



West Lothian Council

Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report

2008

Foreword

Welcome to the second West Lothian Council Annual Report on Disability Equality, reporting progress against our Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan for 2006 to 2009. As an organisation we have made considerable headway in meeting the positive duty on disability equality. The council recognises however that there are significant challenges remaining to ensure that mainstreaming of disability equality is achieved. Through developing our close links with partners, continuing to involve people with disabilities and improving the way in which we monitor and review our action plan, we have achieved a significant number of the objectives set out in our Plan for 2006 to 2009, ensuring that disability equality becomes part of everything we do.

Continued progress in relation to the management of disability equality will contribute significantly to our wider aims of ensuring that we create a West Lothian in which all people and communities have a say in their future and an equal opportunity for health, safety, education, fulfilling work and a high quality of life.

We are grateful for the support and involvement of the West Lothian Disability Equality Forum, and the West Lothian Council Employee Disability Forum in the development of this report.

Peter Johnston
Leader of the council

Alex Linkston
Chief Executive

November 2008

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Executive Summary

Since the publication of our first annual report in December 2007 the council has taken a number of positive steps to promote disability equality. The progress we have made over the last year has ensured that we have made use of the infrastructure devised during 2007 to implement the corporate and service level action plans and to ensure disability equality is further mainstreamed into all our policies, practices and procedures.

The council is committed to promoting disability equality. Some of the key corporate initiatives and developments that have taken place to help us achieve this commitment over the past year include:

- **Support and development of the West Lothian Disability Equality Forum.** This innovative structure is designed to ensure that the members of our community with disabilities are directly involved in all that we do around the promotion of disability equality. Acting as a critical friend, the Forum helps the council to mainstream disability equality and to ensure that appropriate and reasonable progress is achieved around the commitments within our Scheme. The Forum also works with all other public sector organisations operating in West Lothian to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities in West Lothian are specifically taken into consideration. The last year has seen the Forum increase its membership by over 250% and become more representative of the wide range of disabilities covered by the Disability Discrimination Act.
- **West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM).** The WLAM, the internal performance management framework for the council, was revised during 2008 and specific requirements to ensure mainstreaming of equality throughout all council services have been incorporated into the new standards. This is an important step towards embedding equality into the everyday performance of the council.

- **Corporate Management Team.** The councils Corporate Management Team received an overview of progress and issues related to equality and diversity within the council, including the challenges of mainstreaming disability equality. This initiative has helped to increase both awareness and commitment at senior level to pro-active implementation of our action plan and the Disability Equality Duty.
- **Involvement in Disability Equality Impact Assessments.** The council has made significant progress in the completion of our programme of disability equality impact assessments over the past year. People with disabilities have been involved in every one of the 49 assessments that have been carried out over the past twelve months. Representatives of the West Lothian Disability Equality Forum have been invited to participate in assessments from the initiation of the process with all council services. This approach has proven invaluable to supporting the council identify practical and strategic issues related to our work and disability equality.
- **Continuing progress of our Disability Equality Employee Forum.** Our employee forum is designed to act as an initial vehicle for the involvement of colleagues with disabilities and to ensure that our Scheme, impact assessments and policies and practices meet the needs of our employees.
- **Diversity Week 2008.** This initiative was designed to promote equality and diversity throughout West Lothian. A series of events were held around each of the seven equality strand areas, with five specific events focused on disability equality. The overall purpose of the week was to raise awareness of diversity and celebrate 2008 as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.
- **Support for the West Lothian Disability Access Fund and Committee.** This important Committee is responsible for ensuring that all premises in West Lothian are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (2004 Amendments) in terms of accessibility for people with disabilities.

The council continues its support of pro-active initiatives to ensure accessibility of all public, private and voluntary sector buildings in West Lothian.

- **Service-specific action plans.** Each council service has in place a specific action plan that is audited, monitored and reviewed by the Disability Equality Forum. These plans are designed to mainstream the corporate objectives of the Scheme and identify how this will be achieved on a practical basis.
- **Service-specific equality groups.** Service level-sub groups of the Corporate Working Group on Equality are now operating in most services. These groups are assisting to mainstream equality within all teams across the council by looking at best fit approaches to implementation of Scheme actions, and taking forward equality impact assessment work.

West Lothian Council will publish an integrated equality scheme in early 2009. This new scheme will replace our existing Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan for 2006 to 2009. The new scheme will be directly linked to the local outcomes within the West Lothian Single Outcome Agreement launched earlier this year. This approach is designed to ensure that everything we do, across all the equality strand areas including disability, is directly linked to our core business and will contribute directly to mainstreaming equality for all. Extensive involvement of people with disabilities has taken place, and remains ongoing, to ensure that our new scheme is robust in its aims for disability equality.

About West Lothian Council

West Lothian is a great place to live, work and do business. West Lothian Council aims to improve the quality of life, and opportunities, for all citizens. We are a top performing council with a reputation for innovation, partnership working and customer focus.

West Lothian is the tenth largest local authority in Scotland. It has a population of over 165,700 and is growing much faster than Scotland as a whole. West Lothian Council is central to the provision of services that affect people's everyday lives, for example, housing, education, libraries, leisure and benefits. We therefore recognise that all the services provided by the council need to reflect consideration of the impact that they may have on disability equality. We aim to provide improved services that meet the needs and priorities of local communities.

Our Values

Our mission statement and values were introduced and adopted in 1996 when West Lothian Council was formed. These values underpin all our work and embody the way we carry out our business. Our values are:

- Focusing on customer need;
- Being honest, open and accountable;
- Providing equality of opportunities;
- Developing employees;
- Making best use of our resources; and
- Working in partnership.

In 2002 we developed guiding principles to focus on service development and delivery. These are:

- A corporate council focussed on priorities;

- A connected council at the heart of a network of partners;
- A customer-focused council organised around the needs of the citizen;
- An adaptive council operating in a responsive positive culture;
- A best value council delivering high quality integrated services; and
- An e-council enabling technology.

