



# Disability Equality Strategy 2006/9

## Foreword by Chief Executive:

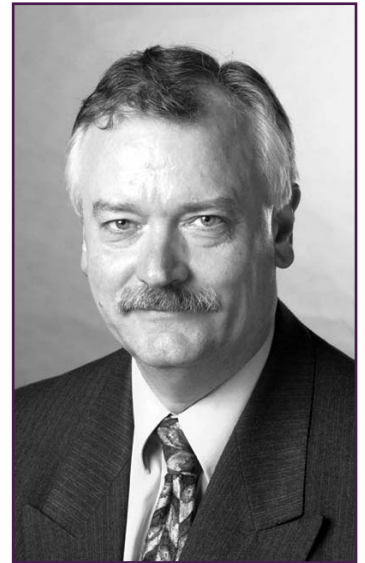
Croydon Council is committed to a policy of promoting equality for, and challenging discrimination against, disabled people who live, work, socialise, study or play in Croydon and those who come to Croydon as visitors.

The Council adopted the social model of disability in 2002. This defines disability as being caused by 'social barriers' not an individual's impairment. We welcome the new statutory duty as an opportunity to review our progress on removing these barriers and develop new initiatives for promoting equality.

The strategic objective for the next three years has been to identify actions which are achievable and will place equality for disabled people at the heart of all council decision making. Through our partnership working and community leadership role we will seek to promote and share good practice, and change attitudes which reinforce discrimination.

We have also taken the opportunity to address specific priorities identified by the disability community during development of the strategy. Namely to reduce discrimination in employment and tackle the harassment and other crime experienced by disabled people.

We look forward to working with disabled people and all others who share our commitment to making Croydon a truly inclusive borough.



A handwritten signature in purple ink, which appears to read "David Wechsler". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**David Wechsler**

Chief Executive  
Croydon Council

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# 1. Introduction to the strategy:

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 places a statutory general duty upon all public bodies to promote equality for disabled people. The Act further places a specific duty upon the Council and some other public bodies to publish, by December 4th 2006, a scheme which will effectively demonstrate the actions that we will take to meet the general duty (See Chapter4).

Disabled people are among the most disadvantaged when it comes to a range of indicators. Research by the Disability Rights Commission, Dept. for Work & Pensions and the Office for National Statistics among others has shown that Disabled people are:

- More likely to be victims of burglary or street robbery.
- Less likely to be in work or actively seeking work.
- More likely to live in poverty.
- Less likely to have academic or vocational qualifications.
- More likely to die early.
- Less likely to own or drive a car.
- More likely to be victims of hate crime.
- Less likely to be able to choose where they live.

There is very little statistical/quantitative information gathered locally which can effectively inform specific actions within our strategic action plan. However the mechanisms the council has established to ensure regular communication with the disability community ensures there is effective feedback from disabled people.

The council involves the disability community regularly through the Equal Access Group, Mobility Forum, Housing Disabled Tenants Panel and Croydon Disability Forum. The Council has its own support group for disabled staff, the “Workers with a Disability Group”, which ensures disabled staff are involved in Human Resources decision making and policy development.

Through these groups and forums and the group of disabled staff and community representatives set up to help develop our strategy we have been able to identify priorities for action over the three years of the scheme. The main priorities from disabled people's involvement in developing this strategy are:

- Ensuring staff can deliver good practice and strategy objectives
- Improving access to information especially the council's website
- Increase opportunities for employment both within and outside the council
- Increase the opportunities for independent living
- Enable disabled people to have a greater say in council decision making

In addition a survey of departments, in 2004, conducted for establishing a base line for the Council's first Disability Equality Strategy and review of that strategy has enabled us to identify gaps in our strategic performance. The audit of Council buildings, carried out by chartered surveyors engaged by the council, has identified the physical features that need to be changed to meet access standards within the DDA 1995.

Croydon Council adopted its first disability equality strategy in January 2005. That strategy has been reviewed in relation to the new statutory duties placed upon the Council by the DDA 2005. This second strategy has been developed to ensure we address the general and specific duties within the Act.

The council recognises that not all people defined by the legislation as having a disability see themselves as disabled people. Many Deaf people, for instance, see themselves as a linguistic minority rather than being "disabled". People with mental health conditions and other long term health conditions equally might see themselves as being ill rather than having a disability.

Croydon Council adopted the Social Model of Disability in 2002 (see chapter 9). This means that we recognise the term disability as referring to the disadvantage or discrimination that people with impairments, or long term health conditions, experience as result of the barriers society creates.

Through our corporate and departmental action plans we will continue our work in identifying the barriers to equality and developing effective actions to overcome and remove those barriers. Our long term aim is to create a community where all disabled people can participate on an equal basis without fear of harassment or discrimination.

## 2. Executive summary:

The corporate strategic action plan is designed to develop a consistent approach to disability equality which will underpin all our work in achieving our longer term objectives. Most of the actions we have identified in the corporate action plan are designed to lay that foundation.

We have identified 6 main strands for our strategic actions over the next 3 years:

- Mainstreaming equality for disabled people in employment and service delivery.
- Improving communication with, and access for, disabled people.
- Ensuring partnership working and our community leadership role promotes equality for disabled people.
- Improving how we reflect disabled people's priorities in Council decision making.
- Promoting independent living.
- Monitoring progress.

