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9 May 2011

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Policy and Organisation Board (Extraordinary)
DATE: 17 May 2011
TIME: 6.00pm
PLACE: Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Geoff Rawling

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The Mayor (Councillor Allen)(ex-officio)
Councillor Hook (Chairman)
Councillor Burgess (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Beavis	Councillor Lane
Councillor CR Carter	Councillor Langdon
Councillor Chegwyn	Councillor Philpott
Councillor Mrs Forder	Councillor Wright

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

(To be read from the Chair if members of the public are present)

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the room immediately. Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

NOTE:

- i. Councillors are requested to note that, if any Councillor who is not a Member of the Board wishes to speak at the Board meeting, then the Borough Solicitor is required to receive not less than 24 hours prior notice in writing or electronically and such notice shall indicate the agenda item or items on which the member wishes to speak.
- ii. Please note that mobile phones should be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

AGENDA

PART A ITEMS

RECOMMENDED
MINUTE FORMAT

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

(NOTE: The Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Friday, 13 May 2011. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

(NOTE: The Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Friday, 13 May 2011).

5. SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

Part II

To seek adoption of the Council's first Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan (Appendix A) as the Council's framework equalities document replacing the Corporate Equalities Policy and individual Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes.

Contact Officer:
Julie Petty
Ext 5381

6. SOLENT LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

Part II

To seek approval for Gosport Borough Council to become a member of the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership.

Contact Officer:
Ian Lycett
Ext 5201

7. AREA BASED INSULATION SCHEME

Part II

(To Follow)

Contact Officer:
Ian Lycett
Ext 5201

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS

which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency.

Policy and Organisation Board (Extraordinary)
17 May 2011

9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC
To consider the following motion:

That in relation to the following item the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

PART B ITEM
FOLLOWING THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Item No.	Item	Paragraph no. of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act	
10.	SALE OF PREMISES AT TORONTO PLACE	Paragraph 3 Reason: The report contains details of the financial affairs of the Council and a third party at a time when negotiations are not finally concluded. These negotiations could be prejudiced if this information was made public which may have an adverse impact on the arrangement to the detriment of the Council tax payers. Therefore the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	PART II Contact Officer: Mark Pam Ext 5563

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

Board/Committee:	Policy and Organisation Board
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 17th May 2011
Title:	Single Equality Scheme
Author:	The Chief Executive
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

To seek adoption of the Council's first Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan (Appendix A) as the Council's framework equalities document replacing the Corporate Equalities Policy and individual Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes.

This Scheme sets out how the Council intends to meet its duties under the Equality Act, which became law in April 2010.

Recommendation

That the Board adopts the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

1 Background

- 1.1 This Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2011-2014 sets out how the Council intends to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act.
- 1.2 The Equality Act streamlines over 100 sets of statutory regulations and nine main pieces of discrimination legislation. It extends the areas in which a person can be protected against discrimination and places a legal duty on the Council to consider the needs of all of these groups when designing and delivering public services.
- 1.3 Prior to the Equality Act, the Council had separate equality schemes and action plans for disability, race and gender. This scheme sets out the Council's commitments across all of the following protected characteristics covered under the Act: age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.
- 1.4 The Council's decision to develop a single scheme and action plan was based on recognition that some people may experience discrimination on more than one ground; it avoids unnecessary duplication between several schemes; and it meets our statutory duties under the Equality Act.

2 Report

- 2.1 The scheme also reflects the requirements of the new Public Sector Equality Duty which came into effect on 5 April and sets out how the Council plans to meet its general and specific duties within it.
- 2.2 The scheme identifies four priority areas of equality work based on Gosport data research and stakeholder consultation. These priority areas provide the basis for further work to establish the Council's specific equality objectives - a statutory requirement under the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Action Plan outlines initial actions the Council plans to take to help meet these needs.
- 2.3 The Council fully appreciates the importance of consulting, and involved a wide range of stakeholder groups throughout the scheme's development.
- 2.4 The draft scheme and action plan was posted on the Council's web site in October for 12 weeks public consultation which ended on 25 January. The document has been revised taking into account all feedback received.

3 Risk Assessment

- 3.1 Compliance with all anti-discrimination legislation is monitored by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, formed in October 2007. Failure to comply would invite an array of possible enforcement actions against the Council.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Adoption of a Single Equality Scheme provides a clear demonstration of the Council's commitment to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the new statutory requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. It also demonstrates the Council is promoting and mainstreaming good equality practices throughout its activities.

Financial Services comments:	none
Legal Services comments:	none
Service Improvement Plan implications:	Production of this scheme is a SIP Action for the Corporate Policy and Performance Section.
Corporate Plan:	This scheme underpins the core values of the Corporate Plan.
Risk Assessment:	Failure to comply with anti-discrimination legislation could result in legal action against the Council and would also create a risk to the Council's reputation.
Background papers:	
Appendices/Enclosures:	

Appendix 'A'	Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2011-14.
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Julie Petty Head of Corporate Policy and Performance Telephone: 02392 545381 Email: Julie.petty@gosport.gov.uk



**GOSPORT BOROUGH
COUNCIL'S
SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME**

2011-2014

Gosport Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities for all.

If you need this document in large print, on tape, on CD, in Braille or in other languages, please ask.

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POLICY STATEMENT

Gosport Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities for all and recognises the value of diversity.

As both a service provider and employer, the Council aims to mainstream fairness and equality into every aspect of its services and employment practices and to remove barriers to ensure equal opportunity.

It aims to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the basis of race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Single Equality Scheme sets out how the Council intends to meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Prior to the Act, the Council had separate equality schemes and action plans for disability, race and gender. This Single Equality Scheme sets out the Council's commitments across all protected characteristics covered under the Act and has been developed in consultation with local stakeholders during 2010.

This Single Equality Scheme is in effect from 1 April 2011 until 31 March 2014. The Action Plan will be monitored by the Corporate Policy and Performance Section and progress reports will be provided to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group, Council Management Team and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.0 PURPOSE

Gosport Borough Council aims to ensure it is addressing its legal obligations under the Act by integrating consistent equality practices in all aspects of Council activity.

By developing a Single Equality Scheme and action plan which covers these new duties, the Council:

- recognises that some people may experience discrimination on more than one ground;
- identifies cross-cutting areas of inequality such as economic deprivation, which may affect several protected characteristics;
- avoids unnecessary duplication between separate schemes;
- meets its statutory duties under the Act; and
- communicates clearly with its stakeholders what it is doing to tackle discrimination.

3.0 SCOPE

This Single Equality Scheme applies to all employees, volunteers and placements and will be reflected in arrangements with contractors. Members of the Council are required to comply with the Code of Conduct which covers equalities issues and by following this scheme Members will be able to demonstrate compliance.

4.0 WHAT IS COVERED UNDER THIS SCHEME

4.1 Public Sector Equality Duty

The Act streamlines over 100 sets of statutory regulations and nine main pieces of discrimination legislation. The Act extends the areas in which a person can be protected against discrimination and places a duty on the Council to consider the needs of all of these groups when designing and delivering public services.

