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Chief Executive

Date: 05 March 2012



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

To: **Members of the Scrutiny Commission**

Mr MR Lay (Chairman)	Mrs L Hodgkins
Mr PAS Hall (Vice-Chairman)	Mr DW Inman
Mr C Ladkin (Vice-Chairman)	Mr K Morrell
Mr PR Batty	Mr K Nichols
Mr Bessant	Mrs S Sprason
Mrs WA Hall	Miss DM Taylor

Copy to all other Members of the Council

(other recipients for information)

Dear Councillor,

There will be a meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMISSION** in the Council Chamber on **TUESDAY, 13 MARCH 2012 at 6.00 pm** and your attendance is required.

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Officer

SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 13 MARCH 2012

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive verbally from members any disclosures which they are required to make in accordance with the Council's code of conduct or in pursuance of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. **This is in addition to the need for such disclosure to be also given when the relevant matter is reached on the agenda.**

3. HRA SUBSIDY

Presentation followed by debate and recommendation to the Executive.

4. SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY (Pages 1 - 36)

Report of the Chief Officer (Corporate & Customer Resources, Scrutiny & Ethical Standards) attached.

EXTRAORDINARY SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 13 MARCH 2012

LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP – SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the members of the Scrutiny Committee on the draft Leicestershire District Councils Equality and Diversity Partnership – Single Equality Scheme 2011 – 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- (i) Members of Scrutiny Committee consider and comment on the Partnership Scheme.
- (ii) Delegate to the Chief Officer (Corporate and Customer Resources, Scrutiny and Ethical Standards)/Monitoring Officer to consider and include as appropriate any comments received.
- (iii) Members of the committee endorse the Partnership Single Equality Scheme and recommend it for Council for formal approval.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

3.1 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has been working to embed equality and diversity since 2005. A number of different schemes have been in place as required in line with equality legislation and were the Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme. All these schemes were combined into a Single Equality Scheme in 2009.

3.2 With the introduction in October 2010 of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty coming into force on the 5 April 2011, the previous Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy and Plan 2007-2010 that the council worked to needed to be reviewed and refreshed to bring them into line with the new legislative requirements.

3.3 The draft scheme addresses all the current nine dimensions of equality:

- Age
- Disability,
- Gender/Sex,
- Gender reassignment,
- Marriage and Civil Partnership,
- Maternity and Pregnancy,
- Race/Ethnicity,
- Religion/belief/non belief,
- Sexual orientation

3.4 Although there is no longer a specific requirement within the current equality legislation to have a separate and distinct equality and diversity scheme/policy in place, there is a requirement for a local authority to prepare and publish its equality objectives and commitments by 6th April 2012 and at least every four years thereafter. This Policy is an opportunity to do that.

- 3.5 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is a lead member of the Leicestershire District Councils Equality and Diversity Partnership (“Partnership”) and as such many of the equality objectives for delivery are being delivered jointly through partnership working.
- 3.6 It therefore seemed logical and efficient to produce a Partnership Single Equality Scheme. (see Appendix A). There are objectives detailed in the action plan which relate purely to Hinckley and Bosworth, whilst others which apply to all partners.
- 3.7 The draft scheme was also considered by all Partners and their staff prior to undergoing an external consultation exercise between 1st July and 30th August 2011. As part of the consultation process, the draft scheme was distributed to relevant Partners and made available to view and download from the Councils web-pages at www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk, plus was available to download via all Partners web-site.
- 3.8 A total of fifty two Partners, locally and regionally were invited to comment and contribute to the development of the draft scheme. Meetings were also held to explain the contents and rational of the scheme with local groups as requested.
- 3.9 Comments from this consultation exercise were received from Leicester City Council, Valuing Peoples Team at Leicestershire County Council, Regional Equality and Diversity Partnership, Age Concern and Trade Sexual Health. These have been considered and subsequently been incorporated within the document attached at Appendix B. Those comments have been taken into account on the draft Single Equalities Policy.
- 3.10 Members are asked to comment, endorse and refer the Policy to Council.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [AB]

All associated costs for the Partnership have been met using existing resources.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (LH)

Detailed in the report.

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The council's current equality scheme need updating and bringing into line with the requirements of the public sector equality duty and the new protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. It contributes to all 5 Stagic Aims.

7. CONSULTATION

Accommodation for the Homeless, Hinckley and Bosworth
 Adult Basic Education Scheme, Hinckley
 Hinckley Connexions Leicester Shire
 Dementia Carers Support Group
 Earl Shilton Business Forum
 Earl Shilton Community House
 Hinckley & District Mencap Society
 Hinckley and Bosworth Disability Action Group
 Hinckley and Bosworth Pensioners Action Group
 Hinckley Shopmobility
 Home-Start Hinckley and District
 Islamic Foundation
 The Carers' Project

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Failing to comply with the legislation may lead to adverse consequences from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.	Adopt the Single Equality Policy and comply with the General Equality duties.	LH

9. **KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is a significant body of new equality legislation which is constantly changing that the Council is required to adhere to. The scheme and the associated action plan as it relates to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council will ensure that the council is complying with these requirements.

The commitments and objectives outlined within the scheme when delivered by services are designed to have a positive impact on local communities

Where there is a proposed new service, change of service, or a new or reviewed policy, an Equality Impact Assessment is required and has been undertaken and can be viewed here:

10. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

None

Background papers: Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy and Plan 2007- 2010
Equality Act 2010
Equality and Human Rights Commission – Equality Act 2010 guidance for English public bodies

Contact Officer: Louisa Horton, ext 5859
Executive Member: Councillor Bron Witherford

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**Leicestershire District Councils
Equality and Diversity
Partnership
Single Equality Scheme**

In August 2010, the seven district and borough councils of Leicestershire came together to form The Leicestershire District Councils Equality and Diversity Partnership known as the “Partnership”. This is the first Partnership Single Equality and Diversity Scheme 2011 – 2014 for the members of the Partnership and covers all our legal duties as required by The Equality Act 2010.



The new single Partnership Scheme outlines how we will as a partnership promote equality and diversity in everything we do, from delivering fair and accessible services through to recruiting and employing staff.

Priorities and actions to support the implementation of the Scheme and the work of the Partnership have been identified in the supporting action plan.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Single Partnership Equality Scheme sets out the Partnership's objectives and approach to promoting equality and diversity, good relations and in tackling discrimination and harassment. It recognises that specific actions are needed to address different equality issues whilst also acknowledging many people experience more than one type of disadvantage or discrimination (multiple discrimination).
- 1.2 The Partnership Scheme outlines, in a holistic way, the steps the Partnership and Councils' intend to take to promote equality in everything they do – whether this is providing services, employing people, developing policies and communicating, consulting or involving people in our activities. To this end, it explains the Councils' statutory responsibilities as prescribed under Equalities legislation;
 - outlines how these duties are to be delivered in making sure that people from different groups are not discriminated against or disadvantaged by the Councils' actions;
 - ensures the action plan is monitored;
 - demonstrates the Councils' commitment to equality and diversity; and
 - encourages participation and engagement with groups and individuals in the community.
- 1.3 The scheme is about long-term, continuous improvement, and for this reason responsibility for implementing the scheme lies with the Partnership Board, all members of the partnership, the Councils' elected members and officers of the seven partner authorities. Our scheme recognises the crucial importance of ensuring that the principles of equality and diversity inform key decision-making at every level within the Councils.
- 1.4 This scheme has been produced by the Partnership and builds on the consultation, action plans and equality schemes produced by the previous district and borough Councils'.