Corporate Working Group on Equality

In June 2002 the council established the Corporate Working Group on Equality. The group is responsible for the strategic implementation of equality initiatives and legislation and provides a forum for good practice council wide. Specifically, the Group is responsible for the corporate implementation and monitoring of the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

The group is chaired at Head of Service level and reports directly to the Corporate Management Team. The group comprises representatives from each of our service areas. The group membership is outlined below:

- Sandra Aird (Chair), Head of Customer Services
- Kenny Selbie (Secretary), Equality Officer
- Pauline Adams, Office of the Chief Executive
- Pamela Bell, Finance Services
- Ian Forbes, Development and Regulatory Services
- Claire Frame, Customer Services
- Susan Gordon, Community Planning and Regeneration Services
- Ewen McNamee, Corporate Communications
- Chris Keenan, Support Services (Human Resources)
- Annette Lambourne, Education Service (Cultural Services)
- John MacEachern, Support Services (Legal)
- Anne-Marie McMillan, Property Services
- Linda Middlemist, Social Policy (Health)
- Brian Pearson, Social Policy

- Alistair Smith, Operational Services
- Andrew Sneddon, Education Service
- Caroline Spence, Ethnic Minority Development Worker
- Ian Treger, Housing and Building Services
- Sophia Westerhuis, Support Services (Human Resources)
- Phyllis Wood, Education Service (Quality Assurance)

Progress on Corporate Objectives

Since the launch of our first annual progress report in December 2007 the council has taken a number of positive steps to promote disability equality across all our services.

The progress made over the past twelve months on the corporate objectives of our Scheme and Action Plan is outlined below. For service-specific progress against individual action plans, please see annex 1.

Please note that there have been changes to the internal structure of the organisation both since the original Scheme and Action Plan were produced and following the publication of our 2007 annual report. A review of relevance of all actions is currently being conducted as part of the transition to our new integrated equality scheme.

Developing the Scheme

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Prepare service action plans to review functions, policies and procedures, and all other elements of the Scheme.	April 2006 then ongoing.	Service plans for each service completed.	Completed to timescale. Action Plans reviewed as appropriate.
The requirement to promote disability equality as part of generic managers' competencies.	2006 and ongoing.	Equality indicators and guidance for the West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM) completed.	Completed and ongoing review as appropriate.
Guidelines and advice on implementation of Scheme to be developed and disseminated via the CWGE.	December 2007.	New audit structure devised and approved by Community Planning Partnership in October 2007.	New audit and monitoring role of Disability Equality Forum communicated via CWGE November 2007.
The Scheme will be reviewed every three years.	December 2009.	N/A	N/A
Scheme is made available via the council's website and summary information published via the council's publications.	August 2006 and ongoing.	Scheme accessible on new corporate website. Communications on progress provided as appropriate within council publications.	Completed and ongoing as appropriate.

Identifying Relevant Functions and Policies

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Review all functions and policies of the council according to our duty to promote disability equality.	April 2006 and ongoing.	Identification of relevance of policies and functions to disability equality completed in all services.	N/A
Services undertake equality impact assessments	Annual assessment reporting.	See next section of report for list of all completed assessments.	Service level schedules devised to complete all outstanding high priority impact assessments.

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Annual monitoring of adverse impacts identified in disability equality impact assessments and other feedback mechanisms.	Ongoing.	Adverse impacts around disability are flagged up to community and employee Disability Forums as well as CWGE as appropriate.	Annual feedback and quality assurance process currently being considered by CWGE.

Assessing, Consulting and Involving

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Establish a forum for disabled people to ensure meaningful involvement of the Disability Equality Scheme.	August 2006 and ongoing.	Forum for development of Scheme completed. Forum for audit and monitoring of scheme now operating. Forum now assessing progress of all public sector partners operating in West Lothian.	Forum structure now in operation. See West Lothian Disability Equality Forum Annual Report (available via council website) for detailed information on activity and progress.
Establish a timetable of meetings and ensure different methods of involvement are utilised as appropriate.	August 2006 and ongoing.	Forum meeting dates agreed and in place. Informal and formal involvement mechanisms in operation.	Council responsibilities to forum operation clear and actioned as required.
Provide appropriate support to disabled employees; consult on new policies and practice.	April 2007.	Achieved. Employee Disability Forum continues to operate and involving disabled employees.	Forum terms of reference approved and supported by council as required.
Provide guidance to managers on the DDA 2005.	May 2007	WLAM guidance outlined above supports this. Equality training delivered to all Customer and Support Services Managers during 2008.	Corporate diversity training implementation due to commence during third reporting year.

Monitoring for Adverse Impact

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Departments undertake disability equality impact assessments.	Annual assessment reporting.	See next section of report for list of all completed assessments.	N/A
Develop guidelines for drawing out disability equality issues considered as part of impact assessments.	August 2007.	N/A (Action no longer appropriate).	Policy Leads are now expected to implement required changes in their own area. All assessments available to view online.
Adverse impact information considered by each service across the authority.	Ongoing annual assessment reporting.	Ongoing.	Assessments considered by Policy Leads and changes to policy implemented as appropriate.

Communicating the Results

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Direction given to services on what information needs to be available in accessible formats for public information.	December 2007.	Action ongoing.	Information provided on request in conjunction with advice from Disability West Lothian and Corporate Communications Team.
Develop guidelines for services to follow in producing accessible formats.	December 2007.	Review of Corporate Communications Branding Guidelines ongoing and due to be published with increased specification related to disability equality.	This has been conducted in partnership with the West Lothian Disability Equality Forum.
Results are published using a variety of media and formats: internet, intranet special reports and newsletters.	August 2007.	Council website accommodates publication of all completed assessments.	All summary assessments can be accessed on line, with full assessments available on request. All those involved in assessments communicated to directly with results of assessments.