It creates a new single Public Sector Equality Duty which covers the protected characteristics of age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Under the general duty public bodies must have due regard to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
- foster good relations between different groups.

The general duty will be underpinned by a number of specific duties which provide a framework to help public bodies meet the general duty. Most public bodies such as local authorities must meet both the general duty and the specific duties.

The specific duties will be finalised later in 2011 and are expected to require public bodies to:

- publish sufficient information to show they have considered the three aims of the general duty across their functions by 31 December 2011 and then publish this information annually;
- prepare and publish one or more equality objectives which are specific and measurable by 6 April 2012 and then publish subsequent objectives and performance results at least every four years;
- include in published information the effect of their policies and functions on equality for service users and employees (for those with 150 staff or more) and report on any significant or longstanding inequalities;

All of the information required to meet the general and specific duties must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access it. Publication of this scheme and action plan, ongoing development of the Council's priority

equality objectives during 2011, annual progress reports, results of equality impact assessments (EIAs) of the Council's policies and functions and results of monitoring and performance reviews are all elements of the Council's commitment to fulfil both the general and specific duties.

This information is available in a variety of formats and is available in other languages on request. The Council strives to understand and meet the needs of its stakeholders and welcomes involvement and feedback from its staff and customers so that it can improve its equality and diversity practices.

Appendix A outlines the other provisions of the Act that are placed on public bodies and their implications for protected characteristics.

5.0 IDENTIFYING EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

The Council considered a wide range of information about the community it serves to identify priority areas of equality to focus on. It reviewed local demographic data to build up a profile of Gosport and its residents to identify areas of inequalities in the Borough. It considered its role as a local service provider, a strategic partner and as an employer and sought feedback from internal and external stakeholders on their experiences as customers, service providers and employees.

In developing this scheme, the Council considered this information with regard to the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. This has enabled the Council to identify priority areas on which to focus further investigation and engagement with stakeholders during 2011, to identify more specific equality objectives. The Action Plan in Appendix B identifies initial actions which support the four priorities. The Action Plan is a live document which will be updated, monitored and published with new actions to support more specific equality objectives which the Council will develop with its stakeholders no later than April 2012.

5.1 Priority 1: Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of customers

Why is it important?

Gosport is a unique and diverse Borough and is one of the most densely populated areas in the South East region. The Council has a duty to understand its community so it can respond to its needs and make sure its services are accessible to all. The information below highlights Gosport's increasing diversity:

- In 2001 the Borough's population was 76,415, of which 1.7% of the population was non-white, with Chinese being the largest minority ethnic grouping within the Borough (0.2%)¹;
- Gosport schools are becoming increasingly diverse. In 2009, 41 different languages were spoken by children and young people²;

¹ Office for National Statistics, Census 2001

- Gosport is estimated to have 2,010 Armed Forces serving personnel, of which 1,790 are Naval – the total Armed Forces figure is estimated to be about 5,253, taking into account veterans, widows, widowers and children³;
- 2,844 people registered themselves as disabled or as having a limiting long term illness in 2001, equating to 17% of the population¹;
- Christianity is the most practised religion in Gosport with 27 Christian organisations; however the faith is shared by a wide range of ethnicities and nationalities including Filipino, African and Polish. A range of other faiths are also practised in the Borough.

How this will be achieved:

- involve and consult customers in the design and delivery of its services;
- ensure its facilities and services are accessible and inclusive;
- develop and share good practice in customer care across its services;
- monitor service take up and feedback.

The Council will continue to consult and involve residents in the design and delivery of its services. By working in close partnership with key stakeholder groups representing and supporting people with protected characteristics, it strives to make its services more responsive to their needs.

The Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum, for example, works closely with the Council to significantly improve inclusive access to the Town Hall and to many other public buildings throughout the Borough.

Work with Connect Advocacy, a self-advocacy group for people with learning difficulties, has resulted in Council staff becoming more aware of the needs of learning disabled people and how best to support them when seeking information about Council services.

Ongoing liaison with EU Welcome, an organisation supporting Polish and Eastern Europeans coming to the area, has provided the Council with a better understanding of the needs of these communities. This has aided the Gosport Partnership to develop a Welcome to Gosport Guide in Polish and Ukrainian languages to assist new arrivals to the Borough to access information and services.

The Council has established links with Inscape, a Portsmouth-based sexual health and support service for lesbian, gay and bisexual people, which is used by Gosport residents to help ensure its policies and practices do not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

The Council works closely with Hampshire County Council's Older Persons Service on local social care provision and support for older persons and engages with Gosport's Older Persons Forum to understand and address their concerns.

² Data Information Booklet for Gosport, 2009/10, Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service

³ Office for National Statistics, 2010

The Customer Care Handbook for all staff is reviewed annually to provide guidance for producing written documents to make sure they are in a plain and readable format for people with visual impairments. Documents are also produced in alternative formats such as Braille or CD and different languages on request.

The Council strives to embed good equality practices throughout the organisation. EIAs will continue to be undertaken on its policies, strategies and functions and refreshed at least every three years to ensure they reflect current legislation and best practice. Actions identified in EIAs to improve fairness are included in each section's Service Improvement Plan to make sure equalities remain part of the Council's core business.

The Council uses equality monitoring to help better understand customer needs and inform service design and delivery. Monitoring can also help the Council to identify any groups of people who may not be accessing certain services or facilities and understand why. A Corporate Equalities Monitoring Standard sets out the way in which the Council will ask equality monitoring questions. Section managers report annually on their compliance to this framework across Council services.

The Council consults with local charitable and community organisations which provide a wealth of services and social networking opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Council plans to create an internal data portal which will facilitate better and more consistent data use and exchange between Council departments to inform the design and delivery of Council services. These measures will ensure data from the 2011 Census will be most effectively used to determine how the population of the Borough has changed and will enable the Council and its partners to respond to these demographic changes accordingly.

5.2. Priority 2: Valuing its workforce, providing equal opportunities in its employment practices and promoting fair employment practices in the Borough

Why is it important?

Despite years of equality legislation, inequalities in employment still persist nationally and locally. While nationally women in full-time work earn on average 11% less than their male counterparts⁴, in Gosport, women who work full-time earn 24% less than men who work full-time⁴. Nationally only 47% of disabled people of working age are in employment compared with 78% of non-disabled people⁵. As a major employer in the Borough, the Council has a legal duty to implement equal employment practices and promote fairness. The Equality Act 2010 places new duties on the Council as an employer and strengthens existing duties. The Council recognises:

- it is a major employer and employs over 380 people;

4 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings Resident Analysis (2010) cited by www.nomisweb.co.uk

5 Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey 2010, Jan - March 2009

- its workforce profile from 2008/09 showed out of 382 employees, 127 (33%) were male and 255 (67%) were female; 23 employees (6%) declared themselves as having a disability; 12 employees (3.1%) were from a Black and Minority Ethnic Group;
- the unemployment rate for Gosport's 16-64 year olds was 6.5% of the population between October 2009 and September 2010, higher than the 6.0% overall in the South East, but still considerably less than the 7.6% overall nationally⁶;
- 2.9% of 16-64 year olds in Gosport claimed jobseekers allowance during the same period which was much higher than the Hampshire average of 2.2% and the second highest number among Hampshire Districts.⁷

How this will be achieved:

- review its employment policies and procedures regularly and conduct EIAs on them to ensure they are applied fairly;
- review its employment practices to incorporate provisions of the Act;
- monitor its workforce profile and staff feedback to highlight and address inequalities;
- promote fair and transparent procurement practices.

