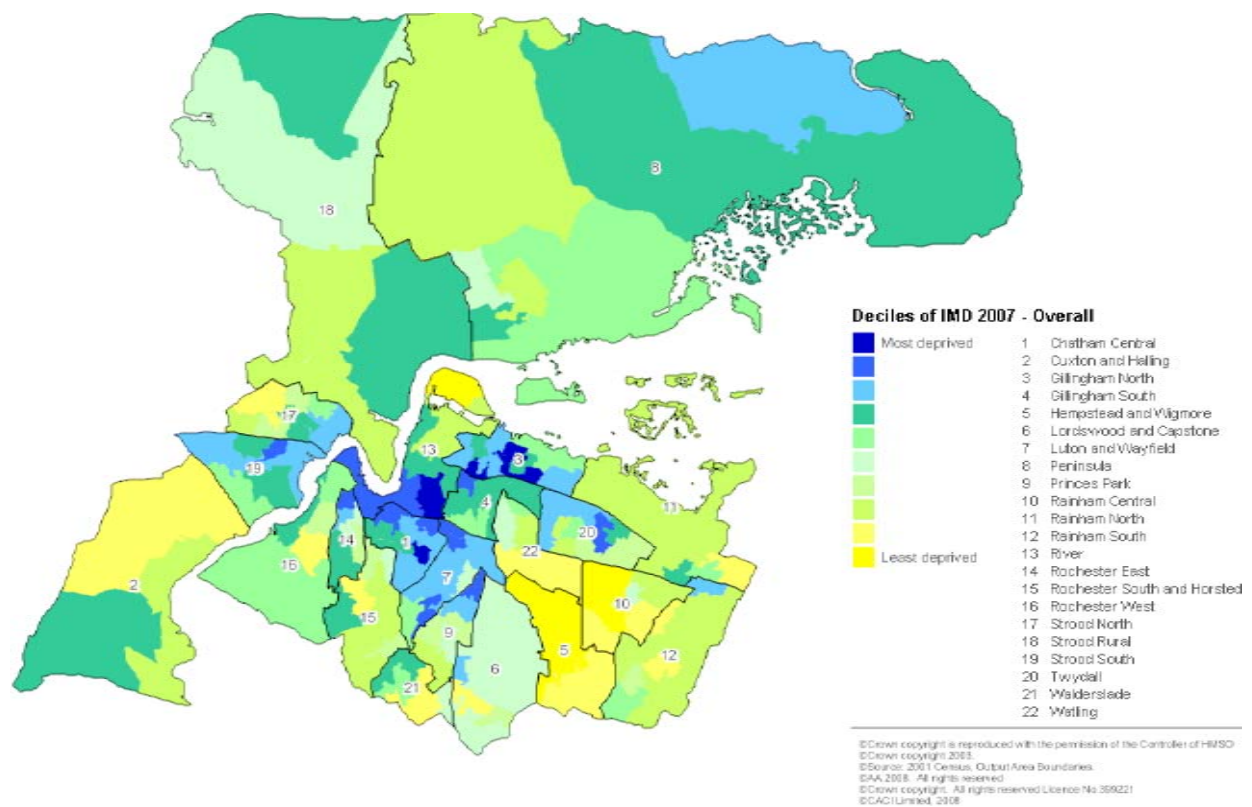
The percentage of households in Medway with one or more people with a limiting long-term illness is 31% according to the 2001 Census, which is less than the UK figure (34%). In 2008, 1,740 disabled people were claiming benefits in Medway. This is equivalent to 1.1% of the working age population, this is just above the rate in Great Britain of 1% (DWP benefit claimants - working age client group)

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The Government estimates that 5-7% of the UK population are gay, lesbian or bisexual. There are no relevant statistics for the South-east or Medway about sexual orientation.

In terms of national ranking, Medway is within the most deprived 43% of local authorities nationally. However this overall position masks extremes of deprivation in Medway, with five areas being ranked as the 10% most deprived nationally and others being relatively 'well off'. Of Medway's adult population, 47% are in full time employment according to 2001 Census. Income deprivation affects over 37,000 people in Medway, while 13,000 experience employment deprivation.

The map below illustrates the pattern of overall deprivation in Medway.



In Medway 22% of children (11,700) and 17% of older people (7,700) live in low-income households.

In 2008 just over 21,000 people in Medway claimed a key benefit. This represents approximately 13% of the working age population. This is higher than the rate in Kent (11.8%) and the South East (9.7%) but lower than the rate in Great Britain (14.1%).

Medway Council is one of the biggest employers in the area. According to the most recent workforce statistics from March 2009, 4.7% of its employees are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, 2.2% of staff declared a disability, and the ratio of men to women is 1:4.

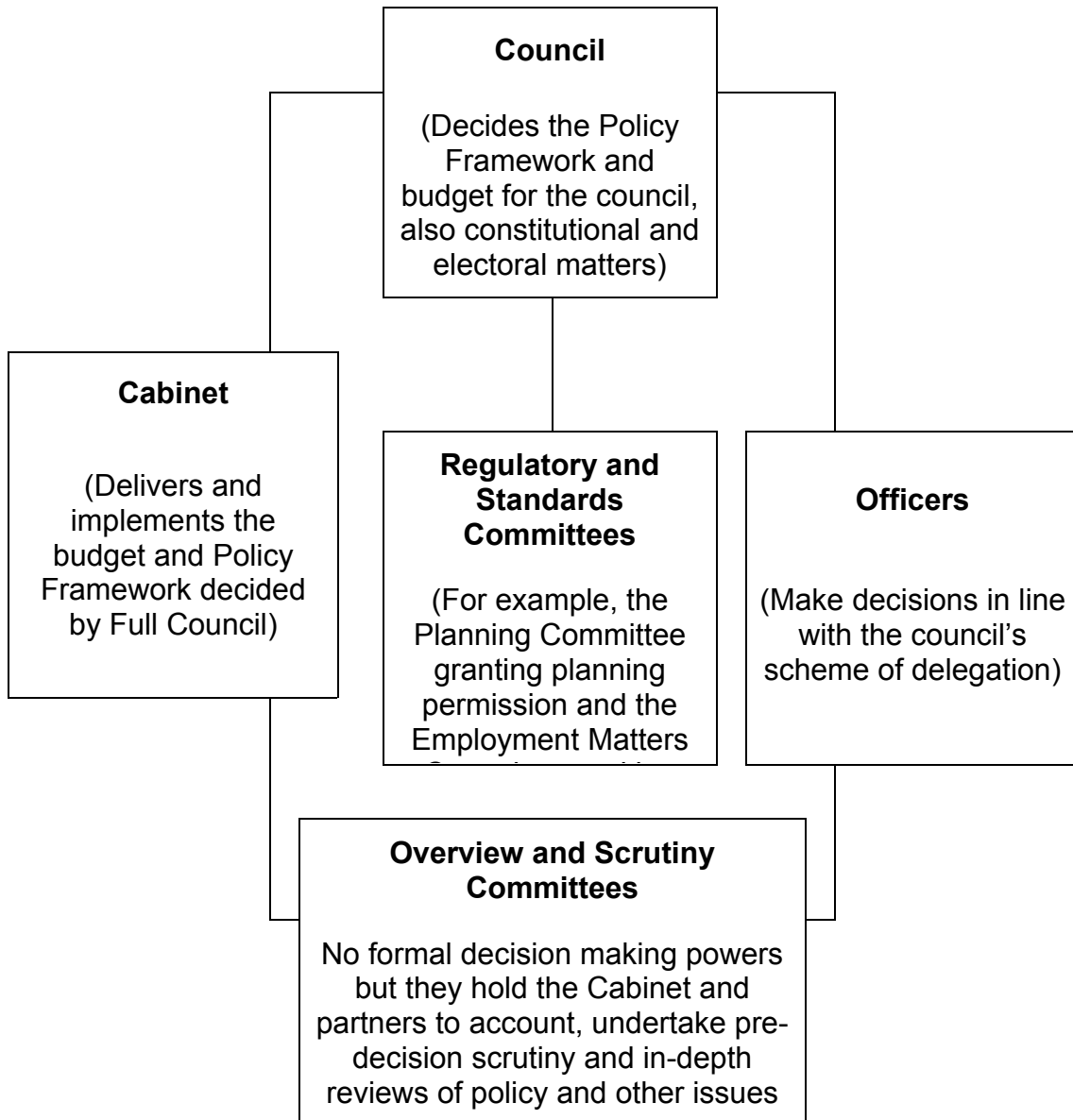
Medway is represented at Westminster by three members of Parliament and in the European Union by ten members of the European Parliament as part of the South East Region. There are 11 parish councils responsible for local facilities in some parts of the area.

About Medway Council

Medway Council is a unitary authority responsible for the delivery of all local authority duties and services in the Medway area. Medway covers the six main geographical areas of Chatham, Strood, Rochester, Gillingham, Rainham, and the Hoo peninsula, a significant rural area.

Management Structure

The chart provides a summary of the various levels of decision-making at Medway Council.



The Full Council

The full council comprises 55 councillors from 22 wards. The political balance is currently as follows:

Conservative	34
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Labour	10
Liberal Democrat	8
Independent	3

The Full Council, collectively, is responsible for setting the budget and the council's main policies (referred to as the Budget and Policy Framework). There are other matters reserved to the Full Council to decide and these are set out in the Constitution (Article 4).