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Identify appropriate communication channels for different community groups and employees undertaken through various consultation mechanisms i.e. Disability Forum etc.	August 2007	Ongoing.	Appropriate methods of communicating results to the community and employees continuously considered by both the employee and community disability forums.
Monitoring of representatives on effectiveness of communication channels and accessibility of information.	Annual assessment of monitoring	This is assessed through forums on an annual basis.	Forum structure now in operation. See West Lothian Disability Equality Forum Annual Report (available via council website) for detailed information on activity and progress.
Compile information available within the council on customer care and service needs and production of guidelines disseminated to staff on communication needs of disabled people.	August 2007.	This has been taken forward on a service specific basis, working directly with the community and employee forums. Also supported by impact assessment recommendation implementation.	This work will remain ongoing, supported by the forthcoming update to the corporate branding and communication guidelines.

Access to Buildings, Information and Services

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Ensure consultations and monitoring arrangements and other available means identify needs of disabled people.	2005 and ongoing.	Disability equality related consultation etc. is conducted via accessible formats and means. Information and awareness raising conducted as appropriate in conjunction with Disability West Lothian.	Ongoing.
Ensure that all staff that have contact with the public are aware of procedures to accommodate people with accessibility needs.	2005 and ongoing.	Conducted as appropriate in conjunction with Disability West Lothian.	It is anticipated that this issue will be picked up through mandatory diversity training to be implemented in near future.

Employment Duties

Action	Timescale	Progress	Comments
Create annual reporting and dissemination of employment monitoring information.	Annual assessment and reporting.	Completed and ongoing.	A six monthly report of statistics covering the specific employment duties are submitted to Committee on a bi-annual basis. Work to ensure analysis of the results remains ongoing.
Specific employment duty additional action.	As above.	As above.	This action has been removed, as is no longer necessary given progress related to action above.

Disability Equality Impact Assessments

Within West Lothian Council, disability equality impact is considered in tandem with gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender and age equality following the introduction of the revised West Lothian Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit in June 2008. Since the publication of our initial disability progress report in December 2007, assessments have been conducted on the following 49 policy and functional areas:

- Adults and Older People – Accessing Services
- Adults and Older People - Assessment and Care Management
- Adults and Older People - Carers Assessments
- Adults and Older People - Commissioning and Provision of Community Care Services
- Adults and Older People - Provision and Procurement of CC Services
- Anti-Bullying Policy (Education)
- Arts Services Development Plan 2008 to 2011
- Behaviour Management and Restraint (Social Policy)
- Business Rates

- Children and Families Team – Fieldwork
- Children and Families Team – Specialist Services
- Citizenship Policy (Education)
- Council Registration Services
- Council Tax
- Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit
- Countryside - Deer Farming and Breeding Herd
- Countryside - Golf Participation
- Customer Information Services
- Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report 2007
- Drug Action Team
- Early Years Assessment Procedure (Education)
- Educational Psychology Consultancy Procedure
- Educational Psychology Referral Procedure
- Environmental Education – Outdoor Pursuits
- Environmental Education – Participants
- Facilities Management
- Fishery Management – Visitors and Anglers
- Fleet Management
- Housing Repairs Policy
- Housing Voids Policy
- Infection Control (Social Policy)
- Inprint Service
- Leave for Family Care Purposes
- Managing Critical Incidents (Education)
- Medication Policy (Social Policy)
- Mentoring Policy (Education)
- Nutrition Policy (Social Policy)
- Organisational Development (Housing and Building Services)
- Parental Involvement Strategy (Education)
- Pupil Voice Policy (Education)
- Recreation – Caravan Bed Nights

- Rent Accounting and Service Accounts
- Roads Services
- Safety and Protection of Children in Managed Care Settings – Guidance and Procedure
- SEBN (Social, Emotional, Behavioural Needs) Assessment Procedure
- Support to New and Existing Businesses
- Transportation of Clients
- Waste Management
- West Lothian Council Neighbourhood Environmental Teams (NETs) and Land Services

The results of our assessments are available to all. Each policy lead has made them available to employees, service users and all other stakeholders. Summary results of assessments are available on the council website for download. Additionally, if you would like to obtain a copy of the full assessment, please contact the appropriate policy lead as indicated within the online summary.

Comments on our Disability Equality Scheme Progress

As part of our involvement strategy for people with disabilities in West Lothian, the council involved both the West Lothian Disability Equality Forum and the Employee Disability Forum in the development of this report. Any suggested changes or comments on the report have been incorporated as a result of this involvement. For further views from the West Lothian Disability Equality Forum on our report, please contact:

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If you have any comments on the content of our annual report on progress please contact the council Equality Officer:

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West Lothian Council wants members of the public to be able to make complaints and comments so we can improve our services as a result of any feedback. However, if someone is not satisfied with the solution offered by the council, we will advise them of their right to make a complaint to the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Scotland.

Annex 1

Progress Against Service Level Action Plans

Corporate Communications

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Corporate Communications are member of CWGE, which meets monthly.	Ongoing.	Concluded. Team will continue to be represented.
Training encouraged so that staff have suitable skills.	Ongoing	Assisted with corporate diversity training pilot and evaluation. All staff to undergo diversity training programme.
Relevant policies and functions assessed.	Ongoing.	Reviewed West Lothian Way communication guidelines and increased disability awareness section.
Review service standards to assess relevance to DDA.	Ongoing	Specific disability questions to be added to future publication surveys
As appropriate consult via Bulletin, intranet and internet as well as taking advice from Disability West Lothian and other representative groups.	Ongoing.	Consulted with West Lothian disability forum on their view on our performance. Conducted research with older people on views on our website.
Identification of opportunities to promote applications like Audio, Braille, Textphones.	Ongoing.	Large print copy of every edition of Bulletin now added to our website. Discussions ongoing with charity Boomerang regarding sending regular audio version of Bulletin to their members. Audio web podcasts in development.
Disability progress published in corporate website and monthly reports to CMT as appropriate.	Ongoing.	Support equality officer and council services with publicity for actions where required.
All publications to be available in different formats on request.	Ongoing.	Large print copy of every edition of Bulletin now added to our website. Discussions ongoing with charity Boomerang regarding sending regular audio version of Bulletin to their members.
Monitoring customer satisfaction around disability equality issues.	Ongoing.	Specific disability questions to be added to future publication surveys. Consult with West Lothian Disability forum as required.