All Council jobs are advertised on a Hampshire-wide recruitment portal. Short listing panels are unaware of any personal characteristics of potential applicants such as disability, ensuring that decisions are made solely on merit.

The Council will review its employment practices and policies in line with the Act. All employment policies regularly undergo an EIA to assess their impact on all protected characteristics.

The Council is committed to identifying and closing any unjustifiable gender pay gap. It uses job evaluation for the grading of posts, and conducts an equal pay audit every three years, analysing the results against the previous audit.

The Council has a zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment and regularly reviews its bullying and harassment policy and ensures any reported incidents are dealt with in the appropriate manner.

All existing and new employees receive mandatory equality and diversity training which covers all protected characteristics. This training is updated annually to reflect legislative changes and staff are briefed on changes as they occur. Their full training must be refreshed at least every three years.

Contractors who intend to supply goods or services on behalf of the Council must provide evidence that they have systems in place to ensure equal access and treatment in their own employment practices and in the services

⁶ Office for National Statistics Local Labour Market Indicators by Unitary and Local Authority, February 2011

⁷ Office for National Statistics Local Labour Market Indicators by Unitary and Local Authority, February 2011

they provide. Post-contract monitoring is undertaken to assess equality performance including reports of any complaints from service users (including any related to harassment) and service audits to check on any problems in relation to the equalities in the specification.

The Council supports the Youth Council to improve young people's aspirations and provide skills to help them gain employment. As an employer it involves and seeks the views of young people through a group comprised of young Council employees, called the Young People's Working Group.

5.3. Priority 3: Working with partners to tackle inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination in the Borough.

Why is it important?

National statistics and research demonstrate Britain is still characterised by inequalities where certain groups of people who share common characteristics are more likely to experience inequalities and be socially and economically excluded than others. The Council, through representation by its officers and elected members, plays an active role in several partnerships and networks through which the Council can work to tackle disadvantage and inequality.

The information below highlights some of the inequalities and deprivation in Gosport:

- Gosport is ranked 168th most deprived area in England out of 354 local authorities (1 being the most deprived)⁸ - the most deprived wards are Town, Grange and Leesland with 4 Super Output Areas* being among the 20% most deprived in England;
- Gosport is the poorest performing District in Hampshire in terms of educational performance, with only 55.5% of pupils (in 2009) achieving 5+ A*-C (and equivalent) grades⁹;
- within Gosport life expectancy for men from the most deprived areas is six years lower than for those from the least deprived areas¹⁰;
- within Gosport domestic incidents account for 23% of all violence against the person crime recorded in 2009, which is above the national level of 16%¹¹.

How this will be achieved:

- share information and data with strategic partners to identify deprivation and disadvantage which can lead to inequality;
- coordinate local services and resources through effective partnership working.

8 The Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2007Communities and Local Government 2007

* Super Output Areas are geographical areas smaller than wards that represent about 1500 people

9 Department for Children, Schools and Families - <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/inyourarea>

10 Gosport Health Profile 2010, The Association of Public Health Observatories, [ww.apho.org.uk](http://www.apho.org.uk)

11 Gosport Violent Crime Problem Profile 2010

The Council produces the Gosport Sustainability Profile annually on behalf of the Gosport Partnership, to provide a statistical picture of Gosport. The profile enables the Council and its strategic partners to better understand local issues, identify the key priorities for local residents, coordinate resources and assess the progress of local initiatives.

The Council works with partners to provide training opportunities to help unemployed people get back into work. It also works with young people to develop their entrepreneurial talents and business skills. As an employer it promotes equal employment practices and is committed to identifying and closing the gender pay gap.

Financial exclusion is an issue affecting many residents and the Council works to address this with its partners by raising awareness of available financial advice and affordable credit to people often excluded from mainstream banking.

The Council is an active membership of the Gosport Health and Inequalities Partnership, which aims to address health needs and reduce health inequalities in Gosport and to inform commissioning of services to improve health, prevent ill health and reduce the demand for healthcare services.

The Council will address inequalities experienced by young people in Gosport through working with its strategic partners to: improve the health of young people; improve safety awareness; reduce the incidence of bullying; increase educational attainment; provide more learning opportunities, and reduce homelessness.

Reducing violent crime is a priority for the Gosport Safety Partnership and reducing incidents of domestic violence and repeat incidents have been particular areas of partnership working to develop effective interventions and provide support services to victims.

The Council works in partnership with the Black Minority Ethnic (BME) community development officers from Hampshire County Council who work to increase engagement with local BME populations to better understand their needs and to promote Council services such as housing and benefits to those who may experience barriers in accessing services.

5.4 Priority 4: Supporting local citizen involvement and promoting good relations within and across communities.

Why is it important?

Localism means devolving more powers from central to local government and empowering local citizens to improve their communities. Local involvement improves community relations and provides opportunities for people from different backgrounds to mix, which can help reduce community tension and hate crime.

A snapshot of local involvement and community relations in Gosport shows:

- more than 100 local volunteers were placed with community organisations in 2009;
- 75.4 % of Gosport respondents to the 2008 Place Survey believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area compared to the national district average of 80%;
- 49.3% of Gosport respondents to the 2008 Place Survey feel they belong to their neighbourhood which is significantly lower than the national district average of 61.8%;
- 11.9% of people in Gosport have been involved in decisions which affect the local area in the past 12 months according to 2008 Place Survey responses which is below the England average of 12.07% and places Gosport in the bottom quartile nationally and eighth out of the other Hampshire districts.¹²

How this will be achieved:

- promote opportunities for community engagement and decision making at neighbourhood level;
- work with voluntary and community sector groups to deliver neighbourhood level services;
- improve awareness of hate crime and its effects and how to report it;
- strengthen community cohesion through opportunities for people from different backgrounds to mix;

The Neighbourhood Management Programme in Rowner has led to better communication and cooperation between residents and service providers, facilitating regeneration of the area, an improved environmental appearance, improved housing, skills training and employment opportunities, and greater resident involvement.

In 2009 Gosport Community Safety Partnership took part in a national community engagement pilot scheme which introduced participatory budgeting in local communities. Everyone in those communities had the opportunity to vote on which projects they wanted to fund. Following on from the pilot programme in 2009, further neighbourhoods within Gosport have taken part in participatory budgeting events.

The Summer Passport Scheme provides diversionary activities for over 500 young people during school half term breaks to deter instances of anti social behaviour by using existing leisure resources and communal spaces, whilst helping young people to stay safe and make a positive contribution. In 2010 12.3% of those taking part were identified as hard to reach young people.