2. National legislative Context

- 2.1 The law rightly protects people from unfair discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin; nationality; religious belief; gender; disability, age and sexual orientation.
- 2.2 In some cases this protection applies only to issues around employment, but in others it applies more widely, including the areas of access to services, goods, social protection and education. The Equality Act 2010 sets out the public sector duties and a schedule for implementation.
- 2.3 The public sector duties of the Equality Act 2010 require public organisations such as district and borough councils in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- ❖ Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- ❖ Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- ❖ Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

2.4 The duties and the act seek to outlaw unlawful discrimination against a person or group of people because of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

2.5 Responsibility for education and access to within Leicestershire rests with Leicestershire County Council. For the purposes of this scheme, the focus and commitment by the partnership will focus on access to and provision of services, and recruitment and employment practises as applicable members of the Partnership.

3. The Equality Framework for Local Government

3.1 All members of the Partnership have given commitment to work to the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). The EFLG builds on and develops the work the members of the Partnership have done against the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG).

3.2 The EFLG recognises that equality and embedding equality and diversity cannot be achieved overnight and sets out three levels of improvement:



3.3 Although there are three distinguished levels of achievement within the framework, in fact it is best thought of as a process of continuous improvement.

3.4 At each level, authorities are able to self-assess against five performance areas. The individual level sections set out the characteristics of an authority at each stage and then sets out key actions and examples of evidence of performance against each action.

The five areas of performance are:

1. Knowing your communities and equality mapping
2. Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
3. Community engagement and satisfaction
4. Responsive services and customer care

5. A modern and diverse workforce.

3.5 At the end of August 2010, all members of the Partnership were self audited and found to be at the Developing stage of the Framework with some partners making good progress against the Achieving criteria and able to evidence many of the Achieving criteria's.

4. The Leicestershire Context

4.1 As a Partnership we make up Leicestershire and are in the heart of England. Leicestershire has been described as being on the north/south divide, at the outer limits of the area prospering from the effects of the economy of London and the South East.

4.2 Collectively, our 2009 mid-year population stands at 645,000 which places Leicestershire as the sixteenth largest of England's twenty-seventh Shire Counties in 2009. In the last five years, there has been an average of 6,700 births and 5,600 deaths annually, giving a natural increase in population. Rather more population increase has been due to net migration, the difference between the large amounts of population movement in and out of the county.

4.3 Net migration into the districts and boroughs has been mostly from within the UK, averaging 2,400 in the last five years. Net migration from overseas has averaged 500 over the last five years.

4.4 1,600 overseas nationals registered for a National Insurance number in 2009/10, with a total for March 2005 to March 2010 of 20,000 new registrations. Countries of origin are very diverse, the most common in the last 5 years were Poland, India, China, Philippines, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Republic of Latvia, France, Czech Republic and Pakistan.

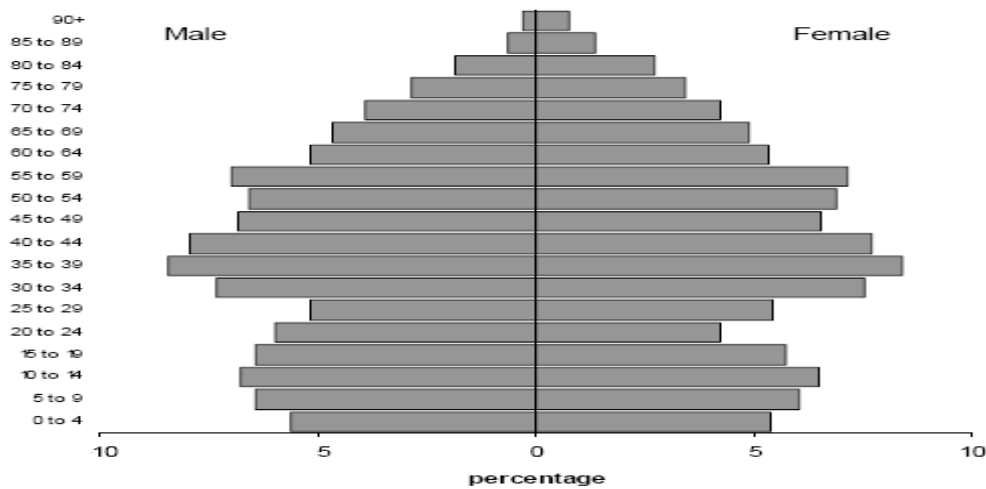
4.2 The Local Context

4.2.1 BLABY

The district covers an area of 13,047 hectares. It shares borders with Charnwood, Leicester City, Oadby and Wigston, Harborough, Rugby and Hinckley and Bosworth Districts. The largest proportion of the population live in the larger settlements of Braunstone (15,123 people), Glenfield (9,779 people), Narborough (8,500 people), Blaby (6,240 people), Countesthorpe (6,595 people) and Leicester Forest East (6,309 people).

- The Black Minority Ethnic (BME) population of Blaby is 6,874 or 7.6% of the population
- The largest ethnic groups are Indian (3,043 people), Other White (1,052 people) and Irish (683 people)
- 66,491 (74%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian.
- The largest non-Christian religious group is Hindu (1.9% of the population) although a large minority (over 22%) state that they have no religion.

Profile of Blaby District – 2003

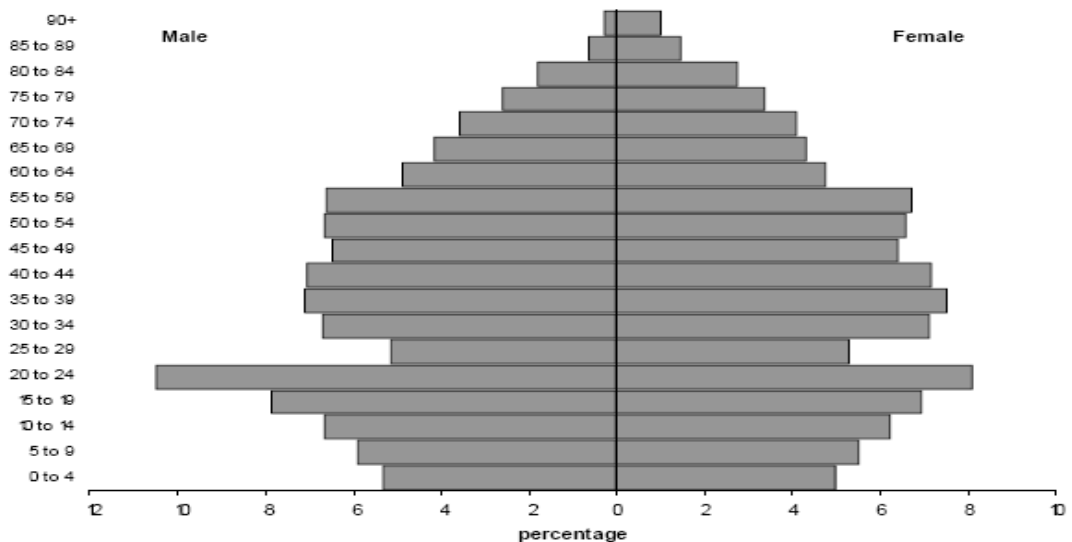


4.2.2 CHARNWOOD

The Borough covers an area of 27,906 hectares. It shares borders with North West Leicestershire, Rushcliffe (Nottinghamshire), Melton, Harborough, Leicester City and Hinckley and Bosworth Districts. The largest proportion of the population live in the larger settlements of Loughborough (55,492 people), Shepshed (13,330 people), Syston (11,544 people), Birstall (11,368 people) and Thurmaston (8,979 people).