Community Planning and Regeneration

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Ensure that the citizens' panel is inclusive in relation to people with disabilities.	April 2007.	Recruitment drive and membership refreshed summer 2007. Targeted work with Disability WL to encourage and increase membership of people with disabilities.
Work with the Youth Participation Network to ensure that young people from disability groups are represented.	April 2007.	Network working with Donaldson's School in Linlithgow to develop pupil council. Capabilities Scotland also members of the network.
Single consultation framework currently being developed. This will be impact assessed and consulted on for disability implications.	April 2007.	No Progress.
Providing standards of community engagement training to staff within the council (2 sessions)	December 2007.	Standards of Community Engagement Training sessions given to nearly 80 officers from across the CPP on the basis of North, West and East Locality Planning areas by Avante Consulting.
<p>Additional Activity</p> <p>As part of the consultation and engagement process involved in developing the new Community Plan 'Towards 2020' we are holding a session with the Disability Equality Forum to discuss and explore their 'visions' for West Lothian in 2020. The findings from the session will influence the development of the Community Plan.</p>		

Cultural Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
<p>Summer Programme 2008: Carry out feasibility study to determine demand from children and parents. Source a number of coaches able to provide good sporting activities for summer club. Provide Disability awareness training to coaches.</p>	April 2008.	<p>Feasibility Study not completed.</p> <p>15 people made up of coaches and Active Schools Co-ordinators have attended Disability Inclusion Training in Sport, run by Scottish Disability Sport.</p> <p>The 2008 Summer Sporting choices classes had a number of inclusive activities advertised. Work is being done to have a specific disability sport provided in Sporting Choices this coming summer.</p>

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
<p>Sporting Choices: Choose a number of sports in the Sports Unit's Sporting Choices Brochure to make inclusive. Provide disability awareness training for coaches currently coaching in Sporting Choices. Train coaches to provide support to children with a disability who would like to get involved in sporting choices classes.</p>	April 2008.	<p>One Disability Inclusion Course run at Blackburn Community Centre in January 2008.</p> <p>One How to Coach Disabled Swimmers course held in Deans Community High School, for local swim teachers. Course held on Sunday 2nd March 2008.</p> <p>A number of Sporting Choices classes have been made 'inclusive' through the above-mentioned training.</p>
<p>Ensure disabled children are able to access sports/physical activity after school. Ensure disability sport is high on the Active Schools agenda.</p>	April 2008.	<p>No after schools provision specifically for the ASN schools at present. This issue will be worked on over the coming year.</p> <p>Disability sport and inclusion is very high on the Active Schools agenda at present. SportsScotland are putting pressure on the Active Schools network to ensure children with a disability are included and have access to physical activity. A new inclusion plan for the Active Schools has been written.</p>
<p>Work with secondary schools support staff and Secondary Co-ordinators to ensure disabled children in their schools feel able to access this provision.</p>	April 2008.	On going.
<p>Regional Events and Competitions: Stay in contact with ASC SEN in Edinburgh and Mid Lothian. Review success of regional competitions.</p>	Ongoing.	<p>Meetings with colleagues throughout the Lothian's happen on a regular basis. An extensive schools competitions calendar has been created that has subsequently been included into the West Lothian School Sports Calendar.</p>
<p>Continue to work with Lothian Disability Sport to ensure local and regional sporting opportunities in a number of sports are created and maintained.</p>	Ongoing.	<p>Meetings with Gary Fraser (Lothian Disability Sport, LDS) happen on a regular basis. Information is constantly shared between West Lothian Sports Unit and LDS.</p> <p>Athletes from West Lothian are representing LDS and Scotland in a number of events including swimming and Boccia.</p>

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
<p>Active Futures West Lothian: Work in partnership with Capability Scotland and WLL. Offer advice to Capability Scotland on local sports organisations. Continue to offer strategic advice on the direction of the programme.</p>	Ongoing.	<p>Meetings with Active Futures are on going. The service have failed to meet a number of targets over their first two years and have recently provided the BIG Lottery Fund with a revised plan for year three, their third and final year.</p>
<p>West Lothian Trust: Distribute WLT grant application forms. Respond to received grants within 2 weeks. Present applications to the grant's panel. Respond to applicants with the decision of the grant's panel. Manage spending of the Trust. Report WLT accounts to OSCR.</p>	Ongoing	<p>WLT grant is available for all clubs; however grant request numbers have been falling in number.</p> <p>It is planned to promote the WLT to local clubs just after the Christmas break.</p>
<p>Club Development: Work with local clubs to raise profile of Boccia, wheelchair basketball and swimming. Ensure an action plan is created for each sport to allow sports to further develop.</p>	December 2007	<p>The Wheelchair basketball club that operates out of West Lothian have a club development plan. The club continue to grow and involve new members.</p> <p>There has recently been a revised action plan for swimming development throughout West Lothian. An inclusive swim development plan has been introduced that will provide the appropriate opportunities for disabled swimmers to be integrated into local swimming clubs.</p> <p>Boccia is provided through the No Limits Club. The club are planning to host a Boccia event over the next couple of months to help promote the sport.</p>

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
<p>West Lothian Disability Sports Forum:</p> <p>WLDSF meets regularly. All local disability sports clubs are represented on the forum. Membership of the WLDSF is expanded to include members of other disability organisations. WLDSF works to the objectives set in their annual action plan.</p>	Ongoing.	<p>The Disability Sports Forum is not meeting at present. Numbers dropped over the course of time, however through information passed on at a Disability Sports Forum meeting there is now a disability representative on the West Lothian Sports Council.</p> <p>Through this forum the needs of the disability clubs can be formally heard, and any actions taken if necessary.</p>