The Council works in partnership with Borough and County-wide forums which influence Council services and policies. The Housing Forum, for example, is comprised of people representing the views of local tenants and leaseholders who can influence strategic housing decisions.

¹² GBC 2008 Place-based survey cited by Local Knowledge

The Council maintains a close working relationship with the voluntary sector and has adopted the One Compact for Hampshire. The Compact and Community Forum provides a formal way for issues between the Council and third sector to be addressed, which leads to a better working relationship between sectors. An annual event is held to improve the working relationship between public and voluntary sector organisations and address common concerns.

The Council recognises the valuable contribution of volunteers in the Borough and works closely with Gosport Voluntary Action to facilitate an annual volunteer awards ceremony which recognises the achievements of volunteers in the Borough.

The Council takes hate crime very seriously. It is nationally recognised that hate crime is under-reported and therefore obtaining meaningful statistics at a local level is difficult. The council revised its hate crime reporting procedures in 2009 and has a system in place to report any incidents of hate crime occurring to staff or members of the public on Council property, or experienced during the course of Council business. Staff have been given guidance on identifying and reporting hate crime. Connect Advocacy has greatly assisted the Council in raising particular awareness of disability hate crime and its effects on its victims.

The Gosport Partnership has recognised the importance of strengthening community cohesion between and within communities. It administered a one-off fund in 2010 which allocated £60,000 to organisations and partnerships which identified local areas of need and projects to support cohesion priorities.

6.0 INVOLVING AND CONSULTING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

6.1 Developing this Scheme

The Council involved its employees and external groups in the development of its priority equality areas and identification of new actions for the Action Plan.

The Council's four priority equality areas were identified in partnership with the Equality and Diversity Steering Group, which comprises representatives from all service units.

Council employees were asked to comment on these priorities and consider how the work of sections contributes to improving equality in these areas. Sections used team meetings to discuss issues and fed back to the Corporate Policy and Performance Section.

Many external stakeholders were invited to comment on this scheme. Several contributed to its development. These included:

- EU Welcome - a voluntary organisation based in Southampton providing support and information to Polish and other Eastern European Communities;
- Connect Advocacy - a local advocacy group for people with learning

- difficulties;
- Gosport Older Persons' Forum;
 - Portsmouth Race and Equality Network Organisation (PRENO);
 - Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum;
 - Inscape - a sexual health support service with links to the Portsmouth Transgender Support Group;
 - Gosport Youth Council - supported by the Council and the Youth Service to engage young people in local decision making.

6.2 Regular liaison and partnership working

In addition to the stakeholder groups involved in the development of this scheme, the Council, through representation of its officers and Members, maintains regular liaison with a number of partnerships and forums.

The Gosport Partnership and sub groups

The Council and its partners, through the Gosport Partnership work strategically to address the needs of the Borough, including areas of inequality and poor cohesion, through the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Gosport Wellbeing Network

Partnership working through the Gosport Wellbeing Network has resulted in better understanding by local service providers of the needs of people from minority ethnic backgrounds and other marginalised communities and better coordination between them. The network supported initiatives to engage with the Borough's significant Armed Forces Community. This has also highlighted local needs and ways to improve liaison between Armed Forces and civilian service providers.

Gosport Compact and Community Forum

This forum facilitates effective partnership working between public and voluntary and community groups and encourages greater community engagement and adherence to Compact principles. Through this forum, the Council is able to consult more effectively with grassroots organisations serving local people.

The following county-wide forums also provide opportunities to learn about inequality experienced by other groups and to share and develop good equality practices across Hampshire.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Equality Network (HIOWEN)

Provides an opportunity for public and voluntary sector officers with responsibility for equality and diversity across Hampshire to share experiences and develop understanding and good practice.

Hampshire Independent Equality Forum (HIEF)

Newly established in 2009, this forum provides an interface between representatives of all of the protected characteristics encompassed in the Act. It helps public organisations to understand and address specific inequalities experienced by these groups to help develop consistent good practices throughout the county.

6.3 Commitment to effective consultation

The Council has adopted a co-ordinated approach to consultations throughout its service areas by requiring all planned consultations to be registered with and approved by Council Management Team. A Consultation Finder has been developed to log all planned and completed consultations on the Council's web site to avoid duplication of effort, encourage joint working and share results to inform service planning and delivery. It co-ordinates its consultation activity under a Consultation Policy to ensure:

- consultation is effectively planned to make best use of resources and avoid consultation fatigue;
- consultation outcomes are used to inform decision making processes;
- consistent standards and approach are applied toward consultation across the Council.

One of its consultation principles is “inclusiveness” to ensure all sections of the community have an opportunity to express their views.

The Consultation Policy provides a toolkit on inclusiveness that incorporates a Faith and Culture Guide and a Diversity Calendar to assist staff in understanding cultural and religious practices and observances when planning and implementing consultation events and exercises.

7.0 DESIGNATION OF KEY RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THIS SCHEME

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for developing a leadership role in the Borough, promoting improved understanding of equality and diversity and ensuring this scheme and action plan are implemented throughout Gosport Borough Council and regularly reviewed. The Chief Executive chairs the corporate Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

Council Management Team

Members of Council Management Team provide senior level support for equality and diversity and are responsible for ensuring this scheme is implemented within service areas.

Section Heads

Section Heads have direct responsibility for the compliance of their service areas to this scheme and the Corporate Equalities Monitoring Framework. They are required to provide annual assessments of compliance to the framework and an annual assessment of their section's service level equality

objectives based on the results of customer feedback, consultations, EIAs and the assessment of compliance itself.

They must ensure staff understand and meet the responsibilities contained in this scheme.

Employees

All employees of the Council have a responsibility to understand this Single Equality Scheme and comply with its provisions in their working practice. Employees should also seek information and advice from their managers or the Equality and Diversity Steering Group on any aspect that requires clarification.

Volunteers/work experience/contractors

Council volunteers, work experience staff or those contracted by the Council for specific services have a responsibility to act in a fair and appropriate manner, in accordance with this scheme and all other Council policies and procedures.

Elected Members

Members engage with the wider Gosport community to better understand local needs and issues and to provide leadership and support for this policy and its schemes. As representatives of the Council, they have a responsibility to support and promote equal opportunities and practices in all aspects of their civic responsibilities.

Personnel

The Personnel section is responsible for ensuring all employment procedures and processes including recruitment, retention and training comply with current equal opportunity in employment legislation as well as this scheme.

Personnel play a key role in ensuring training needs are identified and delivery mechanisms put in place with respect to equality and diversity issues in employment.

The production, review and updating of relevant equality and diversity in employment policies is the responsibility of the Personnel section.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

This committee will receive an annual progress report on the implementation and progress of this Single Equality Scheme and action plan. It can request further reports or additional information on any aspect of this scheme or its actions in order to assess corporate compliance and good practice.