- The BME population of Charnwood is 16,573 or 10.8% of the population
- The largest ethnic groups are Indian (7,203 people), Other White (2,639 people) and Bangladeshi (1,249 people)
- 59,700 (69.55%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian.
- The largest non-Christian religious group is Hindu (3.98% of the population), although a large minority (over 23.78%) state that they have no religion, or did not state their religion.

Profile of Charnwood Borough – 2003

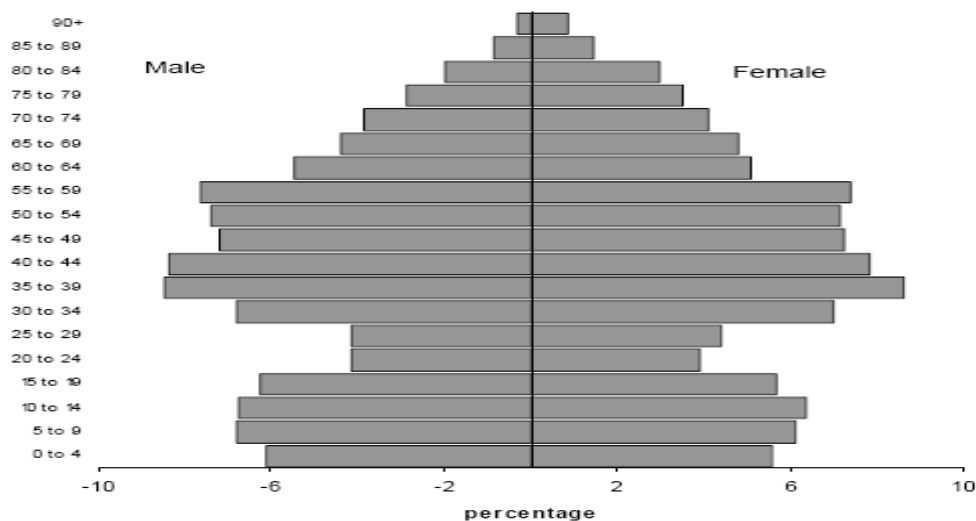


4.2.3 HARBOROUGH

The District covers an area of 59,178 hectares. It shares borders with Melton, Rutland, Corby, Kettering, Daventry, Rugby, Blaby, Oadby & Wigston, Leicester and Charnwood Districts. The largest proportion of the population live in the larger settlements of Market Harborough (18,600 people), Broughton Astley (8,680 people) and Lutterworth (8,350 people)

- The BME population of Harborough is 3,257 or 4.2% of the population
- The largest ethnic groups are Other White (1,131 people), Indian (631 people) and Irish (488 people)
- 59,700 (78%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian.
- The largest non-Christian religious group is Hindu (0.47% of the population), although a large minority (over 20.6%) state that they have no religion.

Profile of Harborough District – 2003



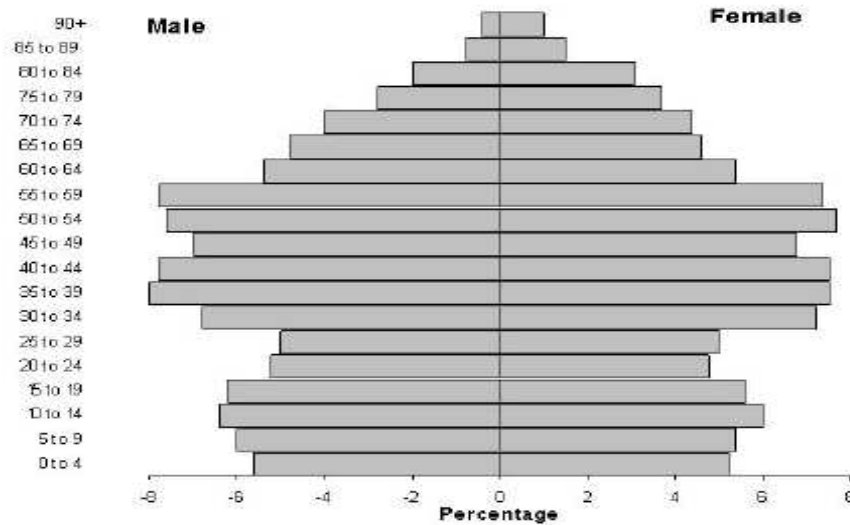
4.2.4 HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH

The Borough covers an area of 29,735 hectares. It shares borders with North West Leicestershire, Charnwood, Blaby, North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth District Council. The largest proportion of the population live in the larger settlements of Hinckley (37,210 people) which is located in the south of the district, Burbage (14,688 people), earl Shilton (9,056 people), Barwell (6,812 people) and Groby (6,776 people).

- The BME population of Hinckley and Bosworth is 3,535 or 3.5% of the population.
- Other White and Indian are the highest Black and Minority Ethnic populations (BME) in Hinckley and Bosworth.
- 78,500 (78%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian

- The largest non-Christian religion is Hinduism (0.5% of the population), although a large minority, over 20%, stated they have no-religion.

