



FYLDE BOROUGH COUNCIL



Meeting Agenda

**Policy & Service Review Scrutiny
Committee
Town Hall, Lytham St. Annes
23 October 2006, 7:00pm**

POLICY & SERVICE REVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

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Raymond Norsworthy

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Martin Taylor

Councillors

Stephen Carpenter

Elizabeth Oades

Maxine Chew

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Elizabeth Clarkson

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CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The Council's investment and activities are focused on achieving our five key objectives which aim to :

- Conserve, protect and enhance the quality of the Fylde natural and built environment
- Work with partners to help maintain safe communities in which individuals and businesses can thrive
- Stimulate strong economic prosperity and regeneration within a diverse and vibrant economic environment
- Improve access to good quality local housing and promote the health and wellbeing and equality of opportunity of all people in the Borough
- Ensure we are an efficient and effective council.

CORE VALUES

In striving to achieve these objectives we have adopted a number of key values which underpin everything we do :

- Provide equal access to services whether you live in town, village or countryside,
- Provide effective leadership for the community,
- Value our staff and create a 'can do' culture,
- Work effectively through partnerships,
- Strive to achieve 'more with less'.



A G E N D A

ITEM	PAGE
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: <i>In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.</i>	4
2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES: <i>To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Policy & Service Review Forum held on 30 August 2006.</i>	4
3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS: <i>Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 26.3</i>	4
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REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES	POLICY AND SERVICE REVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	23 RD OCTOBER 2006	4

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Public/Exempt item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

The Council has already approved a Child Protection Policy, which was specifically designed to address Leisure services. In order to follow best practice there is a requirement to adopt and approve a Child Protection policy that protects any child that comes into contact with Fylde Borough Council and its services

Recommendation/s

1. The Scrutiny Committee to consider the draft Child Protection Policy and make any recommendations to Cabinet to determine the adoption and implementation of the policy.

Executive Portfolio

The item falls within the following executive portfolio[s]:

Tourism and Culture (Councillor Simon Renwick)

Report

Background

1. In 2003, the Government published a Green Paper called Every Child Matters. This document built on existing plans to strengthen preventative services by focusing on

Continued....

Report

Background

1. In 2003, the Government published a Green Paper called Every Child Matters. This document built on existing plans to strengthen preventative services by focusing on four key themes. One of these themes is ensuring that the people working with children are valued, rewarded and trained. Following consultation Every Child Matters: The Next Steps was published and the Children Act 2004 was passed. The aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:
 - Be healthy
 - Stay safe
 - Enjoy and achieve
 - Make a positive contribution
 - Achieve economic well being
2. Fylde Borough Council is not an investigative or intervention agency for child protection or child safety. However the Council does deliver a whole range of services and activities that involve children. Its members, staff and volunteers can have regular contact with children. This puts them in a position to observe signs of abuse, which can and should enable them to alert others when identified. It also puts members, staff and volunteers in a position where they themselves are open to accusations and as a caring employer measures need to be put in place to protect these people.

Policy

3. The aim of the policy is to address the issues and to provide a framework, which ensures the Child Protection Policy, is applied and implemented. This should be achieved by the appointment of a member champion responsible for Child Protection issues together with a designated senior officer in each business unit with contact with children. They will be responsible for implementing the policy and ensuring all staff are trained to deal with and respond to any incidents that may occur.
4. The policy deals with recruitment and selection of staff through the process from Job description to completing the probationary period and beyond. A section on recognising abuse, harm and neglect followed by how to respond to suspicions or allegations. The appendix is a best practice code of conduct for those who are working with children.

Implications	
FINANCE	THERE IS A SMALL COST ASSOCIATED WITH TRAINING MEMBER CHAMPION AND SENIOR DESIGNATED STAFF .

LEGAL	NONE ARISING
COMMUNITY SAFETY	NONE ARISING
HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITIES	NONE ARISING
SUSTAINABILITY	NONE ARISING
RISK MANAGEMENT	REDUCE THE RISK TO CHILDREN AND REDUCE THE RISK TO EMPLOYEES WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN.



Child Protection

This information provides simple guidance for Elected members, staff, and volunteers under the auspices of Fylde Borough Council to help them deal with issues that may arise when working with children.

For the purpose of this document a child will be classed as any young person under the age of 18 or any vulnerable adult

Policy Statement

Fylde Borough Council recognises the need to ensure the welfare of children whatever their age, culture, gender, disability, language, race origin, religious or background. In doing so Fylde Borough Council is committed to ensuring that any child, who may come into contact with a Council employee (paid or voluntary) or elected member, or any child who may take part in any activity organised by the Council, will have a positive and enriching experience, and that the behaviour of any member of staff/volunteer or elected member will always be above reproach.

Fylde Borough Council works in partnership with other organisations on many issues, including Lancashire County Council – particularly where they provide direct services to our community via Education, Lifelong Learning and Social Services. The very nature of this work gives substantial one to one access to children. To support the delivery of services, Lancashire County Council has in place a multi-agency Child protection policy for Lancashire as a whole, which Fylde Borough Council is committed to supporting. The guidance within this policy has been produced within the spirit of a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to protecting the interests of children.

Scope

It is proposed that the content of the Council's Child Protection Policy should form part of the Terms and conditions of Service for employees of Fylde Borough Council. This includes all whose work involves, or who would come into contact with children during their normal employment duties. It is further proposed that the policy applies to all who work with such individuals or groups, whether as a permanent or temporary employee, elected members, casual worker, volunteer or otherwise. All contractors who are expected to come into contact with children in the course of their work for Fylde Borough Council will be required to agree to abide by this policy.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework, which ensures that policies and practices within Fylde Borough Council are applied, implemented and reviewed by all Fylde Borough Council staff in line with best practice. It also provides guidance to help prevent child abuse, give support and protect all children who have contact with Fylde Borough Council.

There are three main elements to the Child Protection.

- Prevention
- Protection
- Support

Prevention

Employees and elected members of the Council will endeavour to ensure that all children using the Council's services, do so safely, and are treated with respect and understanding.

Protection

The Council will take all reasonable steps to protect the rights, health and well being of children who take part in activities organised by the Council and who use Fylde Borough Council facilities.

Support

Fylde Borough Council recognises that child protection issues can be emotive and the Council will offer suitable impartial support to any member of staff and elected member affected by this policy, whether directly or indirectly. Child protection training will be made available to all members of staff and elected members who work with or come into contact with children in the course of their duties with the Council.

Procedures/Policies/Practice

Fylde Borough Council will elect a member champion who will be responsible for all issues regarding Child protection issues related to the council

Fylde Borough Council, will also, through each business unit/service within the Council which involves contact with children, ensure that there are senior designated staff who are responsible for implementing the policy, training staff and are able to respond to child protection incidents, situations and concerns whenever they may arise.

Anyone working for Fylde Borough Council will be expected to report any concerns to the designated officer so that all matters can be responded to swiftly and appropriately.

However it is NOT the responsibility of anyone under the auspices of Fylde Borough Council in a paid or voluntary capacity to prove whether or not child abuse is taking place. However there is still a responsibility to protect children in order that the appropriate agencies can make their enquires and take the necessary action to protect the child.

Recruitment and selection of staff / volunteers

It is vital that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and it is essential that the same procedure is used consistently for all staff / volunteers.

When undertaking pre-selection checks the following course of action will be followed:

Job description / Person specification

All job descriptions for posts will contain the statement:

‘The post-holder is required to be committed to the prevention of abuse of children, and to abide by the Fylde Borough Council Child Protection Policy.

Each member of staff or volunteer who comes into contact with children should have a written description of the work that they are expected to do, including:

- the post to whom they will be accountable.
- the post whose work they will supervise.
- a description of the work that they will undertake with children, with reference to the Fylde Borough Council Child Protection Policy
- the duty to prevent abuse of all children in contact with the Council, and reference to the Fylde Borough Council Child Protection Policy

All Person Specifications for posts that work with children will contain the statement:

‘The post-holder will be subject to a check for any criminal record via the Disclosure process’.

Application forms

All staff / volunteers who have regular contact with children should complete a standard application form and a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure form designed to elicit the following information:

- their full name, current and recent addresses, and date of birth.
- employment history, giving details of any previous work with children.
- permission to contact, in writing and in person, at least one person who has experience of their work with children.

- details of any convictions for criminal offences against children, including any spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- whether they are known to any Social Services Department as being an actual or potential risk to children.
- permission to check for any police criminal record.

The form should also:

- state that a failure to disclose information will result in termination of employment.
- include an agreement to abide by this or any subsequent Child Protection Policy produced by Fylde Borough Council.
- include a self-disclosure form.

Interview

All applicants, for employment should be asked about their relationships with children, both in a working and voluntary capacity. Applicants should also be asked about their ability and commitment to fulfil the duty to prevent the abuse of children set out in the job description or outline of tasks. Fylde Borough Council will need to use the information gained in this way only to prevent the abuse of children, applying the principles of equality of opportunity and adhering to accepted employment procedures.

Police and Social Services checks

Evidence suggests that only a small percentage of incidents against children are reported and, of these, only a proportion results in conviction. This means that trying to ascertain whether an applicant has any conviction for offences against children is not the most efficient way to prevent abuse. Although checks will be made wherever possible, Fylde Borough Council will not depend on applicants or any other authority disclosing information as the main or only means of preventing child abuse.

Induction

Each new member of staff / volunteer will be issued with a copy of the Fylde Borough Council Child Protection Policy statement during their induction. They will be informed of their duty to prevent abuse of any child in contact with the Council, and referred to the action to be taken if abuse is discovered or disclosed. They will be informed of their duty to abide by the Fylde Borough Council Child Protection Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) when performing their duties. Staff will also receive basic Child protection awareness training.

Probationary period

Details of the length and purpose of a probationary period should be given on appointment. During this period, the line manager will hold supervision meetings on a more frequent than normal basis, and observe the work of new staff regularly. The line manager must have no doubt as to the staff member's commitment to prevent the abuse of children before confirming the successful completion of the probationary period.

Training

It should be clearly recognized that checks are only part of the process to protect children from possible abuse. The checks must be operated in conjunction with appropriate training of staff / volunteers so they are aware and sensitive to potentially abusive situations. All Fylde Borough Council elected members, staff / volunteers who are in regular contact with children, in the course of their duties with the Council, will receive appropriate awareness training delivered by suitable tutors.

Recognising abuse, harm or neglect.

Child abuse can occur anywhere and at any time and can cover a wide range of issues including neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Even among those experienced in working with Child abuse it is not easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has taken place. It is also acknowledged that Fylde Borough Council elected members, staff, or volunteers are unlikely to be experts in this field. Therefore the Council encourages and expects staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with their line manager. The line manager will then pass the issue on to the designated member of staff or the Human Resources Manager. They will then ensure that appropriate advice is obtained from Lancashire County Council, the police or NSPCC. If these people are not available please contact other officers in the personnel office.

