



District of **easington**.

District of Easington Council

Race Equality Scheme

2005 - 2008

Introduction: Commitment to Equality for All

This is District of Easington Council's second Race Equality Scheme (RES). It will set out how we will meet our general and specific duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

District of Easington Council has undergone a number of changes since the first Race Equality Scheme was written. One of the biggest changes is the commissioning of East Durham Homes - an Arms Length Management Organisation, which now delivers the Council's housing services. East Durham Homes has its own parallel Race Equality Scheme.

This Race Equality Scheme will outline how the Council will meet its statutory duties and progress its race equality agenda.

District of Easington Council is totally committed to providing services that meet the needs of all the communities it serves. In order to do this, the Council aims to reflect and be sensitive to the diversity of Easington District's residents, including ethnicity, culture, religion and language.

The Council is committed to revealing and tackling the causes of inequality in our community and promoting a greater awareness of racial and equality issues. Through these actions we hope to change attitudes and promote better understanding and integration.

In this document we will show how we will meet the three parts of the General Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity; and
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Also, in publishing this Race Equality Scheme we will show how we intend to meet our Specific Duties to:

- Assess and consult on, the likely impact of proposed policies.
- Make sure the public have access to information and services
- Train staff on their responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- Review all our functions for their relevance to the general duty (see Appendix 1)

It is important to note that this document goes beyond merely complying with statutory obligations; it builds on the Council's vision:

"To make the District great!"

We will make our District a prosperous, safe, attractive and healthy place to live. To do this we will be an effective and financially responsible Council that is open and accountable to our community. We will:

- Provide excellent services which focus on our customers
- Strive to achieve excellence in the workplace
- Provide decent homes for all
- Ensure our community is clean and tidy
- Provide learning opportunities for all
- Provide better transport
- Make the most of opportunities for investment, economic growth and employment
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Build a healthy community

Equality considerations are not an addition to what we do. They are an integral part of our customer service and our role as an employer. District of Easington Council is committed to ensuring equality of access to its services for all the community. We will also ensure that no sector of the community shall be denied access to or receive a poorer service on grounds of race or ethnicity.

The Council ensures that all its policies and procedures comply with relevant legislation including the following (and subsequent amendments):

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Religion & Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

The Council is committed to equal opportunities in the selection and development of its staff and to the provision of a work environment free from discrimination and harassment.

Profile of Easington District

The District of Easington is situated on the Durham Coast in the North East of England. The area was built on the coal industry. When this came to an abrupt end in the late 80's and early 90's, we had to face the massive task of social, economic and environmental regeneration.

The effect of the decline of the coal industry on the area was serious and this brought about the initiation of a comprehensive regeneration of the area. We recognise that we still have major problems to deal with and some barriers to remove, but we believe we have the capability and drive to achieve our goals.

The challenge our diverse community now faces relate to public engagement and social inclusion, housing, employment, crime and the environment.

According to the 2001 Census, the District has 93,993 residents. The Black and Minority Ethnic population stands at 0.8%. Even though the numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic people living in Easington District has increased by 0.2% since the 1991 census, numbers are still relatively low. This, however, does not mean that race equality issues are not as important as in areas with very large Black and Minority Ethnic populations. In fact, small populations can experience high levels of isolation and greater barriers accessing services. Therefore, working to promote race equality and eliminate race discrimination is of the utmost importance in our District.

The Challenge: Mainstreaming Equality

The Council has adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government and has, so far, achieved Level 1, which is the foundation stage of a 5 level programme of work to improve our equality practice. To achieve level 1 a Corporate Equality Plan had to be developed. Our next challenge is to make this Plan consistent with this Race Equality Scheme and to complete our work on putting the foundations in place that will help us mainstream equality and diversity.

This Race Equality Scheme cannot be considered out of context of the Council's mainstream policies and services. In order to make it meaningful, the Race Equality Scheme must be embedded in all of the activities the Council undertakes. Actions must be written into service plans, and we must strive to achieve partnership working with other public and private sector organisations in order to achieve our vision for race equality.

What has been achieved in the last three years?

