

REPORT TO CABINET.

REPORT OF: Cllr Frances Cartwright, Cabinet Champion for Equalities

REPORT NO: CHSC0024

DATE:

TITLE:	Equalities Report: Annual review of the 'Corporate Equalities Scheme' and publication of Council's 'Equalities In Employment' monitoring report	
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Key decision	
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Councillor Frances Cartwright, Cabinet Champion for Equalities	
CONTACT OFFICER:	Teena Twelves, Equalities Lead Joyce Slater, Service Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development	
INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:	Carried out and Referred to in paragraph (7) below:	Full impact assessment Required:
Equality and Diversity		
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:	This report is publicly available via the Local Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Corporate Equalities Scheme	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the publication of the annual review of the Corporate Equalities Scheme and Equalities in Employment monitoring report

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT/DECISION REQUIRED

The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on work to meet the commitments made by the Council in the Corporate Equalities Scheme 2009-12, and to meet legal requirements to monitor the Council's workforce under the duties of the Race Relations Amendment Act 1976 (amended 2000).

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

A draft of the Annual Review of the Corporate Equalities Scheme and a report on the Equalities in Employment monitoring report were considered by the Engagement Policy Development Group on Thursday 25 March. The meeting was attended by representatives of local community groups who have been invited to join a new

Community Focus group to work with the Council to progress the equalities agenda. The group recommended that Cabinet adopt the report for publication.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council was required under previous legislation to produce an annual review of its Corporate Equality Scheme. Following the promulgation of the Equalities Act 2010, this will be reviewed in new regulations expected by the autumn of this year. Similarly monitoring of equalities in employment is a requirement under the current legislation.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional resource implications to this report which provides a review of work undertaken to date.

6. RISK AND MITIGATION (INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND DATA QUALITY)

None.

7. ISSUES ARISING FROM EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The report deals with equalities and diversity and our approach to providing equality of service to all groups in our community. The Council's action plan for meeting its equality and diversity commitments and obligations is regularly updated and any areas of work still outstanding at the point of this report will continue to be included in the corporate action plan.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications as a result of the review or the monitoring information provided.

9. COMMENTS OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

I have no specific comments to make in relation to the financial implications of this report.

10. COMMENTS OF MONITORING OFFICER

The Council has duty to monitor the data contained in this report for the purposes stated. In addition, paragraph 5(3) of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001 requires the Council to publish annually the results of all such monitoring. This report is made as the proposed publication of the results of that monitoring

11. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

Not applicable.

12. APPENDICES:

Appendix 1:

2009/10 Annual Review of the Corporate Equality Scheme 2009-2012

Appendix 2:

Appendix 2:

Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report April 2010

South Kesteven District Council

**Corporate Equalities Scheme
Annual Report 2009-10**

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Foreword

We are pleased to introduce this first annual review of the Council's Corporate Equalities Scheme 2009-12. The scheme which was published in April 2009 sets out how the Council meets its statutory duties to promote race, disability and gender equality under the Race Relations (Amendment Act (2000), the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and Equality Act (2006). This review is written as the new Single Equalities Bill is making its passage through Parliament, and will provide a sound foundation for the Council's response to the new emerging legislative framework around equalities and diversity.

Whether dealing with our own staff or with members of the public, the Council aims to treat everyone with respect and to be an organisation that values, promotes and celebrates diversity. We want to ensure that we provide services that reflect the needs of all members of our local community. With that in mind, our commitment to equalities and diversity is reflected across our four priority themes, and this review demonstrates how, whilst meeting those priorities for action, we have been able to build equalities and diversity into our mainstream policies, strategies and work programmes.

We are grateful for the help of our staff, our partners and community organisations who have supported us in the delivery of our objectives in the Corporate Equalities Scheme.

Councillor Mrs Linda Neal
Leader of the Council

Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Cabinet Equalities Champion

Corporate priority themes

The Council has four priority themes, all of which have been assessed for their contribution to equalities and diversity in the Corporate Equalities Scheme 2009-12.