The following may help you decide whether a child's welfare is at risk of abuse, harm or neglect.

Physical Abuse - "Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful or

neglectful failure or prevent injury or suffering to a child". Physical abuse may include broken limbs and head injuries and could involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Signs which may suggest physical abuse

- Any bruising to a baby - pre-walking stage
- Multiple bruising to different parts of the body
- Bruising of different colours indicating repeated injuries
- Fingertip bruising to the chest, back, arms or legs
- Burns of any shape or size
- An injury for which there is no adequate explanation

Sexual Abuse - "Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature". Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggary) or non- penetrative acts. They may include non- contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Signs of possible sexual abuse

- Something a child has told you
- Something a child has told someone else
- A child who shows worrying sexualised behaviour in their play or with other children
- A child who seems to have inappropriate sexual knowledge for their age
- A child who may be visiting or being looked after by a known or suspected sexual offender

Emotional Abuse - "Actual or likely severe adverse effect of the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. Emotional abuse may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Signs which may suggest emotional harm

The following signs may be present in children whose parents are over-critical and emotionally distant, or who are unable to meet their child's emotional needs:

- Children whose behaviour is excessive. For example, excessive bedwetting, overeating, rocking, headbanging.
- Children who self harm. For example, they may cut or scratch themselves or overdose.
- Children who attempt suicide

- Children who persistently run away from home
- Children who show high levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal
- Children who usually seek out or avoid affection.

Neglect - "Is the persistent or severe neglect of a child, or failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health and development, including non-organic failure to thrive". Neglect is the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Signs which may suggest neglect

- Squalid, unhygienic or dangerous home conditions
- Parents who fail to attend to their children's health or development needs
- Children who appear persistently undersized or underweight
- Children who continually appear tired or lacking in energy
- Children who suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision.

Responding to Suspicions or Allegations

Disclosure from child

If a child discloses abuse, employees and/or volunteers should give the child or young person the opportunity to talk in private, NOT on a ONE TO ONE basis, but always with a witness. People receiving such a disclosure should listen carefully to what is being said and offer support and reassurance.

The person receiving the information should

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Reassure the child and tell them that they are not to blame and it is right to tell
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Try not to interrogate the child, keep questions to the absolute minimum, simple and easy to understand. This will enable the child to give clear and accurate information
- Do not give promises or guarantees that cannot be made
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible
- Tell the child, at the earliest opportunity, that what is being said may be passed on to other authorities in order to help and cannot be guaranteed to be kept confidential.
- Having listened to the evidence decide on the appropriate action.

It is NOT the responsibility of anyone under the auspices of Fylde Borough Council to investigate and prove the disclosure, but to collect as much information as possible.

If you suspect child abuse

If as a member of Fylde Borough Council staff, a volunteer or an elected member you suspect that a child has been abused or is experiencing abuse then you should ask for a confidential meeting. This can be with your line manager, an officer who has designated responsibility for child abuse or the Human Resources Manager.

A careful record should be made of any concerns and incidents by completing the Concern/ Incident report form. The appropriate action to be taken will be discussed. If there are reasonable grounds that alleged child abuse has taken place then the person who you have dealt with should inform Social Services and or the Police.

Immediate action

The line manager, officer who has designated responsibility, the human resources manager will then make a decision. If they believe that a child or young person may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering harm, and or sexual or physical abuse they must make a referral to Children's Services and or the Police.

1. You must pass on your concerns to your line manager, the officer with designated responsibility for child protection or the human resources Manager. If none of the above are available then pass your concerns directly to Children's Services and or the Police.
2. There is no requirement at this stage to inform parents/guardians/carers of the intention to inform Children's Services and or the police, particularly if it is felt that this would put the child at further risk.
3. When speaking to Children's Services you should disclose your name and details of your role within Fylde Borough Council.
4. You should also obtain and make a record of the Social worker, police officer who you have contacted and the date and time of the call.
5. You should explain your concerns, giving as much clear and concise information as possible, based on your opinion. The Social worker will assess the situation and if required initiate the appropriate procedures to protect the child.
6. If not done previously, you should inform your line manager, officer responsible for child protection, or personnel officer or member champion at the earliest possible opportunity.
7. A record should be then made of all information related to the incident

Allegations against staff / volunteers

This would include anyone working with children in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Evidence suggests that abuse that takes place in a public setting is rarely a one-off event. It is crucial that those working with children are aware of this possibility and that all allegations should be treated as, and remain, confidential. The person to whom the incident is reported may be unsure whether the allegation constitutes abuse or not. There may be occasions where the allegations are about poor practice, rather than abuse, but in all instances the line manager, designated officer or personnel manager must be informed. They will then obtain advice from Children's Services as it may be just one of a series of instances which together cause concern.

Fylde Borough Council assures all staff / volunteers that it would fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Guidance for staff / volunteers against whom allegations are made

Staff / volunteers seeking help in defence of any allegation should be encouraged to seek support. This may be through:

- Reference to legal advice
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Trade Union

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff there may be 3 types of investigation:

- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation by Fylde Borough Council
- A child protection investigation by Children's Services
- A criminal investigation by the Police

The results of the Police and Children's Services investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Child Abuse will be regarded as gross misconduct under the Fylde Borough Council Disciplinary Procedures. Where an allegation is made against an employee, the employee will normally be suspended on full pay, or given special leave with pay if the disciplinary process is not involved, pending investigations and action, either under the disciplinary procedures and / or Children's Services / the Police. This action will not be seen as assuming the employee is guilty of any abuse, but rather to protect both the child and the employee involved.

Appendix 1

Child Protection Fylde Borough Council Code of Conduct

Those working with children should:

- Respect the dignity and spirit of all participants: children, young and vulnerable adults.
- Treat all participants fairly and equitably.
- Establish supportive, positive environments for the purpose of healthy competition, skill inspiration, development, fun and achievement.
- Avoid contact or conduct that may be interpreted to have sexual connotations or which are defined as inappropriate by the organisation.
- Do not take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses, demoralises or negatively affects a participants self esteem.
- Do not tolerate acts of aggression.
- Work towards eliminating harassment and abuse from training and workshop environments.
- Be prepared to intervene if a child is being abused or neglected.
- Engage in "fair play" both during and outside of activities. "Fair play" is defined as showing considerate regard for participants, personnel, parents, spectators and officials; abiding by the code of conduct; abiding by the officials/workshop leaders decisions.
- Adhere to the policies of the venue and Fylde Borough Council.

Staff ratios

Any consideration relating to staff ratios needs to take into account the age of the children involved (the lower the age the greater the need for supervision), disability,

degree of risk involved in the activity. Ratios of 1 staff to 20 children are advised this will be dependent on the activity taking place and the results of the risk assessment. Where the activity involved mixed gender consideration must be given to having male/female staff available.

Changing rooms

Where Participants need to be supervised in changing rooms two members of staff must be present. Adult staff should not change or shower at the same time as children who have sole use of the same facility. If you are involved in a mixed gender activity separate facilities should be made available. If children are uncomfortable changing or showering in public no pressure should be placed on them to do so. Encourage them to do this at home. If there are participants with disabilities involve them and their carers in deciding how they should be assisted and ensure they are able to consent to the assistance that is offered.

Injuries and illness

All activities should have guidelines/notification forms relating to injuries sustained during participation in activities. Where staff witness an injury this must be reported to the parents at the first opportunity.

Consent

The organisation must receive permission from parents/carers for children to participate in all activities (where appropriate) The organiser should provide a timetable of activities at the beginning of a programme and notify parents/carers of any changes to this timetable as appropriate

The consent form for participation contains two contact numbers, one for the carer and another for the next point of call if the carer cannot be contacted. Parents/carers are informed on the consent for that it is not the responsibility of the club/organisation to transport children people in the event of them being detained.

All staff/volunteers **should**

- Attempt to contact the parent/carer in the event of late collection;
- Check the club contact number for any information regarding the child;
- Contact the alternative contact name/number;
- Wait with the child/young person at the venue with wherever possible other staff/volunteers or parents;
- Remind parents/carers of the policy relating to late collection.

Staff/volunteers **should not**

- Take the child home or to any other location;
- Ask the child to wait in a vehicle or venue with you alone;
- Send the child home with another person without permission.

Discipline

Discipline may be required on occasions due to the inappropriate behaviour of children. When discipline is used it should be done so appropriately and with the clear

intention of teaching or reinforcing appropriate behaviour. It must not be used impulsively, to gain power, or to embarrass or humiliate a child.

Discipline should be used only to:

- Develop a sense of responsibility for behaviour;
- Develop respect for others and their property;
- Reinforce the rules or values of the activity;
- Reinforce positive behaviour or attitudes;
- Reinforce awareness of health and safety aspects of the activity.

Physical conduct

Many sport and art activities, by their nature, require a degree of physical contact between adults and children. Physical contact can be used appropriately to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort. The aims of guidelines relating to physical contact are to provide adults and children with appropriate types and contexts for touching.

Physical contact between adults and children should only be used when the aim is to:

- Develop skills or techniques;
- To treat an injury;
- To prevent an injury;
- To meet the requirements of the particular sport/activity

Physical contact should always meet the need of the child and not the need of the adult.

Physical contact should be fully explained to the child and, with the exception of an emergency, permission should be sought.

Physical contact should not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

Records of injuries should be fully recorded.

Disability

Children with disabilities should have the same rights and opportunities as others take part in activities to have fun and be safe. The nature and degree of the disability may require additional support or training methods. Their particular vulnerability to abuse or neglect requires organisations/coaches and workshop leaders to take additional steps to safeguard the welfare of people with disabilities.

Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at Events

- There is evidence that some people have used events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all groups are vigilant with any concerns to be reported to a club official or responsible person at an event.
- If you are commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event it is important to ensure they are clear about your expectations of them in relation to child protection.
- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Issue them with identification which must be worn at all times
- Inform athletes and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and

ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.

- Do not allow unsupervised access to athletes or one to one photo sessions at events.
- Do not approve photo sessions outside the events or at a participant's home.
- Parents with cameras need to register cameras with the activity leader, when they will receive a sticker to certify registration and clearance.

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
POLICY AND PERFORMANCE	POLICY & SERVICE REVIEW OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	23 OCT 2006	5

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES REVIEW

Public item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

The report provides details of the outcome from a 'desk top' review of the Councils corporate objectives. It is considered best practice by the Audit Commission to examine the corporate objectives each year giving consideration to the local and national factors that may have changed during the year. The report outlines the factors considered in reviewing the corporate objectives and provides evidence to support the recommendations.