In our first Race Equality Scheme, published in 2002, we set ourselves a number of targets to achieve by 31st May 2005. Below is an outline of what we have achieved in the last three years.

The Council

- Language Line has been installed in all reception areas across District of Easington Council. Employees have been trained in the use of Language Line and reception staff have received more in depth training in sign language and communication tactics.
- Arrangements with Darlington and Durham County Race Equality Council have been put in place in order to respond to any request for the translation of Council documents.
- A number of Council documents now have standard phrases in Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu or a standard phrase in English making people aware that translations can be obtained in these languages.
- The Council has established an Equality and Diversity Working Group consisting of members and officers. This group meet on a regular basis to discuss the Council's progress in equality work and take the necessary action to keep improving.
- We have developed a Dignity and Respect policy, which is now in place. It is due for review in 2005/6.
- We have begun to increase liaison with hard to reach groups (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities, Black and Minority Ethnic communities) in partnership with other public sector organisations such as the Primary Care Trust and Police.
- Equality and Diversity is a key consideration in the Council's reporting procedure. When reports are written to put forward to the Executive, officers must demonstrate that they have considered the likely equality and diversity implications of the topic being reported on.

Community Services

- CCTV equipment is now offered to business owners who have been repeat victims of harassment and/or hate crime.
- The Council respond to requests for the removal of graffiti within 3 days. However, for reports of racially offensive, or other hate related graffiti, the Council will remove this within 24 hours.
- Food hygiene advice is made available in a number of different languages.
- Due to changes in legislation, owners of hot food takeaways, which are open after 11pm, require a licence. Because people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds own a large number of these businesses, the Council has translated application forms into different languages.
- Local schools have participated in Show Racism the Red Card, which has attracted considerable media attention.
- Durham Sport has accredited status for Race Equality.

- We are a top performing authority for the percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action. In 2004-5 this we achieved 100% as a result of the good work carried out by the Community Safety team.

Corporate Development

- District of Easington Council has recently appointed an Equality and Diversity Officer who will ensure that the equality agenda is consistently driven across all departments.

Finance and Corporate Services

- A leaflet was sent to every household in the district regarding help with Council Tax bills. These contained the standard phrase in all six languages.
- The Revenues department conduct a satisfaction survey every year. A random 4000 service users are selected from the database of 40,000 customers and sent a questionnaire with their Council Tax bill. This gives service users from all ethnic backgrounds an opportunity to raise concerns or give feedback on the Revenues service. These questionnaires do include questions on ethnicity.
- Electoral registration forms and other election information, is available in a number of different languages and are widely available.
- Research is underway to find an electronic translator for our website that is compatible with our IT systems. This will give people access to the whole website in languages other than English.
- We have begun to monitor our employees by ethnicity as well as age, marital status, disability and gender.

Regeneration and Development

- Systems have been introduced for reporting racial harassment and hate crimes. The intention is to extend this to harassment of any description and encouraging a reporting culture.
- The Planning and Building Control Unit have written a “Charter for Planning” outlining their commitment to equal opportunities.
- East Durham Business Service monitors all grant applications for business support assistance by ethnicity as well as disability, employment status and age.

The Next Three Years

This is a three-phase action plan. With resources dedicated to equality and diversity, the Council can lay the foundations to make significant progress in race equality. We will report every year on the progress we have made through an annual Diversity Report.

Year One

Monitoring

More work needs to be done to help us analyse the make-up of our staff and service users, and how best we can tailor services to suit them. Monitoring systems should record the number of employees/service users accessing particular services and break these numbers down into age, gender, disability and ethnicity. With this information we can assess whether a service is targeted appropriately, whether it is accessible and ensure there is no unfavourable treatment of any group. In order to help us achieve this, we will be setting up a monitoring focus group consisting of elected members and officers.

Consultation

To be able to deliver high quality services to the right groups of people, we need to listen to the community's views. With small numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic people in the District, it is difficult to get representative views from the whole community. It is essential that we now establish a community engagement programme, which will encourage local groups to share their views on key Council decisions. We aim to involve as wide a range of community groups as possible. This programme will not only meet the legislative requirements of Council departments, but also ensure that the community's opinions are heard..

