

**EQUALITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY
AND RACE EQUALITY SCHEME
(Report of the Head of Policy)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for the Cabinet to consider and comment on a revised and enhanced Equality and Inclusion Strategy, together with an updated Race Equality Scheme.
- 1.2 The Strategy and Scheme are intended to provide a framework and common approach to equality in the way the Council achieves its priority of providing high quality services that meet the needs of local people and effective community leadership.
- 1.3 The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery & Resources) have considered the Strategy and Race Equality Scheme and made minor changes which are reflected in the appended document.

2. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 In 2002 the Council adopted an Equality Strategy, supported by an action plan. A Race Equality Scheme also was endorsed, which set out how the Council intended to meet the general duty of promoting equal opportunity, good race relations and preventing discrimination.
- 2.2 Since then there have been changes in relevant legislation and regulations and new good practice and guidance have been published. The Council is also required to review its Race Equality Scheme every three years. Accordingly, a comprehensive review of the Strategy has been carried out.
- 2.3 At the same a social inclusion policy has been drafted to help combat pockets of exclusion across the District. In view of the similarity of objectives, the inclusion policies have been incorporated into a combined Equality and Inclusion Strategy.
- 2.4 The attached Strategy and Scheme have been designed to meet statutory requirements and good practice; they also extend the Council's approach beyond minimal standards in order to support its priorities as a service provider and community leader.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet is invited to submit comments on and otherwise to recommend to Council adoption of the appended Equality and Inclusion Strategy and updated Race Equality Scheme.

Background Papers

Equality Strategy, Draft Social Inclusion Strategy, Race Equality Scheme, May 2002; Available from the Head of Policy

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