We will measure our success over the three years of the strategy by the following objectives;

- All staff routinely apply the social model and inclusive design principles as standard.
- Assessing decisions for their impact on disability equality is routine.
- Promoting disability equality in employment and service delivery is a high level priority at all levels of the council.
- On target to have all council buildings achieve DDA 1995 access standards by April 2011.
- All public documents available in accessible formats on request.
- People with communication difficulties find it much easier to communicate with, receive information from, the council.
- Our partnership working is delivering equality benefits for disabled people.
- Disabled people find it easier to influence council decision making and partake in the public life of the borough.

- The number of disabled people working for the council is increasing
- The number of disabled people in work in the borough is increasing.

We believe that this strategy lays the foundation for all our future action planning. If, at the review in 2009, we have achieved the above objectives, the council will have created a firm basis on which we can build real equality for disabled people.

### **3. Our achievements so far**

This three year strategy builds upon our previous work which has led to Croydon being recognised as “ahead of the game”. Since before the DDA 1995 the council has been working not just to improve access for disabled people to services and facilities but to change attitudes, policies and practices generally which discriminate against disabled people.

The Council assisted the foundation of Croydon Disability Forum and continues to work closely with the Forum. During the winter of 2001/2 the Council and the Forum jointly organised the “Shattering Myths Campaign” designed to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people among businesses, employers and the general public.

Croydon Disability Forum also played an integral part in developing our first disability equality strategy which in turn has led to the “Making Croydon Safer for Disabled People” campaign. This campaign has researched the experiences and fears of disabled people about crime and led to positive action to change policies and attitudes.

The Better Understanding Group of disabled people who attend our day centres has provided training to staff on the issues for people with learning difficulties. The group also puts Council information into easier read/picture formats. At present the group are making a video to promote safety for people with a learning difficulty.

The council has produced Guidance for Contractors and Procurement Officers called “Integrating Equality and Diversity in Procurement”. It has developed a framework to incorporate equality and diversity issues in the contracting process. This ensures that contractors comply with all equalities legislation including the Disability Discrimination Act as part of the tendering process.

Equalities questions are also integrated into the 'Pre-qualification Questionnaire and Invitation to submit Outline Proposals'. We also encourage our contractors to adopt non-statutory best practice in relation to disabled people. All new procurement projects are assessed for equality impact including the impact on disability equality.

Croydon Council has developed a generic equality impact assessment template for use by departments in assessing the impact of all new decisions. All reports to Cabinet are required to state the outcome of the impact assessment. Completed Equality Impact Assessments are also sent to the Equalities and Community Partnerships Unit and are also a publicly accessible document.

All generic equality impact assessments cover detailed issues concerning disability equality and specific guidance on assessing impact on disabled people is provided with the assessment forms. In the year to June 2006 ninety managers have been trained on conducting equality impact assessments.

This training includes specific guidance on assessing impact on disabled people. A copy of the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment Scheme and guidance is available from Lata McWatt tel: 020 8604 7077. Equality impact assessment is now part of the annual service planning within departments and informs each department's annual disability equality action plan.

In February 2006 a seminar was organised by the council for managers in the council and public sector partners on the new statutory duty to promote equality for disabled people. Addressed by Marie Pye from the Disability Rights Commission the seminar was attended by over 140 managers.

This preceded a series of fifteen one day disability equality training sessions which has ensured that over 200 managers, and staff with significant customer contact, have had foundation training, by December 2006, to equip them to meet the statutory obligations. This training has also helped to identify further specific training for managers and staff teams.



## 4. The disability equality duty

The DDA 2005 states that when public bodies are carrying out their functions they must have due regard to:

- eliminating all forms of harassment against disabled people that is related to their disabilities;
- eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- take steps to take account of a disabled person's particular disabilities, even where this means treating that disabled person more favourably.

The last point means that we have to go beyond just treating disabled and non-disabled people alike. In order to ensure equality there will be occasions when we will have to treat disabled people more favourably.

## 5. Aims and objectives

The overall aim is to mainstream disability equality into all the Council's decision making and activities. In particular Croydon Council wishes to ensure that disabled people can participate fully in the local community on an equal basis with non-disabled people.

The specific aims of this strategy are:

- Further develop a culture within the Council where an outcome of equality for disabled people is placed at the heart of all decision making.
- To challenge all forms of crime and harassment against disabled people.
- Better support disabled victims of crime and reduce the fear of crime.
- Through our community leadership role to improve access to employment and training.
- Work towards a level of employment of disabled people within the Council at all levels which reflects the proportion of disabled people of working age within the community.

- Increase the involvement of disabled people in developing Council services and other activities.
- Improve the way we gather information to ensure we can better take account of the experiences of disabled people.
- To remove the barriers experienced by disabled people to equal access to services, facilities, employment and other activities.
- Promote understanding and implementation of the social model of disability and the disability equality duty throughout the Council and among our partners.
- Work closely with our strategic partners and through the Community Strategy to achieve these aims.

## 6. The Strategic Action Plan Background

The corporate strategy concentrates on the Council's key strategic, cross cutting policies and decision making, its community leadership role and partnership working. Individual departments are required to produce their own action plans and in some cases will be producing their own disability equality strategies.