Profile of Hinckley and Bosworth District – 2003

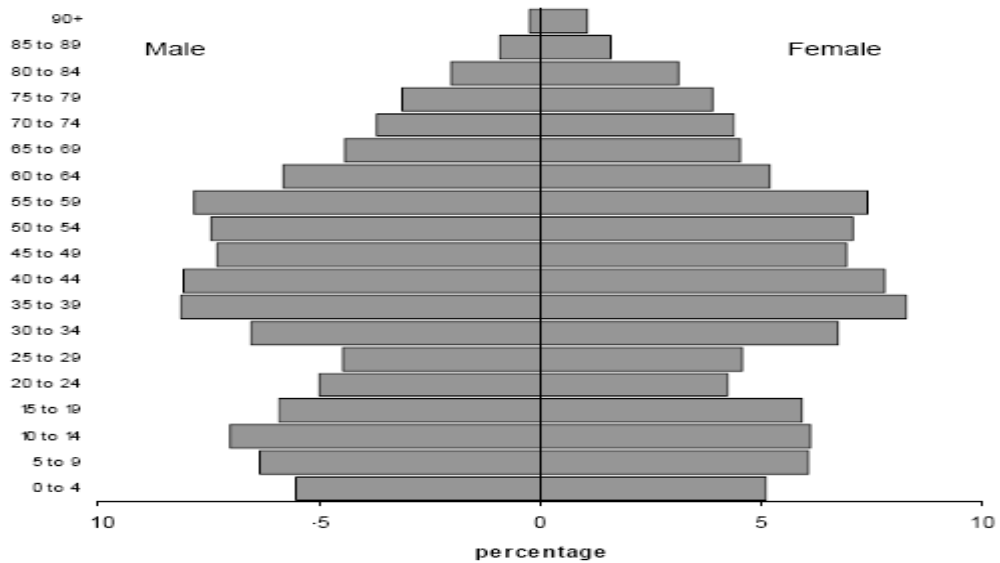


4.2.5 MELTON

The Borough covers an area of 48,138 hectares. It shares borders with Rushcliffe and Newark and Sherwood (Nottinghamshire), South Kesteven (Lincolnshire), and Rutland, Harborough and Charnwood Districts. Half of the population in the Borough live in Melton Mowbray (25,500 people). Other larger settlements include Bottesford (3,290 people), Asfordby (2,640 people), Long Clawson (970 people) and Waltham (780 people).

- The BME population of Melton is 1,522 or 3.2% of the population
- The largest ethnic groups are Other White (613 people), Irish (308 people) and Indian (209 people)
- 37,913 (79%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian.
- The largest non-Christian religious group is Hindu (0.3% of the population) although a large minority, over 20%, stated they have no-religion

Profile of Melton Borough – 2003

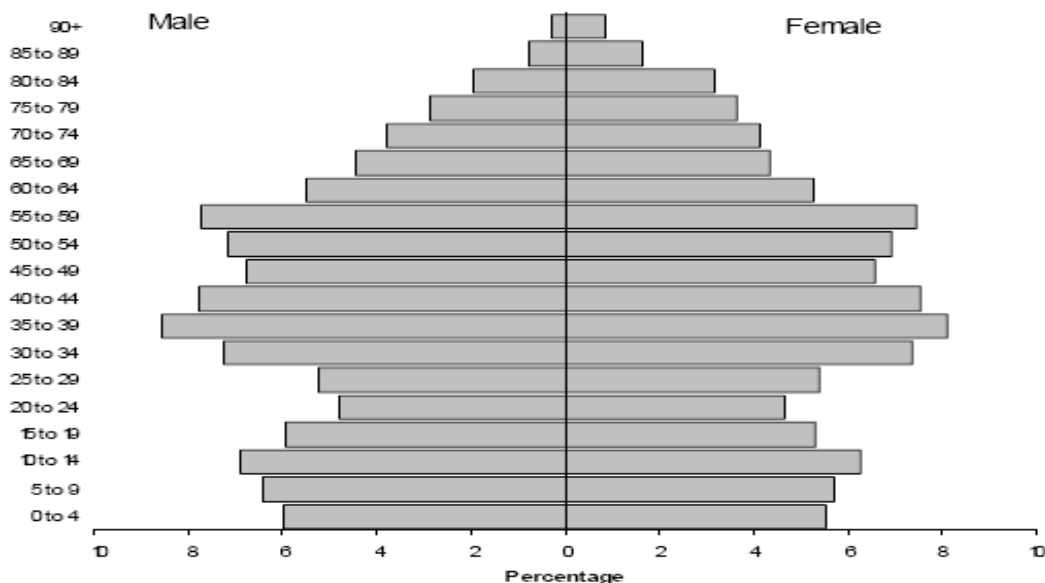


4.2.6 NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE

The District covers an area of 27,933 hectares. It shares borders with Hinckley and Bosworth, Charnwood, Rushcliffe, Erewash, South Derbyshire, Lichfield and North Warwickshire district councils. The largest proportion of the population live in the larger settlements of Coalville (32,987 people), Ashby (13,049 people), Castle Donington (6,086 people) and Ibstock (5,621 people).

- The BME population of North West Leicestershire is 2.26% of the population.
- The largest ethnic group are Other White (742 people), Irish (460 people) and Indian (294 people).
- 66,835 (78%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian,
- The largest non-Christian group is Hindu (0.2% of the population) although a large minority (over 21%) state that they have no religion.

Profile of North West Leicestershire District – 2003



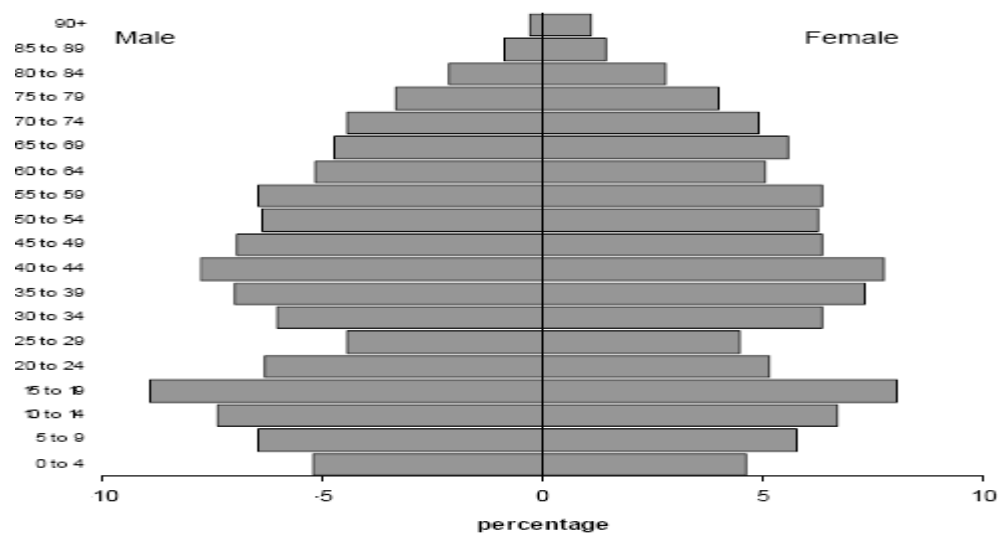
Source: ONS

4.2.7 OADBY AND WIGSTON

The Borough covers an area of 2,352 hectares. It shares borders with Leicester City, Blaby and Harborough Districts. The population in the Borough live in the two settlements of Wigston (32,464 people) and Oadby (23,336 people).

- The BME population of Oadby and Wigston is 10,165 people or 18.2% of the population
- The largest ethnic groups are Indian (6,362 people), Other White (765 people) and Other Asian (566 people)
- 36,131 (64.8%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian.
- The largest non-Christian religious group is Hindu (6.0% of the population) with a large proportion of Sikhs (4.2%) and Muslims (2.8%). A large minority (over 21%) stated that they have no religion.

Profile of Oadby and Wigston Borough – 2003



5. The Vision and Values of the Partnership

This new and ambitious Partnership is striving to deliver excellent services through a strong focus on customer access and service and making sure local people and local communities are at the heart of every partner member's daily work.

