

# Disability Equality Scheme

Annual Report – December 2007

The information contained in this report is available in large print and other accessible formats upon request.

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**Forward by Councillor Andrew Goodwin, Disability Champion:**

The Council's role as community leader brings with it great responsibility. The responsibility of leadership requires the ability to build trust and encourage participation; to listen and to be open to change; to demonstrate understanding and show through actions that every single individual's contribution is valued and needed. This is particularly relevant to Eastbourne's disabled community.

I was delighted to take on the role of Disability Champion in May 2007. As Disability Champion I see the role as a catalyst for action to happen both inside and outside of the Council, also to bring enthusiasm for the Disability Discrimination Act and the Disability Equality Duty, rather than seeing it as a chore or an onerous duty to comply with. I see the role as helping to encourage and motivate the business, retail and tourism sectors in particular, to comply with the act in various ways.

We have already started to see some changes within the Borough Council this year, with the Disability Involvement Group already proving effective in helping officers to understand the needs of disabled people across the borough.

Over the next year we will see further changes as we start to work in partnership with various bodies. I want to ensure that individuals, groups, businesses and organisations are made aware that the provision of accessibility is not a choice but a requirement to ensure that everyone has equal access and choice, regardless of disability or ability.



**Councillor Andrew Goodwin  
Disability Champion**

## **1. Introduction**

This annual report covers the first year of working with our Disability Equality Scheme which has seen the successful implementation of several new initiatives. The report also demonstrates how committed the Council is to achieving equality for disabled people. This report should be read in conjunction with the Council's Scheme.

## **2. Inclusive Community**

Eastbourne's Community Strategy has several themes including the theme of 'inclusive community' which is set out below.

In 2020 Eastbourne will be a place where:

- everyone can access information, services, natural green-space, cultural and recreational facilities in a way that is suitable to them
- diversity is valued
- everyone feels that they belong and each person is important to the future of the town

The Council's Disability Equality Scheme supports this theme with several objectives outlining what is to be achieved in each of the areas highlighted.

## **3. Doing the Duty**

The Disability Equality Duty does not create new individual rights for disabled people but it provides a framework for public authorities to carry out their functions more effectively and to tackle discrimination and its causes in a proactive way.

### **3.1 How we have responded**

It is important to note that the Council has always worked towards improving access to its services and employment for disabled people. The Scheme contains references to the wide range of past and existing activities specifically targeted towards disabled people. They are not repeated in this annual report to avoid duplication.

In particular regard to the Disability Equality Duty the Council has responded positively in its first year and has dedicated resources to the development and administration of a disability involvement group.

### 3.2 Disability Involvement Group

The Council working with the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership and Eastbourne Homes Limited invited disabled people to an engagement event in October 2006. This one event, with all statutory agencies working together, proved extremely successful and ensured disabled people were not overloaded with individual consultation events. Disabled people were able to engage and participate in the formulation of Disability Equality Schemes and influence the aims and objectives set out in their associated action plans. At the end of this event disabled people volunteered to work with organisations in the delivery of their Schemes, and the Disability Involvement Group (DIG) was formed.

The DIG consists of individual disabled people representing themselves and disabled people representing members of the groups they belong to i.e. Access Group, MORE Club, MS Society. The DIG has agreed terms of reference, which are appended to this report (appendix 1) and the members influence their own agenda.

Members of the DIG have agreed to restrict their membership to twenty but to expand invitations beyond their group when presentations and discussions take place on a borough wide topic, such as regeneration of the town centre.

### 3.3 Officer Involvement with the DIG

The Council and the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership provide officer time to administrate and support the Group and this is working well. The two officers were nominated and voted as Chair and Vice Chair for the first year and although this may appear a little extraordinary, disabled people attending the DIG wanted to work with the group for the first year before volunteering themselves to Chair it.

DIG members have requested presentations from officers on a number of topics these being Town Centre Regeneration, Taxi Licensing, Parking and general Highway issues. Topics coming up include a presentation by an external provider on the Disability Equality Duty/Discrimination Act.

Officers who have attended the DIG at the request of members to provide awareness, information and answer questions around a particular topic (mentioned above) have found it a positive experience, and gained valuable knowledge and understanding of the issues facing disabled people. This very direct relationship is helping to break down any barriers around perception and assumption.