Paragraph 8 highlights the main priorities of each department. Here you will also find information on how to obtain individual department action plans, and strategies where appropriate. The Human Resources strategy for recruiting and retaining disabled employees within Croydon Council has a section of its own at Chapter 7. The Human Resources Action Plan is included within Mainstreaming Equality for Disabled People in the Strategic Action Plan.

### 6.1 Mainstreaming equality

Mainstreaming means placing the issues for and, concerns of, disabled people at the heart of everything the Council does. Management practices and processes at all levels which raise the profile of disability equality are core to this process.

The council's policy and guide on promoting equality for disabled people "Achieving Access for All" is widely recognised as an example of good practice. By ensuring that all staff are aware of the barriers disabled people regularly face and use "Achieving Access for All" in their day to day work, we can better ensure we get it right from the beginning.

Complementing this is our corporate policy of impact assessing all decision making for its impact on equality. Training and guidance for staff on carrying out impact assessments and how to take account of the impact on disabled people is helping to establish impact assessment as a key part of high level service planning.

The Council, as an employer, endeavours to go beyond mere compliance with the disability legislation by striving to embed best practice into all aspects of the employment relationship with its workers. This disability strategy will be an integral part of our overall HR strategy for employment, and will enable us to meet our statutory duties under DDA2005. The Council actively endeavors to ensure that its contractors and partners comply with the employment provisions of the DDA.

## **6.2 Improving communication with disabled people**

The Council recognises that we don't always achieve the standards of best practice that we set for ourselves. The aim in this strategy is that no disabled person should experience unreasonable difficulty or be treated less favourably when communicating with the council or seeking access to information, services and facilities.

Our achieving Access for All Policy and guide contains clear guidance on making information and communication accessible irrespective of the individual's impairment. Ensuring adherence to this policy will significantly increase the Council's ability to communicate with disabled people. However to achieve our aims will also mean identifying new ways in which we make our information available.

The council is concerned that the lack of BSL interpreters often creates significant delays for Deaf people who communicate by sign language. We will investigate ways in which we can improve communication with deaf and other hearing impaired people.

A priority, within the budget for making reasonable adjustments, is to ensure that all contact points, such as receptions and libraries, have hearing loop systems. As well as Typetalk and minicomms which are already used, we are investigating the use of textbox to assist customers with hearing impairments to communicate by phone.

A Housing Department consultation with Croydon Disability Forum highlighted issues of staff lack of awareness of Deaf culture and the needs of people with hearing impairments generally. Over the period of this strategy the Council will work with Croydon Hearing Resource Centre and Croydon Deaf club to improve staff awareness for all Deaf and hearing impaired people.

The group of disabled staff and Croydon residents who have contributed directly to this strategy have also highlighted how the new e-communication practices can disadvantage people with visual impairments. The strategy will ensure that all on line communication is screen reader friendly. The aim is to ensure full accessibility of on line communications

### **6.3 Ensuring partnership working and community leadership promotes equality for disabled people.**

Increasingly Councils are providing services and carrying out other functions in partnership with other statutory agencies and private and voluntary organisations. This is often achieved through formal partnership groups such as the Local Strategic Partnership. Formal contracts and service level agreements with private and voluntary organisations are other ways in which the Council carries out its functions.

Whether the Council carries out its functions directly or in partnership with another organisation, the core obligation to promote equality for disabled people remains with the Council. Partnership groups and private and voluntary agencies do not have the statutory obligations that apply to the council and other public authorities.

It is imperative within these working arrangements that we can still affectively meet our obligations to promote equality. All partnership groups will need to review their existing terms of reference to establish how they can best promote equality for disabled people.

We already have an established policy on promoting equality in procurement and impact assessing all contracts. This will need to be extended to all existing contracts and service level agreements. The purpose is to not only ascertain that existing contracts and service level agreements don't discriminate but also to establish if they can better promote equality for disabled people.

How far existing contracts can be changed to take account of our new statutory duties may be limited by the cost of renegotiating existing terms. Improvements may be limited in the short term, however existing contractors will be left in no doubt of the requirements they will need to meet if or when the contract is re-tendered.

Multiple discrimination creates extra barriers for disabled people. Mothers of disabled children and lone parents particularly experience significant extra barriers in entering the labour market often around access to, and availability of, suitable childcare.

Different ways of accessing information and/or different attitudes towards disability within some ethnic minority communities can also add to the barriers for disabled people from some communities accessing services and employment. These are two priority areas of multiple discrimination, that the Council intends to research during the period of this strategy.

The consultation process on this strategy has highlighted concerns from people with severe and multiple disabilities that their issues were not being effectively understood or addressed. We will work with our strategic partners to investigate how we can campaign to increase awareness of, and facilities for, severely disabled people.

During 2005 the Council, working in partnership with Croydon Police, Croydon Disability Forum, Victim Support Croydon and Croydon PCT, researched disabled people's experiences of crime. This research consisted of a survey of disabled people's experience of crime and a one day workshop involving staff from statutory and voluntary agencies with disabled people to identify priorities for action.

This process identified the following priorities:

- Address the abuse experienced by disabled people
- Work with young people to change attitudes
- Develop a single hate crime reporting number that is 'disabled friendly'
- Provide new and more imaginative ways of promoting the hate crime reporting number that are fully accessible

The above are being acted upon and form the basis of an ongoing campaign to develop more appropriate support and services to disabled victims of crime. The primary aim of the project is to increase the confidence of disabled people in reporting hate crime.