Recommendations

1. That the committee supports the conclusion that there is no requirement at this time to make changes to the high level corporate objectives at Fylde.
2. That the committee takes into account the agreed corporate objectives when considering all future policy and service development.
3. That the committee makes any appropriate recommendations to officers and / or Portfolio Holders to ensure that emerging issues are monitored or addressed.

Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet Portfolio holder for Corporate Performance and Development is Sue Fazackerley.

The Report

1. The corporate objectives are the high level outcomes that the Council intends to achieve for the local community and by their nature are the key priorities for the Council. The following factors have been taken into consideration as part of the review of the corporate objectives:
 - ❑ Statutory services that the council must discharge
 - ❑ Feedback from stakeholders gathered over the last three years
 - ❑ Local circumstances particular to Fylde
 - ❑ National legislation and emerging national priorities
 - ❑ The level of resources (financial and human) available to the council
 - ❑ Partnership commitments and opportunities – The Community Plan
2. The current corporate objectives along with the actions agreed in the Corporate Plan are included in Appendix 1 and the review report is included in Appendix 2.
3. The scope of the report is to examine whether there is the need to make a significant change to any of the corporate objectives. The performance of the services or actions linked to each objective is not relevant to the subject of the report.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications.
Community Safety	There are no direct Community Safety implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights & equalities implications.
Sustainability	There are no direct sustainability implications.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct H&S or Risk Assessment implications.

REPORT AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Allan Oldfield	(01253) 658576	October 12 th 2006	
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS			
NAME OF DOCUMENT	DATE	WHERE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION	

Corporate Plan	May 2006	www.fylde.gov.uk
Community Plan	January 2005	www.fylde.gov.uk

Attached documents

Appendix 1: The Corporate Objectives and Current Actions

Appendix 2: The Corporate Objectives Review Report

Appendix 1: The Corporate Objectives

- To improve, protect and enhance the streetscene and the local environment
- To tackle the fear of crime and maintain safe communities
- To create a strong and diverse local economy and improved employment prospects
- To improve access to good quality affordable housing and promote the health, well being and the quality of life for everyone in the community
- To deliver value for money, high quality local services

The 2006/07 Corporate Action Plan

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To improve, protect and enhance the streetscene and the local environment.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
ENS01 - Develop a business case and project plan for establishing a "Public Sector Company" (1 year action).	Tim Ashton	David Jenkinson	Report considered by Cabinet and the Wyre Joint Committee. A new service delivery option has been selected and implemented.
ENS02 - Market Test the Parks & Gardens Service in open competition (1 year action).	Tim Ashton	David Jenkinson	A contractor engaged based on a new 'Output' Quality/Cost specification.
ENS03 - Join the refuse collection and recycling services of Fylde & Wyre Borough Councils into a single managed service at one location (1 year action).	Tim Ashton	David Jenkinson	All services managed from one site by August 2006.
ENS04 - Implement a mini best value review of the Amenity Cleansing service, to include all Parish Councils that currently carry out their own cleansing service (1 year action).	Tim Ashton	David Jenkinson	Review Completed and new Parish cleansing contracts implemented.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>		To improve, protect and enhance the streetscene and the local environment.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)	
ENS05 - Work closely in partnership with the LSP to deliver the required outcomes of the Environmental Enhancement group that fall within the responsibility of the council (5 year action).	Tim Ashton	Paul Walker	Clear targets and milestones agreed for the council with the sub group partners. The council is on course to deliver the actions required by the group.	
ENS06 - Work with partners to produce a comprehensive energy conservation strategy for the borough (2 year action).	Tim Ashton		An established corporate and community strategy that integrates assets, transport, waste minimisation and environmental sustainability.	
ENS07 - Update and submit the Local Development Scheme (LDS) statutory requirement (1 year action).	Roger Small	Tony Donnelly	LDS SCHEME UPDATED AND SUBMITTED	
ENS08 - ENS08 - Prepare the Local Development Framework (working with the LSP) in accordance with the currently adopted Local Development Scheme.	Roger Small	Tony Donnelly	Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) subject to independent examination Residential Extensions SPD published Business & Industrial Land (DPD) draft options prepared Airport Area Action Plan draft options prepared	

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To tackle the fear of crime and maintain safe communities.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
CS01 - Support the implementation of the Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008 (3 year plan).	Patricia Fieldhouse	Christine Miller	To achieve appropriate year end performance measures as agreed in the strategy
CS02 - Work closely in partnership with the LSP to deliver the 2006/07 outcomes of the Safer Communities group that fall within the responsibility of the council (5 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	Christine Miller	Clear targets and milestones agreed for the council with the sub group partners. The council is on course to deliver the actions required by the group.
CS03 - Establish council owned and operated rapid deployment CCTV facilities (2 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	Christine Miller	Successful bid for council owned rapid deployment CCTV facilities that compliment those of the Community Safety Partnership.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To create a strong and diverse local economy and improved employment prospects.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
EC01 - Formulation and completion of the 'Classic Resort' delivery Plan (6 year action)	Roger Small	Paul Drinnan	A Development Partnership formed to oversee and approve the Classic Resort Delivery Plan. Partner funding profile agreed to bring about the Classic Resort Delivery Plan, including any necessary bid documents
EC02 - Finalise the strategy for the regeneration of Kirkham town centre and consult the local community (1 year action)	Roger Small	Paul Drinnan	Consultation carried out, final strategy agreed and partners engaged
EC03 - Work closely in partnership with the LSP to deliver the 2006/07 outcomes of the Economic group that fall within the responsibility of the council (4 year action).	Roger Small	Paul Walker	A clear sub group action plan in place that outlines the role and degree of responsibility for the council with milestones that the Council is working towards.
EC04 - Regeneration of St Annes Town Centre area (4 year action)	Roger Small	Darren Bell	Undertake detailed designs for restoration of Ashton Gardens and submit phase 2 bid. Completion of Orchard/Park Roads and The Crescent (phase 1) refurbishment schemes.
EC05 - Work closely in partnership with the LSP to deliver the 2006/07 outcomes of the Life Long Learning group that fall within the responsibility of the council (4 year action).	Roger Small	Lorraine Charlesworth	A clear sub group action plan in place that outlines the role and degree of responsibility for the council with milestones that the Council is working towards.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To create a strong and diverse local economy and improved employment prospects.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
EC06 - Produce a guidance note to compliment the recently agreed policy in respect of commuted sums for affordable housing (1 year action).	Roger Small	Clare Platt	Revised and updated guidance note in place on how the council will promote, determine and monitor commuted sums to specific projects which is communicated widely to all stakeholders. 40 additional affordable housing units brought into use.
EC07 - Review the councils approach to the enforcement of off street car parking (1 year action)	Tim Ashton	Andrew Shore	A scrutiny review of the policy completed by November 2006.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To improve access to good quality affordable housing and promote the health, well being and the quality of life for everyone in the community.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
QLF01 - Complete the review of local authority leisure and swimming provision throughout the borough and implement the agreed action plan (2 year action).	Simon Renwick	Paul Norris	To invite tenders for the delivery of swimming service. Project due for completion in Oct 2007 as per Project Plan. To have established clear partnership / shared service arrangements for leisure provision.
QLF02 - Development of a sport and play strategy for the borough (2 year action).	Simon Renwick	Paul Norris	Strategy and Action Plan adopted by Council.
QLF03 - Complete the implementation of the Passport to Leisure Scheme (2 year action).	Simon Renwick	Paul Norris	Passport Scheme implemented for all residents.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To improve access to good quality affordable housing and promote the health, well being and the quality of life for everyone in the community.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
QLF04 - Review all other elements of the Council's Cultural Strategy – Arts, Tourism, Parks, Heritage, countryside recreation (2 year action).	Simon Renwick	Paul Norris	Strategy/Action Plan adopted by Council. A minimum 10% increase in satisfaction with councils cultural services.
QLF05 - Implement Fylde's contribution to the action plan for the review of services for young people (2 year action).	Simon Renwick	Paul Norris	At least 80% of the agreed action plan completed by April 2007.
QLF06 - Registration of Lowther Gardens as a charitable trust and exploring the appointment of alternative Trustees (2 year action)	Simon Renwick	Paul Norris	Registration of the gardens as a charitable trust and negotiations advanced with alternative Trustees

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>		To improve access to good quality affordable housing and promote the health, well being and the quality of life for everyone in the community.	
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
QLF07 - Increase affordable housing stock numbers in the borough and implement the remaining elements of the Housing Strategy. To hold a Fylde 'Housing Summit' (1 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	John Cottam	Creation of 40 affordable housing units in the borough. Clarity on the provision of affordable housing in Fylde with supporting policy and planning framework. Annual housing summit delivered.
QLF08 - Implement the homelessness strategy action plan (time scales in the strategy).	Patricia Fieldhouse	John Cottam	Implementation of the actions identified for 2006/07
QLF09 - Review the housing and homelessness strategies and develop new strategic approaches (1 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	John Cottam	New housing and homelessness strategies and action plans produced
QLF10 - Develop licensing policy for houses in multiple occupation and implement systems to deal with applications and inspections (1 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	John Cottam	Licensing policy implemented and administrative systems in place

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To improve access to good quality affordable housing and promote the health, well being and the quality of life for everyone in the community.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
QLF11 - Participate in delivering the action plan of the Health and Wellbeing theme group of the Local Strategic Partnership, particularly with regard to the priority of reducing misuse of alcohol (5 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	Clare Platt	Actions attributed to Fylde Borough Council delivered
QLF12 - Undertake a review of Fylde Borough Councils land assets that could be allocated for affordable housing development (1 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	Paul Walker	Report presented to Cabinet by the Asset Management Group with clear recommendations and proposals.
QLF13 – Develop licensing policy on gambling and implement systems in preparation for applications and hearings (1 year action).	Patricia Fieldhouse	Stuart Handley	Licensing policy implemented and administrative systems in place