Customer Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Ensure that our approach to equality in service delivery is being fully deployed through assessment and review.	Ongoing	Equality commitments incorporated into the WLAM process during 2008 review.
Assess equality issues through customer review and satisfaction surveys.	Quarterly reviews	Customer service monitoring data on equality included within CRM, launched during 2008.
Use survey information to influence service development and delivery elements.	Quarterly reviews	Annual review of CRM information due to be conducted, in order to analyse any trends and subsequent required actions.
Ensure alternative access methods are available to customers as required.	Ongoing	Provided on request. Specific consideration of disability access taking into account during project planning for new Carmondean Connected during 2008.
Ensure staff are aware of disability equality scheme.	Ongoing	Customer service CWGE sub-group now in operation. Customer service employees are currently involved in awareness raising via equality impact assessment process. A number of individual CIS offices have also received equality briefings from the Equality Officer during 2008.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Publish and communicate information relating to equality of access to our CIS Offices.	Quarterly reviews and reports	Currently being reviewed and managed as part of equality impact assessments on individual teams and services.
Provide range of information in a variety of formats (e.g.: Braille, large print, audio etc).	Quarterly reviews	Available as required and on request.
Ensure physical access is open to all citizens of West Lothian	Ongoing reviews	Currently being reviewed and managed as part of equality impact assessments on individual teams and services.
Record, monitor and publicise the results and our equality statistics in line with council policy and procedures	Quarterly	Annual review of CRM information due to be conducted, in order to analyse any trends and subsequent required actions. This information will be published.
Ensure ETS and/or CRM captures relevant statistics for equal opportunities monitoring	Quarterly	Customer service monitoring data on equality included within new customer service management system, launched during 2008.
Capture and report ETS/CRM statistics on an annual basis	Quarterly	Annual review of CRM information due to be conducted, in order to analyse any trends and subsequent required actions.
Capture, report and monitor complaints	Quarterly	Ongoing.
Ensure staff are trained on policies, the scheme and related processes	Ongoing	Customer Services are supporting the ongoing corporate diversity training pilots and evaluation process. Service staff will attend as required.
Ensure equalities issues are integral to team planning, service planning and planning through the WLAM	Ongoing	The WLAM review will now ensure that equality considerations are assessed as part of performance management of services throughout the council.
Ensure staff participate in disability awareness training as identified through PDP process	Ongoing	Customer Services are supporting the ongoing corporate diversity training pilots and evaluation process. Service staff will attend as required.

Development and Regulatory Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Development and Regulatory Services Equality Group is active with representatives from each section: this group will provide information to assist with the implementation of disabled equality practice.	Ongoing.	Continue to make improvements on disabled access within the various areas of D and RS.
Training encouraged so that staff have suitable skills around disability equality.	December 2007.	No formal training courses have been organised to date. However, the service will ensure that it takes part in the corporate diversity training pilot and evaluation as required.
Disability Discrimination Act determines how we deal with functions and policies that are then prioritised.	Ongoing.	On track.
Consultation takes place as part of Impact Assessments.	December 2008	Development and Regulatory Services are due to attend the West Lothian Disability Equality Forum in early 2009.
Consultation via bulletin, intranet and internet as well as taking advice from Disability West Lothian and other representative groups.	Ongoing.	On track. Regular discussions with disabled groups ongoing in relation to transportation and planning work, via the West Lothian Access Committee.
Specific consultation available. Home visits for planning matters and advice and grants for disabled applications.	December 2007.	Progress continues to be made in relation to this.
Published via corporate communications with information from D and RS group.	Ongoing.	Assessments will be published via council Internet site as per all services.
All forms and publications to be available in different formats.	Ongoing.	Various formats for publications available on request.
Publications reviewed for ease of access and availability in a range of formats.	Ongoing.	Conducted as appropriate.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
All employees should have mandatory corporate training.	December 2007	This is currently being considered at corporate level.
Staff and managers aware of training opportunities.	December 2007	Remedial action required.

Education Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Cascade knowledge of Disability Equality Scheme from SMT to Managers Meeting and Team Meetings.	1 st Reminder Session - Oct 2007.	Completed. Schemes are available on-line.
Ensure equalities issues are integral to improvement planning.	December 2006	Equalities targets for Education are included in Draft Local Improvement Plan 2008-11, due for publication in December 2008, and also in Outcome Agreement and Corporate Plan 2008-11
Ensure equalities issues, including disability, are addressed through the curriculum.	Ongoing.	On track. 90% of schools received an assessment of good and above for equality and fairness in HMle inspection in school year 2007-8.
Review all policies using corporate assessment tool.	May 2007.	Ongoing. Over 100 policies assessed for equalities relevance. 14 Impact assessments completed subject to consultation, three in process of completion, with approximately 11 too undertake.
Update policies as required to comply with disability and other equalities duties.	Dec 2007.	All policies reviewed, and all new policies will contain appropriate content to ensure compliance with disability and other equalities duties.
Consult with and involve stakeholders (including pupils and parents/carers) in the development and implementation of new policy at authority and school level.	Ongoing.	Ongoing in terms of service Engagement and Involvement Strategy

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Ensure 'Equality and Fairness', including disability issues, is assessed during self-evaluation against HGIOS and QMle, IIP, Charter Mark and WLAM.	Ongoing.	Standards on-going practice. 90% of schools received an assessment of good and above for equality and fairness in HMle inspection in school year 2007-8.
Self Evaluation validated by regular HMle inspections at school and authority level, and IIP and Charter Mark assessments.	Ongoing.	Standard on-going practice. 90% of schools received an assessment of good and above for equality and fairness in HMle inspection in school year 2007-8.
Customer Satisfaction Survey undertaken with service users/customers, including those with disabilities, undertaken as part of Charter Mark.	December 2007.	Surveying is standard on-going practice, as set out in the service Engagement and Involvement Strategy.
Ensure equalities implications, including disability, are identified through assessment and consultations are published in the Committee Report accompanying all new policies.	Ongoing.	Standard ongoing practice.
Ensure equalities outcomes, including disability, are reported annually.	December 2006.	Equalities outcomes are included in the annual Standards and Quality report (Report for 2007/8 due for publication in January 2009) and Council-wide equality monitoring statistics. Updated statistics are available on-line on the school performance pages of the Council's web site.
Ensure published documents include statement on how to obtain document in alternative formats i.e. large print, Braille, audio.	Ongoing.	Standard ongoing practice.
Provide access to information in a variety of formats, on request.	Ongoing.	Standard ongoing practice.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Fully implement Additional Support for Learning Act.	June 2008.	Service improvements and developments ongoing, including the development of a behaviour strategy for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs, increasing outreach provision for pupils requiring additional support for learning from Burnhouse School, and further developing Nurture Groups.
Review Access Strategy to fully align it with the Continuum of Support.	June 2008.	Continuum of Support continues to develop in light of best practice in schools. Updated Strategy will share this best practice throughout all schools.
Introduce Autism Strategy and audit Autism Provision.	June 2008.	Completed – update report containing audit of first year of operation to Education PDSP presented in November 2008
Review Speech and Language Provision.	June 2008.	Completed – centre of excellence at Murrayfield Primary School will be officially opened on 27 November 2008.
Ensure staff have access to appropriate training on equality and disability issues.	Ongoing.	To be addressed by Corporate Equalities Training piloted with staff including Teachers/Headteachers to ensure its relevance.
Ensure equality and disability issues are discussed during identification of development needs during staff reviews.	December 2007.	Managers informed. Ongoing.

