

Background

Hackney is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country in terms of its communities and attracts people from all backgrounds. Hackney Homes is an employer of a diverse workforce from various religious and ethnic backgrounds. It strongly values equality and diversity and is committed to challenging discrimination and eradicating barriers which may, hinder the fair and equal treatment of minority groups within the workplace.

The vision of Hackney Homes is:

“To deliver excellent, responsive housing services, helping all residents to lead healthy and thriving lives in decent homes and estates within safe, mixed and sustainable communities.”

Hackney Homes commitment to equality and diversity is underpinned by a range of Legislation and Codes of Practice including:

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended), including the Equal Pay (amendment) Regulations 2003, and the EOC Code of Practice on Equal Pay
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986 (as amended)
- Race Relations (amendment) 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001
- CRE Codes of Practice – service delivery and employment
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and associated codes of practice
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Human Rights Act 1988
- The Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Relations Act 1999
- The Employment Act 2002

The European Union Equal Treatment Directive also introduces anti-discrimination employment regulations to include disability and age by 2006.

The Equality Standard for Local Government was introduced to replace the Commission for Racial Equality Standard. The key objectives of the Standard are to ensure that Local Authorities mainstream equalities into service delivery and employment in all aspects of their work and to help Local Authority's meet their statutory obligations. Implementation of the Equality Standard is also a Best Value Performance Indicator. The standard focuses on four areas:

- Leadership and Corporate Commitment
- Consultation and Community Development and Scrutiny
- Service Delivery and Customer Care
- Employment and Training

The standard has 5 levels, with level 5 being the highest. Hackney Homes by virtue of its transfer from the London Borough of Hackney Council is currently at Level 1 and aiming to progress to Level 2, by the end of March 2007.

The implementation of an Equality and Diversity Action Plan is important for meeting the Level 2 requirements of the Standard, as well as provide an avenue for monitoring, updating and reviewing the performance of Hackney Homes, in this area.

The Equality and Diversity policy will be realised through working towards the objectives and values of Hackney Homes:

- Embracing equality, celebrating diversity and delivering all services fairly, equally and with integrity.
- Valuing, developing and empowering staff to achieve their potential.

These will be achieved through forming key partnerships; consulting and working with all stakeholders; staff, contracted workers, partner agencies, residents, services users and visitors to the area. Hackney Homes will strive to improve services and increase opportunities for all, raising the life chances of the most disadvantaged within the community.

The Equality and Diversity Policy aims to provide a coherent framework, which underpins all of Hackney Homes, equalities, diversity and community cohesion.

In conjunction with the other key, people and performance management policies and strategies, Hackney Homes will realise its vision, "*To deliver excellent, responsive housing services, helping all residents to lead healthy and thriving lives in decent homes and estates within safe, mixed and sustainable communities.*"

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1. Purpose

- This policy seeks to clarify for residents, service users, staff and the wider community, Hackney Homes' interpretation of 'equality' and 'diversity'.
- It provides a clear statement of principles derived from its vision, for an equal and socially inclusive organisation and community, and demonstrates how the application of best practice underpins its wider social and economic aims.
- It outlines the duty of Hackney Homes to comply with relevant legislation and other statutory requirements and make known its commitment, which is beyond basic compliance where possible. This is in order to improve equality and diversity in the workplace; while achieving high quality service delivery and community leadership.
- It also identifies key 'equality groups' within the community, which Hackney Homes recognises are likely to experience ongoing discrimination and disadvantage; and whose needs and issues are therefore the focus of this and other related policies.
- It summarises how Hackney Homes will ensure that equality and diversity is integral to all aspects of its business at every level, informing service planning, workforce management and community engagement.

2. 'Equality' and 'Diversity'

Hackney Homes Equality and Diversity Policy reflects an approach that is based on equality and respect for all, and focuses on managing, valuing and celebrating diversity.