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To deliver value for money, high quality local services.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
HQS01 - Implement partnership with Blackpool to deliver a joint revenues and benefits service (2 year action)	Paul Rigby	Brian White	All financial systems and practices to be in place across both authorities.
HQS02 - Develop and implement an improved web site with full transactional service (1 year action)	Paul Rigby	Allan Oldfield	A new Fylde web site operational and with full transactional status of on line services.
HQS03 - Deliver the efficiency savings outlined in the efficiency statement (2 year action)	Paul Rigby	Brian White	Successful submission and audit of statements during the year and an action plan to deliver the savings.
HQS04 - Establish electronic service delivery take up targets and promote e-access (3 year action)	Paul Rigby	Allan Oldfield	A suite of targets allocated to every on line service / transaction and promotion campaign in place.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To deliver value for money, high quality local services.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
HQS05 - Develop and implement a business process re-engineering solution for use at Fylde (3 year action)	Paul Rigby	Dave Joy	Funding secured, BPR process agreed and resources dedicated to implementation. Links established to efficiency programme.
HQS06 - Update and review of the medium term financial strategy and production of a balanced budget (1 year action)	Paul Rigby	Brian White	Revised medium term financial strategy approved and in place along with actions identified for a balanced budget.
HQS07 - Manage and improve the council's assets (4 year rolling plan).	Paul Rigby	Paul Walker	Annual Asset Management Plan reviewed and performance reported to members Office Accommodation project resolved by September 2006.
HQS08 - Review of all council assets to ensure more effective use is gained from them (5 year rolling plan).	Paul Rigby	Paul Walker	Policy agreed on the transfer/disposal of Council assets to Town/Parish councils Asset Management Group has reviewed 20% of council property/land assets.
HQS09 - Complete the consultation and evaluation process for Equitable Taxation (1 year action).	Paul Rigby	Dave Joy	Parish consultation exercise completed by September 2006.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To deliver value for money, high quality local services.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
HQS10 - Undertake a review of the councils pricing policies (1 year action).	Paul Rigby	Brian White	Report considered by Cabinet on the Councils general approach to tiered pricing structures.
HQS11 - Develop the job evaluation scheme (2 year action)	Sue Fazackerley	Lorraine Charlesworth	Agreement reached on the implementation of a programme of job evaluation against every post.
HQS12 - Develop, implement and champion proposals for local government re-organisation, subject to legislation being passed (3 year action)	Sue Fazackerley	Dave Joy	Firm proposals in place for new local government arrangements in the Fylde region.
HQS13 - Achieve level 2 of the Equality Standard (1 year action)	Sue Fazackerley	Lorraine Charlesworth	Employee training and impact assessments completed and action plan developed for move to level 3.
HQS14 - To provide support and assistance to elected members to ensure they are able to fully carry out their role as local government representatives (3 year action)	Sue Fazackerley	Tracy Scholes	Implementation of the I&DeA capacity building programme.
HQS15 - To develop a business continuity plan in line with the Civil Contingencies Act (1 year action).	Sue Fazackerley	Tracy Scholes	Completion of all preparatory work and plan in place by March 2007.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To deliver value for money, high quality local services.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
HQS16 - To achieve top quartile service quality against all key performance indicators for Fylde (4 year action).	Sue Fazackerley	Allan Oldfield	Identify the key performance indicators for Fylde and secure improving trends compared against all English district councils.
HQS17 - All first point of council contacts to be dealt with by the Customer Service Team (4 year action)	Albert Pounder	Paul Norris	Systems is place for all face to face, written, electronic and phone contact from external customers to go straight to the customer service team.
HQS18 - Work with LSP partners to facilitate an annual 'Listening Day' event (5 year action)	Albert Pounder	Paul Norris	Findings from Community Listening Day 2006 to be considered in partners priority setting and budget allocation in 2007/08
HQS19 - Deliver Fylde's contribution to the LAA action plans with partners (4 year action).	Albert Pounder	Paul Norris	Clear targets and milestones established for Fylde's contribution to the LAA. Required progress made against the targets and milestones for Fylde.
HQS20 - To enhance the reputation of the council through the I&DeA 'Reputations' toolkit (4 year action).	Albert Pounder	Paul Norris	At least 90% of the Reputations criteria achieved and operational at Fylde.

<i>CORPORATE OBJECTIVE</i>	To deliver value for money, high quality local services.		
Key Action	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY APRIL 1 ST 2007 (Output)
HQS21 - Ensure that sufficient capacity exists within the Development Control Unit (1 year action).	Roger Small	Paul Walker	Staffing resources up to full compliment to deliver an improved service.
HQS22 - Monitor trial outsourcing of household planning applications (1 year action).	Roger Small	Mark Evans	Trial evaluated and longer term delivery methods agreed by November 2006.
HQS23 - Continued development of scrutiny activity in line with national best practice (3 year action)	John Coombes	Tracy Scholes	Each Scrutiny Committee to conduct one in-depth review per annum within Work Plan with the aim of the information being posted in the Institute of Public Scrutiny Website as good practice work.
HQS24 - Implement joint service reviews in partnership with Wyre Borough Council. (3 year action).	John Coombes	Dave Joy	Completion of at least 2 joint service reviews and establishment of joint working arrangements between Fylde and Wyre.

Appendix 2: The Corporate Objectives Review Report

Introduction

The Audit Commission has recommended that local authorities review their corporate objectives at least once every two years. This report outlines the key findings from a 'desk top' review of the corporate objectives. A 'desk top' review is carried out using existing data and information as opposed to duplicating it.

Best practice guidance supports the 'desk top' approach as the best value for money approach to implementing the review. The data and information required to carry out the review should already be available and includes:

- National legislation and regulations (white papers etc)
- National and local performance measures
- National and local user satisfaction surveys
- Service based customer records and research
- Census data and socio-economic trends
- Indices of multiple deprivation
- Corporate priorities and objectives
- The Community Plan and LSP research

All the sources of data and information listed above have been examined as part of the review. This report outlines the key findings from the research and any impact they have on the current corporate objectives. Significant importance has been placed on the views of local residents and stakeholder groups to ensure that the objectives reflect the needs of the local community.

Scope of the Review

At the highest level the local authorities corporate objectives are deliberately broad and can be all encompassing between them. For example, the issue of crime and / or community safety is a high level corporate objective for every local authority because it is a major national issue. The difference lies in the detail that reflects local circumstances around crime or community safety. For Fylde the issues are primarily centred on the fear of crime and trying to reduce the already comparatively low level of crime, in other areas the issues are around violent crime, murder or high levels of gang crime.

The scope of this review has focused on the high level corporate objectives outlined in appendix 1 because the detail is reflected in the actions that are reviewed each year as part of the work on the Corporate Plan. However, details of the current actions for each of the five broad objectives have been included in Appendix 1.

The scope of the review does not include an examination of performance in any of the service areas. A review of this nature is designed to focus on what the Council should be outlining as corporate objectives.

The National Issues

The focus of the work on the national issues has centred on developments over the last 18 months. Local government is in constant change with legislation being developed on a monthly basis. The most significant piece of legislation in the last 18 months has been the 'Every Child Matters' paper. The majority of this paper is directly applicable to education and social services but district councils have a responsibility through services for young people and LSP work.

Several issues around the Every Child Matters agenda are addressed in the community safety work at Fylde, the leisure services and work through some of the LSP groups. The lead on this work is the responsibility of the county council but there is scope for Fylde to highlight children's services in the annual update of the Corporate Plan. This issue has recently been the focus of a Lancashire wide Chief Executives meeting at which implications of the paper and the role of the districts was discussed.

Planning and waste management services have remained high on the national agenda and are also big issues on the local agenda. These services are more than adequately reflected in the current corporate objectives on the environment and economy. The current Corporate Plan has a significant number of actions and targets linked to the waste and planning services. At the local level the national issue of affordable housing is prominent in the Corporate Plan actions and the high level corporate objectives.

Global warming, bio-diversity and sustainability are national issues that have been prominent for some years and are included within the environment corporate objective. Several actions relating to these issues have been identified for the current year and work is progressing in a joint bio-diversity with several partners that will lead to further activity on these issues.

The white paper on the Local Government Review has yet to be published, however, the issue has been high on the district council agenda for some 12 months. Several district councils have made clear statements of intent to bid for unitary status in advance of the paper being published. A decision was made at the September 2006 Cabinet meeting that Fylde Borough Council would wait to see the detail of the paper before formulating any plans. At the time of publishing this report there is no impact on the current corporate objectives. A move to any form of unitary authority would require a further review of the corporate objectives in its own right.

Transport issues that include roads, traffic, public transport and parking have for a long time been major issues on the national agenda. The current Corporate Plan has actions that outline the Councils contribution to addressing the local and regional issues in respect of traffic and road networks. This is primarily a County Council function and is linked to through the partnership working and the new Lancashire Local committee. Parking in the borough is now a direct responsibility of the Council and a major issue. Actions are included in the Corporate Plan to review the arrangements in place to deal with the enforcement of car parking.

The migration of European workers to Britain since 2003 and the expansion of the European Union membership were significantly underestimated. Central government officials estimated that around 30,000 migrants per year would come from the eastern European expansion states, the reality is that almost 100,000 per year have migrated to Britain. The majority of the migrants have been of Polish origin seeking work. Blackpool is the third top destination in the country for the eastern European migrants to come for work. There is no evidence that the influx of eastern European migrants has created additional pressures on any of the services in Fylde. Many of the migrant workers seek work for the summer season and return in the winter. The One Stop Shop has come across the need for a Polish translation service on one or two occasions but systems were already in place to cater for this. In Blackpool and the surrounding area the eastern European migrant population has had a positive impact on the local economy. Officers at Fylde are monitoring the impact on the local community but at this stage there is no need to change the high level corporate objectives as a result of this change.

Another national issue that has been on the agenda for some time but has yet to be resolved is the 'super casino' that could be located in Blackpool. The Council is involved in the consultation process and strong links exist between Fylde, Blackpool Council and the Re-Blackpool regeneration team. At this time there is no direct impact on the high level corporate objectives.

Crime and community safety are always on the national agenda with the focus on reducing crime and reducing the fear of crime. The Community Safety team at Fylde has continuously produced excellent results from the resources available and has established strong partnership working across the borough. The Community Safety issue is prominent in the high level corporate objectives and should remain as one for the foreseeable future.

The Local Issues

Many of the national issues are prominent in the corporate objectives at Fylde including waste, planning, housing and community safety. Feedback from stakeholders including residents, visitors, partners, auditors and elected members is continuously gathered by the council. The feedback provides information on levels of satisfaction with services and improvements that stakeholders would like to see.

The scope of the review is focused on what stakeholders want the council to deliver. The current corporate objectives were agreed after extensive consultation and a series of workshops, focus groups and events with stakeholders. This 'desk top' review has examined whether the current feedback has any significant issues that the corporate objectives do not cover.

The latest statistical data available on the social and economic make up of the borough can be obtained from the Council's web site using the link below:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/lancashireprofile/areas/fymain.asp>

The data indicates that business activity has grown at a much slower rate than the rest of Lancashire and the United Kingdom over the last five years.

Table 1: Stock of Businesses Registered for VAT

	2001	2005	% Change
Fylde	2300	2310	+0.4%
Lancashire	37,335	38,425	+2.9%
North West	166,600	172,800	+3.8%
United Kingdom	1,758,500	1,819,900	+3.5%

Despite a period of economic boom the growth of businesses within the borough has been well below the regional and national average. There are 488 residents unemployed in the borough (1.1%) of the working age population which is actually a 5% increase over the last 12 months but still one of the lowest in the North West. The figures show that the borough has a higher than average percentage of residents employed in professional or managerial roles and a higher than average percentage of businesses in the professional and service sector.

