

## Equality and Diversity in Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire County Council wants to ensure that there is equality and diversity for everybody in the County. Our Single Equality Strategy (SES) and Action Plan were published in March 2009 to help us do this. We now want to look at how well the actions we listed meet our objectives.

This document has been produced to begin discussion on the quality and effectiveness of the Action Plan, it provides background information on the Single Equality Strategy and summarises the aims and objectives of the Action Plan.

### Introduction

The Strategy sets out our commitment to providing fair and equally accessible services for everyone in Cambridgeshire

We want to ensure that all of the services that we provide are accessible; that we have a workforce that reflects the diversity of Cambridgeshire's communities; and that it goes beyond its legal requirements to celebrate Cambridgeshire's diversity, and the benefits that it brings to all of us.

Now is the time for us to review the priorities of the Action Plan, to work with key people and groups to ensure that our actions are properly meeting the needs of Cambridgeshire.

### Why is equality and diversity important?

The vision of Cambridgeshire County Council is simple; to create communities where people want to live and work, now and in the future. To achieve this the council must recognise and celebrate the diversity of local communities and be sensitive to the particular needs that arise from that diversity.

Services must be fair and accessible to everybody – helping them to be the best that they can be.

### What do we mean by equality and diversity?

We define equality as – a fair society in which everyone can join in and is given the opportunity to achieve. Equality is backed by legislation addressing discrimination.

We define diversity as – recognising and valuing differences between individuals, groups and communities to create a positive and inclusive culture for the benefit of the people of Cambridgeshire.

### What are our objectives?

The Action Plan sets out the work that we are doing to meet the commitments we have made in the Single Equality Strategy. We have identified a set of objectives

for the Strategy. These objectives bring together our work on all areas of equality and diversity.

### Action Plan Summary

There are two sections of the Action Plan:

- **Organisational Objectives** ~ the actions that are mainly internal to Cambridgeshire County Council (organisational objectives)
- **Service Objectives** ~ those that are mainly external and relate to services delivered by the Council (service objectives)

### Organisational objectives

What we have said we want to do:	Ways we think we should do this:
<p><b>1:</b> <b>Show a strong commitment to equality and diversity in all that we do</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion and promote equality and diversity</li> <li>• Work to ensure that equality is integrated in policies, strategies and procedures</li> <li>• Work to achieve national standards for diversity</li> <li>• Adopt a consistent approach to embedding equality and diversity in everything we do, and build on our culture that recognises and values the diversity of the communities we serve</li> <li>• Continue to embed equality and diversity throughout the organisation through Equality Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Use our Cambridgeshire Behaviours framework to ensure all employees act with respect for each other</li> </ul>
<p><b>2:</b> <b>Ensure that our workforce is responsive to and reflective of Cambridgeshire's diverse communities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise and promote the benefits of a diverse workforce</li> <li>• Ensure that employment practices do not discriminate against different groups</li> <li>• Ensure all employees are treated with respect and dignity</li> <li>• Encourage employees to take a positive attitude towards diversity and promote best practice</li> </ul>

<p><b>3: Listen and be responsive to the needs of Cambridgeshire's communities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure equality and diversity are embedded in the Council's new Community Engagement Strategy</li> <li>• Enable people to have greater control over their lives and to make choices about the way in which services are provided</li> </ul>
<p><b>4: Develop new ways of joint working, building on the work of existing partnerships and programmes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the new Countywide Diversity Network to ensure a common and coherent approach to equality and diversity throughout the Cambridgeshire Together Partnership</li> <li>• Carry out an Equality Impact Assessment of Cambridgeshire's Local Area Agreement, to ensure equality and diversity are sufficiently embedded in its projects.</li> </ul>

### Service objectives

<b>What we have said we want to do:</b>	<b>Ways we think we should do this:</b>
<p><b>1: Tackle inequalities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close gaps in achievement and access to services, particularly in areas of relative deprivation within the County</li> <li>• Work to address issues of deprivation across the county and in particular to narrow the gap between Cambridgeshire's least and most disadvantaged communities</li> <li>• Support those particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change</li> <li>• Support economically deprived communities and groups</li> </ul>

<p><b>2: Promote respect and strengthen community cohesion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work across our services and settings to challenge stereotypes and assumptions, raise aspirations and challenge inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>• Promote cohesive, diverse but inclusive communities where the needs of all groups, including vulnerable people, are met</li> <li>• Plan new developments to form cohesive communities</li> <li>• Update our Community Cohesion Strategy and develop the links between it and the Single Equality Strategy</li> </ul>
<p><b>3: Deliver services that are personal to each user</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an understanding of demographic changes across the County to ensure that we are able to respond appropriately to individual needs</li> <li>• Ensure that where applicable services are sensitive to the needs and requirements of individual users and are flexible enough to adapt to their needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>4: Support vulnerable people to remain in their own homes and minimise the use of institutional care</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support people to remain in their own homes and minimise the use of institutional care</li> <li>• Enable people to live full and active lives in their own communities with access to training and employment and social opportunities</li> <li>• Develop person-centred services that are responsive to individual needs and promote independence, choice, control and inclusion</li> <li>• Work towards removing environmental barriers that prevent people from participating fully</li> <li>• Deliver the Council's In Total Control programme so that users of social care can choose the services that most meet their need</li> </ul>

### Are we getting it right?

We would like to know how well we are meeting our aim to ensure equality and diversity for everyone in Cambridgeshire.

We would be grateful if you could share your thoughts on how good you think the Action Plan is, giving particular thought to the following questions:

- Are we doing the right things?
- What else could we do?
- Will this Action Plan make a difference?
- What could we do better?
- How should we measure our achievements?

Please feel free to provide any other comments that you would like us to consider as part of this programme of discussion. Please contact Dan Thorp, Corporate Policy Officer - Cambridgeshire County with responses:

**Email:**

[daniel.thorp@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.thorp@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

**Telephone:**

01223 699953

**Post:**

Dan Thorp,  
RES 1206,  
Shire Hall,  
Castle Hill,  
Cambridge,  
CB3 0AP