At the last meeting in October DIG members wanted to know how Council officers were sharing the information and learning within their teams. DIG members want to know if their feedback is being used positively outside of the group and more importantly how it influences future thinking. As a result of this a pro-forma has been designed which will be used to monitor how officers have used the information provided by disabled people, back in their services. This shows how committed DIG members are to assisting the organisations involved and in participating with services on a direct level.

### 3.4 Consultation on the future of the DIG

DIG members who have attended meetings have been asked for their views on the DIG and its future. Without exception all have stated: that the DIG should continue; that membership should widen; their attendance is personally worthwhile and worthwhile for the groups they represent; presentations received are very useful; and they are able to provide challenge and influence outcomes. The outcome of the consultation is attached at appendix 2.

#### 3.4.1 Membership

DIG members would like more disabled people to have the opportunity of attending the DIG on a regular basis and have requested that groups and individuals known to DIG members should be approached to join. Of equal importance to some is raising awareness of the DIG across the town by way of a poster campaign and media releases; it is hoped that this will raise interest among individual disabled people to come forward.

#### 3.4.2 Providing challenge and influencing outcomes

Members have stated that the DIG gives them a voice. This voice enables disabled people to engage instantly and directly on subjects they may never have known about, had it not been for the DIG.

They feel their voice helps to raise awareness; not only of their specific requirements, but also opens a constructive dialogue with officers to challenge or support what is proposed. DIG members also feel they are being listened to and are keen to use the pro-forma as this will demonstrate the Council's commitment to listening to its community demonstrated and evidenced through its actions.

### 3.5 Employee Engagement Group

The employee engagement group formed during the Council's consultation on its Scheme has met three times. Members of this group have discussed their own experiences but also assisted in raising awareness of disabled employee needs in regard to parking which formed part of the wider consultation in regard to the proposed parking scheme for the town.

An awareness campaign via the Council's intranet is planned for 2008 to raise interest in this group in the hope that more employees will participate and provide valuable input for our internal practices.

### 3.6 Wider engagement

Although membership of the DIG is restricted to twenty members the Council is fully aware that certain DIG members attend as representatives of their Groups. Some groups represented consist of up to eighty individual members. Therefore, although the numbers of disabled people who have the opportunity of attending the meeting appears small, the Council knows that it is reaching far more than this number through representation.

The Council recognises how important the DIG is but also recognises that some disabled people/groups are not represented within this group. Therefore, the Council will continue to engage and consult with other agencies in the town such as the East Sussex Disability Association on matters which require borough wide consultation and feedback.

## **4. Action Plans**

Many solutions were put forward by disabled people at the engagement event held in October 2006. The public authorities involved agreed to discuss these further, and where appropriate would work together on achieving agreed objectives.

The action plan of the Council's Scheme partly derives from planned and existing work of the Council and further from the areas raised during the event. The action plan covering the first year of our Scheme with the progress to date can be found at appendix 3 with the action plan for the year ahead at appendix 4. These plans will cross-over as some objectives set in the first year have deadlines to be achieved in 2008 and so are repeated. There are also some objectives which due to work priorities and resources available in the past year have had to be postponed into 2008.

## **5. Equality Impact Assessment - improvements to our services**

The Council has in place equality Schemes covering Race, Disability and Gender. These Schemes together with the Comprehensive Equality Policy, the Fair Employment Policy and the Corporate Equality Action Plan set out the Council's commitment to achieving equality of opportunity for every member of its community.

There is, and has been since 2002, a forward programme of equality impact assessments. Individual services which have undertaken equality impact assessments have responded to a number of specific requirements put forward by disabled people as part of this process. The equality action plans of individual services are not specifically covered in our corporate scheme action plans, but all are available on the Council's internet.

[http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/Your\\_Council/Council\\_Strategies/equalities.asp](http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/Your_Council/Council_Strategies/equalities.asp)

Some outcomes are highlighted below.

Over the past year our Customer Services team who operate within our Customer Contact Centre, has successfully negotiated the implementation of reserved disabled parking bays outside the front of the Centre and also in the side access road. This is a direct response to requests of our disabled customers.

The Council's work in addressing the problems of disrepair and inadequacy in the private housing stock has assisted a number of disabled people over the past few months. A full equality impact assessment of this area is currently taking place and more outcomes will be highlighted as part of this process when the assessment is completed in the Spring/Summer of 2008.