Learning and Development Group

This corporate group is responsible for identifying corporate training needs

and developing appropriate responses. The group is involved in the design and delivery of training for staff and elected Members on equality and other corporate issues.

Equality and Diversity Steering Group

This corporate group has representatives from every service unit and the Trade Union, Unison. It has overall responsibility for co-ordinating the Council's equality and diversity work. It provides a forum for discussing equality issues and developing good equality practices across service units.

8.0 MAINSTREAMING EQUALITIES AND MONITORING PROGRESS

Mainstreaming and monitoring of equality principles and practices throughout Council activities is achieved through a variety of means.

Service statistics

Service statistics are used to measure satisfaction with access to Council services and a standardised question on its surveys asks those who are dissatisfied to comment further. If there are any comments related to equalities or diversity these are specifically reviewed (even if they are not a key theme) and reported to the Corporate Policy and Performance Section in addition to being considered within the service unit and by the Equality and Diversity Group.

Partnerships and networks

Through active representation in many partnerships and networks, the Council seeks to improve its understanding of local issues and local needs. Engaging with other organisations through partnerships and networks provides valuable opportunities to share information and expertise to help identify and address community concerns.

The Council understands its role as part of the fabric of the local community rather than an entity outside of it. Regular consultation with and feedback from these partnerships, formal and informal networks, assists Council staff in assessing and monitoring services in relation to local equality issues and their impact on local people.

Personnel management and information systems

Personnel collect and monitor extensive information to ensure equality standards are maintained throughout the Council's employment processes. Profile information on the Council's workforce, including gender and ethnicity information, is routinely collected and monitored. The monitoring of its grading structure through the job evaluation scheme and Organisation Sub-Group, and commitment to an equal pay audit every two years, helps to ensure that pay and grading are applied fairly.

Personal review and training assessment processes provide the means for monitoring equality of opportunity in the development of the Council's

workforce.

External accreditation and assessment

The Council has attained external accreditation and awards which indicate high standards in performance and service delivery. The documentation required to prove the standard has been achieved can often include collecting evidence that a particular service area or Council as a whole has demonstrated good equality practices.

Personal reviews

Personal reviews provide an opportunity for managers to discuss with staff areas for performance improvement with respect to customer care, service delivery and any aspect of this Corporate Equalities Policy. Each member of staff has his/her own personal training plan that is reviewed annually to help identify training needs and allocate training resources. Refresher training on the personal review process is offered regularly to managers; all managers new to the Council are provided with training before undertaking the process. A range of training is available to staff from internal and external sources.

Team meetings

Equal Opportunities – “Employment and Service Delivery Issues” is a corporate standard item on all team meeting agendas and acts as a vehicle for raising and discussing equalities issues identified within teams. Managers can seek further information or guidance from the Personnel Section, Equality and Diversity Steering Group, Council Management Team or the Corporate Policy and Performance Section to address issues raised.

Equalities Monitoring Framework

This provides a corporate approach to equalities monitoring across Council service areas. It provides guidance to service areas for determining the type and degree of equalities monitoring to be applied. All section heads provide annual assessments of compliance to the framework and an annual assessment of service level equality objectives based on the results of customer feedback, consultations, EIAs and the assessment of compliance itself. All actions undertaken to maintain compliance to the framework or achieve service level equality objectives are tracked through service improvement plans.

Compliments and complaints

Compliments and complaints received about services also help to identify the impact of good practices and any adverse impact of existing practices.

Gosport Borough Council responds to complaints from customers as quickly and as efficiently as possible and considers their suggestions for improvements. Its formal complaint procedure is detailed on the Council web site and available in different formats from the Town Hall.

The Council Management Team regularly reviews summary reports on complaints received by the Council with a focus on any related to equality and diversity issues. These are then reported to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group for further review and recommendations for corporate actions to address them.

The comprehensive Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy ensures that staff are aware of and can use a formal procedure for any complaints which may arise.

Procurement and funding relationships

The duty to promote equality applies to procurement. Where an external supplier carries out a function on the Council's behalf, the Council recognises it remains responsible for meeting the duty. All contracted services and functions are assessed for relevance to the general duty and undergo the EIA process.

Contractors which currently or intend to supply goods or services on behalf of the Council must provide evidence that they have systems in place to ensure equal access and treatment in their own employment practices and in the services they provide. The Council provides information to potential contractors on its equality commitments as part of its Invitation to Tender documentation and ensures these commitments are part of its Contractual Agreements.

Post-contract monitoring is undertaken to assess equality performance indicators, collate reports of any complaints from service users - including any related to harassment - and service audits to check on any problems in relation to the equalities in the specification.

Guides and toolkits

Current good equality practice is mainstreamed throughout the Council by the development of guidance notes and toolkits provided on the Council's Infonet and through induction packs to new members of staff. These include the Customer Care Handbook and consultation toolkits. Written updates on legislative changes are also provided.

Training

The Council delivers equality training to all staff through an Equality and Diversity e-learning programme. The training modules are updated every year to reflect new legislation and good practice and all staff are required to renew training every three years. New staff complete this training during their induction period. Training and awareness raising events are also delivered to staff and elected Members in a variety of ways.

Equality impact assessments

The Council has a corporate process for assessing the impact of its policies, strategies and functions on different groups. This assessment process is

undertaken at the development stage for proposed new policies, strategies and functions or whenever a significant change is being considered to existing ones. All policies, strategies and functions are reassessed at least every three years.

This process has been revised to specifically analyse how Council policies, strategies and functions further the three aims of the general Equality Duty. An initial assessment is completed and then reviewed by a sub-group of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

The review sub-group determines if the analysis and evidence provided are sufficient to reasonably assess the possible impact of the policy, strategy or function for each protected characteristic.

It can recommend gathering further evidence to assess impacts, recommend specific equality actions are undertaken to mitigate potential negative impacts on groups or to further the aims of the general duty, or recommend the policy, strategy or function be halted until a full assessment is undertaken. Actions from the assessment process form part of the Section Head's annual review of their service level equality objectives. All completed assessments are then published on the Council's web site and offered in alternative formats and languages on request.

APPENDIX A

Summary of Equality Act 2010 Provisions

Equality in procurement

The Act extends the existing duty to consider the needs of women, disabled people and ethnic minorities in procurement practices to cover all of the protected characteristics. The Act makes it clear that public bodies can use procurement to drive equality.

Banning age discrimination

Age discrimination in the workplace has been banned since 2006, but the Act strengthens this legislation and will make it unlawful to discriminate against someone aged 18 or over, because of age, when providing services or carrying out public functions.

Gender pay and equality reports

The Act has made pay secrecy clauses unenforceable meaning employees are able to discuss their pay. Organisations with 250 employees or more are not required to report and publish information on their gender pay gap, but this requirement may be introduced in the future.

