

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>Name of Policy/Service/Function</b>	Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	March 2008
<b>Directorate</b>	People, Policy & Performance
<b>Head of Service</b>	Satwant Pryce
<b>Names and Roles of the people carrying out the EIA</b>	Jane Brown, Head of Diversity Shahid Mallam, Diversity & Social Inclusion Manager Satwant Pryce, Head of Policy & Partnerships Michael Toyer, Strategy & Research Manager Ben Plant Partnership Manager Stephanie McEvaddy LSP co-ordination manager
<b>Why is the Equality Impact Assessment being done?</b>	To support the cabinet report of April 2008 and inform the development of the SCS.

### 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council and its partners are developing a long term view of the pressures and key drivers that will influence the development of the borough over the next 20 years – the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).
- 1.2 The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is a collective, long-term set of ambitions and priorities that are specific to the borough and its position as part of a world city. The strategy sets out what the key agencies, in partnership with local people, will do to build a more sustainable, prosperous and cohesive community.
- 1.3 The key themes the SCS will focus on have been identified as:
  - Managing population growth and change
  - Creating wealth and opportunity for residents
  - Retaining wealth in the borough
- 1.4 In working towards the development of the SCS, an in-depth exercise of collating and analysing the evidence base was undertaken:
  - Waltham Forest Place Shaping (June 2007)
  - Supporting Evidence (June 2007)
  - Waltham Forest Shaping Our Future: Key Drivers for Change (June 2007)
- 1.5 The evidence base was used as the basis for developing a preferred scenario for the future, through scenario building workshops with members of the Local Strategic Partnership.

1.6 To inform the design, development and delivery of the SCS a number of thematic papers were produced across the following areas:

- Climate Change
- Transport
- Housing
- Economy and Skills
- Healthier Communities
- Community Safety
- Children and Young People (Education)
- Community Cohesion
- Public Space and Leisure

The scope for each of the thematic papers was to:

- Identify and agree the issues
- Assess the current situation
- Scope and agree the changes needed
- Develop the work programme to address the issues identified

1.7 There is a consensus across the authority and its partners that the SCS presents a rare opportunity to truly mainstream and embed equalities and diversity into the very fabric of what the council and its partners deliver over the next 15-20 years.

1.8 Given the SCS is a high level strategic document that will define the way in which we design and deliver services as well as planning for the future economic and spatial development of the borough its impact will be and should be for all groups and communities that live, work and socialise in the area.

1.9 This report will assess the implications of the SCS through an equalities lens, focusing particularly on maximizing opportunities for equality groups as well as ensuring that any potential negative impact is identified early on and dealt with in an appropriate way.

## **2. Questions this assessment addresses**

The assessment focuses on the following key questions:

- Is the evidence base inclusive and does it offer a sufficiently sound basis for priority setting and decision making from an equalities perspective?
- Are the consultation arrangements sufficiently inclusive to give policy and decision-makers confidence that the equalities perspective has been heard and incorporated?
- Do the proposed key commitments adequately cover and/or give priority to the key equalities issues identified in the evidence base?
- On what aspects of the statutory equality duties will the SCS strategy impact?
- What is the nature of the impact and could it constitute unlawful discrimination?
- What further information is required to gauge the probability of the impact and the extent of it on equality groups?
- Where and how can that information be obtained?

## **3. Conclusions**

### **3.1 Overall Assessment**

The evidence base is sufficiently inclusive and offers a sound basis for priority setting and decision making from an equalities perspective. The approach to the consultation and the workshops are sufficiently inclusive to give policy and decision-makers confidence that the equalities perspective has been heard and incorporated. Subject to the activities in the action plan being implemented the proposed key commitments give an appropriate level of priority to the key equalities issues identified in the evidence base.

The strategy has a positive impact on all three statutory equality duties and we found no evidence that the implementation of this strategy could constitute unlawful discrimination. The strategy is consistent with the Council's statutory duties on race, gender and disability. It is likely to have a particularly positive impact in addressing inequalities related to race, gender and disability equality in housing, employment, education and community safety and in the promotion of community cohesion.

Although no action is required to reduce any negative impact further action is required to better promote equality of opportunity in relation to LGBT equality and to ensure that the fullest possible benefits are obtained in respect of the other equality strands. In particular further information is required to ensure that the work plans that underpin the strategy provides the fullest possible benefits for people in the equality groups. The detail of what is required and where it can be obtained is set out in the action plan.