2.1 The interpretation of 'equality' is underpinned by three core values:

- **Equal Outcomes / Fairness**

Hackney Homes interprets equality to be about fair and equal treatment but acknowledges the need to move beyond just treating 'like for like' to focus on improving the equality of outcome for all in order to ensure substantive equality and effect meaningful change. This may mean responding to individuals or groups differently, in order to meet their needs at differing levels of disadvantage and discrimination in an essentially unequal society.

- **Dignity of the Individual**

Hackney Homes also interprets equality to be linked to the dignity and worth of each individual and believes that the recognition of dignity as an unassailable right is a valuable step towards achieving a more equitable environment. The notion of dignity is significant to the identification of such acts such as discrimination or harassment which under the Human Rights Legislation, is judged to be an affront to it.

- **Participative Democracy**

Hackney Homes' interprets equality to be about participative democracy and community empowerment in order that everyone, including the weakest and most economically and politically disadvantaged, have a voice. Furthermore, that the needs of everyone, including the most socially excluded groups met and all communities are afforded the opportunity to shape their own futures.

2.2 Hackney Homes interprets '**diversity**' to mean recognising and valuing differences, between both individuals and groups. The commitment to manage and value diversity is underpinned by the belief that:

- Employing a diverse and representative workforce, will allow for better engagement and an understanding of the needs of the local community.
- Managing and developing a diverse and representative workforce is one of the best means of ensuring justice and universal non-discrimination in the delivery of services and in carrying out statutory functions.
- Effective management and leadership is about valuing and harnessing the diverse skills and talent of the workforce or community to ensure consistently high levels of customer care and mutually beneficial community partnerships.
- Acknowledging and celebrating the rich diversity of the community, which Hackney Homes serves, makes people feel valued and respected. Promoting the benefits of diverse community helps to break down barriers and negative attitudes, created through a lack of understanding, misinformation and fear of the 'other' helps to promote social cohesion and good community relations.

3. Hackney Homes Vision and Key Objectives

The borough of Hackney is one of the most socially and culturally diverse in the country. Diversity brings with it both challenges and great strengths and Hackney Homes believes that through listening to and involving Hackney's residents, it will realise its vision of reducing inequality and social exclusion.

3.1 Hackney Homes Vision for 2006 – 2011 and Equality objectives

The Vision is; *"To deliver excellent, responsive housing services, helping all residents to lead healthy and thriving lives in decent homes and estates within safe, mixed and sustainable communities."*

The two key Equality objectives for realising its equality and diversity actions are:

- Embracing equality, celebrating diversity and delivering all services fairly, equally and with integrity.
- Valuing, developing and empowering staff to achieve their potential.

3.2 Equality and Diversity Statement

The vision of Hackney Homes for the fair and equal treatment for all and respect for dignity and value of all is summed up as:

"...reduce inequality and social exclusion within communities and between Hackney and the rest of the country to make Hackney one of the best parts of London to live, work and do business in"

4. Statutory Duties

4.1 Hackney Homes will comply with all anti-discrimination and human rights driven legislation including:*

- The Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended), including the Equal Pay (amendment) Regulations 2003, and the EOC Code of Practice on Equal Pay
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986 (as amended)
- The Race Relations (amendment) 2000
- The Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001
- CRE Codes of Practice – service delivery and employment
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and associated codes of practice
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- The Human Rights Act 1988
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004
- The Employment Equality Regulation (Sexual Orientation) 2003
- The Employment Equality Regulation (Religion or Belief) 2003 and Age (as amended)
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Bill
- All European Regulations and Directives
- The Equality Bill

*(see also appendix II)

It is recognised that not all individuals or groups benefit from current anti-discrimination legislation, which outlaws specific acts of discrimination based on certain, but not all, perceived differences in certain areas of life such as the workplace but not in the home. Hackney Homes is committed to legislative compliance and beyond that, to actively promote equality and non-discrimination in all areas, throughout the community it serves.