As a new Partnership we recognise that we are Stronger Together than if we worked on our own. However, the Partnership also recognises and respects localness, recognising that one size does not fit all and that it will work with local people to develop local services.

As a Partnership we are committed to leading and supporting our partner members to deliver meaningful and lasting improvements for local people, by adopting and developing good equality and diversity practice across the Partnership and to demonstrate high levels of corporate and social responsibility.

These are underpinned by our values which are embedded in all aspects of service delivery and partnership working:-

- *Strength* – we are confident and will ambitiously drive the change and development required for the members of the Partnership to succeed.
- *Fairness* – we are democratic in our actions, treating everyone individually but equally, and with consistency
- *Accessibility* – we are accessible to all and will listen and respond to the views and opinions of everyone

6. Working with Partners

- 6.1 The member partners work closely with many partners and agencies in the delivery of their functions and services. One of the principal ways this occurs is through their respective Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 6.2 The respective LSP's bring together and co-ordinate the work and contribution of local organisations and local community groups to improve the quality of life in the districts and boroughs.
- 6.3 Within each LSP, there is a Stronger Communities Theme, and it is this theme which has the responsibility for promoting equality and diversity.
- 6.4 The Partnership is a member of the Leicestershire Equalities Forum, which is a group of equality leads from all of the statutory organisations in Leicestershire, plus equality leads from the voluntary sector. The Forum meets regularly and has developed a partnership equality and diversity strategy which is focused on tackling issues common to all members. As a forum, we have been successful in securing additional funding through the East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (EMEIP) to further develop collaborative partnership working on equalities throughout the sub-region.

7. The Partnership Approach to Equality and Diversity

- 7.1 Prior to August 2010 and the creation of the Partnership, each member authority recognised that in order to effectively fulfil its commitment to promoting equality and tackling disadvantage and harassment, it had to put in place a number of corporate processes that are applied by every part of the organisation. These had to be complemented with specific actions related to the particular needs of the different communities, which are likely to suffer an inequality or disadvantage.
- 7.2 This Partnership scheme replaces those individual policies and details the actions and approach, the Partnership will take to ensure each member authority is able to meet its obligations and responsibilities under equality legislation.

8. Partnership Equality and Diversity Action Plan

- 8.1 The aims of this scheme will be progressed through the Partnership Equality and Diversity Action Plan. The Action Plan for the first year will encompass service delivery and employment issues, contain specific, measurable and achievable targets.
- 8.2 The Equality and Diversity Action Plan will focus on the five levels of the Equality Framework and can be found at page xx of this document.

9. Partnership Commitment to each Protected Characteristics

Equality for People of all Ages

Members of the Partnership are committed to eliminating age discrimination and will do all they can to promote greater social inclusion for people of all ages and will work to develop the right conditions for their employees of all ages to develop and contribute.

To achieve this objective the members of the Partnership will:-

- Ensure services are delivered in a way that takes full account of the rights and needs of all including young and older people;
- Provide services for young people, and older people to meet their particular needs including the provision of targeted services for youth groups and older peoples' groups;
- Support and encourage initiatives which are set up and run by young people and by older people, and which promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity;
- Develop access to decision making arenas that take account access needs of young and older people (venues, time, support and formats);
- In policy development, service planning and delivery, the Partner members will ensure people do not receive a different quality of service due to their age;
- Will work towards ensuring that young people and older people are effectively represented in any consultation undertaken;
- Will work towards implementing procedures (where applicable) which ensure young and older people have their views taken into account separately from those of families and carers
- All Partner member will work towards ensuring that arbitrary age discrimination is removed and job-related criteria are adopted;

Disability

Members of the Partnership are committed to eliminating discrimination against disabled people, attempting to remove the barriers which disabled people face in accessing services and encouraging disabled people's right to an independent life.

In carrying out all of their duties the partner members will seek to ensure that people with disabilities are free from prejudice and discrimination in their everyday lives. Partner members will ensure that people with disabilities are involved in decisions.

To achieve this objective the members of the Partnership will:-

- Involve people with disabilities in decisions through their programme of impact assessments and local access group;
- Involve and engage local people with disabilities and take into account their specific needs in planning and delivering services;
- Design, plan and provide services to enable people with disabilities to maximise the control over their own lives;
- Consider the full range of access (includes the built environment) to services and improve the access to services, utilising the experience, views, creativity and expertise of people with disabilities;
- Work to provide information in plain English and make available that information, on request, through a range of media and in a range of formats [including, where appropriate, the provision of materials in symbols, large print, Braille, British Sign Language video or audio description] and offer alternatives to verbal communication so people with disabilities enjoy equal access to information and services;
- Handle sensitively allegations of discrimination and harassment providing appropriate support to the alleged victim(s) in accordance with organisational policy and procedure;
- Ensure recruitment and selection is carried out in line with current equality legislation, but also within the spirit of this scheme and national best practice;
- Where possible to ensure reasonable adjustments are made so applicants with disabilities and existing employees who are or become disabled are treated fairly and with proper consideration of their abilities;
- To take a proactive role in encouraging and enabling disabled people to gain employment with the Partners;
- Make all reasonable efforts to help employees who are or become disabled remain in the Councils' employment;
- Manage employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on grounds of the persons' disability in terms of work allocations, consultation and communication, development and training opportunities, employee appraisals, granting of leave, service reviews or grievance and disciplinary matters.

Gender equality

Members of the Partnership are committed to eliminating sex discrimination and enabling women, men and transgender people to participate on an equal basis in social, cultural, political and economic life.

The Partner members will ensure that in carrying out their duties, women, men and transgender people are protected from unlawful discrimination and treated with respect and fairness.

To achieve this objective the members of the Partnership will:-

- Ensure employees are able to work in an environment that values them as individuals and are free from sexual harassment or discrimination;
- Confront unlawful discrimination and promote gender equality through learning and development;
- Ensure all their employees know and understand that acts of sexual harassment or discrimination against other employees or customers are unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the organisations Disciplinary and Harassment Procedure;
- Recognise, that while women have the greater responsibility for childcare and providing unpaid assistance to older people, disabled people and for people who are ill, male and transgendered employees should also be supported in their responsibilities;
- Where operationally viable, support and enable flexible working to help employees who wish to do so balance their lives inside and outside work;
- Ensure all information, publicity and advertising over which each Council has control and or influence is non-sexist, and uses positive images and language to counteract the effects of sexism and promote gender equality;
- Endeavour to challenge sexist attitudes, structures and practices of external organisation's or partners;
- Undertake job evaluations and carry out a pay and grading review as part of the process to develop fair employment and equal pay policies;
- In policy development, service planning and delivery, the Partner members will ensure that people do not receive a different quality of service due to their gender
- Manage employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on gender grounds in terms of work allocations, consultation and communication, development and training opportunities, employees appraisals, granting of leave, service reviews or grievance and disciplinary matters.

Race equality

Members of the Partnership are committed to eliminating discrimination against people on the grounds of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, and cultural background.