This is important to us	This is what we want to achieve	To achieve this we need to manage the following equality and diversity issues
CUSTOMER FIRST Putting the customer at the heart of all we do	Excellent customer service and customer and community access to services	<p>Ensuring that all people can access our services</p> <p>Ensuring our staff understand the different cultures and service needs of local community groups and individuals, including potential physical, language and geographical barriers that may exist</p> <p>Ensuring that we communicate and engage with people, particularly regarding corrective action being taken to improve services</p>
QUALITY LIVING Protection and improvement of our environment Improvement of health and well being Working with our partners to create communities where people are safe and feel safe	A clear and safe environment in our towns and villages Improved health and well being Vibrant and cohesive communities	<p>Working with police and other partners to better understand and respond to differential patterns of crime and anti-social behaviour affecting young people, migrant communities and older and vulnerable people</p> <p>Ensuring that all group and individual reports of crime and anti-social behaviour are treated sensitively and sympathetically and monitored against recognised equalities criteria</p> <p>Ensuring consistent standards of street cleanliness in all parts of the district</p> <p>Understanding fuel poverty and the impact on the health of older and vulnerable people and taking action to address this</p> <p>Working with partners including health authorities, to address recognised health inequalities within the district</p> <p>Engaging hard to reach groups in</p>

This is important to us	This is what we want to achieve	To achieve this we need to manage the following equality and diversity issues
		<p>local democracy and community based services and activities</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate opportunities for young people and low income households in rural communities</p> <p>Ensuring access to housing and benefits and promoting choices for vulnerable people</p>
<p>GOOD FOR BUSINESS</p> <p>Develop strong, vibrant and inclusive communities with a strong economy</p>	<p>Revitalised local economy and communities</p>	<p>Monitoring trends in financial exclusion and economic divergence in the district (i.e. rich getting richer and poor getting poorer)</p> <p>Understanding and acting on diversity issues in relation to business and employees</p> <p>Supporting everyone to acquire skills to improve employability or encourage entrepreneurship</p>
<p>QUALITY ORGANISATION</p> <p>A council delivering brilliant service with improved performance and satisfaction levels.</p>	<p>An organisation that is customer focussed, which values its staff, and delivers quality services</p> <p>Increased efficiency through the use of technology and working with others</p> <p>Developed and motivated staff and members. A council that listens, consults and communicates well</p>	<p>Valuing all our staff, their diversity of skills and experience and the contribution that they can make to the Council's priorities</p> <p>Ensuring that we gain staff input to service improvements</p> <p>Ensuring that we train and communicate well with the workforce and elected members on the Equality Scheme.</p>

The Council's commitment to equalities and diversity

The Council recognises diversity as a key strength to the South Kesteven district in the realisation of our corporate priorities, whilst acknowledging the complexity of needs and related issues that can arise.

The Council is therefore committed to understanding, identifying and responding to the equalities and diversity issues that are raised by the corporate priorities as set out above, and to ensuring that robust management and decision making arrangements are in place to demonstrate and deliver this commitment in practice.

Section 1: Background

Overview of South Kesteven district

Location

South Kesteven is located in the southwest corner of Lincolnshire, incorporating the towns of Grantham, Stamford and Bourne and an area known as the Deepings with over 100 villages and hamlets covering 365 sq miles of countryside. The administrative headquarters are based in Grantham and the area was one of the fastest growing districts in the UK. The population of the area is estimated by the Office for National Statistics to be 132,000 for mid 2008 which is an increase of over seven thousand since the Census 2001. The GP registrations for the district show a population of 136,353. There was a 14% increase in population between the census' 1991 and 2001, compared to 4% for the East Midlands and 2.5% nationally. The gender split in 2001 was 49% male and 51% female.