The Council's current standard of accessible communication and services for non English speaking people was further advanced this past year for disabled people. Working in partnership across East Sussex (East Sussex Translation and Interpretation Partnership - ESTIP) the Council has implemented a variety of interpretation and translation services covering both verbal and non verbal forms of communication. ESTIP now has an agreement with the Royal National Institute for the Deaf and with SoundTalking to enable disabled people to participate and engage with our services. These agreements are evaluated quarterly and will be fully reviewed in Spring 2008 when the initial contract period comes to an end.

There has been a lot of interest in the achievements of ESTIP, so much so that Brighton and Hove City Council (some services form part of ESTIP already) and West Sussex County Council are interested in joining and expanding the partnership from 2008 when a re-tendering exercise is planned.

The Council's existing guidelines for communication follow the Royal National Institute for the Blind's 'See It Right Campaign'.

## **6. Disability Champion**

In view of the importance placed on disability equality within the Council the unique role of 'Disability Champion' was created with the adoption of the Scheme in 2006. The Disability Champion is a controlling group Councillor, and the former Councillor Patrick Bowker was the Council's first Champion. Councillor Andrew Goodwin now performs this role and he has provided the forward to this annual report. In 2008 the Disability Champion will become a standing member of the Council's Equality Steering Group.

Councillor Goodwin is a member of and attends the DIG and feeds the views of disabled people directly back to his fellow elected Members. Councillor Goodwin has also attended other disability forums and meetings and feeds information into the equality work outlined in the Scheme.

## **7. Training**

As explained in the Scheme, disability equality already forms a significant part of our equality impact assessment process and will continue to do so.

We also provide employees with the opportunity of attending a number of training courses specifically in regard to raising their awareness of certain impairments i.e. visual and hearing impairments.

In the past twelve months a session was held for our senior management team and nominated officers covering the Disability Equality Duty. This course raised awareness of our obligations in regard to the Duty; the social model of disability; and an innovative way of challenging perceptions in regard to what life is like for disabled people. The course was delivered by two disabled people which added to the very positive experience.

Development opportunities and training sessions will continue to form an integral part of the corporate training programme.

## **8. Monitoring**

The Council's Disability Equality Scheme will be monitored periodically by members of the DIG and the Equality Steering Group. The DIG have agreed to look at the progress being made against the actions set out in the Scheme's action plan and their comments will be fed back to the Steering Group by the Disability Champion.

The notes taken at each DIG meeting are sent to all Officers who have attended the relevant meeting in order to provide a written account from the Group. This will enable the officer to use the information to raise awareness among their teams and feedback the views of disabled people about what is proposed.

The pro-forma will provide further monitoring on the actions the Council takes as a result of the information provided to it by the DIG. DIG members are more concerned with actions and outcomes than words and will keenly monitor how the Council responds.



## **Eastbourne Disability Involvement Group**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **PURPOSE**

- To represent the views of disabled people in Eastbourne
- To obtain equality for all disabled people
- To monitor progress of the Eastbourne Borough Council Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan quarterly
- To share information in the spirit of education and learning
- To advise on improved access to services in Eastbourne
- To help shape future service delivery in Eastbourne – not to make the mistakes of the past in relation to disabled people

#### **OPERATIONAL**

- The DIG cannot represent or champion individual cases or problems of disabled people
- DIG meetings will be held six times a year and will be formal in style with a Chair and Vice Chair
- DIG meetings will be held in Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road
- Membership of the group will be twenty members and membership will be by application/nomination/election
- Membership of the group must include one representative each from Eastbourne Borough Council and the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership
- A quorum will be one member above half of the total membership and must include at least one representative from Eastbourne Borough Council or the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership
- For the first year the Chair will be Eastbourne Borough Council and the Vice Chair will be the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership
- The March meeting will be the annual meeting when the Chair and Vice Chair will be agreed and the Terms of Reference will be reviewed

