

# **Pride in Our Communities**

Equality Strategy 2005-8

# Year 2

## **The Second Year Review and Update**

September 2007



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# A

## An Overview

In 2005 the City of York Council produced its first comprehensive Equality Strategy – “Pride in our Communities” (PIOC). This strategy provided a framework for moving beyond mere compliance with equality legislation and policy, towards embedding an equalities culture at every level of the organisation. It also outlined how the council would continue to implement the Equality Standard for Local Government, carry forward the work of the Council’s Race Equality Scheme and prepare the council for the introduction of the gender and disability equality duties.

This document reviews the Strategy in it’s final year and updates completed and current work. Unfortunately, despite best efforts, there was a reduction in staff in the Equalities Team in 2007. The implication of this is that equalities work has had to be prioritised and we haven’t been able to carry out the quantity of work we had planned.

This review reflects these restricted resources and concentrates on work that can be achieved in the next six months. We will also spend the next six months putting together and consulting on a new Equality Strategy for 2008-11.

# B

## **Main Successes in the last year**

- **Consulting local disabled and Black and minority ethnic people.**

We held a conference in June 2007 to consult with local disabled and Black and minority ethnic people. Thirteen different council services were involved in focus groups and stalls and the feedback these services received was used in various council strategies and plans.

- **Social Inclusion Working Group.**

This group of Councillors and community forum representatives was formed to look at making council policies and procedures more inclusive. In the past year the group has covered, amongst other things, the diversity of the council workforce, age discrimination and Human Resources policies and how to involve young people in the group.

- **Making consultation more accessible and inclusive.**

Guidance and training on making consultation more accessible and inclusive was given to staff.

- **Reporting Hate Incidents.**

A new city wide reporting procedure for hate incidents was agreed. This involved partners such as the police, Safer York Partnership, and community groups as well as various council services. The new procedure will be launched in autumn 2007.

- **Equality Training for Senior Managers**

A pilot forum theatre training event was held for senior council managers. This event was very successful with all attendees recommending the training be offered to more staff. More forum theatre training events are planned for late 2007 and early 2008.

### **B2** New Equalities Legislation

There have been many changes to equalities legislation in the past couple of years and there's many more to come. As well as changes to disability (2006) and gender legislation (March 2007), legislation for sexual orientation and religion and belief for goods, services and facilities comes into force in October 2007. Also in October the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights will come into existence. This is to take the place of the three existing Commissions for disability, race and gender and also to enforce legislation for sexual orientation, religion and belief and age.

The government is also consulting on proposals to bring in a single equalities bill to gather all the protected groups (eg. disability, race and so on) together under one piece of legislation rather than keeping them all separate, all with slightly different duties. The aim of this is to simplify the law so better progress can be made. The proposed bill is at the early stages at the moment so we don't know exactly what the new legislation will be or when it will come into force (2010 has been mentioned). However it will bring further changes

to equalities work and will impact on other areas such as the Equality Standard for Local Government.

There have also been changes to the Equality Standard for Local Government. There is now an inspection at level 3 and level 5 (the final level) of the Standard. This means there is more work to do to achieve level 3 as the inspection requires a rigorous self assessment, supported by documentary evidence, as well as the extra time, work and money for the inspection itself.

## C

## The Six Improvement Themes

The Equality Strategy is divided into 6 different themes that the council focuses equalities work on. There are also 6 equality 'strands' that equalities work is focussed on: race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief. The work mentioned in the following pages identifies which 'strand' it is relevant to.

Some of the areas where more work is needed will continue into the new Equality Strategy 2008-11. This is either because they are large projects that will take longer than six months to carry out or because they are on-going pieces of work that continue on a rolling programme (for example training or impact assessments).

### C1 Leadership

This theme looks at the role of Council leaders in shaping, driving and supporting the Equality Strategy and the implementation of the equality work.

#### What we have done in the past year:

	<u>Equality Strand</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified priority projects for equalities impact assessments</li> </ul>	All
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed the corporate strategy to focus on the needs of our</li> </ul>	All, particularly



## ANNEX 1

communities. One of the specific aims of the refreshed corporate strategy is to promote cohesive and inclusive communities.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ▪ Developed the Social Inclusion Working Group, chaired by the Executive Member for Youth and Social Inclusion.   | All   |
| ▪ Commissioned the Director of Housing and Adult Social Services to be the corporate Equalities Champion to help give equalities work a higher profile within the organisation                                  | All   |
| ▪ Set up the Equalities Leadership Group; a group of high-level officers, and the Executive Member for Youth and Social Inclusion, who will agree on the strategic direction of equalities work in the council. | All   |
| ▪ Piloted Forum Theatre training with senior managers to which Members were also invited.   | Play focussed on race issues as an example of discrimination faced by minority groups |

### **Areas where further work is needed:**

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
|   | <u>Equality Strand</u> |
| ▪ Progress the priority equality impact assessments | All                    |
| ▪ Produce an action plan for promoting              | All,                   |

## ANNEX 1

cohesive and inclusive communities  
(part of the corporate strategy)

particularly  
race and  
religion and  
belief

- Set up an equalities network of officers to support equalities work within directorates.