The policy framework currently consists of the following plans and strategies:

- Community Plan
- Council Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Community Safety Plan
- Development Plan*
- Licensing Policy Statement
- Local Transport Plan

* Plans and other strategies, which together comprise the Development Plan (i.e. Local Development Framework and Regional Spatial Strategy).

Executive Decision Making – The Cabinet

The Cabinet is responsible for proposing the policy framework and budget to Full Council and for taking in-year decisions on resources and priorities. The Cabinet delivers and implements the budget and policies decided by Full Council.

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The Cabinet Portfolios cover

- Leader – Democracy Governance and Regeneration
- Finance and Deputy Leader
- Adult Services
- Children's Services (Lead member)
- Children's Social Care
- Community Safety and Enforcement
- Community Services
- Customer First and Corporate Services
- Front Line Services
- Strategic development and Economic Growth

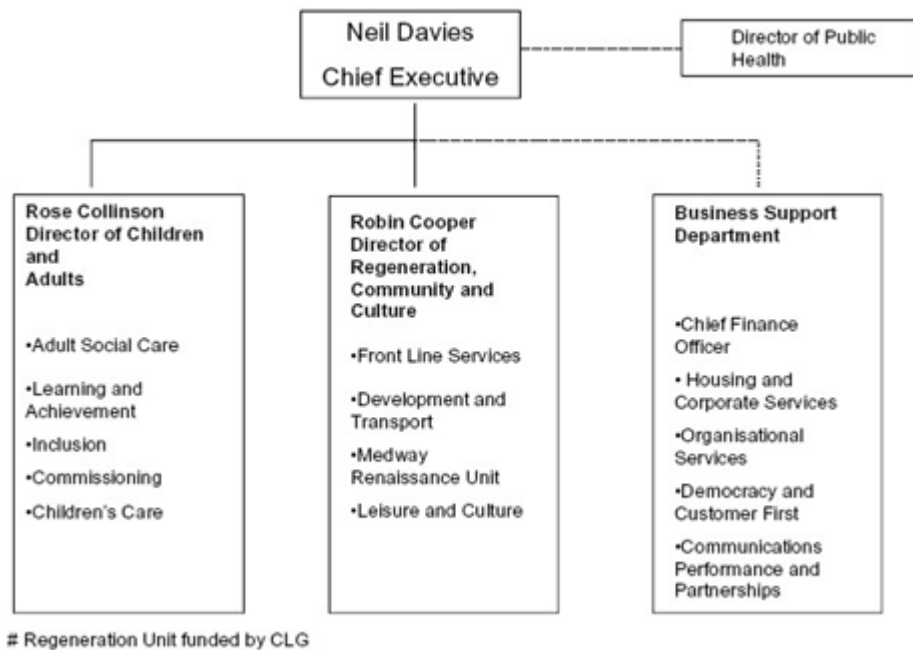
The Regulatory and Standards Committees deal with the functions of the Council that cannot be dealt with by the Cabinet, for example, determination of applications for planning permission. The Employment Matters Committee considers and approves a

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wide range of workforce issues, including the Workforce Strategy and Recruitment and Selection Policy. There are also Committees that must be set up under specific legislation such as a Licensing Committee. The Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining a high standard of conduct by councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives. The committee and its sub committees also deal with complaints about the conduct of Medway's councillors.

The council consists of two directorates and a Business Support department, with the latter reporting directly to the Chief Executive. The directorates are:

- Regeneration, Community and Culture
- Children and Adults – Caring and Learning



The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees play a key role in developing and reviewing policy and holding the Cabinet to account through a facility to call-in Cabinet decisions for review or undertaking pre-decision scrutiny. They also have powers to scrutinise the activities and decisions of some partner organisations including the NHS and the Community Safety Partnership. Each Committee has a membership that reflects the overall political balance of the Council. Cabinet members cannot be appointed to Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Strategic Management of equality issues within the council

The Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) have primary responsibility to ensure that the equalities and diversity priorities are identified and supported appropriately so that equality outcomes are achieved across the council. The CMT and Directorate Management Teams (DMTs) monitor and review progress against set objectives. Currently each Directorate has an equalities action plan which is reflected in team service plans and Personal Development Reviews.

The council currently has two main groups involved in managing and overseeing the development and practice of equalities and diversity issues in the council.

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The first is the Equality and Community Cohesion Group, which comprises council representatives, statutory partner representatives, representatives from local voluntary sector groups and different communities. The Chief Executive chairs the group and alongside working to improve community cohesion across Medway it supports the work related to the indicators NI1 and NI4.

The second group is the Equalities and Access Group. This is an internal group, chaired by the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture. Its remit is to overview the delivery of the council's equality targets and priorities and to disseminate good practice.

Two additional groups, the Black Workers Forum and the Disabled Workers Forum, influence this work. Both staff forums offer a support network for staff and are represented on the cross-directorate Equalities and Access Group and are invited to participate in the quarterly 'Welcome to Medway' sessions held for new starters, and to give consultation feedback on policies and procedures.

Our Approach to Equality: achievements & progress

The council's approach and commitment to promoting equality and diversity is embodied in a number of documents.

Fair Access and Inclusion Policy.

Medway's Fair Access and Inclusion Policy (set out on page 1 of this document) replaces the Corporate Equal Opportunities Policy statement, which was adopted in 1998:

Medway Council wants to be acknowledged as an organisation that promotes fair access and inclusion by effectively meeting the changing and diverse needs of the Medway community, visitors, and our workforce.

It is a natural consequence of our Core Value of putting the customer at the centre of everything we do that we are committed to improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living, working, learning, playing and visiting in Medway.

Achievements

This section describes a few of the ways in which attention to equality and diversity issues is already leading to improved services for all in Medway. The strand(s) of equality which it supports are shown in brackets.

Families developing cross-cultural friendships (race/ethnicity)

The All Saints Sure Start Children's Centre in Chatham/Luton offers services to families with children from pre-birth to the age of five and has several thousand visitors a year. The population in and around the Central Chatham area is diverse, with approximately 43% of families with children under five years of age coming from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds, and with over 35 languages spoken, including Bangladeshi, Punjabi, West Indian, South African, French, Turkish, Czech and Russian. The Centre hosts a relaxed and friendly group called 'Coffee and Culture' that helps to develop cross-cultural friendships. Over 300 different families have been to the group in the last year. Through planned activities families share the customs and cultures of their home countries and have an opportunity to explain and celebrate their own and other people's cultures. Recent evaluations tell us that families appreciate finding out about the values and traditions of other cultures, tasting different foods, trying on the national dress of others, such as a sari or kimono, and joining in with traditional cultural activities such as dancing and African drumming. This has led to better communication and understanding.

Advice about Housing adaptations (disability)

An Occupational Therapist was appointed in Spring 2009 to work as part of the Homechoice team. This enables the Housing team to offer a comprehensive service to applicants with disabilities that are approaching Medway Council for re-housing. Applicants who are being offered properties now receive support and advice to adapt their current properties and when they move into social housing. Since commencement of the role the housing Occupational Therapist has assisted in over 70 re-housing cases with clients of varying levels of disability. The introduction of the post has helped provide a smoother transition for people with disabilities moving into social housing. The post has also helped get the best use from properties that have

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already had adaptations put in place by ensuring that there are suitable applicants that have similar need to the needs that an adapted property can cater for.

Encouraging healthy living by improving sports facilities (gender & disability)

The Kicks premium football facility played host to a five-a-side summer football league for women in 2009, offering teams with a structured training programme and give new teams a chance to get involved in competitive fixtures.

Specially designed scales for wheelchair users are now available in five community settings across Medway enabling people with mobility problems or wheelchair users to keep a check on their weight and manage a healthy lifestyle. A gym group at Strood Leisure Centre's Echoes gym for disabled people has specialist exercise equipment for wheelchair users.

Fostering neighbourhood cohesion (race/ethnicity & socioeconomic status)

A survey of Luton households carried out in 2006-2007 revealed that 1.3% were part of the Slovak community from Eastern Europe: Medway Council took decisive action to address growing tensions and to strengthen community cohesion. During 2007-8, it funded a range of programmes for people in the area to promote community cohesion, including sports and leisure events, cultural awareness and community safety meetings, and advice on gaining skills and education for employment.

Medway's Young Commissioners and Young Inspectors (age & socioeconomic status & disability)

Two initiatives have been developed in Medway to ensure that children and young people actively support the work of the Medway Children's Trust.

Medway Young Commissioners programme was launched earlier this year as part of the national Youth4U Young Inspectors programme. Children and young people between the ages of 8 and 19 (and up to 25 for those with disabilities and/or learning difficulties) from all backgrounds across Medway are helping to shape the services that young people use. Some young inspectors are specially recruited from challenging backgrounds and so have had personal experience of the services involved. They help by evaluating specific services, seeking the views of current service users, and reporting their findings to the Medway Children's Trust and Department of Children Schools and Families.

Better access to transport (disability & geographic area)

To improve access to low floor buses for those with mobility difficulties including wheelchair users and parents with pushchairs and buggies, a programme of bus boarder installations on distributor and residential roads has been introduced. Already there are nearly 300 bus stops with bus boarders in Medway. Medway Council is also working with NHS Medway to improve access to Healthy Living Centres by installing new pelican crossings.