Finance Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Re-establish Equality Group to co-ordinate the Disability Equality Scheme.	October 2006.	Concluded. Group now meeting at regular intervals as required.
Ensure all staff are aware of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.	December 2006.	Concluded for sub-group members. Corporate training may assist with this action for service staff.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Identify a revised list of existing functions and policies for relevance to Disability Equality.	November 2007.	Concluded. Action Plan now in place.
Prioritise identified policies and functions and identify any adverse impact and promote equality of opportunity.	December 2009.	Concluded. Action Plan now in place.
Complete impact assessment for disability using the impact assessment tool. Review existing consultation arrangements for new functions and policies and revise.	December 2009.	On track. Finance has completed 50% of equality impact assessments required as part of our commitment under the Disability Scheme.
Review policies & procedures.	December 2008.	On track. Plan reviewed as appropriate.
Develop sensitive and appropriate monitoring systems to assist with the evaluation of our functions.	June 2007.	No longer relevant.
Analyse the information gathered for adverse impact.	March 2009	Recommendations from individual assessments have been progressed as required.
Publicise progress reports on equality, including results of assessment, consultation and monitoring undertaken within Finance.	Ongoing.	Updates provided to CWGE as appropriate.
The results will be reported publicly on the Internet and Intranet.	March 2009.	Results passed to Equality Officer on completion for publication.
Identify key information to be published.	Ongoing	On track. Availability via Internet.
Provide information in accessible formats as required.	Ongoing	Information available in alternative formats on request.
Identify training needs for staff on disability equality and provide relevant training.	December 2007.	Finance pro-actively supports the pilot and evaluation process for corporate diversity training as required.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Customer care strategy to be rolled out to all front-line staff.	December 2007	Concluded. All frontline staff made aware.
Ensure staff are aware of, and kept up to date with all existing policies and procedures.	December 2007.	Ongoing. To be informed via equality group members & circulars.

Housing & Building Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Ensure that our approach to equality in service delivery is being fully deployed through assessment & review.	December 2006.	Concluded. Equality Impact assessments have formed part of the assessment and review rolling timetable of all service functions.
Surveying customers/tenants through tenant satisfaction visits to identify those with disabilities who are affected by the scheme.	December 2007.	On track. Rolling programme of tenant satisfaction visits which collect equality information about our tenants.
Use survey information as it becomes available in order to identify disparities within the service regarding access and take appropriate remedial action where necessary.	December 2007.	The results of survey information forms part of the assessment and review process will feed subsequent recommendations for service improvements.
Ensure that our customers have a variety of methods of access, with staff who can adapt to suit their needs.	December 2007.	This is an ongoing commitment – we offer a wide variety of access methods, with community-based staff forming the basis for an easily accessible service. We have responded quickly to the demands for translated information and have tried to ensure that what we spend on translation is of a quality that can be used to benefit others.
Ensure that our people are aware of the scheme and relevant procedures.	April 2007.	Concluded. Scheme is widely advertised and highlighted to staff during training sessions.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Ensure that our partners comply with council Policy on Equalities issues.	December 2008.	By making equalities part of our assessment and review process, partners and stakeholders are aware from policy formation stage that this is important to the partnership.
Continue to develop partnership working with other services and agencies.	December 2008.	On track. Housing & Building Services work with a variety of external agencies to deliver an excellent service – the further development of these ties can be seen within the housing offices work on homelessness and the Neighbourhood Response Team partnership arrangements with police, domestic abuse teams and other agencies.
Complete Assessment Grid.	August 2006.	Concluded.
Ongoing Policy/Procedure review.	December 2009.	Equality Impact assessments have formed part of the assessment and review rolling timetable of all service functions – the resulting reports and recommendations directs all review activities.
Audit of equalities functions/DDA compliance.	December 2006.	Concluded. DDA compliance now rests with Customer Services – we continue to ensure our functions and policies are fit for purpose via the assessment and review programme.
Consult and work with tenants' and residents' groups and other groups in planning and delivery of services (Tenant Participation Strategy).	December 2007.	Impact assessment on revised TP strategy now concluded – this involves, tenants, staff and stakeholders as well as other interested parties.
Review policies and procedures.	December 2008.	Equality Impact assessments have formed part of the assessment and review rolling timetable of all service functions – the resulting reports and recommendations directs all review activities.
Complete impact assessment on new policies/procedures to ensure the duties of the act is being met (Allocations/Repairs).	December 2007.	Concluded.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Surveying customers/tenants through tenant satisfaction visits to identify those with disabilities who are affected by the scheme.	December 2007.	Rolling programme of tenant satisfaction visits which collect equality information about our tenants. The last review of the form ensured this information was captured.
Take action as required as follow up to ongoing findings.	December 2007.	Concluded. This information will be reported to the performance meeting and any areas for improvement are carried forward as a result.
Produce regular information in Tenants News/Plasma screens/Website.	Ongoing.	Ongoing publicity on relevant issues is carried out, both within staff publications and tenant publications.
Monitor & analyse complaints & concerns, feedback, surveys & responses.	Ongoing.	The complaints information and data is presented to the management team who take remedial action where required. The complaints data is monitored via performance for potential service wide improvements.
Publicise equalities policies, procedures and associated schemes & documents on the intranet.	June 2007.	Website updated with all completed impact assessments. Ongoing as required.
Report publicly on the results of consultations/surveys/assessment & review and monitoring including DDA access audits.	Ongoing.	On track. This information has been widely publicised and made available via a variety of access methods. Web, hard copy, conferences, information days, publications and plasma screens are a few examples of the methods we utilise.
Provide access to information in a variety of formats (Braille, large print audio etc).	Ongoing.	On track. This is made available on every publication we produce.
Publicise equalities policies, procedures and associated schemes & documents including the DES on the website.	June 2007.	Housing equality assessments and relevant action plans are available on the councils website.
Monitor & analyse complaints & concerns, feedback, surveys & responses – specifically relating to access to information.	Ongoing.	The complaints information and data is presented to the management team who take remedial action where required. The complaints data is monitored via performance for potential service wide improvements.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Train staff on policies, the scheme and related processes and their implementation.	Ongoing.	A range of training in various formats has been carried out and is ongoing on the different strands of equalities. We are also committed to contributing to the council wide diversity training pilots.
Offer tenants/tenants group's access to training on policies and their implementation.	Ongoing.	On track. A rolling programme of tenant training is currently underway, with access to other staff courses opened up to tenants.
Ensure equalities issues are integral to team planning, service planning and locality planning through West Lothian Assessment Model and other self-assessment processes used in planning.	Ongoing.	On track. The use of the WLAM is well established within Housing Services and this is demonstrated through the department's progression to the EFQM (European Foundation of Quality Management) finals 2007. The WLAM is based on this model of excellence and has been updated to specifically take account of equality implications.