The average household income in Fylde is £33,500 (2005) which is slightly above the national average and well above the Lancashire average. Since 2001 the natural population has decreased by 1800 but the migration in to the borough has been 4800 resulting in an increased population of 3000 with 23% of the population over the age of 65 and 97.5% of the population of white origin.

This picture of Fylde has been static for some years now that has resulted in the following issues:

- The need to diversify the economic base by attracting new and different businesses
- The need for services to accommodate access for the elderly and disabled
- The need to engage a predominantly 'cash rich' and 'time rich' population balanced with the need to focus on pockets of real deprivation
- The need to provide suitable and affordable housing in a highly desirable community

The current corporate objectives cover all of these issues because they have been trends that the Council has been aware of for some time. However, the increase in unemployment and the slow increase in the growth of local businesses are issues that fall within the economic corporate objective that may need further action. The LSP has a working group that is dedicated to developing the local economy and economic prosperity that the Council works closely with to try and address these issues.

The latest corporate research involved sending out a questionnaire to 2627 residents of Fylde selected at random from the electoral register. Residents were provided with a list of the services that Fylde Borough Council is responsible for delivering. The list of services excluded those provided by Lancashire County Council. The aim of the survey was to establish the corporate priorities for Fylde Borough Council.

From the list provided residents were asked to select the three top priorities and list them in order. The responses were weighted according to whether the service was identified as

first, second or third priority. The first priority total is multiplied by three, the second priority by two and the third priority by one. This method ensures that the rankings of the services are appropriate e.g. a service with a large number of second and / or third place votes cannot be ranked out of sequence. The outcome of the cumulative weighted scores placed refuse collection as the top priority, street cleansing as the second priority and community safety as the third priority.

The three top priority services scored well above any of the other services with the third priority, community safety (489), scoring 206 points more than the fourth place, recycling (283). Refuse collection (649) scored a further 160 points above community safety. This supports the old adage that the Council 'empties the bins and cleans the streets'.

Four of the top five rated priorities are environmental related services providing strong support for the Corporate Objective to 'provide a clean and attractive environment'. Only Community Safety and Leisure Services from the top 12 priorities are not clearly linked to the environment corporate objective.

The services ranked as least priority included: licensing; mayoral services; the elections service, rent allowances and allotments. Grants, committee services and private sector housing are also ranked very low on resident's priorities. The economic related services are ranked across the range from Economic Development ranked 13, Employment Training ranked 28 and Tourism ranked 37. Some elements of the Economic corporate objective are more important than others, however, overall it has far less priority than the Environment objective.

Table 2: The Service Rankings

SERVICE	Rank	1 st Priority	2 nd Priority	3 rd Priority	Total
Refuse Collection	1	435	148	66	649
Street Cleansing	2	270	218	113	601
Community Safety	3	348	104	37	489
Recycling Services	4	144	94	45	283
Environmental Health	5	129	114	35	278
Planning	6	123	96	40	259
Building Control	7	129	90	23	242
Parks & Open spaces	8	66	100	56	222
Town Centre Development	9	105	72	41	218
Waste Management	10	114	54	26	194
Leisure Facilities	11	63	76	40	179
Beach Cleansing	12	66	76	34	176
Economic Development	13	93	52	23	168
Benefit Investigation	14	84	24	27	135
Drainage maintenance	15	42	62	18	122
Noise Nuisance	16	45	42	20	107
Dog Warden Service	17	45	36	25	106
Council Tax Benefit	18	66	28	9	103
Public Conveniences	19	39	36	23	98
Coastal Defences	20	60	22	12	94
Concessionary Travel	21	36	40	10	86
Car Parks	22	45	18	19	82
Lowther Pavilion	23	33	22	20	75

Playgrounds	24	21	23	20	64
Conservation Work	25	24	22	13	59
Sports Development	26	12	30	13	55
Council Tax Collection	27	30	18	7	55
Employment Training	28	15	18	10	43
Fylde in Bloom	29	9	18	14	41
Christmas Trees & Lights	30	9	8	16	33
Food Control	31	9	18	3	30
Housing Benefit Service	32	18	10	2	30
Nature Reserves	33	6	16	6	28
Pest Control	34	12	8	8	28
Business Rates	35	18	6	4	28
Internal Audit	36	12	8	4	24
Tourism Services	37	3	2	13	18
Crematorium & Cemetery	38	6	10	2	18
Renovation Grants	39	6	6	4	16
Committee Services	40	9	6	1	16
Park Rangers	41	3	6	6	15
Private Sector Housing	42	6	6	3	15
Corporate Management	43	9	4	1	14
Land Charges	44	6	2	3	11
Caravan Sites	45	9	0	1	10
Allotments	46	6	0	1	7
Rent Allowances	47	3	0	3	6
The Elections Service	48	0	2	3	5
Mayoral Services	49	0	4	0	4
Licensing	50	0	0	2	2

This work was carried out by the University of Central Lancashire in 2003, however, subsequent service based research, Listening Day feedback and analysis of ongoing information has continued to support these outcomes.

In 2003 the Council also carried out the compulsory household survey that is being completed this year as well. The 2003 survey asked residents what they felt was most important in their local community and which service areas needed most improvement.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS

Respondents were asked which factors they felt were most important in making the community a good place to live. The top five responses are listed below:

1. Low levels of crime (67.5%)
2. Health Services (54.4%)
3. Clean Streets (42.6%)
4. Shopping Facilities (41.8%)
5. Parks and Open Spaces (30.7%)

The least important were race relations (3%) and cultural activities (10.8%). Community safety and the environment are the two big issues that Fylde has direct responsibility for from the list above and a strong partner input into the local economy. All the key issues identified are covered in the current corporate objectives and actions being undertaken.

Again subsequent research by both Fylde and partners has supported these findings. At the time of writing this report the 2006 compulsory survey is being implemented. The results from this years survey will be used to inform the corporate action plan update and future corporate objectives reviews.

ASPECTS MOST IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

Respondents were asked which areas of the community need improving the most. The top five responses are listed below:

1. Road and pavement repairs (47%)
2. Activities for teenagers (39.5%)
3. Levels of crime (39.3%)
4. Clean streets (34.3%)
5. Level of traffic congestion (25.8%)

Race relations (0.9%) and access to nature (3.7%) were the areas that respondents felt needed least improvement. Issues around teenagers and young people very often come out high in research and surveys carried out across the borough. The issues cut across several of the corporate objectives including community safety (real or perceived problems), the local economy and quality services. A great deal of work is taking place in partnership with LCC centred around the Young Peoples Strategy, however, the update of the corporate action plan will consider looking at further activity.

Conclusion

The 'desk top' review of the corporate objectives has not highlighted the need for any significant changes. However, several emerging national and local issues will need further consideration when the corporate action plan is updated in 2007.

Ongoing research, consultation and feedback from all stakeholders is analysed, reported and acted upon as part of the day to day service delivery. The outcomes are monitored to check that activity is consistent with the corporate objectives and associated actions.

When developing policy and / or service delivery officers are required to ensure that the work is consistent with the corporate objectives. Decision making throughout the Council is guided by the corporate objectives. The next formal review of the corporate objectives is scheduled for 2008 subject to there being no changes in the responsibilities of the Council as a result of any possible local government re-organisation.

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
POLICY AND PERFORMANCE	POLICY & SERVICE REVIEW OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	OCT 23RD 2006	6

CORPORATE EQUALITY POLICY

Public item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

Summary

The report details the Councils commitment to delivering equality in employment and service delivery through the Corporate Equality Policy. It outlines the process that we intend to mainstream equalities by working towards the Local Government Equality Standard.

Recommendations

1. That the committee supports the draft Corporate Equality Policy incorporating the Councils Race Equality Scheme.
2. That the committee supports the Councils commitment to achieving the Local Government Equality Standard.
3. That the committee supports the action plan and the timetable for achieving the Local Government Equality Standard as outlined in the policy.

Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet Portfolio holder for Corporate Equality is Sue Fazackerley.

The Report

1. The Council is working towards the Equality Standard for Local Government as a means of performance managing the equality agenda. The basic principle behind the Equality Standard is *'that equality policy and practice must be part of the mainstream of*

all an authorities activities for that authority to be able to demonstrate that it is a good employer and offers high quality services'

2. The standard is a voluntary process, however it is incorporated into the Best Value framework and reported annually as BVPI2. There are 5 Levels of the Equality Standard and the Council aims to achieve Level 1 by December 2006
3. The Council has had a Race Equality Scheme in place since 2002, this is a statutory requirement that must be revised every 3 years. To enable the Council to achieve Level 1 of the equality standard it must also adopt a Corporate Equality Policy that will now incorporate the revised Race Equality Scheme.
4. The Equality Standard and Race Equality Scheme ensure that the Councils corporate equality priorities are grouped under four themes which provide a comprehensive framework. The themes are:
 - Leadership and Corporate Commitment
 - Assessment, consultation and monitoring
 - Equal access to services and customer care
 - Employment and training
5. The Corporate Equality Policy outlines how the Council intends to meet its duty to promote and implement equality of opportunity in all its activities

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications.
Community Safety	There are no direct Community Safety implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	As outlined in the Corporate Equality Policy.
Sustainability	There are no direct sustainability implications.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct H&S or Risk Assessment implications.

REPORT AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
:Lorraine Charlesworth	(01253) 658587	October 13 th 2006	

Attached documents

Appendix 1: The Corporate Equality Policy



Corporate Equality Policy 2006-2009

Title of Policy	
Purpose of Policy	
Date of Policy	
Policy Review Date	
Policy Author	

Introduction

Fylde Borough Councils Comprehensive Equality and Diversity Policy is our commitment to identifying and removing barriers that discriminate or prevent equal access to services and employment.

Our vision is to be an excellent Council that improves the quality of life for everyone, this includes valuing diversity and respecting others. Our Equality and Diversity agenda is therefore not just about responding to targets set by legislation or reaching performance objectives, it is about how we behave toward each other every day of our lives. As a Council we are one of the biggest employers in the borough and the services we provide have an impact on everyone who lives, works in, or visits Fylde. We aim to make sure that everyone is confident of being able to access our services, seek employment and take an active part within the community without the fear of prejudice or discrimination.

Equalities Statement

The Council is committed to valuing diversity and promoting and implementing equality of opportunity in all its activities.

This commitment is based on a belief that successfully promoting the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the community depends upon everyone having a stake in the future of the Borough.

We recognise that we can reduce the disadvantages experienced by many people by making our activities more responsive to the different and various individual and community needs evident throughout Fylde. The Council values the diversity of the population of the Borough and wants its activities to be accessible, relevant and meaningful to everyone.