5. Implementation

Inequality and issues of discrimination are recognised by Hackney Homes as part of a broader and complex social context. An overall focus on the roots of inequality will be highly effective to tackling disadvantage amongst all sections of the community. The implementation of this policy seeks to achieve this focus through three core functions:

5.1 Service Delivery: To work towards ensuring that there are accessible and appropriate services for everyone in the community.

The key objectives will include:

- Work effectively with residents, staff and partners and contribute to the development of new partnership in order to deliver the best possible service to the Hackney community.
- Ensure that all services, and providers of goods and service, operate to and are procured to Best Value and Customer Care principles.
- Communicate clearly the expectations that partners and providers of good and services to Hackney Homes adopt this (or a similar) policy.
- Work to ensure that information about Hackney Homes services and functions is accessible to all groups within the community, in its content, style and mode of delivery.
- Adapt services or service provision to meet the differing needs of the diverse community.
- Ensure that the premises are fully accessible to all members of the community.
- Ensure equal access to the complaints procedure and monitor those who use it in order to identify potential areas of inappropriate service or discrimination. Ensure that appropriate action is taken as a result of the feedback gained.

5.2 Employment Practice: To work towards ensuring, equal and fair treatment and, recognition of the diverse potential, within the community.

The key objectives will include:

- Seek to employ a workforce that is at all levels and across all sections, representative of the borough population and monitor accordingly.
- Ensure that the recruitment process actively encourages applications from all groups in the community and particularly those that are underrepresented.
- Implement and monitor the application of the recruitment and selection processes that avoid unlawful discrimination to ensure consistent and effective application and to promote equality of opportunity.
- Monitor opportunities for and access to learning and career development, are provided fairly, using lawful discrimination (positive action) as appropriate.
- Provide a safe and accessible working environment that values and respects the identity of, and encourages individuals, to maximise and reach their full potential.
- Create a culture and working environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or intimidation.
- Where the requirements of service delivery are not compromised; ensure that all staff have access to flexible working, and recognise the benefits of work-life balance.

- Ensure regular review of the equalities and diversity training needs to ensure that the workforce is equipped with the necessary skills and understanding to work within a diverse environment and for a diverse community.
- Ensure that access to information and data is as open and transparent as possible.
- Encourage two-way communication between staff and managers and seek to listen to and involve all employees.
- Consult with representative groups of staff wherever possible, on all proposed changes to employment practices.
- Ensure that all Human Resource employment policies are regularly reviewed and cross-referenced with this document.
- Ensure that all Human Resource policies are assessed for potential negative differential impact on certain groups of staff and action is taken where necessary.
- Apply fair and transparent processes for job evaluation in order to ensure equal pay for equal work.

To ensure that the Human Resources Standards are met, particular regard has to be paid to the findings of the Crawford report (November 1997), which examined the impact of its employment practices and procedures on 'visible ethnic minority' staff.

6. Assessing the Work of Hackney Homes

6.1 The Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG)

The ESLG is a nationally recognised framework, which is used to assess the performance of Local Authorities and in turn Hackney Homes; in terms of equality and diversity best practice. When used effectively it can provide guidance for identifying and meeting diverse needs, recognise and take action to address actual or potential disadvantage, monitor outcomes for diverse groups and plan strategically for a fair and equal future.

The ESLG requires that each Council must as a minimum apply the framework to three diversity areas: 'race'/ ethnicity, gender and disability. However, Hackney Council has extended the ESLG framework to also apply to age, religion/ belief, and sexual orientation:

The Standard comprises 5 levels and relates to all areas of a Council's work including service delivery and employment practice:

- **Level 1:** Commitment to a Comprehensive Equality Policy
- **Level 2:** Assessment and Consultation
- **Level 3:** Setting equality objectives and targets
- **Level 4:** Information systems and monitoring against targets
- **Level 5:** Achieving and reviewing outcomes

Hackney Homes will aim to achieve Level 2 by March 2007 and will then work incrementally to achieve Levels 3, 4 and 5.