Economy

Whilst Grantham has had a long association with the engineering industry, the manufacturing base in all areas continues to expand and diversify along with food processing, cold storage, distribution, agriculture, local government and the NHS, tourism and the service sectors. The unemployment rate for South Kesteven is 3.5% (January 2010) as compared to 4.2% for the East Midlands. The number of VAT registered businesses as at the beginning of 2008 was 5,015 which is an increase on the previous year of 4.37% and indeed has increased year on year for the past ten years or more.

There are a number of major development plans within the district. These include: Grantham for growth, the Bourne core retail area and the Northfield Industrial Estate in the Deepings.

Communications

The area lies approximately 100 miles from London, which is just an hour away by train from Grantham and within easy reach of Nottingham, Lincoln and Peterborough by road and rail. The district is skirted to the west by the main A1 traffic artery with the A15, A16 and A52 main road connections to other parts of Lincolnshire and the East Midlands. Whilst there are bus services between the major settlements and the many rural villages, the frequency of the services leaves the population heavily reliant on their cars for transport. The Census 2001

showed that 37.2% of South Kesteven's households have more than one car as compared to the national figure of 29.4%.

Social Profile of the community

South Kesteven is a mix of urban and rural communities. The average house price is £164,124 (Jun 2009), which is a decrease of 10.7% over the past year which is in line with national trends. Most housing is detached or semi detached.

The employment rate (2009) was 78.9% as compared to 75.2% for East Midlands, with median average gross weekly earnings by residence of £458.70 and £460.50 respectively. Much of the employment within the district, however, is low paid with low skills levels. Average incomes are distorted by very high incomes of those commuting out of the district.

There are excellent high achieving schools in the district with 5 secondary schools achieving a 90%+ pass rate for 5 GCSE A*-C grades in 2008 and 64.5% of all people had qualifications of NVQ2 or above.

South Kesteven tends to lose many of its young people particularly of college age, when they move away for education and job reasons and then do not necessarily return. We would appear to be starting to attract people of the middle age groups, including families with young children rather than the older residents. There are 14,800 people aged between 15 and 24 and 6,700 people aged 80 or over living in the district.

98.4% of the population, in 2001, were classified as "white" with the remaining 1.6% from ethnic groups such as Asian, African, Caribbean and Chinese. This means there are about 2,000 non-white residents in the district. There are 52 different nationalities living in the area totalling 5,050 persons registered for National Insurance contributions; the majority of whom come from Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal, Slovak Republic, India, the Phillipines and South Africa.

There are two hospitals in the area, one in Grantham with an A&E dept. and the other in Stamford without an A&E facility. The NHS health profile for South Kesteven 2009 shows that drug misuse, hospital stays for alcohol related harm, people diagnosed with diabetes and new cases of tuberculosis are all significantly better than the average for England. The census 2001 showed the overall health of the population to be "good" with 4.1% (5,116 persons) described as permanently sick or disabled as compared to the national rate of 5.5%. The life expectancy rate for females is 82.2 years and for males it is 77.9 years (2009) which is higher than that for the UK.

The number of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people is not known, however, based on national research by Stonewall and HM Treasury, the estimated number LGBT people living in the district is about 8,500.

Figures from the 2001 census show that 82% of the local population are of Christian belief with over 900 people recorded as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh (ie less than 1% of the total population in 2001).

The Indices of Deprivation 2007 shows that only one lower level Super Output Area of 1,397 people or 1.1% of the district's population falls into the bottom 10%

of the most deprived areas in the Country. By contrast there are 18 lower level Super Output areas in the top 10% least deprived.

Geography

The town of Grantham is the largest of the settlements with approximately 16,073 dwellings, Stamford is next largest with approximately 9,326, Bourne with approximately 6,321 and the Deepings with approximately 5,691, leaving almost 21,389 dwellings spread over the remainder of the 350 sq miles of the district.