To achieve this action, we are currently in the process of putting together a multi-agency consultation focus group. We will also be looking to work in partnership with other organisations in the area.

Personnel Systems

Personnel are currently in the process of updating their IT system. Once this change is in place, it will allow Personnel to collect, monitor and report on a wider range of information. For example, we will be able to collect ethnicity data for applications for training and those who have undertaken data. This information can then be compared to ensure equality.

Training

In order to implement any new system or strategy it is essential to ensure all appropriate members of staff receive training. Therefore, a programme of training events will be scheduled for employees to raise general awareness of diversity issues. Also, we will look into different ways of delivering diversity awareness training to managers and employees.

Policy Review

We will be reviewing all of our policies to ensure for their current and potential impact on the community, consistency of style, accessibility and equality and to make sure that they conform to all relevant legislation.

Year Two

Impact Needs/Requirements Assessment

To ensure that all our policies, procedures and functions are delivered fairly and equally to our diverse community, a system of Impact Assessments will be put into place. This is not only a requirement of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 but also an essential part of the Equality Standard for Local Government. Impact Assessments look at the potential impact of new or changed policies, however, to achieve Level 2 of the Equality Standard, we must also look at the impact of our existing policies and functions on our customers and whether there are any unmet needs not being resolved. Consultation is essential to this process.

In order to advance through the Equality Standard for Local Government, we need to conduct a series of impact assessments on existing policies and amend them where necessary. Members of staff who are responsible for amending and updating those policies will conduct these assessments. Of course, training will have been carried out in year one to ensure that these employees are comfortable with the process and that it is carried out effectively.

The results of these impact assessments will be made available for members of the public to access should they want to. Any recommendations from these assessments will also be written into service plans.

Communications Strategy

The Communications Strategy will be reviewed and rewritten to include an equality statement of intent. This statement will outline the Council's commitment to ensuring that all members of the community have equal access to information and are visually represented in Council literature.

Translation Services

A comprehensive list of preferred translation services will be developed and communicated throughout the Council. These services will be assessed for value for money, quality and the speed of service.

Support Services Best Value Review

A Best Value review of the Council's support services is scheduled for 2005/6. We will use this opportunity to review our employment practices and identify and eliminate any barriers for Black and Minority Ethnic people.

Year Three

E-Government

A review of the Council's website will be carried out to ensure that it is visually representative of the community. Also, a micro site will be set up to report the results of any impact assessment and consultation that has been conducted.

A system whereby the Council can consult with the community electronically (internet, SMS message etc.) will be piloted.

Positive Action

By 2007 we should have enough information through monitoring to assess whether positive action initiatives are necessary to attract more applications for employment from the Black and Minority Ethnic community and what kinds of action need to be taken. This will enable us to design and develop specific projects.

Employment

Staff in Post

We currently have 551 employees at District of Easington Council. Two of these employees are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. This represents 0.4% of the workforce. We currently have no black and minority ethnic people in the top 5% of earners.

Although some excellent work has already been done on trying to attract more applications from people from BME backgrounds, we still have a long way to go. As part of the Impact Needs/Requirements Assessment review process we will look specifically at barrier to employment for under-represented groups.

Applicants for employment, training and promotion

1171 people applied for jobs with District of Easington Council over 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005. Of this number, 27 applicants were from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

From the 1171 applications received, 311 people were short listed for interview. Five of those short-listed were from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

From those short listed 96 appointments were made. One person appointed was from a Black and Minority Ethnic background.

At the moment we do not monitor requests for training by ethnicity or any other criteria. This will be addressed as a priority in year one as part of the work on establishing monitoring systems.

District of Easington Council does not have an automatic promotion system. We operate an open recruitment system. All vacancies are advertised internally and externally and are open for all to apply.

Training received

We have just begun to monitor training received by race, gender, disability and age. There is, as yet, not enough information to make a clear assessment of how we are performing. However, the next Annual Diversity Report will outline our position.

Received a benefit or detriment as a result of performance assessment

We do not offer benefits or detriments as part of our appraisal or performance assessments. Our performance management framework focuses on supporting employees in order to improve individual performance and welfare. We do not operate a performance related pay system.