### **DIG Terms of Reference**

- All communication with members of the DIG will be by hard copy (paper), not email
- Travel expenses of voluntary community members of the group will be paid subject to adherence to the rules of the scheme (attached to this document)
- Support to the DIG will be provided by the Eastbourne Borough Council Communication and Participation Team and the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator
- The DIG will wind up when it identifies that it no longer has an active role to play
- Any member of the DIG, who has an interest direct or indirect in any matter under discussion by the DIG, should declare an interest and withdraw from the meeting, before the matter is discussed, unless the DIG invites the person to remain. If this is the case that person should not take part in the discussion and/or vote on the matter

## **Disability Involvement Group**

### Consultation Feedback report

#### Methodology

DIG members agreed to take part in a small questionnaire covering their membership, its usefulness and its future development. Members were telephoned at home and their comments were noted down and read back to them for approval. One member requested that their questionnaire was sent to them in hard copy and this was accommodated.

It is important to note that only a small number of members were contacted for their views, this is because a core group of six members have attended all or the majority of meetings. These members have first hand experience of how the DIG operates and obviously can put forward their views based on this experience. This was not to exclude other members who very unfortunately have not been able to attend meetings for various reasons, and it is hoped that this decision will not cause offence to anyone.

The following short report provides the questions and a summary of the views of those contacted. Should you wish to see the completed questionnaires which are anonymous please contact Monica Elsen – details at the front of this report.

#### Summary of Responses

- 1.** The DIG is currently made up of individual disabled people and representatives of disabled people. Do you feel that the current mix is appropriate?

100% of members felt the current mix was appropriate but all wanted to see the membership widen.

- 2.** How would you like to see the membership improve and/or widen?

DIG members were given a variety of options to widen the membership of the group. The results were split between inviting all known disabled groups in the town to nominate a representative to join and raising awareness via a poster and media campaign. One DIG member wanted to contact individual disabled people known to existing members and invite them to join. The majority of members felt that a newsletter would be beneficial also.

- 3.** DIG members have received presentations on Taxi Licensing, Highways and proposed Parking Scheme, and received a Town Centre Regeneration update. Future topics already agreed are awareness of the Disability Equality Duty/Discrimination Act and Eastbourne Homes Limited – decent homes agenda. How useful have you found these presentations:

100% of members stated that they found the presentations either useful or very useful (84%) with one saying they were brilliant.

- 4.** If you have answered 'Of no use' to question 3, please use the box below to explain why you feel this way: Not applicable.

- 5.** What other topics would you like to see included in the future, these could include presentations on health matters, policing, fire safety, learning skills, housing etc. Please place your comments in the box below:

100% of DIG members felt that the example topics listed in the question would be useful. Where individual comments were made these are noted below:

*"We are desperate in this town for hotels/rooms to recommend to people that are suitable for disabled people so I would like to see someone from the Hospitality Association come along and talk to us. Policing and Fire Safety would also be interesting and useful too, all of them really."*

*"The more we know the better informed we are."*

*"More information on recycling would be useful"*

- 6.** As a member of the DIG do you feel that you are treated with dignity and respect and that you have an equal opportunity to put your views across at the meeting?

100% of DIG members said they were treated with dignity and respect. 70% agreed they had an equal opportunity to put their views across.

One member said that they sometimes found it hard to put their views across and another said they generally could get their views across but occasionally felt they couldn't.

- 7.** If you have not answered 'always' to question 6, please use the box below to explain why you feel this way:

One DIG member said they sometimes felt they can't get a word in because others jump in and take over. A second said that sometimes people butt in.

How can we improve things for you?

*"Although the Chair does a good job it's difficult to monitor who wants to speak all the time and people should make a sign that they wish to speak and not interrupt or jump in. Also, when the meeting goes off on a tangent it should be brought back on track quicker as it sometimes drags on and we waste time then run out of time for the more important items."*

- 8.** Currently the DIG meets once every two months on a Wednesday afternoon, do you consider this to be appropriate?

50% of DIG members felt that the current arrangements were OK.

Two members said they would like to meet more often especially when important initiatives need to be discussed and the meeting runs out of time.

Two members wanted to keep the revised winter start time and not revert back to the later summer start time.

- 9.** Do you feel you gain any benefit from being a member of the DIG, for instance, is your attendance personally worthwhile or a waste of your time?