## **6.4 Better reflect disabled people's priorities in decision making**

Qualitative information from disabled people should be at the heart of all decision making. The council has developed a number of Forums and Groups to assist that process which have worked well in the past. It is also recognised that the present capacity within disability community groups will make it very difficult to meet the increased demand that will flow from the new duty.

There is a need to encourage greater involvement from disabled people locally. In order to ensure that as many disabled people as possible can participate there will need to be a range of different methods.

Croydon Talkabout surveys the views of volunteers about a range of local issues. At present about 12% of volunteers taking part have declared a disability. We will seek to increase the number to at least 15% and seek to ensure that the volunteers are reflective of the diversity of disability. Developing mechanisms for disaggregating the information will also be investigated.

We will actively seek, through a range of mechanisms, volunteers willing to take part in surveys, focus groups etc. We will also work with community groups to ensure that we can encourage greater participation by disabled people. This again will help to ensure that when community groups are involved their comments are more reflective of disabled people's issues.

As part of the Strategy we will investigate the feasibility of establishing two specialist groups of disabled people to assist the Council in meeting its statutory obligations:

- An Independent Disability Advisory Group
- A reference group of representatives from disability organisations

We will investigate the feasibility of setting up an independent advisory group to assist with promoting equality during service planning. The Independent Advisory Group will comprise of people who have direct experience of the barriers disabled people face and an understanding of how the public sector works.

Applicants would need to meet a person specification to ensure they have the skills and experience to carry out the role. The role of group members would be to provide expert advice to senior managers on the potential impact of proposed decisions and ways of better promoting equality.

The reference group is envisaged as a method for involving disabled people in longer term planning. The idea developed from involving disabled people in developing the strategy. The aim is to enable policy makers to meet with and listen to disabled people's experiences on a range of topics. A small executive would agree before each meeting the topics for debate.

The aim would be to involve our partner agencies in this project. This would enable the public authorities in Croydon to better understand the barriers faced by disabled people and empower disabled people to influence public policy development.

## **6.5 Promoting independent living**

The term 'independent living' refers to all disabled people having the same choice, control and freedom as any other citizen – at home, at work and as members of the community'.

Disabled people have the right to be empowered to make choices about how and where they live, work study and socialise. Housing, Education and Social Services Departments have specific responsibilities to ensure that disabled people have the support they need (see chapter 8 for an outline of the actions these departments are taking). The Corporate Action Plan (see pages ) sets out the actions we are taking to increase choice in housing for disabled people.

Equal access to employment, transport, leisure facilities and the built environment is also an important part of achieving those rights. Most responsibility for transport issues lie with Transport for London, the Mayor of London and the transport operators. This leaves little scope for the council to take direct action.

However through the mechanism of the Mobility Forum a regular dialogue is maintained between disabled members of the community, Council Officers and elected members with representatives of Transport for London, Southern Rail and Dial a Ride.

We have therefore given a high priority to increasing opportunities for employment in this strategy. Employment is an essential ingredient of empowering disabled people to advocate for those rights, make choices as to where and how they live their lives.

Our objectives for increasing the number of disabled people in employment with Croydon Council is outlined in Chapter 7. During 2006 the Council was successful in gaining funding to develop two significant projects.

The Opportunities Network is a network of employers launched in 2005 to assist employers in the Croydon area with recruiting disabled staff. This initial work also identified a clear need for a single source of comprehensive advice on employing disabled people. With funding from the London Development Agency this innovative project is now being developed further.

The project is designed to promote the benefits of employing disabled people through a wide range of advice, training and consultancy services. The key to the project's success lies in the private sector driving the delivery vehicle, the Community Interest Company( CIC), in order to meet target outputs. The CIC will be projected as a dynamic company responding swiftly to client needs - private sector to private sector.

A Community Interest Company is a new type of company, designed primarily for social enterprises that wish to use their profits and assets to pursue social objectives. The main outcome of the project will be a step change in attitudes to attracting, recruiting and retaining disabled staff amongst employers. This will enable businesses to engage effectively with job brokerage agencies and access other support services.

The project itself is contracted (subject to negotiation) to deliver 2 hours of consultancy advice to a target of 450 businesses in the south and central regions of London over the lifetime of the project (3 years). There are 3 key elements contributing to ensure the success of the project. These are

- The Steering group
- The Council as lead partner, particularly the project manager
- The private sector driven CIC and its operating board

With Equal funding we have also been able to develop a new pilot project aimed at retaining in employment workers who become disabled or long term sick. The "Improving Life Chances of Disabled People Report 2005" highlighted the problems of workers losing their jobs through disability and ill health who could have been retained in employment with the right support.



The aim of the project will be to work with partner agencies to develop a range of practical support, including a new case worker role, that will facilitate the reintegration of a cohort of people with a range of health conditions back into the work force. The focus of the project will be in supporting reintegration within small and medium size enterprises in the London Borough of Croydon and the surrounding commutable area.