There are four leisure centres and four libraries each based in the main towns with a mobile library to serve the rural community. Grantham and Stamford also have an arts centre with theatres and tourist information centres.

There are over 600 buildings classed as Grade II and 100 of these are Grade II*, being of particular importance.

Source:

Lincolnshire Research Observatory

Nomis

BERR

Land Registry

Office for National Statistics

DCFS

APHO and Dept of Health

National context

Legal context

As a local authority the Council currently has a range of legal responsibilities to meet general and specific equalities duties which are set by law. These require us to address discrimination, and to ensure that processes are in place to meet the equalities duties laid down for us. The key pieces of legislation currently in force are:

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005)

The Equality Act (2006)

The Corporate Equalities Scheme 2009-2012 sets out our responsibilities under these laws in more detail, and how we aim to meet these. A copy can be obtained from our website at [link]

The new Equality Act 2010, sets out new duties which will increase the range of equalities action beyond the traditional groups of race, gender and disability, to include strengthen protection for all persons on grounds of age, sexual orientation, and economic disadvantage. This new legislation will inform a full review of the Corporate Equalities Scheme, which will now be brought forward from its programmed date of 2012.

The Local Government Equality Standard and Equality Framework

The Council was assessed at Level 2 of the Local Government Equality Standard in 2006; following this, during April 2009 the new Equality Framework was introduced to replace the old Standard.

The Equality Framework measures local authorities against three standards:

- Developing
- Achieving
- Excellent

The Council recognises the changes which have occurred in the move from the Standard to the Framework. In particular the Council sees a need to ensure that a full understanding of equalities and diversity is essential across all staff and members in order to progress through the levels of the framework to achieve excellence.

With this in mind, the Council has focussed during 2009 on a programme of significant cultural change within the authority. The purpose of this programme is to ensure that the principles of equalities and diversity are reflected not only in our policies and procedures, but in the culture of the authority - the way that we work, or "the way that things are done around here".

The Council is currently working against a combined action plan which sets targets against the Corporate Equalities Scheme and the "developing" level of the Equalities Framework.

The Council will seek external validation and assessment once sufficient progress has been made to reach "Achieving" level in the Framework. It is anticipated that this will be during 2012 as there will be further additional work now required to bring the elements of the new Equalities Act 2010 into practice in the authority.

Managing delivery of the Corporate Equalities Scheme 2009-2012

The Council has a number of existing and emerging groups that are working together to ensure progress in delivering the commitments in the Corporate Equalities Scheme.

Corporate Equalities Group and Implementation Team

During 2008, the corporate management of the equalities and diversity agenda was radically overhauled. The Corporate Equality Steering Group, which included members, management and frontline staff, was disbanded, and two new officer groups were formed.

The Corporate Equalities Group has the management oversight for the Corporate Equalities Scheme and the equalities and diversity agenda in general. The Corporate Equalities Group is made up of the members of the management team for the Council; and once every quarter the management team devotes its agenda to equalities and diversity issues, receives an update on progress against the implementation plan, and presentations from staff on key projects, or local interest groups. A member of the management team is the management equalities champion and has the responsibility for the management of the equalities and diversity agenda in the Council.

The Corporate Equalities Implementation Team meets monthly, and is made up of "champions" representing each service in the Council, supported by the Equalities Project Officer and administrative support staff. This team works through task

and finish groups to carry out the actions in the plan, and reports through the corporate management structure to the Corporate Equalities Group. The work of this group is overseen by the management equalities champion, working with the Equalities Project Officer.

Community Groups

During 2009 progress has been made with local communities to identify and begin to work with two community based groups:

Tenant Equalities Group

This tenant group supports the work in the housing services and all members have been trained in equalities and diversity, and on how to conduct equality impact assessments (EIAs). The service level equality impact assessments for the landlord services have been discussed with the Group ahead of their publication for public consultation. The Group will have an ongoing role in monitoring the progress against the action plans which are drawn up as a result of the service level EIAs, also to assist with setting and monitor progress against the service level equality objectives which are included in the service plan.