100% of DIG members said they found their membership and attendance worthwhile. Individual comments are quoted below:

*"I find it benefits me personally but also benefits the people I represent therefore it is worthwhile. If it wasn't I wouldn't devote my time to it."*

*"It is very valuable to me and to those I represent – I get around a lot and involved in what's going on, it is very important for me to do this."*

*"I am picking up on issues I didn't know about and would not know about if it wasn't for this group – my membership is very worthwhile."*

*"It is extremely worthwhile, it shows that something is getting done and the Council and others care what we think."*

*"It is of benefit to me, I would not come to the DIG if it wasn't."*

- 10.** Please use the box below to make any further comments about the DIG and how you would like to see it develop in future:

Individual comments are quoted below:

*"The DIG definitely has a place in our town. It gives disabled people a voice and the opportunity to speak about things that wouldn't come to light unless we had this opportunity."*

*"We are helping the organization as much as the organization is helping us and this is a very good thing."*

*"I feel that you don't have the right to complain about things that the organization has no knowledge of, unless you bring these matters to the attention of the organization which the DIG enables – then if no action is taken you have every right to complain."*

*"The DIG is needed and appreciated."*

*"I would like to see more people/organisations integrated into the group. I would also like to see some feedback from the people who gave us presentations. I understand that Eastbourne Homes Limited (EHL) also has a similar group, so it would be a good idea if we could meet together."*

*"It is early days but the DIG is really important. Eastbourne Borough Council is interested in our opinion and this is the best thing it could be used for."*

*"The DIG is working well at the moment with new subjects coming up perhaps more frequent meetings are needed or special meetings covering specific subjects. We could look at holding 'Open meetings' a Question Time style with a panel, not dissimilar to the panel recently set up to answer housing questions to which anyone can attend – broaden the field."*

*"I definitely want it to continue and to see more members join and people being able to talk. We need to get in touch with other groups. We have a voice now and feeding information back to our groups is important. A newsletter is a good idea and one which we should discuss further."*

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**Follow-up action:**

The responses to the questionnaire will be shared with all members.  
Discussion points to raise in group meetings are as follows:

- Start time of meeting
- Frequency of meetings
- Approach known disability groups for representatives to join the DIG
- Awareness campaign
- Agree forward plan of subjects
- Newsletter/website options

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress as at Dec 2007</b>
<b>Eastbourne Borough Council</b>			
(1) Improve opportunities for disabled people to access Council services	(a) Involve disabled people in the equality impact assessment (EIA) process in order to find out the difficulties faced by disabled people when trying to access the specific service under review and associated information, using this knowledge to focus future actions toward reasonable and agreed improvements	All EIA's reporting to April 07 Equality Steering Group to include specific reference to the participation of disabled people, highlighting their views and any resulting actions	Achieved. EIA's presented in April 07 contained feedback from disabled people. The Council now has the DIG and this group will be the main focus for future engagement and participation in our service areas for equality work.
	(b) Work in partnership with the Access Group in the achievement of improved access to the Town Hall	Agreed objectives in place by May 2007	The Council installed evacuation chairs on all main stairways in the Town Hall to enable effective means of escape for people with mobility difficulties and provided 'fire protected refuges' to two escape stairways serving upper floors.
	(c) Continue to deliver an outreach service for vulnerable disabled people in their own homes providing advice, guidance on and access to Council Tax and Housing benefit	Ongoing service	Ongoing

Objective	Action	Target	Progress as at Dec 07
(2) Improve the way the Council communicates with and provides information to disabled people	(a) Raise awareness of and encourage feedback on the Council's current corporate communication standards among disabled people and representative organisations	Agreed accessible communication guidelines in place by November 2007	Achieved. The Council has produced a guide for accessible comms via the Communication, Participation, Reputation and Branding Document. Guidance is also available via the Council's intranet for employees to refer to when consulting and engaging with all members of the community.
	(b) Undertake a feasibility study with partners represented on the East Sussex Equality Co-ordination Group to jointly procure accessible communication services such as tape recording, SMS messaging, British Sign Language interpretation etc	Feasibility study completed by Aug 2007	Achieved. The study showed that a joint procurement exercise was achievable across East Sussex.
	(c) Depending on the outcome of the feasibility study work with appropriate public authorities on a joint procurement exercise of these services (along the same lines as the East Sussex Translation and Interpretation Partnership)	Services procured and contract in place by April 2008	Achieved. A temporary contract is in place until April 2008 with RNID and SoundTalking. Guidance available to staff.
	(d) Explore with member organisations of all partnerships the Council is involved with on the feasibility of adopting accessible communication standards as set out above. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, work with relevant partners on the introduction of agreed standards	Carry out consultation by September 2007  Implement agreed standards with relevant partners by Nov 2008	This is deferred to 2008. Work priorities and avail. resources were the main reason for this target not being achieved.
(3) Investigate alternative	(a) Investigate the use of alternative mediums for advertising job opportunities within periodicals	Investigation completed by Nov 2007	ESDA now receive our job vacancy circulars. Other