The Project is called Back in Business and will target the following groups:

- People with long term health conditions
- People experiencing work-related stress
- People with mental health problems
- People with physical disabilities or sensory impairment

This project aims at much earlier interventions with the target group before they are classed as IB claimants and intends to achieve this by:

- developing a new caseworker role.
- developing a mentoring model that offers one to one or group. support from both peers and employers.
- developing the role of health professionals as 'employment champions' to identify and support individuals at risk of dropping out of the work force for health reasons or supporting their reintegration if they have already dropped out.

The "Aztec Centre" is Croydon's disability equipment centre. Disabled people have the right to expect greater choice over the aids and adaptations which assist independent living. The centre is looking at ways of making equipment available to purchase at a reasonable price, cutting out the wait for an occupational therapy assessment

The longer term aim is to develop the centre into an independent living centre which would help to provide a single contact point for accessing a range of support and advice. As part of this strategy we will be looking at ways in which that process can be supported.

From April 2006 a commitment of £1.5m over 5 years has been made to ensure all council buildings and other facilities with public access meet our legal commitments. Each year priorities are established and a work programme drawn up to ensure that progress is made with the best use of resources.

The physical changes that are required can vary from the colour of the walls or lighting, to major works such as installing automatic doors; from signage to drop kerbs. Any physical feature over which the Council has control comes within the remit of this programme. The programme for 2006/7 is contained in the action plan. New priorities will be established each spring.

The council is committed to ensuring that disabled people can have equal access to sports, arts and leisure facilities within the borough. The council will complete an audit of sports clubs and Council facilities in the borough, to identify gaps in usage by people with disabilities. A range of initiatives for increasing participation in sports is included in the strategic action plan.

The Environmental, Cultural, and Sports Services Department has a track record of promoting involvement of disabled people in the arts. Full details of the department's objectives are available in their service plan. See Chapter 8.a. for how to receive a copy.

Increasing the opportunities for disabled people to live in housing which meets their needs is essential for enabling or retaining independence. Ensuring social housing (council and housing association) homes meet the needs of people who want to live independently is a priority for the Housing Department.

The Department has also been very proactive in improving communication with disabled customers. In 2005 a panel for Disabled Tenants was set up which enables disabled residents on our estates to raise issues of concern and increase staff awareness of disabled customers' priorities. In addition processes have been established to ensure the communication needs of all customers can be met.

Encouraging greater housing choice within the private and owner occupier sectors is equally important. From July 2006 the Planning Department is encouraging all new housing developments to be designed to Lifetime Homes Standards with the aim of 10% to be wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable.

## **6.6 Monitoring Progress**

No strategy and action plan can be effective unless its progress is monitored regularly. Within this strategy there will be annual reviews of the action plan and a complete review of the whole strategy and action plan within three years. This will enable annual updates to the action plan and a completely revised strategy and action plan to be published by December 2009.

The measures the Council is taking to improve the involvement of disabled people will assist feedback on progress. This will be done through developing feedback via focus groups and surveys. Making Croydon “Talkabout” more reflective of the disability community will also enable further information gathering on progress.

In addition the Council will enter into a service level agreement with Croydon Disability Forum to develop and administer a mystery shopping scheme. This scheme will select at random services and functions from those identified by departments as being suitable for mystery shopping.

This will establish a base level for, and guidance on improvements, needed for promoting equality for disabled people. The mystery shop will be repeated the following year to gauge progress.

The new Corporate Disability Group will be tasked to work with the disability community to establish performance measures which reflect disabled people’s needs and experiences. This will increase the transparency of our action planning and assist with increasing disabled people’s confidence of the council’s commitment to equality.

## 7. Increasing Employment Within Croydon Council

### Introduction

Croydon Council believes that access to employment is a major factor in overcoming social exclusion. The Council is acutely aware of the under representation of disabled people within its own workforce and within employment and other economic activity generally across the borough.

The Council is keen to attract and retain workers with a disability in the organisation and seeks to be the employer of choice within the borough.

The focus of the Disability Equality Strategy for Employment is to consolidate and build on work already undertaken by focusing on:

- Attracting more workers with a disability into the organization.
- Ensuring fair access to employment, training and development and promotion opportunities.

- Ensuring that the new E-recruitment service meets the needs of jobseekers and applicants with a disability.
- Promoting the use of Access to Work funds.
- Capturing more accurate information on the number of workers with a disability employed by the Council, their location and the range of disabilities. This information will enable the Council to better facilitate needed adjustments and to support the progression of workers with a disability within the organisation.
- Changing attitudinal barriers to recruiting and retaining workers with a disability through training, implementation of Working in Partnership, and the new framework for performance appraisal and one to one meetings between managers and their staff.
- Supporting the Workers with a Disability Group.
- Review of Worksmart to establish how it is supporting workers with a disability.
- Promoting the use of Worksmart to support the recruitment and retention of workers with a disability.

### **Recruiting Workers with a Disability**

Croydon Council is committed to increasing the number of workers with a disability whom it employs. Voluntary sector and community groups working with disabled people in Croydon have identified the recruitment process as a potential block to people with disabilities gaining employment with the Council.

The Council has developed a protocol in an attempt to ensure that all applicants with a disability are given support and fair and equitable treatment within the recruitment process, from advertising jobs through to induction.