Extending positive action

Despite having the same educational qualifications, research shows that certain groups do not get the same opportunities as others in the workplace and are far less likely to reach executive positions. The general positive action provisions came into force in October 2010. These allow public authorities to take proportionate action to meet the needs of, or encourage, persons who share a protected characteristic. From April 2011 the Act will allow employers to make their workforces more diverse by using “positive action” in recruitment. For example, when two job applicants are equally suitable the employer can select the candidate from an under-represented group. Positive action can be used, on a case by case basis, to allow employers to increase diversity in their workforce to better reflect the local community or customer base.

Employment tribunals

The Act strengthens the power of employment tribunals and allows them to make a recommendation in discrimination cases which benefit the whole workforce and not just the individual who won the claim and often leaves the organisation.

Protecting carers

The Act prevents discrimination or harassment of people who are caring for someone who is disabled. The new rights protect carers where they are provided with a worse service than someone who is not caring for a disabled person and provide protection where carers are discouraged or prevented from using a service because they are caring for a disabled person.

Protecting disabled people

The Act makes a number of new provisions to protect disabled people. It is now unlawful for employers to ask job applicants general questions about disability or health before making a job offer, except in specified circumstances. The Equality Duty means public bodies need to think about the needs of everyone who uses their services or works for them, in particular, disabled people.

Introducing discrimination by association

This means protecting people discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic. An example of this is protecting someone who provides care to a disabled relative. They will be protected by virtue of their association with that person.

THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

This section outlines provisions which have been added or extended with regard to specific protected characteristics under the Act.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 apply to employment and vocational training and prohibit discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of age. The regulations ban discrimination in recruitment, promotion and training and ban unjustified retirement ages below 65. The regulations remove the age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights, introduce the right to request working beyond retirement age and require employers to give at least six months notice to employees about their intended retirement dates, to allow individuals to plan better for retirement. The Regulations have been replaced by the Act and the Government abolish the default retirement age of 65 from 1st October 2011.

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 made it unlawful to discriminate against a person because they have a physical, sensory or mental impairment. Organisations were required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that disabled people were able to access services and employment. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed greater responsibilities on public authorities, citing general and specific duties.

The Act extends protection to those who are linked to a disabled person, such

as their carer. The Duty will mean public bodies need to think about the needs of everyone who uses their services or works for them, particularly disabled people. From 2011 public bodies with over 150 employees will be required to annually publish their disability employment rate.

Sex

The 2006 Equality Act amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to place general and specific duties on public authorities to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote equal opportunities between men, women and transgender people. The Act requires public authorities to promote equal employment practices, reduce the gender pay gap, and reaffirms the use of positive action where appropriate to assist in improving the diversity of their workforce.

Race

The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 makes it unlawful for public authorities to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their race. Public authorities have a general duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote equal opportunities and promote good relations between persons of different racial groups. Public authorities must also set out how they will promote equal opportunities as an employer and service provider.

Religion and Belief

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 were replaced by the Act to make it unlawful to discriminate against an employee on the grounds of their religion or belief, including lack of belief. These regulations prohibit discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any person in employment on the grounds of their religion or belief or lack of belief.

Sexual Orientation

The Act requires public authorities to advance equality of opportunity for lesbian, gay and bi-sexual people. Previously, the Employment Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 prohibited harassment in relation to employment on the basis of a person's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation by others.

Gender Re-assignment

The Act requires public authorities to advance equality of opportunity for transsexual people. Previously, the Gender Re-assignment Regulations under the Sex Discrimination Act prohibited harassment in relation to employment or vocational training and in the provision of goods, facilities and services due to the gender re-assignment of a person.

The Act includes a revised definition of gender re-assignment to make it clear that a person does not have to be under medical supervision to be protected from discrimination. People are also protected from discrimination because of

their association with transsexual people.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters and the Equality Duty applies to marriage and civil partnership in the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 made it unlawful to discriminate against mothers who wish to breastfeed their baby in public. The Act strengthens this legislation and will make it clear that it is unlawful to force breastfeeding mothers and their babies out of public places like coffee shops and restaurants. An employer must not demote or dismiss an employee, or deny her training or promotion opportunities, because she is pregnant or on maternity leave.

APPENDIX B

Single Equality Scheme Action Plan 2011-14

Key Abbreviations	
CMT – Council Management Team	EDSG – Equality and Diversity Steering Group
O&S – Overview and Scrutiny	GAG – Gosport Access Group
HIOWLA – Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Authorities	GVA – Gosport Voluntary Action
PRENO – Portsmouth Race Equality Network	LDG – Learning and Development Group
CPPS – Corporate Policy and Performance Section	C3 – Customer Care and Communication
CSP – Community Safety Partnership	BME - Black and Minority Ethnic

Priority 1: Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of customers				
Action	How will it be measured	By Whom	By When	Protected Characteristic*
1.a. Ensure continued compliance with the Disability Audit recommendations for the Town Hall in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005	Progress updates to GAG and EDSG	Access Officer and GAG	04-11 04-12 04-13	D
1.b. Ensure reception areas of the Town Hall remain safe and accessible for all customers	Access Officer record of actions resulting from customer and staff suggestions and feedback	Service Unit managers in liaison with Access Officer, GAG and other groups	Updates to GAG and EDSG	D
1.c. Section Heads review their equality monitoring practices annually to ensure compliance	Percentage completion rate of compliance	Section Heads	12-11 12-12 12-13	R, G, D, A,

to Council Equality Monitoring Framework	statements			
1.d. Section Leads complete EIAs assigned to them for new and existing policies, strategies and functions in line with the corporate timeline.	EIA completion rate monitored by CPPS as part of quarterly review	EDSG	03-12 03-13 03-14	ALL
1.e Publish completed EIAs on the Council's web site after review by EDSG	No. published	CPPS	06-12 06-13 06-14	ALL
1.f. Annually review of the Customer Care Handbook to ensure it provides up-to-date information and best practice guidance	Completion of review and revisions made	C3 Group	06-11 06-12 06-13	R, D, A
1.g. Liaise with PRENO and EU Welcome to discuss new trends or needs of local BME populations and how to address them	Record of contact and any actions identified for action plan	CPPS	09-11 09-12 09-13	R
1.h. Annually report on the progress of this scheme to CMT and O&S Committee	Submission of annual report	CPPS	CMT: 06-11 06-12 06-13 O&S: 09-11 09-12 09-13	ALL
1.i. Review annually the Welcome to Gosport Guide	Record of distribution, requests	CPPS	09-11 09-12	R

and liaise with EU Welcome on suggestions for change	for more copies or requests for alternate languages		09-13	
1.j. Create an internal data portal to include customer insight data and enable sharing of data across Council service units to inform service development and delivery	No. of data sets in portal, no. of site users	Data Working Group	12-11	ALL
1.k. Review 2011 Census data available and determine which would be useful for availability on the data portal	Additions to the portal	Data Working Group	01-13	ALL
Priority 2: Valuing its workforce, providing equal opportunities in its employment practices and promoting fair employment practices in the Borough				
Action	How will it be measured	By whom	By when	Protected characteristic
2.a. Review staff e-learning equality and diversity modules annually to ensure they reflect current legislation	Annual checkpoint with Cylix to ensure modules reflect current legislative additions or changes	IT Training Officer in liaison with EDSG and e-learning contract provider	09-11 09-12	ALL
2.b. All Council staff to refresh their equality and diversity training at least every three years through completion of e-learning modules	Quarterly IT training reports on staff completion by unit	Personnel and IT Training Officer	Quarterly updates via EDSG	ALL
2.c. All new Council staff to complete their e-learning	Quarterly personnel IT Training Officer	Personnel IT Training Officer reports	Quarterly updates via EDSG	ALL