All

## **C2** Community Involvement

This theme considers how the council can improve community consultation and involvement work with local minority groups.

### **What we have done in the past year:**

- |  | <u>Equality Strand</u>                         |
|--|--|
| ▪ Established community representation at Social Inclusion Working Group   | All  |
| ▪ Held community conferences for local disabled people and Black and minority ethnic people  | Disability,<br>Race,<br>Religion and<br>Belief |
| ▪ Set up a database of different community groups, and the service areas they are interested in, for council services to consult with. | All  |
| ▪ Set up an independent Disabled People's Forum  | Disability,<br>age                             |
| ▪ Issued guidance to officers on how to make consultation accessible and inclusive   | All  |

## Areas where further work is needed:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are helping to organise, in partnership with York Council for Voluntary Services, a conference for organisations that work with Black and minority ethnic (BME) people to discuss York's response to the rise in the BME population and it's implications.</li> </ul>	<u>Equality Strand</u> Race, religion and belief
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hold a gender themed event to discuss and raise awareness of gender issues in York</li> </ul>	Gender, including transgender
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support the effective operation of the new Disabled People's Forum</li> </ul>	Disability, age
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure equality perspectives are incorporated into the refresh of the Community Strategy. The team are holding a city conference in October to get the views from different communities in York.</li> </ul>	All

## **C3** Partnerships, Procurement and Grants

The council does not provide services in isolation. We have relationships with many organisations (public, private, voluntary and community) to help us deliver quality services. This section looks at how these arrangements can help us achieve our equality objectives.

## What we have done in the past year:

## ANNEX 1

### Equality Strand

- The Inclusive York Forum (part of the Local Strategic Partnership in York) has been working on challenging prejudice in York. They have identified 5 key themes: leadership, media, people living separate lives, education and employment. They are now working on the action plans under each theme.

All

The Local Area Agreement, which sets out public sector priorities for York over the next 3 years, contains equality focussed priorities such as:

All

- create a diverse program of cultural and environmental activities, accessible to all, and increase participation in communities with low participation rates
- tackle prejudice, harassment and discrimination where it exists in our communities and neighbourhoods
- develop a more integrated, environmentally sustainable and accessible transport network.

- A new hate incident reporting procedure has been agreed by Safer York Partnership Executive. The new procedures will be launched in autumn 2007.

All  
especially  
LGBT, Race,  
Religion and  
Disability

### **Areas where further work is needed:**

- Build up equalities focus in council procurement policies and practices for tendering of new contracts.

## **C4 Employment**

The council wants to become a fair and equal employer, with a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. How can the council continue to build on the progress already made?

### **What we have done so far:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reviewed and amended the council's policy on retirement to take account of new legislation on age.</li> </ul>   | <p><u>Equality</u><br/><u>Strand</u><br/>Age</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trained managers on employing disabled people and what help, advice and grants are available to ensure disabled employees, or prospective employees, get the support they need to carry out their jobs.</li> </ul>                                      | <p>Disability</p>                                |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completed a job evaluation review as the first part of a pay and grading review. This is being done to bring about equal pay for council employees. We are now putting together a proposed pay structure and consulting with Unions on this.</li> </ul> | <p>Gender</p>                                    |

## ANNEX 1

- Carried out a pilot survey of female staff in the Chief Executive's Directorate to find out what the issues and barriers are regarding career progression. These findings will be presented to Managers for decision on how to take forward.
- Consulted staff on the Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying Policy. The policy is now being re-drafted by Human Resources.

Gender

All

### Areas where further work is needed:

- Rolling out a varied schedule of training on equalities to improve staff's knowledge, understanding and skills.

Equality  
Strand

All

### Employment Equality Statistics

The proportion of the workforce that are from disadvantaged groups in comparison to their proportion in the local labour market.

	York	Council Oct 05	Council Mar 06	Council Sept 07
Disabled	17%*	2.1%	1.9%	2.1%
BME	6.1%**	2.8%	3.1%	4.1%
Women	51%#	73%	73%	75%

\*Percentage of all disabled people in York (not just working age)

\*\* 2003 Annual Population Survey estimate total York figure (not just working age).

# % of female working age population (16 to 64 years) from 2001 census

## **C5 Accessible Services**

This theme considers how council services can be as accessible as possible to people who currently may find using our services difficult due to physical or communication barriers.