### **3.2 Assessment by Equality Strand**

Subject to the activity in the action plan being implemented the impact of the SCS strategy on equalities is as follows;

#### **Race**

With regard to the statutory duties on race the very clear emphasis on community cohesion provided in the strategy ensures that the Council is able to meet its duty to promote good relations between people from different racial groups. The strategy also provides opportunities to further contribute to the Council's duty to tackle unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in respect of employment, community safety and health.

#### **Gender**

With regard to the statutory duties on gender the strategy provides opportunities to further contribute to the promotion of equality between men and women and eliminate discrimination in respect of employment, education and housing. The strategy is consistent with and further supports the Council's current gender equality objectives in respect of improving women's safety.

#### **Disability**

With regard to the statutory duties on disability the strategy provides opportunities to further contribute to the promotion of equality between disabled and non-disabled people, promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and eliminate discrimination in respect of employment, education, housing and transport. The strategy is consistent with and further supports current disability equality objectives in respect of enabling disabled people to live independently and to get out and about more easily.

#### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Trans-gender (LGBT)**

With regard to the promotion of LGBT equality there are opportunities through this strategy to promote equality and eliminate discrimination in respect of health, community cohesion/safety, housing and culture/leisure. Implementation of the EIA action plan is key to ensuring that these issues are picked up and the opportunities for action are taken.

#### **Faith**

With regard to the promotion of faith-based equality the emphasis on community cohesion will provide benefits for people in faith communities. In addition where faith and race intersect it is likely that the strategy will have a

positive impact of faith-based equality in the areas of employment, community safety and health.

### **Age**

With regard to the promotion of age equality for younger people the strategy will have a positive impact in respect of education, employment and community safety. For older people it will have a positive impact in respect of employment, housing and health.

## **4. Action Plan**

<b>Action required</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>	<b>Comments/Outcomes</b>
<p>To ensure the promotion of LGBT equality Council officers to contact relevant lead officers to notify of the results of the EIA and the areas for development and ensure that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The new housing strategy takes account of young LGBT peoples homelessness and the needs of older LGBT people</li> <li>- The healthier communities strategy takes account of access to GPs by LGBT people and</li> <li>-The community cohesion strategy takes account of possible prejudice of new migrants towards openly LGBT people</li> </ul>	Satwant Pryce	By 1 July 2008	Lead officers to take forward areas for development
<p>Council officers to contact relevant lead officer on employment and skills to notify of the results of the EIA and the areas for development. This will include clarifying the position with the employment and skills strategy (being led by Job Centre Plus) in respect of planned activity to improve access to work for adult disabled people including those with mental health issues, older people and lone parents and</p>	Satwant Pryce	By 1 July 2008	Lead officers to take forward areas for development

also to promote women's enterprise and support BAME businesses. In addition this will support the Council's gender equality objective of raising girls' economic aspirations.			
Council officers to contact lead officer to notify of the results of this assessment and to ensure that the housing strategy is subject to an EIA especially in respect of incorporating the relevant LGBT, gender, age and disability issues identified in this assessment.	Satwant Pryce	1 July 2008	Lead officers to take forward areas for development
Council officers to clarify the position with the crime and disorder partnership regarding managing the risk of an emerging sex trade and the associated gender equality issues identified in this assessment	Robin Tuddenham	1 July 2008	Lead officers to take forward areas for development
In addition to LGBT issues raised above ensure community cohesion plan takes the opportunity to meet the Council's duty to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.	Robin Tuddenham	1 July 2008	
Ensure a full EIA is carried out on the climate change strategy	Jane Brown and Carolyn Seymour	1 July 2008	
Identify opportunities for current consultation work being done with young learning disabled people (as part of DES) to be fed into the development of the employment and education work-plans as appropriate	Sugra Bibi to disseminate to Chris Kiernan	1 July 2008	Lead officers to take forward areas for development
Ensure that when the LSP is commissioning activity that this is informed by an equalities understanding in respect of the issues and prioritises it accordingly. This will ensure that equalities is mainstreamed into activities and that the needs of any particular group is highlighted where this is	Satwant Pryce	1 July 2008	

relevant.			
During the delivery phase ensure the disaggregation and reporting of key LAA targets in respect of employment, education, crime, housing and health by equality groups	Satwant Pryce	By 1 September 2008	
Ensure that equalities monitoring is further strengthened in the commissioning of external work particularly in respect of types of disabilities/impairments, LGBT and the growing "mixed" ethnic group.	Mimi Konigsberg and Jane Brown (Via council equality board)	By 1 September 2008	
Revise Council guidance in respect of LGBT monitoring to remove the "prefer not to say" option	Jane Brown and Shahid Mallam (via planned review and relaunch of equality monitoring guidance)	By 1 September 2008	