equality and diversity modules within the first three months of their employment	reports			
2.d. Develop in-house training tools to assist staff in applying their understanding of equality and diversity issues to real life work situations	No. of training aids developed, record of implementation means, feedback from users	EDSG with input from LDG and C3 Groups	Quarterly updates via EDSG Annual report to CMT: 06-11 06-12 06-13	ALL
2.e. Collect post-contract monitoring data from contractors and review annually to assess compliance with the Council's equalities standards	No. of annual reviews held with contractors, no. of reviews of monitoring data completed	The Core Group	June 2012	ALL
2.f. Complete analysis by gender, ethnicity, and disability of applicants for each post and appointments made	Annual report to CMT and part of quarterly review of local indicators	Personnel	09-11 09-12 09-13	R, G, D
2.g. Research the use of possible positive actions, if required, in recruitment and training to encourage consideration of all career paths without bias		Personnel in liaison with Unison and CMT	11-11 11-12 11-13	R, G, A, D
2.h. Collect data to assess the number of employees who are disabled, from a BME group,	Reviewed annually as part of local indicators, and three	Head of Personnel	09-11 09-12 09-13	R, G, D

age ranges, analysis of posts by gender and those occupying senior posts	yearly via equal pay audit			
2.i. Analyse workforce data for any equality issues, identify actions needed or make recommendations to EDSG for ways of addressing issues identified	Review by EDSG	Head of Personnel	09-11 09-12 09-13	R, G, D
2.j. Review use of medical report forms in line with Equality Act 2010	Implement new procedures for use of medical report forms after offer of employment	Head of Personnel	04-11	D
2.k. Complete of an equal pay audit every three years. Analysis of results including comparison with previous years to assess actions needed to address	Completion of audit	Personnel Officer in consultation with Unison Branch Secretary	09-11 Audit 12-11 Analysis	R, G, A, D
Priority 3: Working with partners to tackle inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination in the Borough				
Action	How will it be measured	By Whom	By When	Protected Characteristic
3.a. Provide guidance to local businesses and service providers on disability access issues and requirements	No. of articles in Business Information Newsletter and on web site. No. of visits to local businesses to	Access Officer with GAG and Economic Prosperity team	Ongoing 6 monthly updates	D

	provide access advice			
3.b. Publish a local directory of domestic violence information and support services and support on web site and keep it updated	Information updates by members of the Fareham and Gosport Domestic Abuse Forum. No. of website hits	Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator from Community Safety Team	12-11 12-12 12-13	ALL
3.c. Improve understanding of particular issues Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people may encounter in accessing local services	Feedback from BME people via Community Development Officer and local service providers. Results from Wellbeing Network projects to engage with local BME people	Hampshire County Council BME Community Development Officer, Gosport Wellbeing Network	Annually via Wellbeing Network	R
3.d. Advise on physical access improvements in the development of the Alver Valley to ensure access by disabled people	Consultation feedback and improvements agreed	Access Officer and Countryside Officer in partnership with GAG	12-11	D
3.e. Support promotion of local Credit Union services to local people who may be experiencing financial exclusion from other banking services	No. of people visiting the information desk of the Credit Union representative at the Town Hall. No. of people opening	Staff from United Savings and Loans, Hampshire Credit Union and CPPS	6 monthly reports from 6-11 via CPPS	ALL

	accounts			
3.f. Review and update annually the financial inclusion advice map for Gosport highlighting information and locations of a range of financial advice and support services	Feedback and no. of referrals resulting from map, annual review and update	Debt and Money Advice Group with CPPS support	Annually	ALL
3.g. Update the Gosport Sustainability Profile for Gosport Partnership to ensure it reflects the most current demographic range of data for the Borough	Delivery of the annual update to the Board	Officer support from Planning Policy and CPPS	9-11 9-12 9-13	ALL
Priority 4: Supporting local citizen involvement and promoting good relations within and across communities				
Action	How will it be measured	By Whom	By When	Protected Characteristic
4.a. Host an annual Community Forum conference for community and voluntary sector members and statutory members to provide training on topical cross-sector issues	Participation numbers and event feedback forms	CPPS in partnership with the Community Forum	11-12	ALL
4.b. Support National Volunteer Week by promoting local volunteering opportunities to staff and supporting annual community volunteer awards	Staff announcements promoting local volunteer vacancies and role of Volunteer Centre, hosting annual awards event	CPPS with Volunteer Centre staff	06-11 06-12 06-13	ALL
4.c. Consult with disabled	Record of	Leisure and Cultural	7-11	D

people over design and facilities at the new Holbrook Leisure Centre	Implementation of consultation recommendations	Services in co-operation with the Access Officer		
4.d. Promote GADSAD (Gosport and District Sports Association for the Disabled) and adult multi sports sessions locally to increase participation	Participation numbers	Leisure Development Officer	06-11 06-12	D
4.e. Promote existing local sports activities for disabled children and young people to increase participation	Participation numbers	Leisure Development Officer	07-11 01-12	D
4.f. Advise Gosport Submarine Museum on equal access at every stage of an ongoing £5m re-fit of the submarine HMS Alliance	Update from Access Officer	GAG	10-13	D, A
4.g. Provision of fortnightly drop-in sessions for residents/carers/local organisations to raise disability and access issues with the Council and involve them in service policy development	Report on attendee feedback	Access Officer	Reports to GAG and EDSG	D
4.h. Invite local voluntary and community organisations to consult on Council plans and	No. of consultation announcements sent to GVA	CPPS	06-11	ALL

policies via GVA through its links and databases				
4.i. Undertake a review of participatory budgeting pilots and make recommendations for future use	Report to the CSP, and record of agreed actions	Head of Community Safety	06-11 06-12 06-13	ALL
4.j. Develop and support six neighbourhood forums to address community safety and neighbourhood improvement issues	Report to CSP	Head of Community Safety	06-11 06-12 06-13	ALL

Gosport Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities for all.

If you need this document in large print, on tape, on CD, in Braille or in other languages, please ask.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

Board:	POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
Date of Meeting:	17TH MAY 2011
Title:	SOLENT LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
Author:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

To seek approval for Gosport Borough Council to become a member of the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership.