The Villager initiative was established in 2006 as a rural community transport project operating in Medway, and provides services to residents in Medway villages who do not have other options for travel. It runs two 16-seater minibuses with the support of a number of volunteer drivers and complements the public transport service network, by offering new routes and services. In the first two years of operation, around 3000 passenger journeys were made and there were 175 hires by community groups.

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Support for carers (disability & age)

During the Summer of 2007, a steering group was established; comprising representatives from across the adult services division within the council, NHS Medway (Primary Care Trust) and carers themselves to consult widely about priorities and to commission new carers' services. Two new services commenced on 1 April 2009: the first service provides information, training and advice and support, and the second provides a carers' break service. These services are significantly improved from those previously provided and the joint work that has been undertaken with key stakeholders has enabled more funding to be targeted to the provision of support for carers in Medway. By giving better support to carers, Medway Council hopes that people can continue to live independently in their own homes for longer.

Somewhere for young people to go, somewhere to be and someone to talk to (age & disability & socioeconomic status)

In 2006 a youth centre was opened in Lordswood in response to reports of anti-social behaviour amongst young people in the area. The youth centre is now open four nights a week and has worked with over 450 young people, taking part in activities, learning skills and getting involved in community voluntary work. At first it was overwhelmingly young men aged 17 and over who attended, but now many girls attend (the percentage has doubled) and the age-range is from 10 – 19 years. There are clear rules of conduct to ensure that everyone who comes to the centre enjoys the experience and gets the best from it including to "respect the needs and differences of all the other people who use the centre". Since the centre opened Lordswood has witnessed a reduction in anti social behaviour by 65% in all crime, young people continue to achieve positive, recorded and accredited outcomes and community relationships have improved dramatically.

Reaching service users and providers across Medway (all groups)

A Community Involvement Officer was recruited to join the Social Care Commissioning Team this year. The purpose of this role is to consult, involve and engage with both users of services as well as other key stakeholders including providers of services across both the private and voluntary and community sectors. As a result, grass roots/seldom-heard groups have been directly involved in shaping and developing Medway's Advocacy Strategy, for example. We have also continued to deliver 'independence fairs' that showcase services and organisations that provide support to enable older and vulnerable people to remain independent within their own homes.

These are just some of the 'good news' stories about how Medway Council is making a difference for its changing and diverse community. We are proud of the successes we have helped to shape in partnership with different groups across Medway, but we are not complacent.

It is recognised that Medway Council has much to do and listed at the end of this document are the actions that we will be putting in place in the next three years to support its equality work. Together they set out how we plan to improve the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living, working, learning, playing and visiting Medway.

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As described earlier in this document, the Single Equality Scheme incorporates the RES, DES and GES and there are a few actions that have been carried forward into the Single Equality Scheme because they have not been fully achieved yet or because they continue to be important for the council. Action 6.5a about Schools Accessibility Strategy comes from the DES, action 7.1a to reduce the educational attainment gap between boys and girls in Medway schools comes from the GES as do the actions to improve women's feelings of safety (7.2a&b), women's satisfaction with sporting facilities (7.3a) and housing allocation for those with childcare responsibilities or experiencing domestic violence (7.4a&b).

As part of the development of this strategy, we have consulted widely about the needs of the community in Medway. We have also drawn on other consultation exercises (e.g. consultations that informed other strategies such as the Children and Young People's Plan, the Older People's Plan and Medway's Housing Strategy).

The next section describes the priorities identified by people in Medway and shows how they are represented in the action plans.

Consultation

Who we asked for their views

In June 2009, a Disability Conference was held jointly with NHS Medway, which was attended by over 70 disabled people and their carers and support agencies. There were five facilitated workshops, which discussed views and opinions about health inequalities, access to Medway services, individual budgets, communication and employment/benefits

Priorities identified during these workshops relate to more flexible home care and community activities (see action 6.2a-c), more employment and training opportunities for people with learning disabilities (6.3a&b), better understanding of people's needs (1.1a, 8.1, 10.1 and 11.1), better communication and more information about services and benefits (5.3a-d and 6.4a&b), improved access to travel and community facilities (6.5b&c), and more help so older people can maintain their independence (9.3a,b&d) including more support for carers (13.1a).

Both the people attending the Disability Conference and people who were consulted about other strategies (e.g. schoolchildren via the TellUs survey for the Children and Young People's plan, older people consulted as part of the Older People's plan) called for stronger action to be taken to tackle discrimination, violence and harassment (7.5a-c, 9.2a&c, 9.3c and 10.1b), and the need for more support for some young people (6.1a, 9.1a, 9.2b&c and 12.1).

Between August and September 2009, structured interviews and workshop sessions were held with the following groups (or representatives of these groups).

- African Child Association
- Aspire Ability Project – disabled students
- Black History Month Events Planning Group
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- CAB Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Staff Forum

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- Council for Voluntary Service
- Ghanaian student, University of Greenwich
- Kent Small Enterprise Network
- Medway Access Group
- Medway African – Caribbean Association
- Medway Council's Black Workers Forum
- Medway Council's Customer Engagement Manager
- Medway Council's Social Regeneration Projects Officer
- Medway Ethnic Minorities Forum (including organisations below):
 - BME Youth Forum
 - Kent Malayalee Association
 - Kent Ramgarhia Darbar
 - Kut-O Chinese Association
 - Medway Hindu Sabha
 - Medway Towns Gurdwara Sabha
 - Shishu Kishor Club
 - Sikh Sangat Gurdwara
 - Siri Guru Nanak Gurdwara
 - Siri Guru Ravidass Sabha
- Medway Human Rights and Equality Council
- Medway Muslim Forum
- Medway Older People's Partnership Board
- Medway Physical Disabilities Partnership Board
- Medway Voice
- Third Sector Employers Forum
- Universities at Medway Students Association
- Universities at Medway Freshers Fair (including societies below):
 - Afro-Caribbean Society
 - College Health / Sterling House GP Surgery, Luton
 - Creative Arts Society
 - Gateway Chapel / Voice of Praise Choir
 - Radio Sunlight
 - Sikh Society
 - Student Ambassadors
- Valuing Medway People – Learning Disability Partnership Board

Medway Council's has three staff equality forums: Black Workers Forum, Disabled Workers Forum and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans) Forum. The members of all the Forums, together with the council's recognised trades unions, were invited to give their views on the draft Scheme and Policy. Feedback received stressed the value and relevance of locally gained knowledge and intelligence, and the importance of working with LSP partners. The Employment Matters Committee also considered a draft version of the Scheme and Policy in January 2009.

Recurring themes identified during these consultation activities endorse the need for better communication by the Council about services, information and advice (3.3, 7.4), improved access to work experience, training and supported transition into employment – including at the Council (12.1d) – and actions to address discrimination or harassment (9.2a).

Priorities for the future

The council's two core values are

- Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do
- Giving value for money

Six priorities are set out in the Council Plan for 2009-2012:

- a clean and green environment;
- safer communities;
- children and young people having the best start in life;
- older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence;
- people travelling easily and safely in Medway;
- everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration.

The national Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG), which was introduced in July 2009 and replaced the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG), anticipates the Single Equality Bill and is designed to be simpler, to use self-assessment and to focus on local equality needs and priorities.

Medway Council is committed to the Equalities Framework for Local Government; one of the priorities addresses this explicitly (2.5) and the table of actions in the Single Equality Scheme is organised to reflect structure of the EFLG:

- **Knowing Medway's community:** strengthening equalities monitoring & information
- **Community engagement and satisfaction:** developing consultation and social cohesion groups in Medway, the LSP partnership, and working relationships with Third sector providers and contractors
- **Leadership & organisational commitment:** establishing Directorate equality plans, the role of the Equalities and Access Group and the Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) process
- **Delivering responsive services and customer care:** embedding equalities in service plans & delivery, reporting progress & publication of equality outcomes
- **A modern and diverse workforce:** fit for purpose, reflects the local community

The Single Equality Scheme Action Plans fall into two parts:

- Council-wide Equality Action Plan 2009 – 2012, which lists actions and outcomes that refer to processes and good practice that need to be applied consistently across the council and across equality strands
- Equality Strand Action Plan 2009 – 2012, which gives actions and outcomes that are specific to particular groups within Medway.

The Single Equality Scheme action plans contain strategic, high-level, cross-directorate priorities only; directorate equality plans include the actions relevant to their responsibilities and also additional equality actions that form part of the service plans of services and departments within that directorate.

Actions that were in the Race Equality Scheme, the Disability Equality Scheme or the Gender Equality Scheme but are still outstanding or have not been completed have been carried-over into the action plans of the Single Equality Scheme and will be addressed as part of this scheme.

Knowing Medway's community

One of Medway's core values is to put its customers at the heart of every thing it does. To do this effectively the council has to have a good understanding of the needs of different groups of people and to be clear about how access to services could be improved.

There are several ways in which the council gathers views, opinions and information about and from the people of Medway.

As well as information taken from the Census, national and regional statistics, and the findings of other publicly available surveys, the council's cross directorate Research and Information Group meets regularly to discuss statistical and demographic information released by government departments and other national bodies.

Diversity monitoring to understand the profile of our customers so we know who is and who isn't using a service, is carried out by services of the council as a routine part of their business, and our attention to trends in locally-generated diversity information such as the dynamics of the school population can alert us to year-on-year changes without having to rely on Census or mid-term results. It is especially valuable for an area, like Medway, that has ambitious regeneration plans to have current data on which to base its plans for services. Getting smarter about understanding the changing profile of Medway is key (1.1a&b).

