

London Borough of Greenwich

Section 10.1 Part 5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

A Strategic Equalities Vision for Greenwich

All employees are bound to observe the provisions of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy which is set out below:-

5.1 Our objectives

That no individuals or groups in the borough should be disadvantaged by reason of ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, class, income, employment status or religious belief.

- That opportunities for all individuals and groups in the Greenwich community should be increased.
- That the diversity of the Greenwich community should be celebrated and valued.

5.2 Our Equalities Mission

The Council, as a major local employer and service provider, will use its influence to promote equality of opportunity, to make Greenwich a more attractive place to live and work, and to achieve for its diverse community the highest possible standards in the provision of public services.

The Council will work with private, public and community partners to enable all local people to have the skills and opportunities to share in the social and economic regeneration of the borough.

5.3 Our Equalities Goals

The principles of equality of opportunity will underpin all areas of Council activity and influence, and will shape initiatives to address poverty, unemployment, discrimination and disadvantage, and create a safer and more sustainable environment. Our commitments towards the millennium and beyond are:

- i. Empowerment of the local community, promotion of inclusive citizenship, and achievement of fair representation, of ethnic minorities, women and disabled people on public and voluntary bodies in the borough.

- ii. Zero tolerance of all forms of violence, in particular racial and domestic violence, and the promotion of safety and security for all people and groups in the Greenwich community.
- iii. Effective partnership with the Greenwich voluntary sector and business community in the regeneration of the borough.
- iv. Equality of opportunity within the Council's workforce and ethnic and gender balance with the local community at all levels in the Council's workforce by the year 2000; every member of the Council's staff fully accountable for promoting equality of access, opportunity and treatment.
- v. Council jobs accessible to people with disabilities and promotion of good practice in the employment of people with disabilities.
- vi. All public buildings and services accessible to people with disabilities, and all new transport systems, interchanges and developments to be accessible by the year 2000.
- vii. Promotion of economic and educational achievement for all groups within the Greenwich community, through inclusive lifelong education, through the fostering of ethnic minority and women's enterprise, through partnership with the voluntary and small business sectors in regeneration, and through the Council's contracting relationships.

5.4 Our commitment to our staff and our expectations of them

Equality of opportunity for all individuals and groups in the community and the workforce is an essential value for the Council. It involves recognising the inequalities which people experience, taking action to reduce them, and creating and maximising opportunities. Equality considerations are central to our aim of achieving Investors in People status across the Council.

Greenwich Council is committed to the Codes of Practice in Employment produced by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Equal Opportunities Commission. These cover fair recruitment and career development practice as well as the prevention of discrimination and harassment, and the promotion of a safe working environment.

Every member, employee and contractor of the Council has a role to play in ensuring fairness towards colleagues and to members of the community we serve.

The Council expects of all its employees the highest possible standards of integrity and care in all their dealings with members of the public and with colleagues. All employees are required to promote the Council's Equal Opportunities vision, in the workplace and in all aspects of service delivery, and to work towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination and disadvantage.

5.5 Our planning framework

Women, people from ethnic minority communities, people with disabilities, and people from other disadvantaged groups are disproportionately affected by poverty, unemployment, educational disadvantage, violence against the person and social exclusion. Many may be multiply-disadvantaged. Disadvantage, and discriminatory attitudes and practices, also lead to under-representation in democratic decision-making structures.

There is a legislative framework governing the fair and equitable treatment of women, ethnic minorities and the disabled, and prohibiting discrimination. It recognises rights, responsibilities and social justice. Local authorities also have a specific responsibility under the Race Relations Act 1976 to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations in the local community, in the exercise of all their functions.

The Council is committed to working towards the Commission for Racial Equality's *Standard for Racial Equality for Local Government in England and Wales* 'Racial Equality means Quality', which has also been adapted by the Council for gender and disability.

This means that equality considerations, which will involve special measures to redress inequality and promote new opportunity, are central to policy planning, service delivery, customer care, community empowerment, and our marketing and corporate image, as well as to our investment in the people who work for us. All Council departments work to Equalities Action Plans based on achievement of the Ethnicity, Gender and Disability Standards.

5.6 Our leadership role

The Council and its Chief Officers have strategic responsibilities for promoting the Equalities vision and managing the achievement of Equalities goals in partnership with the community.