### **What we have done so far:**

- The [easy@york](#) project has consulted with older people, disabled people, Black and minority ethnic people and Social Inclusion Working Group on it's plans to bring in telephone menu systems. Feedback from these groups was used in designed the new menu system.
- The planning and development department consulted with disabled people and Black and minority ethnic people on the development of the new Hungate site in York. The new council building will be fully accessible when it opens in 2010.

Equality  
Strand

All with extra Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Belief

Disability, Race, Religion and Belief

### **Areas where further work is needed:**

Equality  
Strand

## ANNEX 1

- Continue to promote the Making Connections document which helps staff ensure their communication is accessible and inclusive.

All,  
particularly  
Disability,  
Race and  
Religion and  
Belief

## **C6** Inclusive Services

We do not just want to provide accessible services, we want to provide the right services. This may mean that our services need to be more flexible, more targeted or to provide different types of service entirely if we are to ensure that all citizens can receive services that are right for them.

### **What we have done so far:**

- A feasibility study for a Centre for Independent Living in York was completed. This is now being taken forward to have a centre up and running by 2010

Equality  
Strand  
Disability

### **Areas where further work is needed:**

- Carry out directorate and corporate self-assessments for the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- Ensure consistent equality monitoring

Equality  
Strand  
All  
  
All



of service take-up, service satisfaction and feedback across the authority.

## D

## Action Plans

In the Equality Strategy one year update we reported on progress on a number of key actions to improve our services. We also added priorities for 2006-7; here is an update on progress on these priorities.

We grouped the actions under the eight corporate aims.

### **D1** Thriving City

#### **Objective:**

Strengthen and diversify York's economy and improve employment opportunities for residents.

#### **Progress update:**

Improve awareness of childcare facilities - the Children's Information Service (CIS) has improved access to it's service by introducing:

- a text messaging service for parents
- childcare guides on audio CD in a variety of languages
- a brokerage service to find childcare that matches a families needs if they are having difficulty in arranging childcare because of complicated requirements or the child having additional needs.
- an outreach programme in community based Children's Centres.

As a result of these changes enquiries have increased from 9,221 in 2004/05, 16,123 in 2005/06 and 19,196 in 2006/07

- Increase the number of apprentices recruited within the council. All current funding is being used to employ nine apprentices working for the council and training to be, for example, blacksmiths, bricklayers, joiners, and electricians.

## **D2 Learning City**

### **Objective:**

Improve opportunities for learning and raise educational achievement for everybody.

### **Progress update:**

- Ensure that the growing number of BME children in schools have appropriate services in place and does not negatively impact upon performance – the Ethnic Minority Support Service has been expanded by the recruitment of 2 teaching assistants to continue to meet the needs of children learning English as an additional language. The service has also developed its training role to help schools meet the needs of BME pupils.
- Implement the second phase of the Inclusion Strategy – to make sure the curriculum is accessible and improve communication. The Accessibility Strategy 2006-9 was launched earlier this year along with a document called 'Access to the Curriculum for all Pupils: Celebrating good practice'. This document celebrates and shares examples of good inclusive practice within City of York Council schools and Early Years settings. Good practice

such as using visual cue cards in classes to represent instructions such as listen, look, think or put your hand up; holding 'read and play' sessions for Traveller children to help improve their language and social skills; multi-cultural assemblies with students singing, dancing or telling a story from their own country; and a 'peer mediation' scheme where older pupils are trained as 'problem busters' to help younger pupils sort out their own disputes at school breaks and lunchtimes.

- Extend intensive work to prepare Traveller children for post-16 education – a pilot to increase the hours of the Connexions Intensive PA for the Traveller Education Support Service is currently running to support a wider range of most vulnerable ethnic minority young people in the city. This involves partnership working with the Ethnic Minority Support Service and, as the pilot appears to be running successfully, it is hoped that funding will continue after March 2008.

### **D3** Healthy City

#### **Objective:**

Work with others to improve the health, wellbeing and independence of York residents.

#### **Progress update:**

- Production of a register of adapted properties – on this year's work plan. The team are improving IT systems to enable the register to be stored, however it is difficult to keep up to date as tenants often make changes to their house without informing the council.
- Assess the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers as part of the Local Development Framework, and subsequent development of a Traveller Strategy - we have commissioned, with our North Yorkshire Housing Partners a Gypsy and Travellers housing needs survey. This is a detailed piece of work looking at the needs across the sub region and involving field work carrying out surveys with Travellers to cover both the summer and winter travelling patterns. This will provide the evidence base on which to develop a range of strategies including the Homelessness Strategy which includes Travellers. This work is also key data for the Local Development Framework and in particular the potential identification of land for Travellers through the LDF process if the surveys determine a need in York. The final report will be completed around April / May 08.

## **D4 Safe City**

### **Objective:**

Create a safe City through transparent working with other agencies and the local community.