Recommendation

Gosport Borough Council accepts the invitation to become a member of the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Limited.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Coalition Government have begun a process to abolish the Regional Development Agencies (RDA) by the 31st March 2012.
- 1.2 Some of the responsibilities of the RDAs will be undertaken by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).
- 1.3 An application lead by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) for LEP status was submitted to the Government and the Solent LEP was one of 24 LEPs approved.
- 1.4 The Solent LEP has been running in shadow form for some months. It is now incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 as Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Limited and is now concluding the appointments of the permanent Board Directors.
- 1.5 Solent LEP covers South Hampshire including Gosport and the Isle of Wight which together form a functional economic area centred around Portsmouth and Southampton.

2 MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOLENT LEP

- 2.1 Membership of the Solent LEP will consist of three classes:

- Business – those undertaking professional business or other commercial activities with a view to profit in the LEP region.
 - Higher education – those higher education corporations and institutions in the LEP region.
 - Public Sector – County Council, District. Borough Councils or Unitary Authorities having statutory responsibilities with the LEP region.
- 2.2 The Board of Directors will consist of 8 Directors elected by the Business Membership, 1 Director elected by the Higher Education membership and 5 Directors elected by the Public Sector membership.
- 2.3 The Joint Committee of PUSH has agreed that representation from the Public Sector on the Solent LEP Board will consist of the Leaders of the County Council and the 3 Unitary Authorities and one representative of the Borough/District Councils.
- 2.4 Gosport Borough Council has been formally requested to join the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Limited as one of its members drawn from the Public Sector.
- 2.5 Subscriptions to the Solent LEP will be confirmed at the first meeting of the permanent Board but it is expected that for Gosport, this will be in the region of £2,500 per annum.
- 2.6 However, in line with the agreement of the PUSH Joint Committee in November 2010, subscriptions for all PUSH members, including Gosport for the Solent LEP for 2011/12 will be met from the PUSH budget.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for this Council for 2011/12. Any future subscriptions to the Solent LEP will either be met from the Council's annual subscription to PUSH or will be addressed within the annual budget process.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Solent LEP is to become a very influential body and funding opportunities are likely to be channelled via the LEP. If Gosport is to continue to progress the many significant development opportunities to successfully regenerate the Borough, it will need the support of the Solent LEP and membership is crucial.

Financial Services comments:	None
Legal Services comments:	The Council's liability as a member of Solent LEP Limited, a company limited by guarantee, should be limited under the terms of the Articles of Association of the Limited Company and as presently drafted this liability is not to exceed £1.00. The Council as a member of the Company will need to comply with these Articles of Association.
Service Improvement Plan implications:	Not applicable
Corporate Plan:	Not applicable
Risk Assessment:	Not applicable
Background papers:	Nil
Appendices/Enclosures:	Nil
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Ian Lycett, Chief Executive

AGENDA ITEM NO 7

Board/Committee:	POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
Date of Meeting:	17 MAY 2011
Title:	AREA BASED INSULATION SCHEME
Author:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

- To seek Member approval to sign up to the Hampshire wide area based insulation scheme.

Recommendation

The Board agrees to participate in the Area Based Insulation Scheme and delegates authority to the Borough Solicitor to enter into any necessary legal agreements to deliver the Area Based Insulation Scheme.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Councils of Hampshire are developing a climate change vision and strategy. Three joint initiatives have been identified to help reduce CO₂ emissions across the County. These are :
- Retrofitting of insulation to domestic property
 - Solar Photovoltaics
 - Retrofitting of energy saving to public buildings
- 1.2 Retrofitting of insulation to domestic properties is the first of these schemes to have been developed. The following other Councils have agreed to participate in an Area Based Insulation Scheme (ABI); Hampshire County Council, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council, East Hampshire District Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Fareham Borough Council, Hart District Council, Havant Borough Council, New Forest District Council, Rushmoor Borough Council, Test Valley Borough Council and Winchester City Council.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The County Council and the Energy Saving trust carried out research into the energy use by residents within the County. The Research determined that around 113,000 Hampshire residents spend up to £49 million more on energy in their properties than would be the case if basic cavity wall and loft insulated measures were installed. Without action, this situation will worsen as fuel costs continue to rise in line with industry predictions. Loft and cavity wall insulation are

considered to be the most effective means to reduce fuel costs, saving household energy bills up to £300 per year, per house, if both are installed.

- 2.2 The option chosen for delivering the ABI scheme is intended to
- offer all households cavity wall and/or loft insulation for a maximum price of £99 each (any property with 60m or less loft insulation will qualify);
 - provide information on how to access schemes for affordable solar PV installation and Feed-in-Tariffs;
 - offer DIY (supply only) loft insulation;
 - provide other energy efficiency advice and support; and referral for wider support services e.g. benefits/household finance.
- 2.3 It is estimated that this offer will increase the existing installation rate across Hampshire (26,000 per annum) to an estimated 57,000 installations per annum until the end of the scheme; generating an additional on-going £3.5m per annum energy bill saving for householders and a CO₂ reduction of over 20,000 tonnes per annum.
- 2.4 The Scheme will be administered by a Board of officers from participating Authorities. The Board roles and responsibilities will be:
- to direct the Project and ensure Funding Contributions are managed and monitored on an on-going basis;
 - to exercise overall control over the Project in terms of ensuring that activities of the Project, including the Lead Authority and its administration of the Contract, are being properly managed and that progress is monitored;
 - to review the progress of the Project and direct changes to objectives and timetables;
 - to ensure sufficient resources are allocated by the Authorities to the Project;
 - to provide a mechanism for review and feedback to the Authorities by way of an informal network with the relevant Representatives of the Authorities. Performance of the Contract will be reported on a quarterly basis or as often as deemed necessary by the ABI Project Board; and
 - to provide a mechanism for review and feedback to the Hampshire Councils in relation to the Project.
- 2.5 The County Council are currently tendering for the scheme through the OJEU process. It is anticipated that the Scheme will operate on a 'three track' approach:
- Referrals will be generated through Hampshire wide marketing and PR, leading to referrals which will be accepted through a centrally co-ordinated call centre and website referral system.

- Referrals will be generated by targeted community doorstep assessments and awareness raising in specific areas.
- Referrals will be passed on from other linked schemes run by the Hampshire local authorities and partners.

3.0 Finance

- 3.1 Authorities will contribute funding based on the size of their particular administrative areas. The Gosport contribution will be £21,600 for the project. This will be matched by an equal contribution by the County Council.
- 3.2 The Gosport funding will come from savings in the improvement grant and home energy efficiency budget for the year 2010-2011 amounting to £10,000 and £11,600 from the improvement grant budget for the year 2011-12.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 Gosport has a high proportion of older properties within the Borough and our average income per family is low compared to the rest of Hampshire. There remains a significant number of properties in Gosport which would benefit from both loft and cavity insulation.
- 4.2 This scheme is an extremely cost effective way of enabling householder to significantly reduce their energy bills and CO₂ emissions. It can also have a significant effect on Fuel poverty within the Borough.

Financial Services comments:	No net impact on overall budgets.
Legal Services comments:	None for the purposes of this report
Service Improvement Plan implications:	
Corporate Plan Implications:	Meets with objective of responding to the impacts of climate change
Risk Assessment:	
Background papers:	
Appendices/Enclosures:	
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Chief Executive