Engaging with people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups and the Gypsy and Traveller communities presents particular challenges for many of the Partner members, especially those who have relatively low proportion of BME residents. Members of the Partnership are committed to developing and implementing policies that will ensure fair access to both services and employment

To achieve this objective the members of the Partnership will:-

- Ensure BME communities are involved in planning services, and that their specific needs are considered in consultation processes;
- Give consideration to advertising and promoting services in the local BME media and in areas with higher concentrations of BME people as appropriate;
- Monitor use of services by ethnicity to ensure equality of access, and use the data to develop services which are appropriate to the needs of the whole community;
- Ensure recruitment is carried out in line with current legislation, but also within the spirit of this policy and national best practice;
- Ensure employees are given appropriate and have access to training in anti-racist practices;
- Ensure service users, employees, consultants, contractors, suppliers, and partners [including those in the voluntary and community sectors] are able to work and deliver services free from racial harassment and discrimination;
- Handle allegations of racial discrimination and harassment with sensitivity, giving appropriate support to the alleged victim[s], in accordance with organisational policy and procedures;
- Manage employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on racial grounds in terms of work allocations, consultation and communication, development and training opportunities, employee appraisals, granting of leave, service reviews or grievance and disciplinary matters.

Religion/Belief or Non-belief equality

Members of the Partnership are committed to eliminating discrimination because of their religion or belief. They will strive to provide fair access to employment and services and will not discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief.

In order to achieve this objective, the members of the Partnership will:-

- Ensure Faith communities are involved in planning services and their specific needs considered in any consultation processes;

- Ensure employees are given appropriate and have access to training in Religion/Belief practices;
- Ensure recruitment and selection is carried out in accordance with the organisation's standards and best practice;
- Work towards enabling employees at all levels in the workforce to feel safe in being open about their faith, religion or belief systems;
- Ensure service users, employees, consultants, contractors, suppliers, and partners [including those in the voluntary and community sectors] are able to work and deliver services free from harassment and religious discrimination;
- Endeavour wherever possible, to ensure all information, publicity and advertising over which the councils' have control and/or influence is non-prejudicial and uses positive images and language to counteract the effects of religious discrimination such as Islamophobia or Anti-Semitism;
- Handle allegations of religious discrimination and harassment with sensitivity, giving appropriate support to the alleged victim[s], within the context of the normal Council policy and procedure;
- Manage employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on religious grounds in terms of work allocations, consultation and communication, development and training opportunities, employee appraisals, granting of leave, service reviews or grievance and disciplinary matters;
- Acknowledge and publicly recognise cultural and religious festivals and holidays so that leave is not unreasonably withheld from employees who may wish to celebrate them.

Equality for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People

Members of the Partnership are committed to eliminating discrimination homophobic prejudice and discrimination.

Members of the Partnership will ensure that in carrying out their duties, lesbian, gay and bisexual people are given fair and unprejudiced treatment.

In order to achieve this objective, the members of the Partnership will:-

- Ensure policies, procedures and practices are not based on the assumption that everyone is, or should be, heterosexual;
- Acknowledge same sex relationships and ensure, wherever possible, partners have equal access to the services and benefits available to heterosexual couples;
- Encourage the participation of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the decisions which affect their lives;
- Work with partners to make communities safer and enable lesbian, gay, and bisexual people to live without prejudice or fear;
- Ensure employees are given appropriate and have access to training in Sexual orientation;

- Encourage a culture of openness about sexual orientation and ensure that lesbian, gay and bisexual employees have a safe and supportive environment in which to work;
- Ensure service users are aware that they do not have the right to refuse service from lesbian or gay employees;
- Ensure recruitment and selection is carried out in accordance with the organisation's standards and best practice;
- Handle sensitively allegations of discrimination and harassment providing appropriate support to the alleged victim(s) in accordance with organisational policy and procedure;
- Work to provide information and guidance to managers and employees on gender reassignment as well as on general appropriate language and behaviour issues which may affect people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual;
- Manage employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in terms of work allocations, consultation and communication, development and training opportunities, employee appraisals, granting of leave, service reviews or grievance and disciplinary matters.

Equality for Transgendered People

Members of the Partnership are committed to eliminating discrimination, harassment arising of, or based on their gender identity.

Members of the Partnership will ensure that in carrying out their duties, transgendered, transsexual or individuals undergoing gender re-assignment are given fair and unprejudiced treatment.

In order to achieve this objective, members of the Partnership will:-

- Ensure employees are given appropriate and have access to training in Transgender, Bisexual and Transsexualism;
- Encourage the participation of transgender, bisexual and transsexual people in the decisions which affect their lives;
- Work with partners to make communities safer and enable transgendered, bisexual and transsexual people to live without prejudice or fear;
- Ensure service users are aware that they do not have the right to refuse service from transgender, bisexual or transsexual employees;
- Ensure recruitment and selection process is carried out in accordance with the organisation's standards and best practice;
- Encourage a culture of openness and ensure that transgendered, bisexual or transsexual employees have a safe and supportive environment in which to work;
- Ensure that any employees who are undergoing or planning to undergo the gender reassignment process are treated with fairness and dignity;
- The Partners will work as flexibly as possible and in line with their sickness and long term absence policy and allow transsexual people undergoing medical and surgical procedures related to gender reassignment time off from work.

10. Arrangements for Reviewing Progress against the Partnership Single Scheme

- 10.1 The Single Partnership Scheme will be considered by each Partner's respective Equality group initially before being forwarded to the District Chief Executives Group for approval.
- 10.2 Formal approval will then be sought from all seven partner scrutiny committees and Cabinet or Council as appropriate.
- 10.3 Progress against the action plan will be monitored by the Partnership Board and the appropriate partner members Equality groups. Any areas of underperformance or slippage will be reported to the appropriate Equality group.
- 10.4 The Partnership will produce an annual report on the progress made in meeting it's duty to promote equality and diversity.

APPENDIX A

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
1. Knowing your community and equality mapping						
1.1	Equality and Diversity monitoring tools are in place	Equality and Diversity Officers	Refresh current Equality and Diversity toolkits so they include the new protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010	Corporate guidelines for collecting equality and diversity data are in place		HBBC; MBC; BDC; OWDC; HDC
			Improve the collection and use of equality monitoring information as part of consultation and engagement events	Customer consultation and engagement events are inclusive	On-going	ALL
			Develop and implement appropriate training for relevant staff and members	Staff and elected members understand the purpose of monitoring	On-going	ALL
1.2	Equality analysis toolkits are in place	Equality and Diversity Officers	Equality analysis toolkits are refreshed and include the new protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010	Equality analysis and actions are robust and inclusive	August 2011 October 2011	NWL; HBBC; BDC CBC; MBC; OWDC; HDC
			Develop and implement appropriate training for relevant staff and members	Staff and elected members understand the purpose of undertaking equality analysis	August 2011 October 2011	NWL; HBBC; BDC CBC; MBC; OWDC; HDC