6.2 Service Improvement Reviews

Service Improvement Reviews are about examining the way that Hackney Homes delivers its services and consults with the people of Hackney in order to make sustainable improvements to services and people's quality of life. It will carry out a cycle of service improvement reviews each year, which must address key equalities and diversity issues.

6.3 Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)

Hackney Homes will be assessed against nationally and locally set equality Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs). For example, the BVPI 2 relates to the duty to promote race equality.

6.4 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

Equalities Impact Assessments are an effective means of identifying existing or potential differential impacts or outcomes, which are disadvantageous to identified diverse groups. EIAs can also help to identify the specific needs of some diverse groups and then inform how services are planned, resourced and delivered in the future.

Hackney Homes will conduct equality impact assessments on all (relevant) new and proposed policies and will review (relevant) existing policies, key functions and services to ensure fair and equal access and outcomes for all communities.

6.5 The Equality Action Plan

This is an overarching strategic document, which will summarise how Hackney Homes will meet its legal obligations and demonstrate to staff, service users, partners and the wider community, how equalities will be incorporated into its operations over a set period (usually 1 – 3 years). Underpinned by this Equality and Diversity Policy, the first Hackney Homes Equality Action Plan (HHAEP) is being developed and will be in consultation during the 2nd quarter in the 2006/2007 year.

The HHAEP will outline how the Equality and Diversity Policy and the Equality Standard for Local Government, will be implemented. It will also draw together other key aspects of equality and diversity work into one coherent document and plan.

The HHAEP will also link equalities and diversity to the excellence and delivery plans and the Human Resources Strategy; focusing on high quality customer service and good management practice. It will provide themes and guidance for staff, service users, partners and the wider community.

7. Identified 'Equality Groups'

Hackney Homes acknowledges that discrimination based on perceived difference from a dominant social or cultural group occurs to many people. This occurs for a variety of different reasons and some people may experience multiple, discrimination or a wide range of intolerant behaviour towards them. For example a black, Muslim, woman may face discrimination on the grounds of her gender, her colour, her ethnicity and her religion whilst a gay man from the same religious background may experience discrimination and a lack of understanding from people within his own community. For this reason some people may be subject to negative and intolerant attitudes from both within as well as outside their own communities.

Hackney Homes recognises that all 'minoritised' groups are at risk of potential discrimination and are likely to be disadvantaged in some way. It understands that different groups may experience different levels of discrimination in a variety of ways and that this can change over time depending on the local and national socio-economic and political context.

Whilst acknowledging that no list can be exclusive, the following groups have been identified, which have traditionally experienced high levels of social and economic disadvantage, intolerance and discrimination. It understands the negative impact, which this can have on the life opportunities and experiences of the following people:

- Women and Girls
- Young People
- Older People
- Single Parents and Carers
- People of lower Socio-economic Classes
- Black and minority Ethnic people
- Gypsies and Irish Travellers
- Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- Disabled People
- Lesbians, Gay men, Bi-sexual women and men
- Trans-gender people
- People of a particular religion / culture or who hold certain beliefs

Discrimination can occur in the areas of housing, employment, education and in access to services or opportunities. It can manifest itself at an individual, group, institutional, or national level and as well as harming the individual it also harms society and divides communities or groups within communities.

Hackney Homes values and celebrates the great diversity of the various communities of interest which live side by side within the borough. At the same time it recognises that different beliefs, interests and lifestyles may sometimes come into conflict with others. In a diverse and densely populated borough like Hackney, we can overcome these differences by accepting the existence of different beliefs and lifestyles which we personally may not share. Also, by celebrating our common humanity, gaining knowledge and understanding of different traditions and beliefs, and valuing the many positive contributions made to the life of our borough. The aim above all therefore, is

to build tolerance and promote respect for the right of everyone to live their lives without fear of ridicule, rejection or abuse.