The HR and OD team will also continue existing positive action in relation to:

- Advertising Job Vacancies – ensure that the Council’s advertisements display the “Two Ticks” disability symbol, which lets disabled job applicants know that we welcome their applications. As users of the disability symbol the Council guarantees an interview to any disabled applicant who meets the shortlisting criteria.
- Supporting disabled applicants through the recruitment process
- Retaining workers who become disabled whilst working for the Council

- Providing appropriate disability awareness training for managers and workers alongside other training on equality and diversity.
- Providing work experience placements for disabled jobseekers
- Supporting the Workers with a Disability Group
- Undertaking outreach work with disability groups and Jobcentre Plus
- Monitoring and Evaluating all aspects of the employment relationship and taking action to address identified disparities between groups of workers

## **Retaining Workers with a Disability**

### **Role of Occupational Health**

The Occupational Health Team strives to enable workers who become disabled whilst working for the Council or whose disability progresses to remain in the employment of the Council.

The Occupational Health Team advise colleagues and their managers on reasonable adjustments that are available. They may also refer colleagues to specialist medical or other services that are able to advise individuals on the best way of managing their disability and the type of equipment that is available to support colleagues who acquire a disability.

The priority is to retain the disabled employee in their current role. However, if this is not possible then every attempt will be made to support the worker through redeployment into a more suitable role. Dismissal/retirement on the grounds of ill-health will be considered only where, after all attempts to retain in the current role or redeploy the disabled worker have been exhausted.

The majority of workers with a disability require little or no adjustments. Research by the Employers Forum on Disability, shows that workers with a disability have a lower incidence of sickness absence than non-disabled workers.

### **Role of HR & OD**

HR&OD provides guidance and training to managers on managing diversity, working with disabled workers including making reasonable adjustments, including use of the Worksmart policy on work/life balance. HR&OD also offer one to one support for individual colleagues with a disability.

HR & OD encourage leavers, including disabled leavers to complete exit interviews. Exit interviews will be analysed once a year to identify areas for action to improve the retention of workers with a disability.

HR & OD will raise the profile and visibility of workers with a disability through articles in staff magazines. In particular, HR&OD will seek to identify individual workers with a disability who can act as role models. HR and OD will regularly up date the good practice guidance on disability on the intranet.

## **Learning and Development**

The Learning and Development Team are developing the corporate learning and development program for equality and diversity and disability training will form a core part of this program.

## **Changing Attitudes**

Attitudes and stereotypes about disability create barriers to people with a disability accessing and retaining employment. Work will continue with managers and workers to promote the positive benefits of employing workers with a disability.

## **Work Experience**

Work experience is one way of enabling more disabled people to gain experience and thus compete in the labour market. A corporate work experience programme is currently being developed. It is hoped that this programme will enable more disabled people seeking work experience to find placements within the Council.

## **Support for Staff Networks**

HR&OD is currently working on a draft proposal for the support and development of support for staff networks. This document proposes a common framework of support for staff networks. Strong and supported staff networks can contribute to the organisation's objectives, priorities and policies.

So that we can mainstream equality/diversity into employment policies and practice we will work with staff forums and networks, such as the Workers with a Disability Group, to evaluate employment policy and practice to ensure that they do not adversely impact on workers with a disability. Also that they support the objectives of retaining in employment, workers who become disabled whilst employed by the Council.

Representatives from HR&OD and the Equalities Team attend the Workers with a Disability Group meetings. The priority for work with this group is to support it to become a fully autonomous, self-servicing and independent workers' group, and continue to make important contributions to personnel policies. Building up the capacity of this group so that it is not dependent on any one officer for its continuance is important if the group is to become sustainable and able to work in partnership with the Council to improve support and conditions for workers with a disability.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Council has invested in a new management information system which will become operative in October 2006. Until recently, monitoring of workers with a disability took place only on application to the Council. Some applicants may choose not to disclose, on application, that they have a disability and workers who became disabled whilst in employment were not counted.

As a result there has been under-reporting on the number of disabled workers employed the Council. This new system will enable improved monitoring, analysis and reporting of the workforce

Monitoring information about workers who become disabled whilst in employment is now being captured and it is hoped that in future it will be possible to provide realistic statistics about the number of workers with a disability employed by the Council.

A data audit was undertaken in preparation for the new management information system and to establish more accurate information on the number of workers with a disability employed. This information will enable the Council to provide better support to workers with a disability. It should also help to break down stereotypes about workers with a disability and their abilities by showing that disabled workers are represented in a wide range of occupations at different levels within the organisation.

## 8. Council Department Strategies/ Action Plan Outlines

Each Council department provides services and other functions which in their own way contribute to promoting equality for disabled people. Each department produces annually its own action plan for how it will promote equality. Some departments such as Education and Social Services have developed their own disability equality strategies.

Below we provide an outline of the main objectives from each department and information on how to obtain further details.

### **a. Environmental, Cultural, and Sports & Services (ECSS)**

The Environmental, Cultural and Sports Services department provides targeted and adapted services for disabled people, which are contained in our annual Service Plan. These included:

- Assisted refuse and recycling collection for disabled and elderly people
- Specialist services to assist people with disabilities in accessing the arts, such as the Beautiful Octopus Club for people with learning disabilities.
- Providing disabled parking bays across the borough
- Providing access to library services through the Housebound Library and Mobile Library services
- Creating a leaflet for disabled/less able bodied people on how to best access burial and cremation services

Further information on these services can be provided on request. Please email [ecspolicy@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:ecspolicy@croydon.gov.uk) or telephone the Council on 020 8686 4433 and ask for the service you require.