Grievance, Disciplinary & Exits

Whilst we do monitor grievances, disciplinary action and exits by ethnicity, because of the low numbers of employees from BME backgrounds working for District of Easington Council, we cannot publish the results here because individuals could be identified.

Appendix 1: Functions Relevant to the General Duties

The following functions were identified as being relevant to the general duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
Corporate Development	Communications & Marketing	Communications & Marketing Services including corporate documents, press liaison and the publication of district and staff newsletters Infopoint and News and Views. Communications Strategy
	Corporate Development	Facilitate and advise on Best Value Review Programme Corporate Development and Training Emergency Planning Graphics and Technical Local Strategic Partnership Policy Development Customer Services / Complaints Performance Improvement Corporate Plan Community Engagement Equality and Diversity Equality & Diversity Strategy Respect & Dignity Policy Sustainability
Community Services	Community Safety	Community Safety Strategy <i>Crime and Disorder Strategy</i> Domestic Violence Forum Youth Forum Youth Strategy Drugs Action Team Anti-social Behaviour
	Cultural Development	Facilitate and promote cultural development within the District Encourage participation in sport and well-being activities of those who live in locations not directly serviced by a Leisure Facility and of those who need encouragement to participate in activities to improve health. Work in local schools to encourage participation of school age children in wide range of sports and health activities

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
	<p>Environmental Health</p> <p>Public Health</p> <p>Removing or abating statutory nuisances</p> <p>Fly Tipping</p> <p>Graffiti</p> <p>Litter</p> <p>Pest control</p> <p>Pest Control Policy</p> <p>Smoke control</p> <p>Dog warden services</p> <p>Street Wardens</p> <p>Dealing with complaints of disrepair</p> <p>Overseeing issuing of grants by care and repair agency</p> <p>Commercial enforcement</p> <p>Enforcement Policy</p> <p>Inspections of food premises</p> <p>Food Inspections Enforcement Policy</p> <p>Inspections of workplaces</p> <p>Health & Safety Enforcement Policy</p> <p>Investigating and controlling pollution and noise from industrial and commercial operations</p> <p>Carry out environmental impact assessments of development plans</p> <p>Processing licences for taxis, public entertainments, gambling operations, animal keeping establishments and street collectors and traders</p> <p>Carry out inspections to enforce standards in licensed premises and vehicles</p> <p>Processing Repairs</p> <p>Recycling/Waste management</p>	
Environmental Services	<p>Special Collections</p> <p>Trade Waste</p>	

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
Finance & Corporate Services	Leisure Services	Environmental Cleanups
		Complaints/Enquiries
		Domestic Refuse
		Controlled Waste
		Business Contracts
		OAP Assistance
		Grass Cutting
		General Grounds Maintenance
		Tree Works
		Steam Cleaning
Social Inclusion	Social Inclusion	MOT services
		Brake Testing
		Vehicle Maintenance
		Provision of Local Authority Leisure Services – 2 Leisure Centres (1 with swimming pool)
		Leisure Strategy
Democratic Services & Administration	Democratic Services & Administration	Bars, catering, vending, special events, luncheon clubs
		Sports coaching, play schemes, sporting events, schools, leagues
		Well being suites, exercise classes, GP referrals, work with schools
		Social Inclusion Activities
		Social Inclusion Strategy
Approved Version	CVS	CVS
		Co-ordinate all Council Committee business
		Council Constitution (standing orders, contract procedure rules, access to information, code of conduct, declarations of interest, cabinet procedure rules)
		Elected Member Services
		Registration of Electors
Page 15 of 20	Elections	Elections
		Civic Services

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
	Financial Management	Cost of Democracy Local Land Charges Subscriptions, Grants, Donations Administration Legal Services Risk Assessment Reception / Telephones Caretaker Admin of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Recovery of Overpaid Benefit Benefit Fraud Investigation Budgetary Management / Financial Planning Accounts & Auditing Regulations Preparation of Statutory Accounts and Statements Treasury Management Financial Advisory / Information Service Contractor Search Council's Financial Regulations Payments Service Collection and Recovery of Council Tax Mortgage Administration NNDR Sundry Debtors Bus Passes Internal Audit