In order to counteract discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and build tolerant, cohesive communities, Hackney Homes will undertake to apply the Equality Standard for Local Government across six key equality 'strands' which broadly reflect or include the groups identified above.

This means that the operations of Hackney Homes; from managing staff and providing services, to working in partnership and consulting with the community; will be cross checked against the needs and potential impact on identified equality groups who fall within one of the Standard's six strands.

8. The Equality Standard's Six Equality Strands

The following six strands are presented in alphabetical order:

8.1 Age

Hackney Homes will tackle discrimination against younger people and older people. It recognises that negative attitudes and common stereotypes about these groups can lead to discriminatory behaviour towards them and to their ongoing social and economic disadvantage. The contributions of younger and older people to the community are often de-valued or ignored. These groups are often less likely to be listened to and consequently experience a greater risk of potential maltreatment or abuse from others who may misuse a position of relative power.

Younger and older people have very different needs but often experience similar levels of discrimination and disadvantage and a similar sense of alienation or social exclusion.

Hackney Homes recognises that older staff may need to work more flexible hours and that rigid working hours can discriminate against staff, who have caring and/ or significant domestic responsibilities or other needs.

Hackney Homes will focus primarily on promoting the rights of younger and older people in a society where working adults have the most influence and access to opportunity. It will promote equality and provide opportunities and will work in partnership with other agencies to eradicate discrimination against younger and older people.

8.2 Disability

Hackney Homes is committed to tackling discrimination against disabled people. It recognises that disabled people are disabled not through their own individual impairment or relative ability to carry out arbitrarily defined tasks, but through common social attitudes. Such social attitudes also disable other sections of the community including older people, children and people with special needs or mental health issues.

Whilst society recognises impairment as 'abnormal' and at the same time, fails to remove barriers – physical or attitudinal, disabled people will continue to be marginalised and to experience discrimination, victimisation and social and economic disadvantage.

Hackney Homes will promote equality, providing opportunities and working to eradicate discrimination against disabled people. Wherever possible, it will provide the necessary support, assistance and care to disabled people to enable them to lead independent lives. It will also consult with disabled people on issues, which affect them and will work with disabled people in the community to improve services and quality of life.

It is recognised that not all impairments are visible, that disabled staff may need to work more flexible hours and that rigid working hours can discriminate against staff, who have specific needs. It also recognises that disabled staff and those applying for work with Hackney Homes, may require adaptations to equipment and/ or the working environment in order to carry out their work/ maximise their potential.

8.3 Gender and Transgender

Hackney Homes is committed to tackling all forms of sex discrimination and sexism. Whilst conceding that discrimination against men can occur, the focus is primarily on promoting women's equality and eradicating discrimination against women and girls. Women and girls make a positive contribution to the community and are often primary carers or have significant domestic responsibilities. Nevertheless, they often experience discrimination, social and economic disadvantage and lack of recognition. They can also experience harassment, abuse, negative attitudes, alienation and violence from either within or outside of their own communities.

The rights of women will be supported and promoted, within the borough. Hackney Homes will work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate sexism, sexual discrimination, harassment and all forms of violence or abuse of women and girls. It will also seek to influence and encourage other agencies to ensue equal pay and equal treatment.

Hackney Homes recognises that female staff and single parents (women or men), may need to work more flexible hours and that rigid working hours can discriminate against staff, who have caring and/ or significant domestic responsibilities.

Positive Action

Hackney Homes recognises that female staff may have experienced direct or indirect discrimination or may have been disadvantaged through unequal access to opportunities in education, training and/or employment. In order to counteract the effects of such structural inequalities and achieve fair and equal outcomes, Hackney Homes is committed to providing development opportunities through Positive Action initiatives.

Where there is clear evidence of under-representation in employment particularly at senior levels for other groups, the Council will extend existing Positive Action initiatives similar to those referred to below (8.4).