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress as at Dec 07</b>
mechanisms to widen opportunities for disabled people to access recruitment and employment with the Council.	of ESDA and VCS etc		sources of circulation are still under investigation.
	(b) Explore opportunities for advertising vacancies and providing information about services and initiatives on notice boards in public access areas	Investigation completed by November 2007	No facility in Arndale Centre. Shopmobility and Langney have notice boards and these will be reviewed for suitability.
	Organise and deliver an annual employment workshop in partnership with other agencies in Eastbourne, where appropriate, to raise awareness of recruitment and processes to follow, that will improve work opportunities for disabled people		Due to work priorities and resources it has not been possible to progress this event. It is deferred to Spring 2008.
(4 ) Raise awareness of the opportunity to work with disabled people through volunteering	Working across sectors and with specialist providers promote opportunities for volunteering	Promotion in place by December 2007	ESDA approached for information and literature. Volunteering will be promoted via Council's intranet.
(5) To have policies and procedures in place that create and promote best practice in terms of recruiting, employing, and respecting the dignity and individual needs of, disabled employees	(a) Undertake equality impact assessment/reviews of policies and procedures covering recruitment and selection panels, absence management, dignity at work, health and safety, stress awareness and flexible working, in regard to enhancing opportunities for existing employees who are disabled and providing wider recruitment opportunities for the disabled community	Corporate Health and Safety equality assessment completed by Nov 2007  Other HR policies as programmed in three year rolling reviews set out in scheme.	Achieved. Assessment completed and will be presented to ESG in April 2008.
	(b) Set up an internal disabled employee involvement and feedback group	Group established by March 07	Group set up and met twice.
	(c) Explore feasibility of undertaking a review of generic tasks within the Council to establish where these could be adapted and performed by a disabled person, taking into consideration a	Feasibility study completed by March 2008	Ongoing

Objective	Action	Target	Progress as at Dec 07
	diverse range of abilities. Seek advice and guidance from other authorities who may have completed a similar exercise and/or advice from specialist providers.	Timetable for completion of review to be set by the outcome of the study	
	(d) Explore establishment of feedback mechanism at each stage of the recruitment process to be provided to disabled applicants who are unsuccessful and who request it	Mechanism in place by December 2007	Achieved. All applicants are offered feedback at each stage of process.
(6) Keep the community informed of our actions and progress against our disability equality agenda	(a) Equality Steering Group minutes published on the Council's website, together with all equality impact assessment reports, action plans and monitoring reports – all available in different formats on request	Reports etc on internet following April 07 Steering Group	Achieved.
	(b) Seek opportunity to use community publications and networks such as the EAVS Community Network and ESDA's newsletter, to raise awareness, publicise our actions/events and outcomes of consultation exercises	Timetable dictated by publishing dates of newsletters etc	Ongoing – currently using community network.
	(c) Prepare and send out press releases in connection with this work as necessary and appropriate	Timings of press releases would coincide with planned events	Ongoing
	(d) Attendance at representative organisations and community groups meetings as invited to express or explain our actions and progress	Dependent on timetable of externally organised meetings	As invited.
	(e) Continue to support the Access Guide and its development where appropriate	Guide published annually	Funded CD Rom version of guide in 2007.
(7) To provide further training and development opportunities for public authority workers to have a much better understanding of the	Investigate opportunities with specialist providers and Sussex Training Consortium to run a range of specialist training and awareness courses for public authority workers and seek funding opportunities to run such courses, open up to all voluntary and public sector workers – once established investigate whether places on these		Work in progress.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress as at Dec 07</b>
needs and expectations of disabled people in the workplace	courses could be offered to the private sector for a reasonable delegate fee		
(8) Improve opportunities for disabled people to move more easily around the town and access private and public transport	(a) Set up a series of meetings between service users and private and public transport providers, highway, parks & gardens and Downland officers and licensing authorities with the purpose of discussing and understanding difficulties faced by disabled users, and to work together to find solutions that will improve access and increase opportunities of use in the future	Initial meeting set up by September 2007	DIG members have received information in regard to parking, taxi licensing and town centre regeneration – and have provided constructive challenge and feedback for these areas (some are ongoing). Due to work priorities and resources it has not been possible to arrange the wider meeting and this will be deferred to 2008.
	(b) Explore opportunity to hold 'Scooterbility' in Eastbourne and depending on outcome seek funding to hold event(s)	Scope of event by Aug 2007 and if possible, run first event March 2008	Meeting taken place with AJ Mobility and future planning meetings will involve members of the DIG – event due to take place in Spring 2008.