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## **b. Education**

To support schools awareness and understanding of their responsibilities under DDA 2005:

- Chairs of Governors have been briefed through the Director's meeting with Chairs of Governing bodies.
- A training session has been held for governors
- A strategic group including Head teacher representation has been established to examine ways of supporting schools enhancement of their Accessibility plans and development of other aspects of their DES. This group is designing a training session for Secondary Head teachers and school managers. The group is also identifying other ways in which it might support schools' work in this area.
- A cluster group of Primary schools is piloting work on the involvement of disabled people to develop their DES.

### **Strategic Development Unit**

- Education Property Section will continue to assist schools in responding to adaptations required at school level to meet the needs of disabled pupils. There are both small schemes that are likely to be funded at school level as well as major schemes that have made a number of schools fully accessible to disabled pupils.
- Plans are being made to review the operations of Education Transport to ensure that the needs of disabled pupils are being addressed.
- Plans are being made to review the admissions procedure to track the experience of disabled pupils through the process and to examine whether their particular needs are being met as part of this process.

### **Early Education & Childcare**

- To support children with additional needs within their settings, each setting can apply for funding from the Inclusion grant to purchase either staff or equipment. This is monitored through a panel which considers whether or not an award from the Inclusion grant should be given. A condition of the grant is that each setting has to submit a 3 year Inclusion plan. 117 Inclusion grants have been awarded since November 2004.
- The Inclusion grant has also been used to facilitate the Inclusion team working with Health professionals to provide training for staff in early years settings, in order to build staff confidence in supporting children with medical needs.

- Staff are finding more ways to problem solve within their own settings and as a result are admitting more children with more complex needs.
- Next area of focus will be to work with settings on 'Including Me' publication from the National Children's Bureau and Children's Disability Council. The aim is to shift the focus away from an SEN focus to an Inclusion focus.

### **Secondary education**

- Secondary schools will be supported in collecting and analysing data for disabled pupils in areas including attainment, achievement, exclusions, participation. Appropriate action is taken in response to identified issues or trends.
- Access initiatives e.g. the Ashburton Learning Village was planned not just for pupils with disabilities but also for employees and visitors to the site. We will also ensure that such access issues are also addressed in the BSF programme so that that is a major focus when implementation date is announced.
- An increasing use of special facilities in some subjects such as design technology. In some schools there are specific facilities for wheelchair users to enable them to use crank-down sinks for food technology and benches in workshops. Special saws that operate within a guide are used for pupils with limited dexterity or who are partially sighted. Computer aided design and manufacturing equipment is used to enable pupils with severe disability to design and manufacture products in light materials. We expect to further develop these initiatives in the future.

### **Community Education – Youth Service**

- All centres, bar one, are now fully DDA accessible, the centre which is not fully accessible has had adaptations made to ensure DDA compliance and work is continuing to further improve accessibility
- Young people with disabilities and learning difficulties have been involved in the ongoing youth consultation programme in Croydon. They have been fully represented both as participants and on the planning and management groups of youth conferences and forums e.g. involved in decision making processes about the allocation and management of Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds

## **Community Education – CETS**

- Senior Management Team sub group set up to examine implications of DDA requirements and to identify actions to ensure service addresses DDA requirements.
- The service has identified a range of documentation which has been prepared adapted and made available to support all staff in addressing key requirements of the DDA e.g. Confidentiality statement for learners with disabilities to be used by staff when enrolling learners with a disability who require support and information for learners with a disability outlining services & support available and CETS commitment to providing a learning environment which enables learners to fulfill their potential.
- An effective and extensive training programme has been delivered with an ongoing programme for front line and teaching staff.
- Learner Disability Forum regularly meets with senior manager to ensure learners voice is heard and can influence decisions and actions within CETS e.g. around accommodation and information issues.
- Special Education Needs Disability Act funds have been used to make buildings and learning environment more accessible.

## **Community Education – Extended Schools**

- Work is being developed to ensure that Special Schools and their pupils are enabled to both offer and to access extended activities.
- There are plans to consult children and young people with special needs and their families e.g. linking with Croydon Xpress project and working with Parents in Partnership.
- An examination of how best children and young people can access extended services is being looked at by the Council for Disabled Children and Continue. The outcomes will help to inform and share local good practice.
- The LEA will support schools to put systems in place for children and young people who have additional needs and attend mainstream schools to be fully involved in their consultation process.
- The LEA will ensure that schools proposals for extended services are inclusive.

### **c. Finance**

No information provided

### **d. Housing**

The Housing Department three year strategy has the following priorities specifically aimed at disabled people:

- Ensure social housing meets the needs of people wanting to live independently by funding housing associations to build wheelchair accessible homes and applying the sheltered housing quality standard as part of an ongoing refurbishment programme of council schemes. Enable people to move on from supported or residential accommodation into independent accommodation, including people with mental health problems and people with learning disabilities
- Enable people with physical disabilities to remain in their own homes through grants, advice and help with aids and adaptations, other home improvements and minor repairs. Develop an adaptations strategy to ensure effective use of resources and reduce the time to assess applications for adaptations.
- Provide an adequate level and range of high quality supported housing services, implementing the commissioning priorities in the 5 year Supporting People Strategy by increasing provision for older people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems and people with HIV/AIDS. Introduce a single referral route into supported housing for people with mental health problems to prioritise need consistently.
- Monitor outcomes of services for disabled people
- Consult disabled residents on issues relating to social housing through the Housing Disability Panel

### **e. Planning and Transportation**

The Planning and Transportation Department has made a commitment to ensure that customers with disabilities have better and fairer access to our services.