Hackney Homes recognises that the transgender or 'Trans' community is a diverse 'community of interest' with a range of different needs. It understands that issues affecting some people may be quite different from those affecting others, also that some services may need to be provided separately.

The level or degree of discrimination against members of the transgender or 'Trans' community is hard to quantify as fear of further discrimination and prejudice may prevent people from reporting or being open about their situation or needs. It also recognises that those who experience discrimination on the grounds of their gender re-assignment or because they are transgender, may also experience other forms of discrimination, for example as a black person and /or disabled person or because of their perceived sexual orientation.

Hackney Homes will respect the right of employees to live in their chosen re-assigned gender and will respect their preferred gender identity. Hackney Homes is committed to promoting equality, providing opportunities and working to eradicate unlawful discrimination against transgender people. It will, as far as possible, consult with the transgender community on issues, which affect them and will seek to work with transgender people in the community to improve services and quality of life.

Hackney Homes is committed to tackling all forms of transphobia. It will support and promote the rights of transgender people in the borough and will work in partnership with other agencies to tackle transphobic violence and abuse and to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of gender re-assignment or perceived gender re-assignment.

8.4 Race / Ethnicity

Hackney Homes is committed to tackling discrimination against black and ethnic minority groups including asylum seekers and refugees and travelling communities. It recognises that racial discrimination is a complex social phenomenon, which can be experienced on the grounds of 'race', nationality, religion, culture and/ or colour. Those who experience racial discrimination may also experience other forms of discrimination for example asylum seekers or refugees.

Hackney Homes is committed to promoting equality, providing opportunities and working to eradicate discrimination against black and minority ethnic people. It will work with its partners and the community to promote good relations between all groups and to develop community cohesion. It will also work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate racial harassment, violence and hate crimes and to promote the rights of all black and minority ethnic people to live without the fear of harassment, abuse or violence from others.

Positive action

Hackney Homes recognises that black and minority ethnic staff may have experienced direct or indirect discrimination or may have been disadvantaged through unequal access to opportunities in education, training and/or employment. In order to counteract the effects of such structural inequalities and achieve fair and equal outcomes, Hackney Homes is committed to providing development opportunities through Positive Action initiatives such as the Phoenix Programme for black and minority ethnic staff.

Where there is clear evidence of under-representation in employment particularly at senior levels, Hackney Homes will extend similar Positive Action initiatives.

8.5 Religion / Belief / Cultural Groups

Hackney Homes is committed to tackling discrimination against religious/ faith or other cultural groups. It recognises that negative attitudes and common stereotypes about these groups can lead to discriminatory behaviour towards them and to their ongoing social and economic disadvantage and can seriously damage community relations. It also recognises that discrimination on the grounds of a person's religion/ faith or cultural background is complex and often experienced on top of other forms of discrimination such as 'racial', or discrimination on the grounds of nationality or refugee/ asylum seeker status.

Hackney Homes recognises that the customs and practices of its workforce are becoming increasingly diverse and that some staff may need to work more flexible hours and that rigid working hours can discriminate against staff, who may need to observe their religious or cultural practices at certain times.

Hackney Homes is committed to promoting equality, providing opportunities and working to eradicate discrimination against people of different religions/ faiths or cultural backgrounds. It will work with its partners, faith groups and the community to promote good relations between different religious, 'racial' and/ or cultural groups and will target resources where necessary to strengthen cross cultural understanding and tolerance and diffuse community tensions where and when they arise.

Hackney Homes will also work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate harassment on the grounds of religion/ faith or cultural background or perceived religion/ faith or cultural background. It will tackle violence and hate crimes against these groups and work to promote the rights of all religious/ faith or minority cultural communities, to live without the fear of harassment, abuse or violence from others.

8.6 Sexual Orientation

Hackney Homes is committed to tackling discrimination against, lesbians, gay men, bisexuals or 'LGB' people.