IT Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Briefing all staff on the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.	November 2009.	On track.
Review Service Standards and all service policies and procedures to assess their relevance to the DDA.	July 2006.	Relevance Assessment Identified and current policies were carried out on 02/10/07.
Conduct impact assessment on revised and new policies. Identify relevant groups to participate in full assessment process where necessary.	November 2009.	This is conducted on new policies as required. IT services are part of the Support Services Equality group that reviews policies and assessment work.
Collect and analyse data on key Service Standards, policies and practices.	November 2009.	On track.
Implement any corporate protocol for publishing the results of assessment, consultation and monitoring.	November 2007.	Assessments will be published according to corporate protocol on completion as and when required.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Incorporate into the Communications Strategy Framework to ensure policies and procedures are accessible to employees and the public. Publish the agreed Action Plan on the IT Services Website as part of our public facing information.	November 2007.	Concluded. Action plan published as part of the Disability Equality Scheme.
Identify training needs within the service and utilise available methods to meet those needs.	November 2007.	Concluded. Review training for new employees. IT services are also committed to the ongoing pilot process for corporate diversity training.

Operational Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Identification of Operational Services representative who will feed into Management Team meetings on requirements and timescales for scheme implementation.	August 2006	The function of Operational Services representative has been reassigned to A G Smith
Operational Services Equality Group tasked with identifying key functions and policies requiring review.	December 2006.	Equality Impact Assessments have been completed on a service wide basis for each of the six services within Operational Services.
Before new policies go to relevant committee for approval, they will be sent to a representative for Disability West Lothian for their comment.	December 2006.	Ongoing as new policies are approved.
All customer surveys will now ask question relating to degree of negative impact that each service invokes on disabled users.	December 2006.	Ongoing. Representatives from Disability West Lothian have taken part in each of the Equality Impact Assessments and also the final consultation exercise in August 2008.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
All assessment, consultation and monitoring activities to be published in employee newsletter, OSTV and service plan on an annual basis.	March 2007.	Ongoing. Successful conclusion of assessments included in September '08 edition of 'Inside News'
Carry out a six monthly review of all information provision via the website, leaflets, CIS/CSC to ensure that information is relevant and useful to all users.	December 2006.	Ongoing
Customer Care Training conducted in-house to address how to ensure consistent level of service for customers with varying needs.	April 2007.	Customer care training ongoing within staff induction programme. Customer care training complete within Fleet and Community Services. Evaluation of best way to deliver to other services within restructured Operational Services and corporately is continuing.
Additional Action Provide information on the services delivered by Operational Services through presentations to Disability West Lothian.	December 2008	Initial presentation in July '08 on the overall services provided by Operational Services was followed by a detailed presentation given by the Waste Services Manager. Agreement with Disability West Lothian to continue the detailed Service presentations through 2009.

Property Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Establish a Property Services disability equality team to develop a service level action plan to implement disability equality in its area.	December 2006.	Property Services Equality Sub Group established and progressing impact assessments on relevant functions and policies
Promote disability equality in all activities undertaken throughout Property Services.	Ongoing.	Conducted as appropriate.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
List, assess and prioritise all relevant functions and policies through Property Services		Concluded
Review identified activities on an annual basis and revise where necessary to meet relevant disability equality issues	Ongoing.	On track – part of the service planning process
Consider and assess the effect of any new activities developed and undertaken by Property Services on disability equality issues	Ongoing.	On track – impact assessments progressing
Monitor the identified relevant functions and policies and revise where appropriate	Ongoing.	On track
Liaise with other services, via the Corporate Working Group, to ensure that consistent methods of monitoring are being used throughout the council.	December 2007.	On track
Contribute to the Corporate Working Group reporting process	Ongoing.	On track
Identify the information and services required and ensure that they are accessible to both staff and public.	Ongoing.	On track
Identify disability equality training as an aspect of personal development process for all staff throughout Property Services.	December 2008.	On track. Part of PRPDP process and CPD for all professional staff