In 2020 Eastbourne will be a place where: everyone can access information, services, natural green-space, cultural and recreational facilities in a way that is suitable to them; diversity is valued; and everyone feels that they belong and each person is important to the future of the town

Objective	Action	Target	Responsible Officer(s)
<b>Eastbourne Borough Council</b>			
(1) Improve opportunities for disabled people to access Council services	(a) Involve disabled people in the equality impact assessment (EIA) process in order to find out the difficulties faced by disabled people when trying to access the specific service under review and associated information, using this knowledge to focus future actions toward reasonable and agreed improvements	All EIA's reporting to the Equality Steering Group to include specific reference to the participation of disabled people, highlighting their views and any resulting actions	Appropriate managers depending on service area involved
	(b) Work in partnership with the Access Group in the achievement of improved access to Council's main buildings as follows: <b>Town Hall</b> Review access to facilities above the ground floor including options to provide a lift from reception to the assembly room on first floor	March 2008	Access and Means of Escape Officer/Assistant Director Amenities and Contract Management
	To review provision of induction loops in all main meeting rooms		
	<b>68 Grove Road</b> To review access requirements to facilitate easier visitor access for deaf people		
(c) Continue to deliver an outreach service for vulnerable disabled people in their own homes providing advice, guidance on and access to Council Tax and Housing benefit	Ongoing service	Customer Liaison Development Officer	

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>
(2) Improve the way the Council communicates with and provides information to disabled people	(a) Seek advice and assistance from DIG Members and relevant organisations as appropriate, to raise awareness across all levels of the Council of the most effective means of communication with disabled people	Deliver two awareness bulletins on Intranet during 2008/09	C&PM
	(b) Continue to work with partners across East Sussex forming part of East Sussex Translation and Interpretation Partnership (ESTIP) to monitor and review existing agreements and investigate further opportunities to enable access to all Council services and information by all members of our community	Agreements in place by April 2009 on the provision of access support to adults with learning difficulties	C&PM
	(c) Explore with member organisations of all partnerships the Council is involved with on the feasibility of adopting accessible communication standards as set out above. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, work with relevant partners on the introduction of agreed standards	Carry out consultation by November 2008  Implement agreed standards with relevant partners by April 2009	C&PM Partnership officers within the Council
(3) Investigate alternative mechanisms to widen opportunities for disabled people to access recruitment and employment with the Council.	(a) Organise and deliver an annual employment workshop in partnership with other agencies in Eastbourne, where appropriate, to raise awareness of recruitment and processes to follow, that will improve work opportunities for disabled people	One Workshop delivered each year – first workshop to be delivered in Spring/ Summer 2008	Resourcing and Development Manager
	(b) Continue to explore opportunities for advertising vacancies and providing information about services and initiatives on notice boards in appropriate public access areas such as Library and Eastbourne Homes Resource Centre	Investigation completed by May 2008	Resourcing and Development Manager for vacancies C&PM for information
(4) Raise awareness of the opportunity to work with disabled	Working across sectors and with specialist providers promote opportunities for volunteering	Awareness campaign completed by May 2008	C&PM