Equalities Focus Group

This group is being made up of representatives from over 20 community groups and will play a similar role to the Tenant Equalities Group for non-tenancy related services.

Section 2: Our achievements during 2009 – 10

The Council has set out on its voyage to achieve the aims in its Corporate Equalities Scheme 2009-12 and some progress has been made against key aims during 2009-10. The Council is not complacent in the face of these achievements, and this review therefore also outlines in Section 3 the main challenges, and equality actions that the Council still needs to deliver.

The reporting on the Corporate Equalities Scheme is set out in two parts. The first part goes through the actions set out in the statutory equality scheme, and identifies whether these have been achieved, or remain within the action plan for 2010-12. The second part identifies where the Council has made changes and improvements in its service delivery, to the benefit of its customers, in line with the equalities and diversity agenda, whether or not these are specific requirements within the Corporate Equalities Scheme.

Meeting our commitments in the Corporate Equalities Scheme

The table below sets out what we committed to do within the Corporate Equalities Scheme 2009 -12 and the actions that we have taken to date to deliver on this. Where action is anticipated during 2010 – 12 this is also noted.

Our commitment	Our action
Monitor services to establish whether any racial groups, or people with disabilities , or men or women are under-represented and	During 2009-10 the Council has begun to implement a process of Service Equality Impact Assessments. This is a move away

Our commitment	Our action
where necessary take positive action to improve this imbalance	<p>from a policy-based approach to consider the whole service, and involves members of the staff team, and external “critical friends” in an analysis of the way that the service is delivered. As part of this analysis, the services are assessed to establish whether any groups are under represented. In the Tenancy Services group of services, where this work was piloted, results showed that no racial group was under-represented in the services provided, or in any aspect of service delivery.</p> <p>The Council also took part in the Lincolnshire-wide monitoring of customers of services to establish whether any groups were being unfairly treated. The surveys were circulated to customers and put on the SKDC website. A number of returns were received and these are currently undergoing analysis. This information will be added to our in-house data.</p>
Undertake impact assessments on all existing and proposed policies and practices	The Council continues to implement a programme of impact assessments for policies. Going forward, as services are holistically assessed, it is thought likely that the need for individual policies to be assessed will lessen, as any proposed changes would be picked up as part of the regular service assessment.
<p>Continue to provide a translation service for customers on request and ensure that all customer are aware of the service, by attaching the appropriate alternative formats document to all council information.</p> <p>Ensure that all information provided is easy to use and understand and is available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille and audio CD</p>	The translation service is widely available and widely used, and all frontline staff are now aware of the details of this service, and the textline service, through the use of special credit card sized information cards which fit with staff ID badges. The alternative formats document is used on all corporate publications in line with the guidelines in the 2008 Corporate Consultation Toolkit.
Seek to improve the level of engagement and two-way communication with representative	South Kesteven has worked hard during 2009-10 to increase the level of community engagement with