Steps are being taken to encourage even greater sharing of diversity information and research findings with Medway's LSP partners too where appropriate. This process of sharing good practice began with the first LSP consultation event carried out in June 2009, which was attended by representatives from NHS Medway, Fire & Rescue and Police services to examine how we can share and make more effective use of information that is already available about Medway. The council's Research and Information Group has been tasked to develop this further in the next three years (1.1c).

One question that continues to prove difficult to answer relates to understanding the incidence and prevalence of different types of disability for different age groups in Medway. This is not easily accessible information and investigations will be made over the next three years to develop our understanding of the number of people affected by different conditions in Medway and their current and likely future needs (1.1d).

Place-shaping, leadership, partnership & organisational commitment

The council is committed to attaining the Achieving Level of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) and a work plan is in place to ensure processes are in place and can be evidenced (2.4a).

Directorates and teams are increasingly embedding equality into their service delivery plans and processes are in place to ensure that papers to Cabinet, including strategic plans, and to Corporate Management Team and Directorate Management Teams have all been diversity assessed.

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Progress is presented in the Annual Equalities report to Cabinet, and this is published on the council's website. At the time of writing, the most recent report considered by Members was in January 2009.

Directorate Equality plans

Directorate Equality plans link the council's equality priorities with service delivery plans. The directorate plans translate corporate objectives into directorate-specific targets that make clear what is expected of services and how they contribute to the achievement of the authority's core values and equality goals. Support and guidance is provided to Directorates to develop service plans and cascade council priorities, including equality objectives, into team targets.

Directorate management teams are responsible for updating directorate equality plans and recording progress across their divisions. Regular review enables directorates to track their progress, identify and share good practice and resolve barriers to success in a timely way (4.1c). To encourage this sharing across the council, a schedule of short presentations by Assistant Directors to the EAG is planned. The ADs will be asked to report equality outcomes achieved, identify good practice and to raise outstanding challenges for discussion (4.1b). At Directorate and Council level, steps will be taken to celebrate positive equality outcomes more formally than has tended to be the case in the past (2.1d).

Diversity impact assessment (DIA) process

The purpose of the Diversity Impact Assessments carried out within the council is to review whether Medway Council's services and policies promote fair access for people from all parts of the community.

Medway Council has, since 2008, used the DIA process to assess policies, strategies, functions and major service changes to ensure that they promote equal access for people regardless of ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender identity, socio-economic status and other factors in Medway.

A major focus during 2008-9 has been on DIAs associated with major council strategies and Medway has been praised for the introduction of our 'Panel of Experts' DIAs. The Single Equality Scheme was subject to a diversity impact assessment using this approach on 16 October 2009. The Panel comprised 20 people who represented minority ethnic, disability, religious and other groups from the community and staff from across Medway Council. The group identified points for clarification, made suggestions for improvement and concluded that there were no adverse impacts (Appendix 1 is the SES DIA screening form).

Council officers' knowledge, skills and practices are improving noticeably, but there is still more work to do. So whilst it has been noted that "there is a sound and effective approach to promoting diversity and equality", more work needs to be done to be sure that good practice is carried out across the council and is shared (4.1a, c&d). Ensuring that the quality of service monitoring data that is routinely collected and analysed is improved is a priority, so that the information can be mapped & disaggregated by equality strand to inform improvements in services (4.1e). There is considerable work to do in this area as the national agenda continues to change.

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Resources are a challenge to ensure that departments embed equality in their service plans (4.2a).

Equality in education and schools

The School Improvement Team from Medway Council works with schools in the area to ensure that the needs of children from different groups are monitored and reviewed as part of each school's improvement and development plan. Governor Services provides training for Governors; its annual training programme includes a session on promoting diversity and equality which includes how to assess the impact of changes. Governor briefings keep governors up to date.

Medway has a growing population of pupils with diverse ethnic backgrounds with currently over 90 languages being spoken in our schools. Our population is changing with increasing numbers of Black African and White Eastern European pupils. Analysis of performance and attainment data is undertaken and support and consultancy provided to schools. Ofsted reports have commented positively overall on school's development of community cohesion and their work in promoting the well being of pupils.

Schools have endeavoured to provide appropriate access to the curriculum for pupils with disabilities by making reasonable adjustments. Specialist support from peripatetic staff is available to support schools. Schools have received advice and guidance on aspects of accessibility including access to the curriculum and information.

The latest data analysis for 2009 shows that there is a difference in the performance of boys and girls in Medway, with girls generally outperforming boys. Medway is participating in a government-sponsored "Narrowing the Gap" project in order to address this inequality (8.1a).

Medway's SACRE agreed syllabus (published in 2006) provides guidance for schools in teaching Religious Education. The local SACRE has also held exhibitions to inform the community about different faiths in addition to the providing resources for loan to schools.

A modern and diverse workforce

Medway Council as an employer

We recognise that our staff are key to the organisation's success. The council's ability to deliver responsive, personalised services will depend in large part on the composition, skills, understanding and commitment of our workforce. We are committed to:

- being an employer of choice;
- developing a diverse and representative workforce;
- promoting fair and inclusive employment practices; and
- delivering best practice in training and developing our people.

Employer of Choice

The council is the second largest employer in Medway after the health service. We aim to lead by example in setting the highest employment standards, embracing

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innovation and helping to generate economic success through encouraging a more skilled and diverse labour market locally.

Our Workforce Strategy for 2009-11 sets out how we will manage, develop and support our staff to deliver excellent, person-centred services to local people (5.1a).

Ensuring that induction, succession planning, talent management, reward and wellbeing, apprenticeships and work placements are all working well will be key to the employment and retention of talented people from across the community we serve. Positive action measures, where appropriate, will be implemented to achieve a proportionate response where under-representation or inequality of access is identified (5.1b-d).

A Diverse and Representative Workforce

An authority whose employees reflect the composition of those who live, work, learn, visit and enjoy Medway is better placed to appreciate and address the diversity of local needs and expectations.

The council has been required to report annually to the government on a number of employment-related performance indicators. Until 2008, we were measured against local and national targets for improvement and compared against other councils in England. Medway Council has consistently performed well when compared with the national and unitary authority averages. However, in common with most other authorities, the diversity of the workforce does not reflect the local population as closely as we would wish.

For example, we know that more needs to be done to encourage and support people with disabilities to achieve employment within the council and our contractors and for staff, generally, to feel confident about declaring any impairment. Valuing Employment Now, Getting a Life and Project Search are key initiatives that the council are taking forward to support people with complex learning disabilities into paid work (7.3b, 13.1d).

Fair and Inclusive Employment Practices

Corporate recruitment and selection has been reviewed and a revised programme was introduced in May 2008, which includes a mandatory equality module (2.1b). Diversity concepts and considerations are integrated in all management training courses commissioned by the council.

Maximising the recruitment and retention of under-represented groups is ongoing. The staff survey is one tool for getting feedback from staff to improve progression opportunities, retention and morale. Application, short-listing and appointment and turnover rates are monitored by equality strand (5.2a).

Medway Council undertook an equal pay audit in 2005, which found no significant gender differences but recommended further monitoring and review. The NJC and GLPC job evaluation schemes are used to assess and benchmark council job roles and salaries. We continue to operate job evaluation review panels with balance across equality groups as far as possible.

We have supported a Black Workers Forum and Disabled Workers Forum for many years, and are working with staff to set up an equivalent group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans employees. The staff forums are a valuable resource for employees and the organisation as a whole (5.1f).

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They play a key role in informing and monitoring policy development and service improvement, including new and revised personnel policies and the development of the new approach to surveying leavers.

Guidance has been sought from Stonewall in 2009/10 on how the council might review its guidance to managers on the employment and provision of services to people who are lesbian, gay and bisexual (5.2b). Similar work with leading trans organisations will be undertaken to meet our legal responsibilities regarding gender identity (5.1e).

Learning and Development

The council is committed to promoting equality in both service delivery and employment. It is important that employees are well informed and participate in ongoing learning and development so that this becomes an integral part of their work. Equality and diversity are key areas in the both the Leadership and Employee competency frameworks (2.1a).

The council has made a commitment that all staff will benefit from the equivalent of at least five day's training per year. Equality training is mandatory for members and staff (2.1b). A variety of different open and bespoke opportunities are offered to achieve this, including:

- Staff awareness training
- Diversity impact assessment workshops
- E-learning courses
- Briefings
- Members' training sessions

Equality training for staff was revised in 2008/09: two new practical courses – Demystifying Diversity and Customer Care and People Managing Not Stereotypes – were piloted in Housing Services during 2009, and these have enabled team members and managers to develop equality action plans collaboratively.

Workforce Monitoring

We review our workforce and compare it with the profile of the local population in order to ensure that the council staff reflect the diversity of Medway's working community. An annual workforce monitoring report is presented to Members and management teams and is published on the council's website. The data is used to make informed decisions about the actions needed to resolve imbalances, to target those actions appropriately, and to evaluate how successful they are.

Workforce monitoring has come more robust over the past two years and good progress in embedding this into the authority's performance management framework is being made.

Community engagement and satisfaction

Effective consultation is a key element of conducting a good impact assessment and the council has a comprehensive consultation policy and good arrangements for gathering the views of local people.