We will work towards an environment and culture where everyone is encouraged and supported to develop their full potential regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin,

disability, age, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, belief, demography or any other individual characteristics which may impact upon a persons opportunities in life.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the council is an organisation that recognises and values diversity and becomes a leading edge example of good practice. This will be achieved by implementing equal opportunities for all issue groups across the whole spectrum of council activities.

We will communicate the policy to our employees, job applicants, customers, partners, contractors and other stakeholders as appropriate by various means.

In brief, we believe that valuing and managing diversity is about recognising and appreciating individual needs and differences and treating everyone with dignity and respect. To achieve its commitment to its equality agenda the Council will provide the resources needed for equality activities.

What is the Corporate Equality Policy?

This is the first Corporate Equality Policy (CEP) produced by Fylde Borough Council. It is a three year action plan that will mirror the statutory timetable of the Race Equality Scheme for equality and diversity work across the whole Council. It provides a framework for the authority and sets out the priority areas in which action is to be taken in order to deliver improvements.

The Councils aim is to fully embed equality and social inclusion into all its work and this is reflected in the Corporate Plan and performance management framework.

The CEP like the Councils Equal Opportunities Policy is intended to create equality of opportunity for everyone in the Borough of Fylde. However, there are some people that the CEP is particularly aimed at supporting. These are the groups of people who are often in the minority of society, who are disaffected or who can be marginalised or unintentionally excluded from certain activities or services through no fault of their own. The discrimination can occur along one or more of the following lines:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Religious or other Beliefs
- Age
- Economic Status
- Geographical Residence

There are a series of different laws that apply (or will in due course apply) to most of the above equality issues in order to provide legal protection from discrimination.

The structure and content of the Corporate Equality Policy

The Corporate Equality Policy sets out the overarching framework or approach that the Council has adopted in relation to its work on equality issues. The action plan sets out a series of activities, which link to broader priorities that the Council will work towards.

To distinguish between these different elements of the CEP the document is divided into 3 parts.

Part 1 – The corporate performance management of equality

Part 2 – Corporate equality priorities and action plan for 2006-2009

Part 3 – The Race Equality Scheme 2006-2009

The Race Equality Scheme (RES) is incorporated into the CEP. This is important because the scheme forms part of the Councils overall commitment to equal opportunities and it must be consistent with the CEP.

Contents

Part 1 – The Corporate Performance Management of Equality

- ❑ The Equality Standard for Local Government
- ❑ The Equality Standard and Civil Rights Legislation
- ❑ Monitoring the achievement of the Equality Standard and Equality Objectives
- ❑ Fair Employment and equal access to services

Part 2 – Corporate Equality priorities and action plan for 2005-2008

- ❑ How is the Corporate Equality Plan informed?
- ❑ Corporate Equality priorities for 2005-2008
- ❑ Corporate Equality Plan actions for 2005-2008

Part 3 – The Race Equality Scheme 2005-2008

- ❑ What is the Race Equality Scheme?
- ❑ A brief overview of Race Relations legislation
- ❑ Progress in Fylde since the 2002 scheme
- ❑ The performance management of race equality
- ❑ The Race Equality Scheme Action Plan 2005-2008

Appendix A

The Equality Planning Process diagram

Appendix B

Assessment of functions and policies 2006

Appendix C

How has the Council progressed the action in the Race Equality Scheme during 2004-05?

Appendix D

Details of consultation

Part 1 – The Corporate Performance Management of Equality

The Equality Standard for Local Government

The Equality Standard for Local Government is a national standard against which local authorities are assessed annually. It helps Councils demonstrate that equality policy and practice is in the mainstream of all its activities and ensures it is a good employer that offers high quality services to all.

The Council has chosen to work beyond the basic Standard that covers race, gender and disability to include age, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs. It also uniquely covers urban and rural areas of the Borough to avoid any adverse affect to the community residing in these areas.

The Standard consists of five separate but incremental levels of performance that enables the Council to break down the mainstreaming of the policy into manageable stages. The Council intends to progress through the five levels in line with the following timetable:

Level	Key Themes	Achieved by
Level 1	Commitment to a comprehensive equality policy	December 2006
Level 2	Assessment and consultation	December 2007
Level 3	Setting equality objectives and targets	December 2008
Level 4	Information systems and monitoring against targets	December 2009
Level 5	Achieving and reviewing outcomes	December 2010

Equality and Performance Management

Having an effective performance management system has multiple benefits for the Council, ultimately resulting in better, more efficient services. Equality and Diversity are important aspects of performance management, not only does the Council approach to diversity impact upon its overall performance rating (through the Best Value Performance Indicators) it also impacts upon how performance is managed within the organisation. A performance management approach that recognises and promotes diversity, whilst supporting fairness and equity will ensure that people are selected and developed on the basis of their capability to do the job.

Mainstreaming Equality in Performance Management

The Council is committed to mainstreaming the equality agenda and its management by incorporating key concepts from the Standard into the annual planning process these include self assessment, information and monitoring, consultation, equality impact assessment (EIA) and equality objective setting. This is a key objective for the

Authority in order to achieve Level 1 of the standard and progress through the standard to Level 5.

Each Business Unit of the Council is required to complete a standard equality planning template as part of their service plan. The template sets out a process for and rationale behind the equality objectives and actions set by service. The equality objectives and actions are monitored and reviewed in the same way as other activities within the service plan, with new equality objectives being set each year. Each Business Unit will identify the need for any full equality impact assessments in the year ahead and outline when these will take place.

Impact Assessments

Step One

When a new policy or function is planned or a current policy is subject to a review, the first step is to screen it for relevance to the promotion of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religious or other beliefs, age, rural or urban demography. If the proposed policy or function is relevant then the next stage is applicable.

If the policy or function is not deemed to be relevant then the Units action plan will reflect this.

Step Two

Before proposals are finalised an equality impact and needs assessment of the policy or function must be undertaken. This means identifying the needs of users and potential users and the likely impact of the proposals on different sections of the community or our workforce. The aim is to ensure that what is put in place is as inclusive as possible from the start. It is at the planning stage that key issues relating to access need to be addressed.

An important aspect of this initial assessment is the consultation and involvement of potential users (more information about the Councils work in this area is given below).

Step Three

The results of the assessments and consultations are then built into the final proposals and published – usually within the final report.

Step Four

Although the aim is to get it right first time, it is important that once a service is up and running, it is regularly monitored on its effectiveness in meeting its objectives and the needs of the target group(s). The type of monitoring information collected and the methods used for obtaining must be appropriate to the service, the users and the improvement process.

Step Five

Whenever unmet needs or equalities in access or outcomes are found, these are addressed by setting equality improvement targets backed up by a time bound action plan.

The Equality Standard and Civil Rights Legislation

The Council has adopted the Equality Standard as the performance management tool for all of its equality work. It is important that all ongoing work i.e. complying with recent pieces of civil rights legislation including the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 is integrated into one consistent and comprehensive approach.

All equality objectives and actions should be integrated into the equality planning process. This will enable all equality actions to be included and monitored within service plans.

The Equality Standard and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2002 (RR(A)A) introduced the requirement for all public bodies to produce a Race Equality Scheme (RES) which must be kept under review and revised substantively every three years. The Scheme is essentially a strategy and action plan that sets out how the authority will respond to its obligations under the Act and which summarises the Authority's approach to race equality.

Since the creation of the Council's first Race Equality Scheme in 2002 the Council has moved on considerably in its approach to improving performance around race equality, and equality issues in general. The processes around the Equality Standard have improved and will continue to improve to mainstream the work required under the RR(A)A.

Equality Impact Assessments as previously described are an important aspect of level 3 of the Equality Standard, but they are also a statutory requirement of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 for all new and amended policies that are judged to be relevant to race equality. The Council has incorporated and extended this statutory obligation around race into its wider work on Equality Impact Assessment. Adverse impact is monitored on an ongoing basis through the equality planning process.

The Equality Standard & the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 & 2005

As in the case of RR(A)A, the Equality Standard and the Equality Impact Assessments will also help the Council to respond more effectively to the needs of the disabled community and its obligations under the DDA.

From October 2004 all organisations must develop and produce action plans that show how they will enable improved physical access to buildings and services and by when. All business units are required to include specific disability access actions for their service within the equality planning process. This will ensure that planning to address all relevant disability access issues is undertaken annually and also monitored on a regular basis.

Monitoring the achievement of the Equality Standard and Equality Objectives

The Council will monitor, scrutinise and audit progress against the Standard generally and specifically against the equality objectives and actions.

Day to Day monitoring at a service level

The Portfolio Holder is briefed on the equality objectives and EIAs that have been set for the service at the beginning of the year. Regular discussions will be part of the normal procedure for monitoring service plans and briefing Members on progress made. The senior manager will be responsible for this in accordance with methods and practices they have put in place. Progress will be reported to the Equality and Diversity Steering group.

Monitoring through the Equality and Diversity Steering group

The Equality and Diversity Steering group consists of representatives from each Business unit. The purpose of the group is to contribute to the corporate co-ordination of equality work. The group will play a vital role in communicating with and supporting managers to embed the equality planning process within the organisation.

The Steering group will consult with relevant managers(s) to report progress on equality objectives and collectively undertake quarterly monitoring of key equality objectives and EIAs. This will inform the reports taken to the Corporate Management Team and Members.

Internal Audit of work towards the Equality Standard

The Internal Audit team will audit the Equality Standard level as the Council works through the Standard. This work will continue throughout the implementation of the Standard at appropriate intervals and will inform decisions made by the Executive Team about the readiness to progress through the Equality Standard levels.

Monitoring through the Corporate Management Team

The Corporate Management Team will receive biannual reports regarding progress against the equality objectives and EIAs that have been produced by the business units. This will be supplemented by 'exception reporting' if particular concerns arise in the meantime.

Corporate Scrutiny of Equality and Diversity Work

The Democratic and Member Services Business Unit will summarise equality and diversity issues that have arisen from corporate scrutiny work during the previous year. This will be used to inform corporate work around equalities and highlight any issues for future scrutiny panels to investigate.

The approach to the Scrutiny of equality and diversity will be developed with relevant Members with equality and diversity issues included in the scope of Scrutiny reviews.

Corporate Overview by Elected Members

The CEP and progress against the action plan will be reported to Cabinet on a bi annual basis and to full Council on an annual basis.

Part 2 - Corporate equality priorities and action plan for 2006-7

How is the Corporate Equality Plan informed?

There is a wide range of information at both the national and local level that the Council will use to determine what it needs to do on an annual basis to improve equality planning and performance management. Because many equality issues are covered by specific pieces of civil rights legislation the Council will ensure that it responds in an appropriate and timely way to changes that are happening nationally and sometimes at a European level.