Social Policy

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Develop functions and action plan.	October 2006.	EIA plan developed to ensure all Social Policy services impact assessed using single assessment tool.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Report regularly to CWGE on concerns for the progress of the action plan.	Ongoing.	On track. Updates provided to CWGE as appropriate.
Managers identified to take responsibility within service area for implementation of equalities including disability.	April 2007.	Social Policy Equality Group (SPEG) members are representative of the services in social policy and responsible for their action plan to ensure the services and group structures are impact assessed.
Training and resources to monitor and develop equalities within Social Policy.	December 2007.	SPEG continues to develop this role with responsibility for each service area devolved to each member.
Ensure that customers have a variety of methods of access, with staff who can adapt to suit their needs.	Ongoing.	On track. Considered in conjunction with the Equality Officer and Disability West Lothian as required.
Ensure that staff are aware of the scheme and relevant procedures.	Ongoing.	On track. It is anticipated that this will be covered as part of corporate diversity training and involvement in Diversity Week and an event to consult on the EIA process.
Monitoring service areas compliance with equalities plan and duties.	March 07, 08 and 09.	This action has now been altered, as Disability Equality Forum will audit progress and compliance.
Senior management in service area to target appropriate service managers to identify responsibilities for planning functions and policies to assess in relation to equalities and conduct impact assessments.	January 2007.	EIA duty has been raised with the senior management team, responsibility devolved to the SPEG members representing their service and the impact assessment action plans for the service areas
Service Managers to make themselves aware of the duties.	January 2007.	Awareness raising event to be discussed at the next SPEG meeting in November
To review the progress of the action plan annually and report this review to the corporate group. This review will include a summary of achievements.	March 07, 08 and 09.	On track. Submitted to Equality Officer as requested.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Publishing action removed.	N/A	Social Policy updated incorporated into corporate annual report on progress.
To consider appropriate complaint mechanisms for social policy, to report this to the corporate group and to implement agreed mechanisms within social policy.	N/A	Remedial action required.
Identify the training needs of key staff.	N/A	It is anticipated that this will be covered as part of corporate diversity training and involvement in Diversity Week.

Support Services

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Briefing the Support Services Equality Sub-group on the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Develop Action Plans Monitor progress of action plans Meeting of Equalities Sub Group.	October 2006.	Concluded and ongoing as appropriate.
Review employment life cycle (employment policies, procedures and practices) to assess their relevance to the DDA.	July 2006.	Concluded. Policies and function grid completed. Relevance assessment for any new policies/functions is carried out by the Equality Sub-Group as required.
Conduct impact assessment on revised and new policies.	Ongoing.	On track. Please see section on equality impact assessments within full report for further information.
Identify relevant groups to participate in full assessment process where necessary.	Ongoing.	Employee Disability Equality Forum set up in September 2007. This Forum is actively involved in the development and completion of employment related equality impact assessments and additional HR initiatives. External Disability Forum are also involved as required.

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Research best practice regarding impact assessments internally and externally.	December 2006.	Research carried out on the Internet. Continue to benchmark with other local authorities – ongoing.
Checklist developed and agreed as blueprint for impact assessments.	December 2006.	Concluded.
Recruitment & Selection policies and functions grid.	March 2007.	Concluded. Recruitment and Selection Impact Assessment complete. Recommendations currently under implementation.
Induction policies and functions grid.	March 2007.	Impact assessment to be carried out on revised induction process – ongoing.
Employment policies and functions grid.	March 2007.	Impact Assessments complete for Discipline, Grievance, Fair Treatment at Work, Absence Management and Equality Policy. Recommendations currently under implementation.
Pay policies and functions grid.	October 2007.	Concluded. Equality Impact Assessment carried out on pay proposals for single status.
Safety policies and functions grid.	October 2007	On track. H&S impact assessment completed.
Collect and analyse data on key employment policies and practices.	November 2009.	Analysis of monitoring statistics for period 1 October 2007 – 30 September 2008 currently underway. To be reported to council executive.
Areas of impact identified through impact assessment.	October 2007.	On track.
Agree a corporate protocol for publishing the results of assessment, consultation and monitoring.	November 2007.	<p>Equality monitoring information currently published on the council's website.</p> <p>Equalities page on the council's website - results of assessments are published there as appropriate.</p> <p>Following approval by council executive the monitoring report for period 1 October 2007 – 30 September 2008 will be published.</p>

Action	Timescale	Progress and Comments
Develop a communications strategy for HR to ensure policies and procedures are accessible to employees and, where requested members of the public. This will include the setting up of an employee panel.	November 2007.	<p>Communications protocols developed. Facilities available to have policies and procedures produced in alternative formats.</p> <p>6 monthly payroll flyers making employees aware of new policies and how to access them has been implemented and remains ongoing.</p>
Ensure that vacancies are advertised as broadly as is possible within budgetary and time constraints that will be achieved following the Recruitment and Selection Impact Assessment.	November 2007.	On track. Recruitment advertising review remains ongoing as a result of the equality impact assessment.
Identify training needs across the council. Identify methods to meet those needs and roll out training plan to services. Monitor training uptake and remind services of requirement for training.	November 2009.	Remedial action taken. HR team trained in requirements of the DDA through professional qualifications, continuous professional development and sharing of information through case conferences. Proposal for council wide package of equality and diversity training produced and agreed by Corporate Working Group on equality. Training pilots as a result remain ongoing and it is expected a corporate diversity-training course should be rolled out during 2009.

Annex 2

List of Abbreviations

Page	Abbreviation	Definition
Various	CWGE	Corporate Working Group on Equality
Various	DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
Various	WLAM	West Lothian Assessment Model
Various	HR	Human Resources
18	CMT	Corporate Management Team
19	Disability WL	Disability West Lothian
19	D&RS	Development and Regulatory Services
21	SMT	Senior Management Team
21	HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education
22	PDSP	Policy Development Scrutiny Panel
23	CRM	Customer Relationship Management
23	ETS	Enquiry Tracking System
30	PRPDP	Performance Review and Personal Development Planning
30	CPD	Continuous Professional Development
32	H&S	Health and Safety