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A notable success has been the establishment of the Equalities and Community Cohesion Group in 2008/9. This brings together partners and organisations and is chaired by the Chief Executive.

The group is working to promote the Community Cohesion targets in the Local Area Agreements (LAA) that relate to the % people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in local area and the % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality. The partnership group has met nine times and has looked at specific issues relating to community cohesion in Medway, such as young people and the media. Members of the group include representatives from the Medway Ethnic Minority Forum (MEMF), Interfaith forum, and Universities. The council plans to develop the reach of the Equalities and Cohesion Group and encourage new and existing communities to be represented more in council advisory groups (3.1a&b).

The council undertakes a residents' opinion poll to gauge satisfaction with our services and areas for improvement and in this survey we have specific requirement that the sample of residents interviewed is representative of the ethnic make up of the population to ensure we can analyse the results by ethnicity.

There is also a standing citizens' panel of over 1500 people that was appointed to reflect the ethnic population of Medway. We regularly survey this group to get feedback on our proposals and plans and make sure that we are taking account of the views of local people in developing our policies.

The council also commissions major research projects on specific topics, such as the STATUS survey for Housing and the survey of the Views of Medway's Children, Young People and their Families carried out as part of the development of the Children & Young People's Plan, and it will continue to seek relevant information that can be used in the future.

Engagement in the review, design and development of strategies and policies

It is important that all sections of the community in Medway are involved, not only in voicing their level of satisfaction with services in Medway or indicating what improvements they think should be made, but also in the design of services, the development of strategies and policies, and the reviewing and monitoring of progress.

Community representatives and the directors of key organisations such as Medway Human Rights and Equality Council, Medway Access Group, Medway Inter-Faith Forum and the Medway Ethnic Minority Forum are members of the Equality and Access Group.

Specific services have also set up service user groups to clarify the needs of their users and to work with the council to respond more effectively to their concerns. An example is carer's consultation that enabled carers and organisations to feedback on the needs of carers.

Strategic Diversity Impact Assessment Panels bring together people from within and outside the council to review major strategies such as Medway's Regeneration Framework, Housing Development Strategy, and the Children & Young People's Plan.

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Consultation findings are increasingly being evidenced in DIAs and inform the planning processes of the council; the quality of the information that is referenced is more robust and extensive than was the case in the past.

Local Strategic Partnership and equalities

The establishment of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in Medway has been a significant landmark in encouraging a greater level of community participation in discussions and decision-making about community initiatives.

We recognise that no one public body can secure this improvement on their own; working in partnership with other public sector bodies and the voluntary and community sector is critical to our success (4.1f).

The council and its partners involved in Medway's Local Strategic Partnership have worked together to develop Medway's second Local Area Agreement. The agreement reflects the council's priorities for improving Medway and sets out five main issues that local people, stakeholder organisations and central government want to see target ed between April 2008 and March 2011. These have been identified and agreed through the Medway Local Strategic Partnership, involving all key local partners and stakeholders, as follows:

- Children, Young People and Families
- Health, Well being and Older People
- Safe and Strong Medway
- Economic Development Transport and Skills
- Regeneration, housing, environment and culture.

Voluntary sector and equalities

Following the benchmark set after consultation with carers, all tender and procurement processes undertaken by the team are being managed through steering groups that have key stakeholder representation on them. These representatives are being and will be involved in developing and designing the service provision as well as in evaluating tender submissions. Our 'checklist for inclusion' ensures that any consultation and engagement activity that is undertaken considers all the relevant issues and that we do not exclude any groups or individuals from participating.

Procurement & commissioning

The Strategic Procurement Team aims to ensure that the principles of equality, fairness and associated equality impacts are identified at the onset of a procurement process and are managed and monitored both in the devising of procurement strategy, through the tendering process and thereafter as an integral part of the contract management process (4.3a). Therefore, all procurement activity will consider equality issues throughout the entire procurement cycle through embedding equalities into:

- Procurement options identification and appraisal
- Specifications and all associated tendering documentation;
- Evaluation criteria setting and throughout the corresponding evaluation process;
- Contract management.

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As procurement at Medway is decentralised, with responsibility for operational delivery residing with departments, the Strategic Procurement Team will work at a strategic level with all departments to ensure that anyone undertaking procurement projects are fully aware of their equality duties and the impacts of equalities issues in relation to their specific projects (2.3a&b).

Responsive services and customer care

The minimum expectation now is not simply that we collect diversity monitoring data on our services, but that we analyse and act upon it, and then are able to follow the progression and improvements that have resulted: in short, that we can point to the difference that our attention to equality issues has made.

Although some parts of Medway Council are incorporating diversity information into their practices well, work is still required to ensure that service monitoring has been implemented on a comprehensive and consistent basis across the council (4.1a-f). A review by the Directorate Performance Managers has resulted in improved awareness and commitment to monitor equality data, although data analysis for service planning is not yet routine in some functions (4.2a&b).

Scrutiny of the quality of DIAs is a priority for the council (4.1a), as is identifying the most effective and accessible way to publish them (4.1g).

Publishing information about equality and diversity in Medway

The purpose of the duty to publish the results of assessment and monitoring is to increase local accountability. The council is keen to enable local people to understand why and how we make the decisions we do and become involved through our consultation and feedback processes. We recognise that in order to build the trust of local people we need to give them feedback on how we have used their views to inform our decisions and so we will work with different groups to develop effective ways to communicate with people from all communities. An easy-read version of this document, for example, will be available and will be distributed throughout Medway. We also recognise that some people distrust ethnic and other forms of social identity monitoring and so we will introduce a programme to ensure that all staff can give a clear explanation of why this information is being collected and how it is being used.

The council publishes monitoring data but this in the main relates to employment monitoring and national performance indicator information.

In terms of service delivery monitoring sections of the council are responsible for publishing their own monitoring data.

Complaints

Medway Council does its best to meet the duties placed upon it by existing and new equalities legislation and is fully committed to implementing the actions set out in this Single Equality Scheme. We want to encourage local people to use homophobic incidents line and the racial incidents line via website (11.1b), or to contact us about other problems and we want to know how to make this most effective (3.2a).

However, it is recognised that, from time to time, the council will not get things right or that people may be dissatisfied with the way services are delivered. The council

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wants people to know that they have a right to complain and to know how to tell us what is wrong.

The Act does not give individuals a right to take legal action against the council for failing to fulfil its general duty (although judicial review through the high court is available), but the council will attempt to deal with any complaints received about its performance in relation to this duty through the council's complaints procedure (see below for further details).

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has the responsibility for enforcing compliance with the specific duties placed on the council. If it is satisfied that a public authority is failing to meet one of its specific duties it has the power to issue a 'compliance notice' requiring the authority to provide details to the Commission about what it is doing to obey the notice and meet the duty. Ultimately, the Commission can ask the courts to order the authority to comply with its duty. Again, individuals do not have a direct right to enforce these specific duties but they (or trade unions, voluntary organisations, etc.) can inform the Commission if they have concerns or complaints about whether the duties are being met and the Commission can then investigate.

Medway Council hopes that anyone with concerns will always contact us in the first instance to give the council the opportunity to discuss the problem and put things right.

The council's complaints procedure

The council has a corporate complaints procedure that allows service users to make complaints, compliments and suggestions about any aspect of the council's services or policies. Leaflets about the procedure are made available to the public and details are also set out on the council's website. The full procedure allows those with a complaint to move through a two-stage process in trying to get the matter resolved and it sets out clear timescales for each stage with the standard being to provide the complaint at both stages with a substantive response within 10 working days. Each directorate of the council has a nominated complaints officer but overall responsibility for complaints lies with the chief executive's office.

To make a complaint to the council please contact:

For further information contact:



Email : customer.services@medway.gov.uk



Telephone : **01634 333333**



Write to :
Customer Services
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent ME4 4TR



Minicom **01634 333111**

Or visit our website: <http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/council/complaints.htm>

Diversity Impact Assessment

On 16 October 2009, an Expert Panel was convened to carry out the diversity impact assessment on the Single Equality Scheme and the Fair Access and Inclusion Policy.

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There was representation from Medway Human Rights & Equalities Council, Medway Access Group, voluntary agencies in Medway, LSP partnership and Medway Council, amongst others. It was agreed that there are no adverse impacts arising from the SES.

Final approval of the Single Equality Scheme is a matter for Cabinet.

Appendices:

1. Single Equality Scheme DIA screening form, 16 October 2009.
2. Equalities Legislation
3. Easy-read version of Single Equality Scheme.