### **Progress update:**

- Increase awareness of adult abuse procedures and ensure appropriate protection and support is provided. During 2006-7 the multi-agency

Local Adult Protection Group increased awareness of the adult protection procedures with presentations and practice discussions. In May 2007, over 90 delegates from a wide range of agencies working with vulnerable adults attended a multi-agency awareness event, to learn about their roles and responsibilities, the role of the police, and the impact of the Mental Capacity Act on this work. In addition staff within organisations receive appropriate training in this area.

- Implement procedures for all hate incident reporting – a Hate Incident Reporting Strategy was produced and agreed by Safer York Partnership Executive in summer 2007. New reporting procedures are being launched in autumn 2007.

### **D5 Cultural City**

#### **Objective:**

Work with others to develop opportunities for residents and visitors to experience York as a vibrant and eventful city.

#### **Progress update:**

- Review funding and structure for Chinese New Year Festival – following a review in 2006 with various people including the Chinese Cultural Group, a smaller scale event took place over Residents First weekend and Chinese New Year weekend in 2007 due to funding restrictions. York@Large (the strategic cultural partnership) has agreed a focus on China in 2008 in support

of the Olympics with Chinese themed events throughout the year.

## **D6 Sustainable City**

### **Objective:**

Take pride in the city by improving quality and sustainability, creating a clean and safe environment.

### **Progress update:**

- Implement equality priorities of second Local Transport Plan – Improvements in the past year include: installing raised kerbs at bus stops and dropped kerbs at junctions and crossing points; identifying new crossing points in ‘transport corridors’; replacing damaged or missing tactile paving; working with public transport operators to improve the accessibility of bus fleets; subsidising bus services to provide evening, weekend or daytime services that operators had deemed commercially non-viable; increasing the number of wheelchair-accessible hackney carriage taxis; providing concessionary fares for older or disabled residents; providing the Dial & Ride service to enable less mobile people to access shops and leisure activities and funding Shopmobility to replace some of their ageing fleet of mobility scooters and wheelchairs.

## **D7 Inclusive City**

### **Objective:**

Ensure that all council services are accessible and inclusive, and build strong proud local communities.

### **Progress update:**

- Ensure that the Safer and Stronger Communities element of the Local Area Agreement promotes good race relations – there are many objectives and priorities in the LAA that will go towards promoting good race relations. Two specific outcomes under this theme are: empower local people to have a greater choice and influence over local decision-making and a greater role in public service delivery (SSC6); and tackle prejudice, harassment and discrimination where it exists in our communities and neighbourhoods (SSC14).
- Ensure that the council's contact centre and web pages are fully accessible to disadvantaged communities – the new telephone menu system was developed after consultation with local disabled people, older people and Black and minority people. The website conforms with the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative standards. W3C is the internationally accepted authority on web accessibility standards.
- Develop and support an independent disabled people's forum- This was launched in October 2005 and a steering group of local disabled people put in place to progress the forum.



**Objective:**

Transform City of York Council into an excellent customer-focused 'can-do' authority.

**Progress update:**

- To produce policy and guidance on the monitoring of service take-up, satisfaction and feedback - This work is currently being planned. The Equalities Leadership Group will decide what approach to take on equality monitoring and then guidance will be rolled out to staff.
- Embed the equalities planning and performance monitoring process at a directorate level. This work will be done over the next 6 months and beyond as it is an on-going task.
- Build equalities into the delivery of the corporate strategy – there are three main priorities in the corporate strategy that have equalities at their heart: an economic strategy that focuses on minimising income differentials, a strategy to promote community cohesion and inclusivity, and a considered response to demographic changes such as the rise in BME people in York and an ageing population.

## Want to know more?

### On the internet . . .

You can download this review in PDF format from the City of York Council website on [www.york.gov.uk](http://www.york.gov.uk).

### In accessible formats . . .

If you would like to receive a copy in large print, Braille, audio cassette or electronic version then please contact the Equalities Team.

### In other languages . . .

If you would like this information in a community language please contact the Equalities Team.

### In the future . . .

A new equality strategy for 2008 – 11 will be written next year. If you want to receive a copy of the new strategy please contact the Equalities Team.

### To contact the Equalities Team:

☎ 01904 551704 or 551726

✉ [heather.johnson@york.gov.uk](mailto:heather.johnson@york.gov.uk)

📄 The Equalities Team,  
City of York Council,  
The Guildhall,

If you would like information in another language or format, please ask.

☎ **01904 551704**

#### Turkish

Türkçe bilgi almak istiyorsanız, bize başvurabilirsiniz.

#### Bengali

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

#### Cantonese

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

#### Urdu

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو براۓ مہربانی ہم سے پوچھیے۔

#### Hindi

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे

#### Gujarati

જો તમને માહિતી બીજી ભાષા અથવા રચનામાં જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી અમને વિનંતી કરો.

#### Kurdish