Our commitment	Our action
groups and individuals who have specific needs or concerns in relation to race equality	minority and hard to reach groups. We have also been a founder member of the Lincolnshire Equalities and Human Rights Council.
Set targets and establish appropriate HR policies and practices that reflect our commitment to being an employer of choice to all sectors of the local community	The Council is using the information collected in the annual equalities monitoring report (see Appendix 1) to inform future targets around equalities. Examples of good practice within our existing practices and policies include the flexible hours scheme, and the employee assistance programme.
Tackle discrimination, harassment and bullying, and inform staff on how they can help to make this work in practice	A review of the existing harassment and bullying at work policy is programmed into the Community Focus Action Plan to be completed by July 2010
Provide training for staff to equip them with the necessary skills to fulfil these requirements and provide advice and guidance	All staff have now been provided with and are working through the "Grass Roots" equalities training programme. All Equalities Champions who are members of the Equalities Implementation Group have attended specific training on impact assessment, religious belief, and disability during 2009-10.
Promote our hate crime reporting procedures to ensure that people are aware they can report incidents	A new corporate hate crime reporting procedure was introduced during 2009-10 and training provided to service managers by way of corporate briefing. The reporting forms are available on the Council website for not only staff but also members of the public.
Deal promptly and systematically with any racial incidents or complaints in accordance with the Council's hate crime and incident reporting procedure	The Community Safety team has responsibility for dealing with racial incidents and hate crime in the District. Service Managers were briefed on the work of the team and the hate crime and incident reporting process during 2009.
Deal effectively and consistently with any harassment, victimisation, discrimination and violence towards gay men, lesbians and bisexual people, or people practicing their chosen religion or belief	
Assess levels of new migrants arriving in South Kesteven and support community cohesion projects to develop understanding	Work to assess the levels of new migrants in the district is still outstanding, although there has been some research and analysis carried out to estimate numbers

Our commitment	Our action
	using proxy data sources such as NI and GP registrations. Work is continuing with these communities and during 2009-10 a group of young people from migrant communities in South Kesteven were supported to make a film – “Welcome to Grantham” about their experience of arriving in the town.
Assess the accommodation and other needs of gypsies and traveller and provide support to meet these needs	A Gypsy and traveller accommodation needs assessment was carried out in 2007 and through the Local Development Framework process the Council is ensuring that appropriate levels of land are available to meet the needs of this group.
Consult with disabled people, and our employees, to ensure, where practical, the council adequately meets the needs of our disabled citizens	The Council consulted a range of groups, including those representing employees and disabled people, on the Corporate Equalities Scheme and the commitments made within it. As part of the progress towards the annual review, groups representing people with disabilities have again been consulted.
Make it easy for everyone to use our service and our buildings Carry out accessibility audits and ensure that we assess our premises to remove any barriers which might hinder access to our services and employment	The Council is ensuring through regular review that its buildings are accessible to people with disabilities. Where this is currently through “reasonable adjustment”, other possible future alternatives to provision are being examined to improve access to services. The Service Equality Impact Assessments (SEIA) programme has already delivered an improvement in this regard: it became apparent through the SEIA of the repairs and improvements service that the hearing induction loop had been removed from the service reception area. Whilst this is not often directly accessed by the public, it was felt to be important that this facility should exist in the event of a customer visit, and the facility has, since the SEIA report, been reinstated.
Undertake periodic equality reviews of our workforce	All staff data was validated during 2009-10 and following this a full Equality Monitoring Report was

Our commitment	Our action
	produced – see Appendix 1.
Carry out annual staff surveys to better understand the experiences of our workforce and take action to address any inequality or discrimination	Annual staff surveys have been regularly carried out since 2007 as part of our corporate briefing sessions using our handheld voting technology. This enables staff to immediately view the results of survey information, as well as ensuring a high level response rate.
Review the training and development needs of all our staff and members	A training review is planned within the community focus action plan for completion by March 2010 and the findings are to be included within our corporate training plan.
Ensure that men and women from all groups within the community feel engaged in decision making	The Council promotes community involvement through the use of community forums across the local area. These open public meetings are attended by representatives from parish/town, District and County Council, plus other community representatives.
Recognise the needs of carers and support appropriate work arrangements to allow them to work effectively.	The Council supports flexible working of its staff, through its annual hours policy, and its support for parents and carers
Carry out an equal pay audit and address any inequalities found	Proposals for the equal pay audit are to be brought before the Equalities and Diversity Implementation Group by March, and a report to Cabinet is timetable for May 2010
Support the formation of groups, networks and services for young people and older people as users of our services within South Kesteven	The Council recognises that there is still work to be undertaken in this area.
Carry out our duties under the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006	The Council has complied with the requirements of these regulations to ensure that there is no discrimination on grounds of age in employment matters.
Carry out our duties under the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, which outlaw discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services	The Council has introduced and uses standard clauses for the procurement of goods and services which seek to ensure that services are provided in an equal way to all groups. All Council directly provided services may not discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation
Challenge heterosexism and homophobia, religious and other	The Council promotes the equality of all employees and service users