The following list outlines how the Council's equality planning is guided by wider national, often legislative factors, but also by issues that have emerged as being important to Fylde Borough Council and its residents.

National influences

This list summarises some of the main national 'drivers' for the Councils equality planning

- Equality Standard for Local Government
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amended 2000)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amended 2004)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Amended 1986)
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Equal Pay Act 1975 (Amended 1984)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sex Discrimination (Indirect Discrimination and Burden of Proof) Regulations 2001
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Draft Disability Discrimination Bill 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

It is unclear whether equality legislation will be harmonised in future in the form of a single equality act.

Local influences

This list summarises some of the main local drivers for the Councils equality planning and key sources of data or consultation process:

- The Community Strategy

- The Corporate Plan
- The Equal Opportunities Policy
- The Race Equality Scheme
- The Human Resource Strategy
- The 2001 Census data
- The Quality of Life report (every 3 years)
- The Listening Day data (every year)
- The Employee Survey (every 2 years)
- The Citizens Panel surveys

Corporate Equality Priorities for 2006-2009

The Councils corporate equality priorities are grouped under four themes, which are consistent with the ideas underpinning the Equality Standard, as well as the Specific Duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. These themes provide a comprehensive framework for the Council corporate equality priorities and help ensure that all relevant aspects of equality work are prioritised and covered annually. The themes are:

- Leadership and Corporate Commitment
- Assessment, consultation and monitoring
- Equal access to services and customer care
- Employment and training

The priority actions under each theme for the next three years are as follows:

Leadership and Corporate Commitment

- Strengthen and formalise the role of the Deputy Chief Executive as the corporate lead on equality issues
- Incorporate equality targets/standards into the corporate procurement of goods and services and create appropriate contract monitoring systems.
- Promote joint working on equality issues through the Local Strategic Partnership and other relevant partnerships
- Update progress against the Corporate Equality Plan and Race Equality Scheme on an annual basis
- Fully review the Corporate Equality Plan and Race Equality Scheme by November 2009
- Respond as required to the forthcoming Equality Bill

Assessment, Consultation and Monitoring

- Achieve all components of Level 1 of the Equality Standard by December 2006 through to Level 4 by December 2009.
- Develop the Councils approach to corporate Scrutiny of equalities issues
- Continue to develop good consultation practice guidance/models with equalities groups
- Ensure that IT systems support the collection and analysis of employee and customer profiles

Equal Access to Services and Customer Care

- Continue to plan and deliver the access requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Ensure planned Equality Impact Assessments are identified, undertaken and their implementation is monitored in service plans
- Begin to develop business unit and service area equality targets or standards

Employment and Training

- Complete an equal pay review by 2007 and report on the implementation of the pay review recommendations by March 2008
- Revise and update the Councils Equal Opportunities Policy
- Expanding the membership of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group
- Provide guidance on and implement the Employment Directive in relation to age discrimination by 1 October 2006
- Strengthen the emphasis on equalities within the employee induction process
- Ensure through fair employment practices that the Councils workforce is representative of the local community and targets are met
- Continue to plan and provide training on race equality and diversity, the Equality Standard and Community Cohesion as part of the Corporate Training and Development programme
- Review all relevant employment practices and procedures to ensure full coverage of equalities issues and groups
- Build equality objectives and targets into Manager and Employee competence and the Performance and Development Appraisal

These priorities have been transferred into an action plan that outlines why the Council has chosen each priority, how they are likely to be delivered, who is responsible for delivering them, by when, and how the Council and the community will know we have achieved them.

Progress against each priority will be monitored in accordance with the monitoring arrangements outlined in this policy.

Part 3 – The Race Equality Scheme

The Council is required to produce a Race Equality Scheme (RES) under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Fylde Borough Council is committed not only to meeting its statutory duty but going beyond this. Through the Race Equality Scheme the Council seeks to set an agenda for everyone living or working in the Borough. The Council seeks to make everyone feel included and that its policy of equal opportunity and access to services applies to all its customers, residents and employees regardless of their ethnic background.

The scheme will be overseen by the Human Resources Manager and monitored and reviewed regularly by the Equality and Diversity steering group.

Annual reports will be published on the progress that we have made against the scheme. These will be available from the Human Resources Manager.

A brief overview of the Race Relations Legislation

The Race Relations Act came into force in 1976 and made it unlawful for most public, private and voluntary organisations to discriminate on racial grounds in areas such as employment, education, housing, goods, facilities and services.

The Amendment to the Act was prompted by the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report, which identified the problem of “institutional racism”. This is where an organisation, sometimes unwittingly, discriminates against certain ethnic groups resulting in a range of negative consequences.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, highlights the need to “mainstream” race equality, in other words to consider it when looking at all our policies, procedures and practices.

The Act also takes the 1976 legislation further by placing a ‘positive duty’ on many public authorities to:

- ❑ To eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- ❑ To promote equal opportunities, and
- ❑ To promote good relations between people from different racial groups

These three requirements are known as the “general duty to promote race equality”.

The Act also places certain specific duties on the Council, these are not a separate set of duties, they are a means to an end i.e. the means by which the Council ensures it meets its obligations in respect of the general duty as set out above.

The specific requirements in relation to a Race Equality Scheme are:

- ❑ The preparation and publication of such a scheme which sets out how the Council intends to meet its obligations under the general duty and any other specific duties.
- ❑ An assessment of the Councils functions and policies that it feels are relevant to the general duty (reviewed every three years).
- ❑ The Councils arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact that any policies it is proposing are likely to have on the promotion of racial equality.
- ❑ The Councils arrangements for monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of racial equality.
- ❑ The Councils arrangements for publishing the results of assessments, consultations, monitoring.
- ❑ The Councils arrangements for ensuring that the public has access to information and to the services that it provides.
- ❑ The Councils arrangements for the training of its staff on issues relevant to the general duty.

There are also the following specific duties relating to employment issues:

- ❑ Monitoring the ethnicity of employees in post, applicants for jobs, promotion and training.
- ❑ Monitoring the ethnicity of employees who receive training benefit, or suffer detriment as a result of performance development appraisal, are involved in grievance procedures, are dismissed or leave for other reasons.
- ❑ Publish annually the results of the ethnicity monitoring.

The Fylde Race Equality Values, Principles and Standard

The Council accepts the Commission for Racial Equality's guidance that 'due regard does not mean that race equality is less important when the ethnic minority population is small'. Whilst the situation at Fylde is different from those Councils with larger black and minority ethnic population, we recognise the day-to-day racism and racial abuse that is suffered by black and minority ethnic people, and acknowledge that this can be more severe for those in isolated communities. The Council accepts the finding of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry which made the point that treating everyone the same will not provide equal opportunities for people who are substantially disadvantaged and discriminated against, and whose culture may not be understood. At Fylde we will continue to take steps to ensure:

- ❑ Our workforce and service provision reflects the multi-racial nature of Fylde generally
- ❑ Racism is acknowledged as a problem for both black and minority ethnic people and white people, and
- ❑ Our services are designed and continually reviewed so that they are accessible and appropriate to meet the needs of our residents.

How we will meet the general duty

We will meet the general duty through:

- ❑ Assessing each function for its relevance to the general duty. A list of functions is attached at Appendix X. Each function has been prioritised in terms of their impact on race equality having completed the assessment pro forma (Appendix ?) and by the application of the criteria set out in Appendix ? thus ensuring that each assessment meets the same criteria. We are open to changing certain priorities if it becomes clear following consultation, that a higher or lower priority would be more appropriate.
- ❑ Ensuring that the mechanisms of the Race Equality Scheme and action plans are integrated within the Councils Service Action Planning process. Specific race equality actions will be incorporated into:
 - ❑ Community Strategy
 - ❑ Corporate performance plan and reviews
 - ❑ Equality standard for local government
 - ❑ Community Safety Strategy
 - ❑ Local Plan

- Housing Plan

The General Duty will be reviewed and measured annually as a National Best Value performance indicator BVPI 2b.

How we will meet the specific duties

Assessing existing functions and policies for their impact on race equality:

- The Business Units, within which the relevant function or policy falls, will carry out the assessment, with appropriate guidance and support within a corporate framework to ensure consistency.
- We will examine evidence on service participation and satisfaction, and analyse how services are provided, whether they take account of cultural identified needs, or the effect of past discrimination. If any adverse impact is identified, action to eliminate or mitigate the adverse effect will be implemented.
- Monitoring and reviewing the impact of functions on different racial groups will use a variety of techniques including:
 - Consultation with users and non-users of services, monitoring and reviewing of complaints made through the Councils complaints procedure, focus groups and workforce monitoring and reviewing.
 - Providing guidance to business units on the maintenance of appropriate records to monitor and review the scheme. The results will be collated centrally in order to address any corporate issues, which may emerge.
 - Identifying, from the monitoring and reviewing, the effects of the function on different racial groups and checking whether there are any differences between the groups, which have an adverse impact on them. For the purposes of ethnic monitoring and reviewing, the categories currently used by the Council are based on the 2001 census (England) (See Appendix 2).
 - Extending existing monitoring and reviewing practices to cover the new areas. The information collected will be used to assess any differences between racial groups, investigate any differences and to deal with any unfair or potential for unfair discrimination where such is found to exist. The key results will be published in the Councils Corporate Performance Plan.
- Managers will report their assessments, progress and monitoring and reviewing to the Executive Team and include any tasks to improve race equality and diversity in their annual service plans. This will then mirror the reporting procedure of the Corporate Equality Plan.

Assessing proposed policies for their impact on race equality

The code of practice suggests that this should include, not only formal policies, but informal arrangements and 'custom and practice'. All proposed policies shall be subject to impact assessments that will address the central question 'could this policy affect some racial groups differently and detrimentally and will it promote good race relations?' Assessments will draw on demographic data, research, comparison with other local authorities and public agencies, survey data and ethnic monitoring and reviewing data.

When carrying out a full impact assessment the Council will:

- ❑ Set clear policy aims and objectives
- ❑ Collect existing ethnic data and commission research if necessary
- ❑ Use the data to decide whether the policy is likely to affect different racial groups, directly or indirectly in different ways.
- ❑ Consider changes to the policy to prevent any adverse impact or unlawful discrimination, while still delivering the aims of the policy.
- ❑ Consult interested parties, service users, trade unions, and members of the public on the preferred policy.
- ❑ Take account of all the assessments and consultations before making a final decision on the policy
- ❑ Monitor and review the policy and its impact, and publish the results of the impact assessments, consultation and monitoring and reviewing

Tasks to be undertaken in order to eliminate the negative impact of proposed policies on race equality and diversity will be built into annual service plans.

The Council will provide appropriate support and training to managers so that they are able to carry out impact assessments in an effective and timely way, and incorporate them into the mainstream plans for their service.