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Council-wide Equality Action Plan 2009 - 2012

Priority	Outcome	Objectives	Responsible Officer	Deadline	
Knowing our Medway community					
1.1	Understand changing profile of Medway and the needs of different groups	High-quality, relevant and timely information available to plan services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To consult with representative groups from each equality strand on a regular basis b. To ensure that commissioned research follows best practice c. To seek information and share findings of consultation and research across council teams and with LSP partners & regional contacts where appropriate d. To consult with NHS Medway and others about the incidence and prevalence of impairment so that nature & size of future needs in Medway can be better forecast 	Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships Assistant Director, Adult Services	Annually (November)
1.2	Strengthen equality monitoring	Equality issues embedded into consultation processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To ensure a consistent approach to equality monitoring is used across the authority 	Assistant Director, Communication, Performance & Partnerships	April 2010
Place-shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment					
2.1	Leadership and management development to have diversity, dignity and inclusion as a core element in the Leadership Framework	Leaders and managers throughout Medway Council champion equality both within the council and with other organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To launch the revised Leadership Competency Framework b. To provide mandatory training for members to ensure they meet equality duties 	Cabinet & Corporate Management Team, with support from Assistant Director, Organisational Services Cabinet & Corporate Management Team, with support from Assistant Director, Organisational Services	2010 Reported annually

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Council-wide Equality Action Plan 2009 - 2012

Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible Officer	Deadline
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. To regularly review objectives set out in directorate equality plans and outcomes achieved d. To find ways to celebrate positive outcomes and good equality practices 	Directorate Management Teams Equalities & Access Group and Directorate Management Teams	Reported annually Reported annually
2.2	Equality successes, actions and processes are disseminated across council and outside	Greater awareness of equality actions and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To take a more influential leadership role b. To publish Single Equality Plan to support & focus work of Equalities and Community Cohesion Group and LSP in Medway on outcomes. 	Equalities & Access Group	March 2010
2.3	Commissioning and procurement process framework in place	Equality is embedded in procurement strategy and management processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To develop and introduce new commissioning framework b. To provide guidance, training and support to carry out equality assessments 	Strategic Procurement Manager and Commissioning and Procurement Managers	To be reviewed annually
2.4	Medway Council to be ready for peer assessment against the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) at Achieving level	Medway is recognised as operating at the Achieving level of EFLG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To be ready for external peer assessment and able to demonstrate equality-driven processes, plans and outcomes 	Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships	Q4, 2009-10
Community engagement and satisfaction					
3.1	Develop reach of Equalities and Community Cohesion Group	New and existing communities are represented in council advisory groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To support community activities which promote good relations between different groups to improve NI1: increase in number of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in local area to 75.4% by 2010-2011 b. To encourage participation of community representatives in Medway Council initiatives 	Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships	Quarterly as part of Council Plan monitoring
3.2	Improvements to perceptions of the	Better and more information about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To gather views of a random sample of complainants to gain a better understanding of 	Head of Customer First Should this be Assistant	Annually end March

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Council-wide Equality Action Plan 2009 - 2012

Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible Officer	Deadline
	complaints handling	customer satisfaction	their perception of the complaint handling process by Q4, 2009-10	Director, Democracy & Customer First instead?	
3.3	Ensure the council is communicating effectively.	All groups have access to and knowledge of services available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To undertake consultation on access to council services and the current availability of information appropriate for a range of audiences b. To review current processes and procedures in light of consultation and national best practice c. To gather feedback about whether changes have made a positive difference for users d. To review and improve effectiveness of how Medway Council targets information & communication for different groups, and what information and advice is wanted 	Assistant Director, Communication, Performance & Partnerships and Assistant Director, Development, Economy & Transport	Annually end March
Responsive services and customer care					
4.1	<p>Diversity Impact Assessments (DIAs) are regularly carried out on strategies, reorganisations, new and existing policies and major service changes</p> <p>Note: The council's impact assessment process includes all legally-recognised and locally-important equality strands</p>	All functions, policies/strategies and reorganisations/ major service changes are regularly impact assessed for equality and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To review outcomes and scrutiny of DIAs at Directorate level b. To present a review DIA outcomes and key issues to EAG c. To monitor outcomes corporately to ensure DIAs are embedded into the core work of the authority d. To strengthen existing peer support arrangements e. To improve quality of service monitoring data routinely collected and analysed, ensuring it can be mapped & disaggregated by strand to improve services f. To identify and address cross department/directorate, cross council and/or cross LSP issues g. To publish DIAs on the council website and/or in other appropriate and accessible ways 	Assistant Directors	To be reviewed annually

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Council-wide Equality Action Plan 2009 - 2012

Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible Officer	Deadline
4.2	Equality actions are reflected in service plans, staff development processes and delivery of services	Directorates and Teams embed equality into strategies, policies and service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To set individual targets in line with performance development review processes b. To monitor, review and evaluate performance on achieving equality objectives in service plans 	Assistant Directors and Service Managers	To be reviewed quarterly (at ADQs)
4.3	Commissioning and procurement services address equality issues with external organisations	All contracts and commissioned services ensure equal access to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To ensure information and specification of commissioned and procured services, products and facilities promote equality and diversity and are consistently described across the council 	Strategic Procurement Manager and Commissioning and Procurement Managers	To be reviewed annually
A modern and diverse workforce					
5.1	Maximising the recruitment and retention of under-represented groups	A workforce that better reflects the profile of the community we serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To implement the workforce strategy action plan and review progress b. To deliver the national Valuing Employment Now programme and NI146 c. To deliver the corporate diversity development programme for staff using a targeted approach d. To revise the corporate recruitment and selection policy and training to ensure that council workforce better reflects Medway community 	<p>Assistant Director, Organisational Services</p> <p>Assistant Director, Adult Services and Assistant Director, Inclusion and Assistant Director, Development, Economy & Transport and Assistant Director, Organisational Services</p> <p>Directorate Management Teams with Assistant Director, Organisational Services</p> <p>Assistant Director, Organisational Services</p>	<p>Annual review</p> <p>Annual review</p> <p>Annual review</p> <p>2010</p>

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Council-wide Equality Action Plan 2009 - 2012

Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible Officer	Deadline
			<p>e. To use the employee survey to identify barriers to recruitment and retention and how they can be overcome</p> <p>f. To support the establishment of a staff forum for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans staff</p> <p>g. To meet with representatives from all staff forums to review progress and develop good practice</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Organisational Services and Directorate Management Teams</p> <p>Assistant Director, Organisational Services and Equalities & Access Group</p> <p>Assistant Director, Organisational Services and Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships</p>	<p>Every time a survey is undertaken</p> <p>2009/10</p> <p>Six-monthly</p>
5.2	Ensuring employment and development promote equality of opportunity and access	A fair and inclusive working environment	<p>a. To ensure that the new duties in the Equality Bill are in place (e.g. equal pay, positive action)</p> <p>b. To undertake Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index assessment</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Organisational Services</p> <p>Assistant Directors</p>	<p>Annual review</p> <p>2010</p>

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Equality Strand Action Plans 2009 – 2012

Race/Ethnicity

Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
6.1	Better analysis of information about race/ethnicity from consultations	Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration	a. To produce annual report on evidence from analysis of race/ethnicity information from consultations about changing profile in Medway and how information has been used to support council decisions	Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships	Annually, November
6.2	Improve community cohesion	Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration	a. To increase the percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area to 75% by 2012 (NI 1)	Assistant Director, Frontline Services, Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships	March 2012

Disability

Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
7.1	SEN children succeed more in learning	Children and young people having the best start in life	a. Gap for vulnerable groups of school-aged children with special educational needs is narrowed: the SEN/non-SEN - achieving KS2 English and Maths threshold (NI 104): to 48 in 2010-2011	Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement	Annually, January
7.2	More flexible home care and community activities	Children and young people having the best start in life Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence	a. Percentage of people using home care increases from last year's out-turn (Annual satisfaction survey of those receiving home care) b. Take up self directed support is increased (NI130): to 30% in 2010-11 and 100% by 2011-12 c. Adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation (NI 145): to 56% in 2009-2010 and 58% in 2010-2011	Assistant Director, Adult Services	Annually June
7.3	More employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities	Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence	a. Adults with learning disabilities in employment (NI 146): to 3% in 2009-2010 and 3.5% in 2010-2011 b. Supported transition period into work for those with learning disabilities so individual and employer can adapt	Assistant Director, Adult Services	Annually June
7.4	More information about benefits/direct payments etc available	Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence	a. Provide more advice and information about claiming allowances & benefits through mailshots and roadshows by Q4 2009-10 b. Take up of personalised budgets is increased (NI130)	Assistant Director, Adult Services	Annually June

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Disability					
Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
7.5	Improved access to facilities	Children and young people having the best start in life	a. Implement the Schools Accessibility Strategy by 2012 to improve the physical environment, access to curriculum and to learning materials for disabled students at schools	Assistant Director, Inclusion and Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement	2012
		People travelling easily and safely in Medway	b. To increase usage of the Guildhall Museum in Rochester by improving accessibility through implementation of the 'Opening the doors' project by March 2012.	Tourism & Heritage manager should this be Assistant Director, Leisure & Culture	2012
			c. To ensure that 80% of bus stops on distributor roads and 30% of bus stops on residential roads in Medway area are accessible to people with disabilities and have bus boarders by 2011	Integrated Transport manager should this be Assistant Director, Development, Economy & Transport instead?	2011
Gender					
Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
8.1	Reduce the educational attainment gap between boys and girls	Children and young people having the best start in life	a. To participate in "Narrowing the Gap" project with the Primary and Secondary National Strategies b. To improve performance across all Key Stages, by raising standards of teaching and learning at all key stages (NI 73): achievement at L4 or above in both English and Maths at KS2 at 75% by 2010-2011 and (NI 75): 5 or more A*-C grades at 57.5% by 2010-2011	Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement	Annually January
8.2	Improve women's feelings of safety whilst out and about in Medway	Safer communities	a. To improve street & environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti & fly posting – NI 195 a, b, c, & d) by 2%, 3%, 1% and 2% respectively by end March 2010 b. Women reporting higher levels of feeling safe in the ROP (2010)	Assistant Director, Frontline Services Assistant Director, Communication, Performance & Partnerships	March 2010 March 2010
8.3	Raising women's satisfaction with sporting facilities	Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration	a. To raise women's level of satisfaction with sporting facilities ROP (2010)	Assistant Director, Customer First, Democracy & Governance	2010

