



The London Borough of Newham

Newham is a densely populated part of east London, with an estimated population of 237,000 in 2001. The borough has a large young population with almost a quarter of our residents aged 14 years or under. Newham also has one of the most ethnically diverse populations in the UK. The Greater London Authority (GLA) estimates for 2001 show that 56.5 per cent of our residents come from ethnic minority communities.

Our statement

It is the council's position that everyone should be treated fairly without discrimination and with respect of their human rights, regardless of their gender, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, language, HIV status, religion, national or social origin or class.

Our aim

Newham council recognises that everyone in Newham has a right to play a full part in the life of the borough. This means that everyone should have equal access to council services, job opportunities and to having their voices heard.

The approach we are taking is to make sure that we understand the reasons that create or contribute to disadvantage and social exclusion. Then we can move forward to tackle these through new ways of thinking and working.

In setting out equalities objectives, the council has developed a set of 'core values' which will underpin our employment practices, our service delivery to residents and the way we engage with the community.

Core Values

- Everyone has opportunities to fulfil their potential
- Unfair discrimination is not tolerated
- Everyone makes their contribution
- Racial equality is promoted
- DIVERSITY IS VALUED

Our commitment to improve

Newham council is committed to respect for human rights. We believe that diversity benefits and adds value to the way we conduct our business. A diverse workforce better represents the people we serve. The differences in culture and range of life experiences bring creativity, vitality and innovation to the organisation.

Legal framework

Newham council has responded to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 by producing Newham's Race Equality Scheme*. We have made a commitment within the legislation to:

- eliminate racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good race relations between people of different racial groups

We will not tolerate processes, attitudes or behaviour that amount to discrimination; including harassment, victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping.

We will demonstrate this commitment throughout the council from top management to frontline staff. We are governed by:

- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relation Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998

*The Race Equality Scheme is available on the council's website at www.newham.gov.uk or by contacting Corporate Strategy on 020 8430 3538.

Developing an equalities framework

Newham council wants to build upon current good practice, which ensures that all council departments consider equalities in everything they do. In this way we can be confident that real change will happen across a broad range of council activities.

Mainstreaming equalities means that we have developed a united approach. We do not have separate policies, structures or procedures for race, gender or disability equality work. We have a single policy framework which covers all equalities categories.

A framework for consultation and research will ensure that our equalities strategy is relevant to people's concerns and to their lives.

To make sure that we deliver the improvements we promise, action plans are set for each council department. These are regularly monitored and checked. This performance measuring allows us to make sure that we can respond quickly if changes in policy or practice need to be made.

How we will improve

The Mayor of Newham, Sir Robin Wales, has identified equalities as one of his 'Seven Key Tasks'. He is committed to the achievement of the Equality Standard for Local Government and has pledged that:

"we will commit ourselves to achieving the highest level of the standard (level 5) by the end of the administration (ie 2006)"

Developing and delivering the Equality Standard in Newham is one of the council's highest priorities. We have set up a working group of senior officers led by the Chief Executive.



Commitments to our community

As the council develops the Equality Standard and begins to take action on it across the organisation, there are some key commitments we will make to the community:

- to provide services fairly to all sections of the community
- to identify groups within the community whose needs or requirements are not being fully met by the council
- to carry out workforce and community profiling to help us better understand and meet people's needs
- to consult the community in a fair and open way - we will talk and we will listen

Commitments to staff

As we bring our equalities work on stream across the council departments from October 2002, we offer a set of clear commitments to our staff.

- to recruit fairly
- to operate a fair employment and equal pay policy
- to check and monitor recruitment, promotion, training opportunities, pay grievances and staff who leave the council's employment
- to develop staff secondments and mentoring across the authority

Commitments on our services

The council will:

- monitor how we deliver our services and who uses them
- set action plans and targets within each department
- have clear lines of responsibility for undertaking the action set out in the plans
- assess and audit our equalities work
- monitor targets and set new ones, creating a framework for continuous improvement

Monday - Friday
9.00am - 5.00pm

CNEP/20



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