Hackney Homes recognises that this is a very diverse 'community of interest' with a range of different needs. It understands that issues affecting some people will be quite different from those affecting others, also that some services may need to be

provided separately. It also recognises that some of the issues faced by the transgender community (covered under 8.3 – Gender and Transgender, could in certain circumstances and for some people, be similar to those under this section)

The level or degree of discrimination against members of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) community is hard to quantify as fear of discrimination and prejudice may prevent people from ‘coming out’ or being open about their sexual orientation. It also recognises that those who experience discrimination on the grounds of their sexual orientation may also experience other forms of discrimination, for example as a black person and or disabled person.

Hackney Homes will respect the right of individuals to be open or otherwise about their own sexual orientation. It also recognises that family ‘make up’ is becoming increasingly diverse and that some LGB staff may need to work more flexible hours as rigid working hours can discriminate against staff, who have caring and/ or significant domestic responsibilities.

Hackney Homes is committed to promoting equality, providing opportunities and working to eradicate unlawful discrimination against the LGB community. It will, as far as possible, consult with the LGB community on issues, which affect them and will work with LGB people in the community to improve services and quality of life.

It will support and promote the rights of LGB people in the borough and will work in partnership with other agencies to tackle homophobic violence and abuse and to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation.

9. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

The implementation of this policy will facilitate a reduction in social exclusion and promote community cohesion, tolerance and respect for human rights within the borough.

Hackney Homes understands that respect for equalities and diversity are intrinsic to good management practice and service excellence. The Management Team of Hackney Homes are responsible for ensuring that an Equality Action Plans is developed as part of all service planning and that mechanisms are put into place for monitoring and reporting on progress against identified objectives. All managers and staff are responsible for helping to implement set objectives and for working together in an open and transparent manner, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, challenge prejudice, reduce inequality and develop community cohesion.

10. Monitoring and Review

The overall implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Management Team with support from the London Borough of Hackney Council. The Human Resources and Policy Teams will also provide support to ensure the maintenance of a robust and clear equalities interface with all other key policies and strategies.

The Board members are also bound by a Code of Conduct, which is explicit in its *General Obligations*, that a Member must:

- a) promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person;
- b) treat others with respect; and
- c) not do anything which compromises or which is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the organisation.

This Equality and Diversity Policy and the Equality Plan, will be updated annually or as appropriate and all stakeholders will be involved in a full 3 yearly review.

Appendix I

Glossary of Key Terms

Assessing the Work of Hackney Homes: The process by which Hackney Homes measures its own performance against set criteria.

Best Value/ Service Improvement (Review): Refers to the processes outlined in the Local Government Act 1999 that requires local authorities to secure continuous improvement in service delivery.

BVPI: Best Value Performance Indicators provide a snapshot of Hackney Homes overall performance and progress on achieving continuous improvement in service delivery.

Disability: The Disability Discrimination Act definition of disability: '*A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal or day-to-day activities*'.

Discrimination: In the widest sense this refers to the process of making a choice between one thing and another. Within the equalities and diversity context it *usually* refers to prejudicial and negative attitudes and actions, which are directed at some groups or individuals just because of who they are, or because they are perceived as being different from a supposed 'norm'. However, some forms of discrimination within the equality and diversity context can be positive. (see Positive Action below)

Equality Impact Assessment: The process whereby Hackney Homes will test the potential of new (or existing) policies or functions to impact positively or negatively on identified groups within the Community

Mainstreaming: The term used to describe the integration of equalities and diversity into policy development, implementation, evaluation and review.

Positive Action: This refers to specific strategies or actions such as recruitment initiatives or training schemes, which are - in certain circumstances – a lawful means of discriminating to achieve more equal and fairer outcomes for traditionally disadvantaged groups such as women and or black and minority ethnic groups.