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8.4	Plan housing to meet needs of men and women with childcare responsibilities and those who are experiencing domestic violence	Safer communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase the number of people assisted through the Sanctuary Scheme (prevention of homelessness) to 40 households by March 2010, 55 households by March 2011 and 65 households by March 2012. b. Report quarterly on the outcomes of applications of (1) people experiencing domestic violence and (2) people with childcare responsibilities 	Housing Strategy & Development, with housing allocations and homelessness should this be Assistant Director, Housing & Corporate Services instead?	2011
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Gender

Priority	Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline	
8.5	Work in partnership with Police & Community Safety Partnership to reduce sexual & domestic violence	Safer communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reduce the number of victims by effective use of available services b. Develop a specialist domestic violence corps in Medway c. To reduce the percentage of repeat incidents of domestic abuse (i.e. cases reviewed to a multi-agency risk assessment conference) to 28% in 2010-11 (LAA target/NI 32). 	Assistant Director, Frontline Services and Assistant Director, Housing and Corporate Services	2012

Religion/Belief

Priority	Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline	
9.1	Understand needs of different faiths to ensure services are acceptable	Putting the customer at the centre of everything we do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To develop a policy for the registration of death and for burial to be agreed by the local interfaith group and acceptable to Muslim, Jewish and other people by July 2010. 	Bereavement and Registration Services should this be Assistant Director, Customer First, Democracy & Governance instead?	July 2010

Age

Priority	Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline	
10.1	Fewer young people “not in Education, Employment or Training”	Children and young people having the best start in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To increase percentage of young people achieving L2 or L3 qualifications by age 19 (NI 79): percentage of young people achieving L2 or L3 qualifications at 19 is 82% by 2010-2011 	Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement and Assistant Director, Inclusion and Regeneration Manager	Annually January
10.2	Safeguard children in schools and looked-after children	Safer communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To reduce the percentage of children who have experienced bullying in schools b. To improve educational & health outcomes for looked- 	Assistant Director, Inclusion	Annually January

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			<p>after children (NI 99, 100 & 101): 69%, 61.5% and 24.2% by 2009-2010 respectively.</p> <p>c. To safeguard children by integrating support services & ensure timely and targeted delivery: 100% designated Sure Start children's centres (i.e. 20) by 2010-2011</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement</p> <p>Medway Safeguarding Children Board</p>	
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Age					
Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
10.3	Enable positive ageing in Medway	Older people maintaining their independence	<p>a. To produce a range of specifically-designed housing for people with disabilities so that there are 300 extra care units by 2012</p> <p>b. Take up of self directed support is increased (NI130) to 30% in 2010-11 and 100% by 2011-12</p> <p>c. To report regularly on safeguarding of vulnerable and/or older people in the community</p> <p>d. Percentage of vulnerable people supported to maintain independent living (NI142): 97.2% by 2010-2011</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Housing & Corporate services</p> <p>Assistant Director, Adult Services</p>	Annually June
Sexual Orientation					
Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
11.1	Understand needs of LGB people in Medway	Putting the customer at the centre of everything we do	<p>a. Develop links with Stonewall and local groups to identify priority actions in Medway</p> <p>b. Encourage local people to report homophobic incidents</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships</p> <p>Head of Customer First</p>	To be reviewed annually
Gender Identity					
Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
12.1	Understand needs of transgendered and trans-sexual people in Medway	Putting the customer at the centre of everything we do	<p>a. Seek advice from national groups (GIRES, a:gender and Press For Change) to identify appropriate approach to take in Medway</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Communications, Performance & Partnerships</p>	To be reviewed annually
Socio-Economic Status					
Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline

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13.1	Employment and training support and information opportunities	Children and young people having the best start in life Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Higher percentage of young people from low income backgrounds (NI 106) progressing to higher/further education or employment (targets to be set by HESA – not LAA) b. More part-time work or flexible working or voluntary work for socially excluded adults NI 146 3.5% by 2011 c. Increase the number of unemployed young people that are able to access work experience, jobs and training. Thanks to Council interventions, 350 young people accessing work experience / training by October 2011. d. Develop employer links with universities, offer 24 work placements in council by 2012 	<p>Assistant Director, Learning & Achievement</p> <p>Assistant Director, Development, Economy & Transport</p> <p>Assistant Director, Organisational Services and Assistant Director, Development, Economy & Transport</p>	To be reviewed annually, in January
13.3	Reduce homelessness amongst young people	Young people having the best start in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To support young people, including those leaving care (NI 147): 90% by 2010-11, and young offenders (NI 46): 90% by 2010-2011 	Assistant Director, Children's Care and Assistant Director, Housing & Corporate Services	To be reviewed annually, in June
Local Priority Groups					
Priority		Outcome	Objectives	Responsible owner	Deadline
14.1	Better support of carers	Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence Children and young people having the best start in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To increase the number of carers' assessments (NI135): 16.5% by 2010-2011 b. To develop child carer support services 	Assistant Director, Adult Services Medway Children's Trust	To be reviewed annually, in June

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Appendix 1

Diversity Impact Assessment: Screening Form

Directorate	Name of Policy & Strategy		
Business Support	Single Equality Scheme 2009-2012 Fair Access & Inclusion Policy		
Officer responsible for assessment	Date of assessment	New or existing?	
Allayne Amos	16 October 2009	Existing	
Defining what is being assessed			
1. Briefly describe the purpose and objectives	The Single Equality Scheme is framework document, a statement of how the council plans to continue promoting equality and diversity for everyone in Medway, and to meet the forthcoming Equality Bill. It reviews our progress to date, broadens our approach to incorporate eight equality strands (race, disability, gender, religion/belief, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and socio-economic status) and integrates our plans into one document.		
2. Who is intended to benefit, and in what way?	Everyone who lives, works, learns, plays or visits in Medway, by ensuring that the services and opportunities we offer meet the changing and diverse needs of the Medway community, visitors, and our workforce.		
3. What outcomes are wanted?	The changing and diverse needs of the Medway community, visitors, and our workforce are met, both in terms of impact & quality.		
4. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Contribute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social cohesion, good community relations • Regeneration projects in Medway 	Detract <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional inertia, fear of change • Rapid demographic changes 	
5. Who are the main stakeholders?	Everyone in Medway, Medway Council service users, Medway Council staff and managers, LSP partners, employers, regional and central government.		
6. Who implements this and who is responsible?	Abi Cooper, Manager Research & Review All managers and staff of Medway Council, its partners, contractors, voluntary sector groups.		

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Assessing impact		
7. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>racial groups</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different communities are understood and that there is fair access to services, regardless of ethnicity, nationality or race. Consultation has been carried out with people from a range of ethnic groups in Medway to identify key priorities and concerns: these have been addressed in the SES action plan.	
8. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>disability</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different communities are understood and that there is fair access to services, regardless of disability. Consultation has been carried out with a range of disability groups in Medway (including a conference in May 09) to identify key priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan. An easy-read version of the SES will be published.	
9. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>gender</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs men and women are understood and that there is fair access to services, regardless of gender. Consultation has been carried out widely both within and outside the council to identify priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan.	
10. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>sexual orientation</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different groups are understood and that there is fair access to services. Consultation has been carried out with individuals and groups with LGB interests to identify the priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan.	
11. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>religion or belief</i>?	YES	
	NO	

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<p>What evidence exists for this?</p>	<p>The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different communities are understood and that there is fair access to services, regardless of religion or belief. Consultation has been carried out with the Inter-Faith forum and with individuals from a range of beliefs to identify priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan.</p>	
<p>12. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to people's age?</p>	<p>YES</p>	
	<p><u>NO</u></p>	
<p>What evidence exists for this?</p>	<p>The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different age groups are understood and that there is fair access to services, regardless of age. Consultation has been carried out with representatives of Medway Older People partnership, the Youth parliament and the local University to identify their priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan.</p>	
<p>13. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>being trans-gendered or transsexual</i>?</p>	<p>YES</p>	
	<p><u>NO</u></p>	
<p>What evidence exists for this?</p>	<p>The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different groups are understood and that there is fair access to services. Consultation has been carried out with people inside and external to the council to identify the priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan.</p>	
<p>14. Are there any <i>other</i> groups that would find it difficult to access/make use of the function (e.g. young parents, commuters, people with caring responsibilities or dependants, young carers, or people living in rural areas)?</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>If yes, which group(s)?</p>
	<p><u>NO</u></p>	
<p>What evidence exists for this?</p>	<p>The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different groups are understood and that there is fair access to services. Consultation has been carried out with members of the Social Cohesion Group, external groups and council staff to identify the priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan. An easy-read version of the SES will be published.</p>	
<p>15. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to <i>multiple discriminations</i> (e.g. disability <u>and</u> age)?</p>	<p>YES</p>	
	<p><u>NO</u></p>	
<p>What evidence exists for this?</p>	<p>The SES sets out processes to ensure that the needs of different groups are understood and that there is fair access to services. Consultation has been carried out with people inside and external to the council to identify the priorities & issues: these have been addressed in the SES action plan.</p>	