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
	Information Services	<p>Development of Information Services across all Service Areas IS / IT Strategy, corporate issues</p> <p>Cheque Production IEG Strategy</p> <p>Help Desk / Support</p> <p>IT Training and User Groups</p> <p>Major Applications Support / Development</p> <p>Contract and Supplier Management / Admin</p> <p>Project Management / New Technologies</p> <p>Developing the IT Infrastructure</p> <p>Local Network Support and Dev.</p> <p>Wide Area Network Support & Development</p> <p>BT / Telecoms Management Information Security</p>
	Personnel & Payroll	<p>General Personnel Work Management of Organisational Change, Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures, Sickness Monitoring Policy, Job Evaluation, Flexible Working Hours, Disabled Persons Policy</p> <p>Recruitment & Selection Recruitment & Selection Policy, Organisational Development Strategy,</p> <p>Health & Safety Health & Safety Policy, Violence at Work, Drug and Alcohol Policy, Stress at Work</p> <p>Contractor Vetting & Management</p> <p>Administer Health Surveillance</p> <p>Risk Assessment</p> <p>Health & Safety Training / Health Promotion</p> <p>Accident Reporting</p> <p>Payroll Administration</p> <p>Pension Scheme Administration</p>
Procurement		<p>Inland Revenue and Contributions Agency Administration Procurement Corporate Procurement Policy</p>

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
Regeneration and Development	Housing Policy	<p>Develop strategic housing policy framework for the District including the preparation of a Housing Strategy Statement and Housing Business Plan</p> <p>Monitoring private sector housing and undertake housing area renewal schemes</p> <p>Monitor for the Council the work of East Durham Homes as a Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)</p> <p>Review areas of low demand housing and the promotion of sustainable residential neighbourhoods</p> <p>Liaise with Registered Social Landlords operating in the District and support new housing provision.</p>
	Planning & Building Control	<p>Local Planning – Preparation, Implementation and review of the Easington District Local Plan and the introduction of the Local Development Framework for the District</p> <p>Development Control – Implementation of Development Plans through handling planning applications</p> <p>Conservation area designation</p> <p>Conservation of the built and natural environment</p> <p>Building Control Application service</p> <p>Enforcement of Building Regulations</p> <p>Planning and building control enforcement service</p> <p>Minor Highways Works</p> <p>Coastal Protection</p>

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
	Regeneration & Partnerships	<p>Development of Neighbourhood Renewal Framework</p> <p>Management of Regeneration Programmes and Initiatives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund Rounds 5 and 6 • Neighbourhood Renewal Fund • Liveability • Lottery Funding • Objective 2 programme Community Economic Development • EU Urban 2 Project • European Social Fund <p>Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder</p> <p>Coalfield Areas Housing Market Renewal Programme</p> <p>Promotion of major regeneration schemes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre Renewal • North Dock Seaham • Business Park Development • East Durham Link Road • Housing Land Release Schemes <p>Production of Capital Strategy / Management of Capital Programme</p> <p>Local Area Statistical Information</p>

Directorate	Service Unit/ Functional Area	Function/Service
	Valuation & Estates	<p>Management of the Council's non-operational land and property.</p> <p>Provide advice and implement acquisitions and disposals of all land and property</p> <p>Land Disposal Policy Asset Management Plan</p> <p>Asset Register Valuations</p> <p>Valuation of Housing Revenue Account Assets</p> <p>Enforcement of covenants on former Council land and properties</p> <p>Provide Estate Management Advice on a range of land and property matters</p> <p>Maintain Civic Premises</p>
East Durham Business Services		<p>Economic Development Strategy</p> <p>Promote sustainable employment in the District through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business support, advice and guidance • Encouraging business start-up • Inward investment • Commercial and retail investment • Promotion and marketing <p>Maintaining Business infrastructure and promotion of sites and premises</p> <p>Development of an East Durham Business Centre</p> <p>Lifelong Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant support to employers • Information and advice about learning, education and training • Co-ordination of training activities <p>Tourism</p>