Note that 'Positive *Discrimination*' is unlawful in the UK

Appendix II

Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)

The following table of Best Value performance measures details those based on the Audit Commission's and IdeA's equality and diversity Performance Indicators for local authorities

Hackney Homes currently reports annually on 15 such BVPIs. However, a number of new equality PIs are being proposed. In addition, Hackney Homes will report on local and other service specific equality and diversity related performance indicators, such as the PAF indicators in Social Services and the EWSA and EAL indicators in Education.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	DRIVER	SOURCE
(a) The Level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms	Evidence of implementing successful equalities and diversity strategy across all areas	BV PI 2 a
(b) The duty to promote race equality. i - Does the authority have a Race Equality Scheme (RES) in place?		BV PI 2 b
ii - Are there continuing improvements for race equality from application of the RES? *		
Representation of councillors compared to the community served by the council by: (a) age (b) gender (c) ethnic background (d) disability	Leadership to reflect the community & community engagement	BVPI (x6)
The percentage of top 5% earners filled by women	Workforce to reflect the community & community engagement	BV PI 11a
The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities	“	BV PI 11b
The percentage of the top 5% of earners who define themselves as disabled	“	BVPI (x1)
(a) The percentage of authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition (b) compared with the percentage of economically active disabled people in the authority area	“	BVPI 16a
The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities (X) compared with the percentage of economically active minority ethnic population in the authority area (Y)	“	BV PI 17 a

The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	To increase access to services all sections of the community	BVPI 156 & Part M of the Building Regulations & DDA (Part 3) Reasonable adjustments
The percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people.	“”	BVPI 165
Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population	To monitor and address trends	BV PI 174
Percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action	To monitor success of actions taken	BVPI 175
The number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 of the population, which are provided or supported by the authority.	“	BVPI 176
Older people helped to live at home per 1,000 population aged 65 or over	To monitor success of work to enable older people continue independent living	BVPI 54
Percentage of people receiving a statement of their needs and how they will be met	To measure appropriate responses to specific groups	BVPI 58
Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord: broken down by: (i) black and minority ethnic and (ii) non-black and minority ethnic tenants.	To monitor success in engaging with all sections of the community	BVPI 75
Does the authority follow the Commission for Racial Equalities code of practice in rented housing and follow Good Practice Standards on tackling harassment	To monitor and address trends & ensure best practice	BV 164

Appendix III

1. Relevant UK Legislation and Codes of Practice

Disability

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Rights Commission Act 1999
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA)2001
- Disability Discrimination Act (Amended) Regulations 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Gender

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended)
- Equal Pay (Amended) Regulations 1983 & 2004
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Sex Discrimination (Indirect Discrimination and Burden Proof) Regulations 2001
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Civil Partnerships Act 2004

Race

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- The Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003

Faith

- The Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003

Sexual Orientation

- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Employment Related

- Employment Relations Act 2004
- Employment Rights Act (increase of limits) Order 2004

Disability Rights Commission

- Code of Practice: the elimination of discrimination in the field of employment against disabled persons who have had a disability (1999)
- Code of Practice: duties of trade organisation to their members and applicants (1999)
- Code of Practice: rights of access, goods, facilities, services and premises (1999)
- Access to goods, facilities and services: regulatory impact assessment (1999)
- Duty of reasonable adjustment on trade organisations to make reasonable adjustment: regulatory impact assessment (1999)
- Code of Practice: on employment and occupation (2004)

Equal Opportunity Commission

- Code of Practice on sex discrimination (1985)
- Code of Practice on equal pay (1997)

Commission for Racial Equality

- Code of Practice for the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment (1984)
- Code of Practice for the elimination of racial discrimination in education England and Wales (1989)
- Code of Practice in rented housing (1991)
- Code of Practice non-rented (owner-occupied) housing (1992)
- Code of Practice in primary health care services (1992)
- Code of Practice in maternity services (1994)

Age

- Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment (1999)