Consultation on new and amended policies will be done via a variety of means, with interested parties. A consultation plan will be drawn up for each proposed policy at the time a final draft is completed, and all feasibility studies/report will incorporate a race equality dimension.

The Council will approach partners in the Local Strategic Partnership with a view to devising a consultation strategy which identifies our ethnic minority stakeholders, how to access their views, and a plan for conducting joint consultation exercises which meet several needs at the same time.

The performance management of race equality

The Race Equality Scheme and action plan will be monitored in line with the CEP as follows:

- ❑ Day to day monitoring at a service level
- ❑ Monitoring through the Equality and Diversity Steering Group
- ❑ Internal Audit of work towards the Equality Standard
- ❑ Monitoring through the Corporate Management Team
- ❑ Corporate Scrutiny of Equality and Diversity Work

□ Corporate Overview by Elected Members

Service areas set equality objectives that they must work towards achieving each year, some of which will relate directly to race equality. These objectives are contained in each service plan in some detail and therefore not repeated here. Annual plans for consultation with a wide range of service users are also summarised in each service plan. The Council has procedures to investigate and deal with racial incidents and will continue to take immediate action and monitor and review outcomes from these.

Relevance

As part of the service planning process, all services are now required to come to a judgement about the implications of their services or policies on equality. The concept of relevance is important in the Race Relations Amendment Act and has also been extended to the other equality dimensions of gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and people with different religions and beliefs, in the Councils own equality planning process.

Equality Impact Assessment

The introduction of Equality Impact Assessments or EIAs is a significant step forward for the Council and most service areas will identify at least one EIA for the year ahead. The idea of assessing the effect or potentially negative consequences of our services and policies on equality sits at the heart of the general duty to promote race equality. The Councils equality planning process has extended this so that EIAs will also look at gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and people with different religions and beliefs. For 2006-2007 the criteria that services should use are as follows:

- Proposed policies
- Fundamental changes to a service including restructures, and
- As part of a Best Value/Improvement/Service review

The criteria will be reviewed in 2007-2008.

The Councils progress around race equality

- Subscription to international interpretation services
- Staff training on equality and diversity has developed
- Ethnic monitoring and reviewing of workforce
- Accessible Customer Contact Centre
- Navarro Charter Mark
- Shared skill sets across the council for translations

Challenges for the next three years

The Council wishes to build on foundations laid in the last 3 years and concentrate on the following areas:

- Staff training on recruitment and selection
- Understanding who our customers are in terms of ethnicity

- ❑ Ensuring that race equality is embedded in Service planning
- ❑ Ensure that all relevant services are equality impact assessed for impact on different racial groups
- ❑ Building the capacity of all our staff to deliver an accessible service.

Our Race Equality Strategic Aims

In order to meet our commitment to everyone who lives and works in Fylde, the Council will establish, where practical, a baseline profile of the ethnic breakdown for the area, ward by ward, village by village, as well as by age, sex and other relevant groups.

The Council will ensure that effective dialogue and consultation is undertaken with these individuals and groups so that we have evidence about whether our services have a differential or adverse impact on them.

The Council will use this information to feed into organisational re-engineering, value for money and best value reviews and other mechanisms to improve our services.

The Council will undertake to deal with adverse impact and instances of discrimination vigorously and decisively. The Council will monitor and review take-up of services and employment and make sure they are responsive to the needs of all racial groups in the district.

The Council will ensure meaningful access to services and information about them is available to all that need them.

In addition the Council aims to meet the requirements of the Equality Standard for Local Government that include:

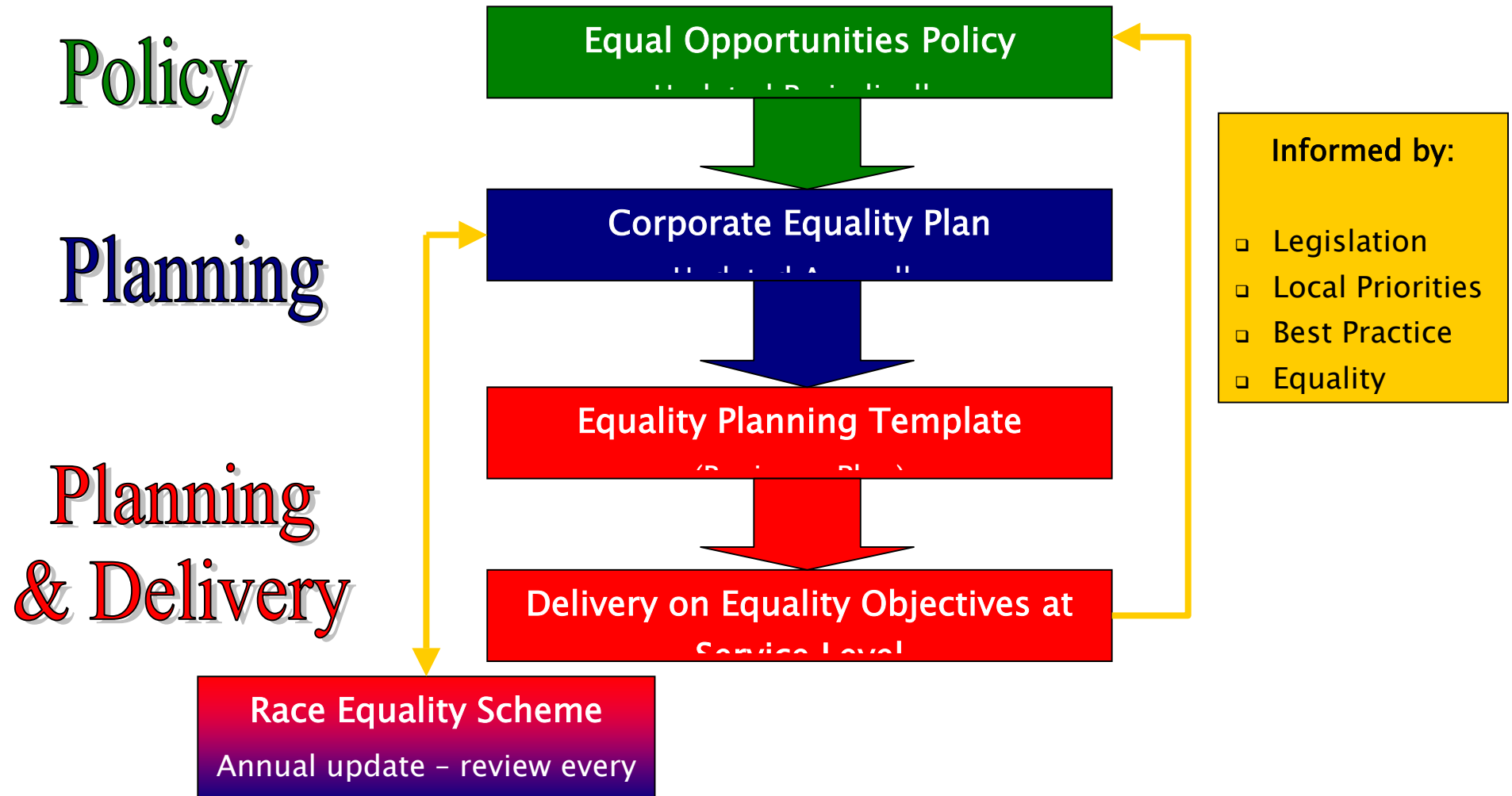
- ❑ To ensure that the Council has an effective and properly applied and monitored and reviewed Equal Opportunities Policy endorsed by its stakeholders.
- ❑ To ensure that the policy is applied whenever we procure goods and services from suppliers with whom we work.
- ❑ To develop mechanisms that identify satisfaction levels of service users and help to identify barriers to accessing services.
- ❑ To ensure that staff are trained to deliver services inclusively without unlawful or unfair discrimination.
- ❑ To ensure that service users and excluded groups are properly consulted when planning, making decisions and monitoring

How the Council has progressed the actions in the Race Equality Scheme during 2005-06

Specific Duty	Objective	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Achievement
Employment and Training	To have applicants for job vacancies coded under the 2001 census ethnic classification	The new ethnic categories will be on job application forms	By the end of March 2005	HR Team	Achieved
	See if there are any differences between different racial groups in accessing training	Monitor and analyse by racial groups, staff participation in training	Ongoing	HR Team	Analysis of data collected so far shows no obvious barriers more data is required to perform a full analysis
	To have 100% of employees with an ethnic code for monitoring	Personal Information Data form sent to all employees for completion. All new starters must complete the form.	March 2005	HR Team	Achieved by direct e-mailing all employees and the completion of PID in new starter pack.
	Set up HR systems to collect data	Assess all existing HR monitoring systems and identify any gaps in current monitoring (e.g. grievance procedure)	March 2005	HR Team	Achieved, Database developed to capture information
	Understand impact of current recruitment practices on race equality and progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse impact of existing recruitment practices on race using ethnic data Begin analysis of data on progression 	From April 2005	HR Team	Recruitment and Selection guidance updated emphasising the importance of equalities in recruitment
	Ensure all employees understand their duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source a staff training programme in equalities Train staff in the general and specific duties under the Act Include equality in the Corporate Induction Programme 	On going	HR Team	A compulsory comprehensive equality course for all employees All new starters attend Corporate Induction Programme that included equality
Leadership & Corporate Commitment	Ensure there is commitment to equalities from Elected Members	Establish an equality and diversity Member Champion	January 2005	Democratic Services	Achieved
	Ensure Managers are aware of equalities in service planning	Provide training to all Management team on Equality Impact Assessments	March 2005	HR Team	Achieved
	Improve networks with	Be an active member of the LSP	March 2005	HR Team	Achieved

Specific Duty	Objective	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Achievement
	other partners and stakeholders	Equality and Diversity sub group			HR Manager and Member Champion are members of the group
Assessment, Consultation and Monitoring Policies	Ensure policies endorsed by the Council have been assessed for their relevance to equalities	All reports will include an assessment of: Equality and Human Rights implications	March 2005	Democratic Services	Achieved
	To review the Race Equality Action Plan on an annual basis	All service plans will be monitored to include race equality actions	Ongoing	HR Team	Monitoring and Assessment of action plans revised in 2006 CEP
	To develop proposals to encourage people from all areas of the Community to access Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings	To hold meetings at various locations within the Borough	March 2005	Democratic Services	Achieved
	To encourage the widest possible participation of residents in consultation	Establish a citizens panel	March 2005	Democratic Services	Achieved
	To make the public aware of how well we are meeting our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000	There will be an Equalities report in the annual BVPP	March 2005	Corporate Policy and Performance	Achieved
Equal Access to Services and Customer Care	Easy access by local people to language support	Review service delivery options for translation and interpretation	March 2005	Corporate Policy and Performance	Achieved Language line available

Appendix X: The Equality Planning Process



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