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Conclusions & recommendation		
16. Could the differential impacts identified in questions 7-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact?	YES	
	NO	
17. Can the adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or another reason?	YES	Not applicable
	NO	
Recommendation to proceed to a full impact assessment?		
NO	This function/ policy/ service change complies with the requirements of the legislation and there is evidence to show this is the case.	
NO, BUT ...	What is required to ensure this complies with the requirements of the legislation?	Minor modifications necessary (e.g. change of 'he' to 'he or she', re-analysis of way routine statistics are reported) Carry out scrutiny of DIAs more effectively and frequently
YES	Give details of key person responsible and target date for carrying out full impact assessment	
Action plan		
Outcome	Actions (with date of completion)	Officer responsible
Better understanding of need	Following publication of Residents' Opinion Poll final report (Dec09), to review whether SES equality actions are still appropriate	Abi Cooper Research & Review Manager
Higher quality of DIAs	Carry out internal and external scrutiny more effectively and frequently	Abi Cooper Research & Review Manager
Compliance with new equality legislation	Review SES to confirm that it meets Equality Bill requirements when it is passed by Parliament	Abi Cooper Research & Review Manager
Planning ahead: Reminders for the next review		
Date of next review	2010	
Signed (completing officer/service manager)	Date	
Signed (service manager/Assistant Director)	Date	

Appendix 2: Equalities Legislation

[Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#) (PDF)

[Employment Equality \(Age\) Regulations 2006](#) (PDF)

[Employment Equality \(Religion or Belief\) Regulations 2003](#) (PDF)

[Employment Equality \(Sexual Orientation\) Regulations 2003](#) (PDF)

[Equality Act 2006](#) (PDF)

[Equal Pay Act 1970](#) (PDF)

[Human Rights Act 1998](#) (PDF)

[Race Relations Act 1976](#) (PDF)

[Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006](#) (link to OPSI website)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1975](#) (PDF)

[Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001](#) (PDF)

The disability equality duty

The disability equality duty was introduced into legislation in the Disability Discrimination Act (amended 2005). It means that public bodies must have ‘due regard’ to the need 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; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons (e.g. the provision of an accessible parking bay near a building, where parking is not available for other visitors or employees.)

Public bodies should report annually on: the steps taken in the action plan, the results of their information gathering and how this information has been used.

The gender equality duty

The gender equality duty was introduced into legislation in the Equality Act 2006, amending the Sex Discrimination Act. It means that public bodies must have ‘due regard’ to the need to:

- to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment (including for transsexual people)
- to promote equality of opportunity between men and women

The specific duties require all listed public bodies to produce a gender equality scheme showing how it intends to fulfil the general and specific duties. It should also set out the gender equality objectives that the authority has identified for meeting the duty.

In preparing a scheme, public bodies should:

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- Consult employees, service users and others (including trade unions)
- Take into account any information it has gathered on how its policies and practices affect gender equality in employment and the delivery of services
- In formulating its gender equality objectives, consider the need to have objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap.

The scheme should:

- Set out how the authority will gather information on the gender equality in employment, services and performance of its functions
- Use this information to review the implementation of the scheme's objectives
- Assess the impact of its current and future policies and practices on gender equality
- Consult relevant employees, service users and others (including trade unions)
- Ensure implementation of the scheme objectives.

The scheme should be implemented within three years. Public authorities should report on progress annually and review and revise the scheme at least every three years.

The race equality duty

The race equality duty was introduced into legislation in the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. It means that public bodies must have 'due regard' to the need to:

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

The race equality employment duty

Under the race equality duty, all listed public bodies must monitor their staff by racial group (using the categories of the 2001 census) for: staff in post and applications for employment, and promotion and training. Employers with over 150 staff must also monitor for training, performance appraisals, grievances, disciplinary action and reasons for leaving their employment. These monitoring findings must be published annually.

Assessment of functions and timetable for undertaking impact assessments on functions and policies.

All new policies going to Cabinet require a Diversity Impact Assessment to be completed.

This timetable will be updated and reviewed as part of the annual review of the scheme.

Directorate & division	Function/policy area	Degree of relevance*	Review dates
Children & Adults			
Adult Social Care			
	Direct services	H	2009
	Learning disabilities	H	2009
	Older people services	H	2009
	Mental health client role	L	2011
	Physical disabilities	H	2009
	Social care commissioning & voluntary sector	H	2009
Learning & achievement			
	Early years	H	2009
	Advisor services	M	2010
	Pupil & governor services	M	2010
	Place planning review & capital programme	L	2011
	Client role adult education	L	2011
	Early years	H	2009
	Advisor and governor services	M	2010
	School Organisation and Student Services	M	2010/11
Inclusion			
	Youth services	H	2008, 2010
	Inclusion	H	2009
	Well-Being		
Inclusion			
	Youth, health & action	H	2008, 2010
	Specialist youth services	H	2008, 2010
	Inclusion	H	2009
	Pupil referral units	H	2009
	Special education needs	H	2009
Commissioning			
	Children's trust	M	2010
	Children's commissioning	H	2009
	Children's and adolescent mental health services	H	2009

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Children's care			
	Looked after children	H	2009
	Children's disability service	H	2009
	Access to learning	H	2009
	Children in need	H	2009
Policies			
	Children and Young People's Plan	H	2009
	School Organisation Plan	H	2009
	Mainstream School Transport Policy	M	2010
	Primary Schools Strategy for Change	H	2009
	School Admission Arrangements	H	2009,2010, 2011
	Youth Justice Plan	H	2009
	Fair Access to Care - Eligibility Criteria	H	2009, 2010, 2011
	Carers Strategy	H	2008/09
	Older People's Plan	H	2008/09
Regeneration, Community & Culture			
Frontline services			
	Highways maintenance	L	2011
	Capital projects	L	2011
	Traffic & parking	L	2011
	Waste	L	2011
	Safer communities	H	2009
Development & transport			
	Development control	L	2011
	Local & regional planning	H	2009
	Integrated transport	M	2010
	Building control partnership	L	2011
	Economic development	M	2010
	Social regeneration & Europe	H	2009
	Tourism	M	2010
Medway renaissance			
	All departments	H	2009
Leisure & culture			
	Leisure & sports	H	2009
	Arts heritage theatres & events	H	2009
	Green spaces & country parks	M	2010
	Libraries	M	2010
Policies			

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	Local Transport Plan	M	2010
	Community Plan	H	2009
	Community Safety Plan	H	2009
	Development Plan	H	2009
	Guide to Developer Contributions	L	On review
	Social Regeneration Strategy 2008-2016	H	2009, 2011
	Medway Learning and Skills Plan	H	2009
	Sustainability Strategy	L	On review
	Local Development Framework	H	2009
	Enforcement Policy and Streetscene Enforcement Strategy	H	2009
	Regeneration Framework	H	2009
	Adoption of Working Together - A Compact for Medway	M	2010
	Regional Economic Strategy	H	2009
	A Building Heights Policy for Medway	L	2011
	Wildlife, Countryside and Open Space Strategy 2008/2016	L	On review
	Economic Development Strategy	H	2009
	Corporate European Strategy	M	2009
Business support			
Organisational services			
	Human resources	H	2008, 2011
	ICT	L	2011
	Business process & improvement	L	2011
	Workforce & Organisation development	H	2008, 2010
	Health & Safety	L	2011
Democracy & customer first			
	Customer first	H	2008, 2010
	Member services	M	2011
	Democratic services	M	2010
	Registrars & bereavement	H	2009
Finance			
	Revenue and Benefits	H	2008
	All other departments	L	2011
Communications, Performance & Partnerships			
	Communications	H	2008, 2010

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	Bidding	L	2011
	Information & research	M	2010
	Safeguarding board	M	2010
	Partnership	H	2009
	Audit and Review (IRO)	H	2009
Housing & Corporate services			
	Legal services	M	2010
	Strategic procurement & Contracts	H	2009
	Property, buildings & design	L	2011
	Licensing & enforcement	L	2011
	Housing	H	2008, 2010
Policies			
	Equal Opportunities	H	2008
	Learning and Development	H	2008/2011
	Bullying and Harassment and Whistle blowing	H	2008/09
	Disciplinary	H	2008/09
	Grievance	H	2008/09
	Capability	H	2008/09
	Reorganisation and Redundancy	H	2008/09
	Redeployment	M	2009
	Job Evaluation Scheme	M	2009
	Annual Leave	H	2008/09
	Other HR policies (17)	M-L	2008-11
	Health and Safety Statement	L	2008/11
	Other Health and Safety Policies (51)	M-L	2008-11
	Performance Plan/Annual Plan	H	2009,2010, 2011
	Licensing Policy Statement	L	2011
	Housing Allocation Policy	H	2008, 2010
	Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy	L	2011
	Race Equality Scheme	M	On review
	Gender Equality Scheme	M	2010
	Disability Equality Scheme	M	2009
	Gambling Act Policy	L	2011
	Carbon Management Plan	L	2011
	Risk Management Strategy	L	2011
	Kent and Medway Structure Plan	M	2010
	Medium Term Financial Strategy	L	2011
	Property Strategy	H	2009

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	Benefits New Welfare Team	H	2008/09
	Recruitment & selection	H	2008/09
All Directorates			
	Major change to service and staffing restructures		2008-2011 ongoing