Our commitment	Our action
intolerance by our employees, other organisations and users of our services	regardless of sexual orientation, belief, culture or other needs
Promote positive images of gay men, lesbians and bisexual people and challenge attitudes that patronise or discriminate against them	The Council recognises that there is still work to be undertaken in this area
Support the right of gay men, lesbian and bisexual employees and service users to be open about who they are	The Council is committed to supporting gay men, lesbian and bisexual employees and service users.
Comply with the Employment Equality (Sexual orientation) Regulations (2003)	The Council has complied with the requirements of these regulations to ensure that there is no discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in employment matters.
Provide suitable facilities for employees to pray and observe their religious needs	Currently we have suitable facilities to meet the needs identified to us. If other needs were to be identified, the Council would endeavour to meet those needs
Justify the need for any particular style of dress to allow where possible employees to observe their religion	Currently we are able to meet these needs. If other needs were to be identified, the Council would endeavour to meet those needs.

Improving service delivery, consultation and engagement

Details of examples where the Council has achieved progress during 2009-10 include:

- A corporate consultation toolkit has been published. The toolkit contains guidance on how to ensure that equalities aspects are considered when undertaking consultation
- A number of major community consultations have been undertaken during 2009-10 to involve the local community in policy making, including consultation events in Stamford and Grantham, including at specific estate locations around green issues such as recycling, energy efficiency and anti-social behaviour
- The Community Safety team have continued to work proactively with a variety of partners and other agencies, including SKDC Housing, Mencap, Social Services and the local Police to address issues of anti-social behaviour
- Handy sized credit card style information cards providing information on language line and text relay services have been produced for all frontline staff. These handy cards fit with staff ID badges to ensure that they are available at all times
- The Council's use of translation services has increased in terms of number of points of use, and also number of languages used
- A range of activities have been provided for young people and youth groups during 2009 including FairPlay Football sessions

- A group of Councillors attended training on Equalities and Diversity at the Holocaust Centre in 2009
- A new standardised corporate equalities monitoring leaflet was developed with the Engagement Policy Development Group and approved by Cabinet. This form will be used alongside new corporate guidance notes for members of staff and service users and it is hoped will increase levels of public participation in surveys and questionnaires
- During 2009-10 the management team and Cabinet received reports on economic trends monitoring. This was prompted by the economic situation but is continuing in light of the emerging duties around economic disadvantage
- Housing statistics from ongoing monitoring has demonstrated clearly that people from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities are not being unfairly treated in new lettings of Council housing
- The economic development service has continued to support youth entrepreneurship/women in business and provided a feature in our local magazine about employment and disability
- Diversion programmes – the Council has worked with its partners include police, community safety teams and local football clubs to provide a programme of "Fairplay Football" across the district
- The Council has made progress during the year towards the implementation of a choice based lettings scheme to offer increased choice to prospective tenants of Council and Registered Social Landlord properties in the district, with a decision by the Cabinet in principle to enter into negotiations with Peterborough City Council to join the sub-regional Peterborough Homes scheme
- A significant change occurred during 2009-10 with the introduction of Service level EIAs. A rolling programme of implementation has now been agreed through 2009-10 and 2010-11. Guidance notes and training were provided to support service managers and equality Champions in carrying out the service level equality impact assessments across the Council's services
- The Corporate Equalities Implementation Team has received training on Equality Impact Assessment, on religion and belief, and on disability during 2009-10
- The Corporate Equality Implementation Team have adopted a new corporate logo (ED the elephant) to promote Equalities and Diversity and he has been the subject of a number of campaigns, including the "Where's ED?" competition, a poster awareness campaign, and featuring on the staff credit card style information cards
- Within the Tenancy Services group of services, a group of tenants within the Housing Consultative Group have received specific training on how to undertake Equality Impact Assessments
- The distance learning "Grass Roots" training has now been rolled out to all staff teams and the majority of staff have now completed the training
- New corporate guidance has been produced on ethnicity and religion for staff and training is to be provided on this subject to members of the Equalities and Diversity Implementation Group during 2009-10
- Equality and diversity has been embedded in service planning with the inclusion of service level equality objectives within the service plan template
- Equality and diversity understanding has also been included as a focus within staff appraisals during 2010