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
1. Knowing your community and equality mapping						
		Equality and Diversity Officers	Produce and publish a three year test of relevance of policies, procedures and services requiring Equality analysis	Three year programme of Equality analysis is in place and published on the councils' web site	July 2011	ALL
		All officers responsible for Equality analysis	Data on community profiles and neighbourhoods are used as part of identifying positive and negative impact	Council policies, procedures and services are non discriminatory and accessible for the communities they serve	On-going	ALL
1.3	Partnership working and community intelligence	Partnership lead officers	Partnership Terms of Reference include data sharing protocol	Information is mapped and shared with partners to assess and set equality objectives	On-going	ALL
1.4	Hard to Reach communities and Access to services	RIEP Equality and Diversity Manager	Undertake research on access to services and barriers	Improved access to services and greater engagement of the communities	October 2011	ALL
1.5	Develop a central data storage point	Customer Services managers	Undertake feasibility study to use CRM or equivalent system as central data storage point		March 2012	HBBC; BDC; CBC
1.6	Monitoring and assessing Equality analysis objectives	All officers responsible for Equality analysis	Community Profiles and Neighbourhood profiles of districts/boroughs are developed and made available to services	Services and polices are non discriminatory	On-going	ALL

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
2. Place shaping, Leadership and organisational commitment						
2.1	To implement the Partnership single Equality and Diversity Policy	Policy and Performance Officer/Equality and Diversity Officers and members of the Partnership Board	Prepare Single Partnership Equality and Diversity Policy plus corresponding action plan, and all other elements of the Policy	Increased awareness of equality and , diversity across the Councils ¹ of the Partnership	June 2011	ALL
			Completion and adoption of Single Partnership Equality and Diversity Policy and action plan by Councils ²	Organisational and partnership objectives are understood and owned by all Partner members	August 2011	ALL
2.2	Raise the standard and awareness of equality and diversity across the Council's	Equality and Diversity Officers/Communication Team	Undertake a targeted internal campaign	Clear understanding of the Councils' and Partnership commitment to Equality and Diversity	On-going	
				Improved community confidence and satisfaction		
2.3	Commitments within equality policies and actions from equality analysis are monitored	Equality and Diversity officers and Performance teams	All actions identified as a result of Equality analysis are incorporated within Service and departmental plans	Equality objectives are monitored by as planned with corrective actions taken to address underperformance	On-going	ALL
2.4	Undertake work to improve representation and participation	Democratic services/ Leicestershire RIEP Equality and Diversity Programme	Black Future Community Group to deliver county wide youth democracy event	Increase in the number of young people living in socially, economically deprived and disengaged areas engaged in the democratic process	May 2011	ALL

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
2. Place shaping, Leadership and organisational commitment						
		Democratic services	Develop actions to improve representation and participation in civic and public life	Under presented groups (young people, new communities) are engaged with the council and in the democratic process		
		Democratic services	Undertake review of polling stations	Polling stations are accessible and meet the needs of the local communities	July 2011	ALL
2.5	Community Overview & Scrutiny Panels	Leicestershire RIEP Equality and Diversity Programme / Democratic services	Review and update the members development programme to include equality and diversity	Elected members are confident in their understanding of their community leadership role with regards to Equality and Diversity and Equality analysis	June 2011 and on-going thereafter	ALL
2.6	Improve community relations and pride in communities	Community Safety Teams	Work in partnership with the Crime and Disorder Partnership and the county wide Hate Incident Monitoring project to encourage and publicise the reporting of Hate crime and incidents	Reduction in the number of hate crime and incidents in the districts and boroughs		ALL
2.7	Fair and accessible procurement	Welland Partnership and Procurement Managers	Staff involved in procurement and contracting are trained on the equality implications of procurement	Contractors providing goods, facilities and services, deliver non discriminatory services		WELLAND PARTNERSHIP; OTHERS

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
2. Place shaping, Leadership and organisational commitment						
			Equality objectives are specified and systems are developed for monitoring during the contract term to ensure compliance to requirements	Commissioned and procured services deliver equality related requirements		WELLAND PARTNERSHIP; OTHERS

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
3. Community engagement and satisfaction						
3.1	Active and inclusive community engagement structures are in place	Community Forum Team/ Communication Teams	Development of Community Engagement Strategy and Toolkit to include examples of good	Community engagement events are held at accessible venues and are inclusive		NWL;
		Equality and Diversity Officers	Development of Local Community Group Directory	Staff are aware of the local groups by equality categories and preferred methods of engagement		CBC; MDC; OWDC; HDC
		Equality and Diversity Officers/Team managers	Access requirements are included as part of engagement process and meetings	Increase in the number of community groups which are engaged with the council		ALL
3.2	Partners have a segmented understanding of their communities needs	RIEP Equality and Diversity Programme/ De Montfort University	Production of Leicestershire Needs analysis	Services are designed to reduce inequalities identified and meet the needs of communities		ALL
3.3	Customer satisfaction	Communication Teams/Performance Teams	Customer satisfaction surveys are undertaken	Increase in the rate of satisfaction with service provision	Varied according to partner timetable	ALL
			Equality and diversity monitoring is undertaken across all the equality groups	Equality targets can be set to address gaps identified	Vary according to district/ borough needs	ALL

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
4. Responsive services and customer care						
4.1	Customer Service Standards	Customer Services Managers	Customer Service standards are in place and incorporate third party harassment	Customers are treated with dignity and respect	On-going	NWL; CBC; OWDC; HDC; MBC
			Review policy and processes on complaints to ensure complaints of discrimination are recorded and monitored across all equality strands	Complaints are analysed for trends and handled in accordance with national best practise	On-going	ALL
		Customer Service Managers, Equality and Diversity Officers	Ensure all front-line staff are aware of how to access Language Line, Braille translation services, and BSL interpreters	Requests for translation and interpretation are monitored to identify and respond to potential future need		ALL
4.2	Accessible information and services	Web – site managers/ Communication teams	Accessibility audit of web site is undertaken	Web –site is WCAG compliant and covers language options (includes users with visual impairment)		BDC; MBC; OWDC; HDC
4.3	Support independent living	Older Person Services	To work to and implement the requirements of the Supporting People framework			NWL; MBC; HBBC; OWDC
		District and Borough First Contact link officers	Joint working with Partners of the First Contact Scheme	More people are able to live remain living safe and independent in their own home.	On-going	ALL; MBC – pilot scheme for vulnerable adults aged 18 - 59+
4.4	Taxi and hackney operators provide fair and accessible	Licensing Officers	Requirement of licence conditions include attending customer care and equality	Taxi and Hackney operators in the district and borough provide	On-going	BTEC – CBC; ALL OTHERS

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
4. Responsive services and customer care						
	services		and diversity training	excellent customer care and non discriminatory services		
4.5		Community Development/ Neighbourhood Management Teams	To support access to and availability of English language training for migrant communities			

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
5. Modern and diverse workforce						
5.1	Council workforce is reflective of the districts and boroughs	Human Resources Managers	Monitor and undertake annual employee validation exercise and satisfaction survey	Analyse and publish workforce information on respective websites	December 2011 and yearly thereafter	ALL
		Human Resources Managers	Identify and implement positive action measures where appropriate to make the workforce more representative of local communities	Each partner authority to set Local indicators according to need		ALL
		Human Resources Managers	Carry out an employee and information and awareness campaign to explain the purpose of monitoring and encourage disclosures.			ALL