Objective	Action	Target	Responsible Officer
people through volunteering			
(5) To have policies and procedures in place that create and promote best practice in terms of recruiting, employing, and respecting the dignity and individual needs of disabled employees	(a) Undertake equality impact assessments/ reviews of policies and procedures in regard to enhancing opportunities for existing employees who are disabled and providing wider recruitment opportunities for the disabled community	EIA's on HR policies as programmed in three year rolling reviews set out in scheme.	Assistant Director Human Resources
	(b) Raise awareness of disabled employee engagement group within Council and promote its value to potential new members	Two meetings to take place in 2008/09 plus two new members joining the group	C&PM
	(c) Explore feasibility of undertaking a review of generic tasks within the Council to establish where these could be adapted and performed by a disabled person, taking into consideration a diverse range of abilities. Seek advice and guidance from other authorities who may have completed a similar exercise and/or advice from specialist providers.	Feasibility study completed by March 2008  Timetable for completion of review to be set by the outcome of the study	Assistant Director Human Resources
(6) Keep the community informed of our actions and progress against our disability equality agenda	(a) Equality Steering Group minutes published on the Council's website, together with all equality impact assessment reports, action plans and monitoring reports – all available in different formats on request	Reports placed on intranet/internet within five days of meetings	C&PM
	(b) Seek opportunity to use community publications and networks such as the EAVS Community Network and ESDA's newsletter, to raise awareness, publicise our actions/events and outcomes of consultation exercises	Timetable dictated by publishing dates of newsletters etc	C&PM and other officers as appropriate
	(c) Prepare and send out press releases in connection with this work as necessary and appropriate	Timings of press releases would coincide with planned events	C&PM/ESP Co-ordinator/officers/Disability Champion

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>
	(d) Attendance at representative organisations and community group meetings as invited to express or explain our actions and progress	Dependent on timetable of externally organised meetings	Officers appropriate to the topic
	(e) Continue to support the Access Guide and its development where appropriate	Guide published annually	Means of Escape and Access Officer
(7) To provide further training and development opportunities for public authority workers to have a much better understanding of the needs and expectations of disabled people in the workplace	Investigate opportunities with specialist providers and Sussex Training Consortium to run a range of specialist training and awareness courses for public authority workers and seek funding opportunities to run such courses, open up to all voluntary and public sector workers – once established investigate whether places on these courses could be offered to the private sector for a reasonable delegate fee	Investigation to be completed by September 2008	Resourcing and Development Manager
(8) Improve opportunities for disabled people to move more easily around the town and access private and public transport	(a) Set up a series of meetings between service users and private and public transport providers, highway, parks & gardens and Downland officers and licensing authorities with the purpose of discussing and understanding difficulties faced by disabled users, and to work together to find solutions that will improve access and increase opportunities of use in the future	Initial meeting set up by September 2008	Planning Manager Licensing Manager Highways Manager C&PM ESP Co-ordinator
	(b) Run a series of 'Scooterbility' courses in Eastbourne. Depending on outcome seek funding to hold future event(s) involving disabled people in the design, content and location of events.	Up to three DIG members to participate in designing the course. First event to be held in Spring 2008	C&PM
	(c) Undertake a feasibility study to establish the potential benefits of the Council signing up to 'DisabledGo' – a web based company who undertake accessibility assessments of towns and their facilities. This will include assessment of	Feasibility study to be completed by January 2008	Disability Champion

Objective	Action	Target	Responsible Officer
	potential alternative providers and approaches.		
Seek the views of disabled people in regard to our proposed plans, facilities and policies enabling disabled people to have a voice and influence our decision making	(a) Officers will continue to present items of interest and provide information as requested to members of the DIG, ensuring that any learning and constructive feedback they receive is used in their service areas and awareness is raised among their teams. DIG members to monitor how their feedback is utilised within service areas by way of a pro-forma.	100% of pro-forma's returned to DIG for monitoring.	C&PM and other officers as appropriate
	(b) Engage DIG members and wider groups in the new town centre regeneration designs seeking their views and advice on access, travel and transport options, ease of movement and potential barriers.	Engagement event to take place in Summer 2008 when design proposals	C&PM ESP Co-ordinator Assistant Director Economy, Tourism and Planning
	(c) Invite disabled people to take part in an initial equality assessment of the Cultural Centre before it opens to the public, specifically seeking their views on the facility in terms of access and ease of use. Where areas are highlighted work together to find reasonable solutions.	Access visit to take place prior to the Cultural Centre official opening in Summer 2008	C&PM Artistic Director, Galleries and Museums Assistant Director Community Services