Section 3: Our challenges in 2010-12

Review of the Corporate Equalities Scheme

As we move towards April 2011 and the projected implementation of the new Equalities Bill the Council needs to prepare for the new duties which this legislation places upon it.

A task group within the Corporate Equalities Implementation Group will identify and progress the work needed to ensure that the Council is able to meet the new duties placed upon it from the implementation date of the Act.

The Equality Scheme will be reviewed in line with the promulgation of the Act and to deliver a new framework for the Council with effect from April 2011.

Achieving level of the Local Government Equalities Framework

The Council will seek external verification against the "Achieving" level of the Local Government Equalities Framework during 2011-12.

Consultation and engagement

The Council will further develop its consultation and engagement mechanisms, particularly around community involvement in its Service Equality Impact Assessments programme. In doing this we will work closely with representatives of local community groups through the new Community Focus Forum.

Our thanks go to all those representatives of community groups for their feedback and support in developing this annual report.

Alternative formats and languages

South Kesteven has a rich and diverse culture - a community made up of people from different cultures, with differing backgrounds, beliefs or experiences. This diversity is one of the things that make South Kesteven such a great place to live and work.

To ensure all residents of South Kesteven have access to our information material, our information is available in a range of different languages and formats, including large print, Braille, audio tape and computer disc.

To request a document in a specific language or format, you can ring us, email us or fax us on:

01476 40 61 27 communications@southkesteven.gov.uk
 01476 40 60 12

Large print, Braille, audio tape or computer disc

This information can be made available in large print, Braille, on audio tape or computer disc. If you, or someone you know, might benefit from this service, please contact us.

□□□ / Cantonese

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Česky / Czech

Tato informace může být dostupná i v češtině. Pokud byste Vy, a nebo někdo koho znáte, mohl využít tohoto servisu, obraťte se prosím na nás.

Magyar / Hungarian

Ezeket az információkat magyar nyelven is tudjuk biztosítani. Ha Ön, vagy valaki, akit Ön ismer igényt tart erre a szolgáltatásra, kérem, keressen fel minket.

Latviski / Latvian

Šo informāciju var iegūt arī latviešu valodā. Ja Jums vai kādai no Jūsu paziņai šādi pakalpojumi nāktu par labu, lūdzu kontaktējet mūs.

Lietuviškai / Lithuanian

Šią informaciją galite gauti lietuvių kalba. Prašome kreiptis į mus, jei jums arba jūsų pažiustamiems ši paslauqa galėtų būti naudinga

Polski / Polish

Informacja ta może być dostępna w języku polskim. Jeżeli Państwo albo ktoś kogo Państwo znają, może z tej usługi skorzystać, proszę nas kontaktować.

Português / Portuguese

Esta informação pode ser disponibilizada em português. Se você, ou alguém que conhecer, beneficiar com este serviço, por favor contacte-nos.

Website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk

Our website can convert text into speech using ReadSpeaker. ReadSpeaker is a system that reads website pages out loud so you can listen to the content and information on each page.

If you have any comments or suggestions on this Annual Review please write to:

Mrs Teena Twelves
South Kesteven District Council
Council Offices
St Peter's Hill
Grantham
Lincs
NG31 6PZ

E-mail: t.twelves@southkesteven.gov.uk