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
5. Modern and diverse workforce						
5.2	Local Labour Market Assessment		Compile a Local Labour Market Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify relevant data sources from existing publications • Decision re: referencing existing sources or compiling CBC LLMA 		May 2012	CBC; MBC; OWBC; HDC
5.3	Equality and Diversity Related Learning and development	CBC shared HR service	To review current provision and ensure appropriate levels including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction for all • Manager provision 			
		NWL Policy and Performance Officer	A range of equality and diversity sessions are sourced and made available	Staff understand the impact of different religions and faiths as part of service and policy development	Start June 2011	
5.4	Processes or knowledge of how to support Reasonable Adjustments	CBC shared HR service	Draft and launch guidance, agree appropriate processes		TBC	
5.5	Work to reduce gender pay gap	CBC shared HR service	Conduct Equal Pay Audit/Review	Single status pay system is in place	March 2012	CBC; NWL
5.6	Provide a safe working environment and appropriate evacuation arrangements for Deaf and disabled	Health and Safety Officers	Personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS) to be developed for all employees who are known to their respective council and require one		On-going	ALL

	Commitments	Responsible Officer	Action required	Outcome	Target/Date	Cross-ref to Partner authority
5. Modern and diverse workforce						
	employees					
5.7	Provide a safe working environment for LGB and T employees	Policy and Performance Officer and Partnership Programme Board	Investigate the benefits of improving the Council's position on the Workplace Equality Index by working with an LGBT organisation	Increase in the rate of personal disclosure		ALL

APPENDIX B: Partnership scheme - Summary of Questions and Responses

Comments	Response
<p>Comments from Anon at Leicester City Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) meets with the requirement of the Equality Act 2010 as it currently stands; good to see that it applies Human Rights thinking 2) wish the new partnership well, but what about MORE OUTCOMES for Communities 3) good to see Trans included in the scheme, though more actions around raising awareness would be helpful 4) Will there be an easy read version? 	<p>As a partnership we recognise that we need to be more customer focussed. The action plan attached to the scheme is based on high levels actions with specific actions being developed for each partner to deliver specific outcomes.</p> <p>Plans are being developed to produce an easy read version. This will be made available on each partners website and on request.</p> <p>NO CHANGE</p>
<p>Comments from the Valuing People Team at Leicestershire County Council:</p> <p>Involve people with disabilities in decisions through their programme of impact assessments and local access group;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider and take into account the specific needs of local people with disabilities and their carers in planning and delivering services; (consultation with people with learning disabilities needs to be done in an easy to understand way, using a variety of different methods) • Design, plan and provide services to enable people with disabilities to maximise the control over their own lives; • Improve access to services and the built environment, utilising the experience, views, creativity and expertise of people with disabilities; (access to facilities is considered to the physical elements which people with disabilities need to overcome, but also includes signage and 'changing places' which is more than an accessible loo!) • Where possible, make information available, on request, through a range of media and in a range of formats [including, where appropriate, the provision of materials in symbols, large print, Braille, British Sign Language video or audio description] and offer alternatives to verbal 	<p>Members of the Partnership would like to thank the Valuing People Team for their comments and would welcome their input into developing appropriate actions to ensure that all our customers have equal access to services, information and employment .</p> <p>ACTION: Changes and amendments made to statements in Partnership with the Valuing Peoples Team</p>

APPENDIX B: Partnership scheme - Summary of Questions and Responses

Comments	Response
<p>communication so people with disabilities enjoy,(this sounds very patronising) equal access to information and services; (no consideration to making document easier to understand using plain and easy language and supporting with picture and images)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle sensitively allegations of discrimination and harassment providing appropriate support to the alleged victim(s) in accordance with organisational policy and procedure; • Ensure recruitment and selection is carried out in line with current equality legislation, but also within the spirit of this scheme and national best practice; • Where possible to ensure reasonable adjustments are made so applicants with disabilities and existing employees who are or become disabled are treated fairly and with proper consideration of their abilities; • Make all reasonable efforts to help employees who are or become disabled remain in the Councils' employment; (to my knowledge no one with a leaning disability is employed by the district council - it would be interesting to know if this is not true. The city council has recently employed 6 - 10 people with learning disabilities in a variety of roles including consultant and cleaners. If you require more information about this - please let me know) • Manage employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on grounds of the persons' disability in terms of work allocations, consultation and communication, development and training opportunities, employee appraisals, granting of leave, service reviews or grievance and disciplinary matters. <p>as part of your single equality scheme you may consider an action to</p>	

APPENDIX B: Partnership scheme - Summary of Questions and Responses

Comments	Response
<p>' make sure that staff have appropriate training to ensure that they are about to work effectively with PWD'. including learning disability awareness training to all your front of house staff and 'making written information easier to understand' guidance training to staff which are involved in designing literature for the organisation. This particular course will refer you to the guideline set up by Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Partnerships and will benefit other hard to reach groups like people who English is a second language and people with low literacy levels. The Valuing People Team currently offer all this training but we would have discuss how this could be rolled out to your staff</p>	
<p>Comments from Age Concern: The main concern for the elderly who access services provided by Age Concern is the reduction in funding to services and the impact on them. There is however the recognition that services such as Meals on wheels and Lunch clubs are not provided or funded by district or borough councils, nevertheless this remains a concern</p>	<p>Members of the Partnership will endeavour to work with Age Concern and the elderly communities at all opportunities and especially where decisions by the partners would impact on them directly.</p> <p>ACTION: 3.1 OF ACTION PLAN REVIEWED AND AMENDED</p>
<p>Comments from Trade Sexual Health: The Partnership looks and sounds great. My concern would be when issues such as sexual health and HIV arise. HIV is a disability and is forgotten in such documents. In terms of LGBT people it's great that they have access and that your commitment to include this group in publicity it valid, how will ensure community centre's will be following this commitment, to date any publicity we have attempted has been met with staff saying "the public may be offended" should this equality just not be for business but also towards service users?</p>	<p>Community Centres are not provided by any of the partner authorities. However where funding is provided to run community centres, all our grant application forms require the applying body to deliver and provide services fairly and without discrimination.</p> <p>NO CHANGE</p>

APPENDIX B: Partnership scheme - Summary of Questions and Responses

Comments	Response
<p>Comments from Regional Equality and Diversity Partnership:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Need more SMART actions which are district/borough specific 2) Need to show and include Disability data 3) Need to show commitment to reduce inequality in social care and housing provision 4) Would welcome the opportunity to work in Partnership with the districts and borough councils 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As per response to Anon from Leicester City 2) It is recognised that a wider range of data would help to inform the scheme and the work of reduce inequalities. However as there is no definitive data on “disability” – this Partnership would welcome the sharing of any data held by the REDP. 3) District and Borough councils do not have responsibility for the provision of social care (adult or children). As not all district and borough councils have retained their own housing stock, this aspect will be developed further within each Partners action plan as appropriate. 4) Offer of closer Partnership working noted and welcomed