This will be provided by the following objectives:

1. Removing the obstacles that prevent people and particularly those from disadvantaged communities from participating in society and achieving their potential.

2. Meeting the information needs of Croydon's diverse community to enable people to access services they require

How will we achieve these objectives?

1. By providing technical input to the Corporate Disability Discrimination Act Working Group to ensure the Council meets it's legal obligations regarding physical barriers
2. To support the delivery of the Mayor's Transport Strategy which has a theme of improving access to public transport
3. By continuing to develop the website, continually reviewing the structure and content to ensure it is accessible.
4. To further enhance the Access Officers role in terms of Corporate liaison and the key link with disability groups (as identified through Best Value Review of "Access to Council Services by Disabled People"
5. Increasing the involvement of people with disabilities in decisions that affect them by promoting the Mobility Forum
6. Consult with the disabled community on relevant planning applications through the Equal Access Group
7. Checking for full compliance on disability issues through both the planning and building control statutory processes.

## **f. Policy and Corporate Services**

In addition to actions already outlined in the corporate action plan, the Policy and Corporate Services Department will meet its statutory duties in the following ways:

Policy & Corporate Services/Customer Services has made a commitment to ensure that all service access channels are accessible by people with disabilities.

We will achieve this by:

- Training our advisers and managers in the diverse needs of our customers including those with learning and other disabilities
- Exploring the concept of a mobile access team to provide access to face to face services across the borough, specifically targeted at people with disabilities and other priority groups
- Looking for opportunities to employ people with learning and other disabilities within the Contact Centre

- Developing the use of CRM and the Customer Service Dashboard to provide regular monitoring reports to enable service improvements that meet customer needs.
- Working and consulting with the public including people with disabilities to improve our understanding of their needs on customer service and service access issues
- Increasing the opportunities for our customers to help themselves to the services they need at a time and in a way that is convenient to them
- Formulating a service channel strategy that takes into account customer preferences

Democratic and Legal Services will be prioritising initiatives to improve access to the democratic process. These will include:

- Upgrade the sound systems and hearing loops in Town Hall meeting rooms
- Provide level access, accessible polling booths and other adjustments to ensure access to the electoral process
- Extension of web casting and the development of on-line forums linked to neighbourhood partnerships

### **g. Social Services Disability Equality Position Statement**

As articulated in the Social Services Disability Scheme, the Department aims to create an environment of inclusivity where prospective service users and staff are treated fairly and not according to the degree of their disability. Social Services include a commitment to aiding staff members who have acquired a disability whilst being at work.

The legislative responsibilities towards service users and staff with disabilities (encapsulated particularly under the Disability Discrimination Act) articulate the base on which Social Services approach is built. However, Social Services is keen to go beyond legislative compliance and adopt all strategies to recognise, and to eradicate the wider social exclusion faced by people with disabilities. In this way the Department hopes to attract, support and retain individuals with disabilities, in order that they may move into employment or obtain appropriate and beneficial services, thereby breaking the cycle of social exclusion.

The Social Services Department recognises that in society people with disabilities are often negatively stigmatised, and that this may prevent staff from disclosing their disability needs and support requirements to the Department. This lack of disclosure prevents the Department from being able to provide effective support, and may lead to some members of staff not seeking needed medical/therapeutic input. The Department is therefore working towards, not only reducing this stigma within its own environment (as part of a wider societal issue), thereby increasing individual confidence to disclose, but also providing staff with opportunities for disclosure at any stage in their working career. Social Services is intending to continuously educate their staff in order to create a positive non-discriminatory working environment.

### **Social Services Disability Equality Statement**

Social Services values the mental, physical and emotional well being of all its service users and staff. It is therefore working towards ensuring that the department itself is better able to protect those members of staff or service users who have issues relating to their disability. The Department will therefore seek to develop the ability of its members to recognise, and respond effectively, within Social Services guidelines, to disability needs as a means to achieve this protection and prevention (wellbeing strategy).

The Disability Scheme is based on the following strategic principles:

The department works towards a policy of:

- integration and normalisation
- addressing institutional disability discrimination
- promotes choice and uses existing structures more positively to promote independence and empowerment.

### **Current Support**

Current support within the Social Services Department for staff and service users' disability well being is provided by a number of sources:

- The Social Services Staff Support and Counseling Service
- Wellbeing Strategy-social services are in the process of developing a wellbeing strategy in conjunction with the Human Resources Department.

- The Equality and Diversity Manager who works within the wider remit of the Equality and Diversity and provides one-to-one support and signposting service to staff and community stakeholders on issues of disability and wider issues surrounding equalities and diversity as well as developing a Departmental wide response to Disability issues.
- The Support and Networking Programmes are open to all staff to attend should they wish and are all housed within the Equality and Diversity Section of the Department.
- A disability staff user group (corporate chaired by SSD staff)
- The Equalities Board and Disability Sub-group which oversee the implementation and normalisation of the Disability scheme within Social Services.

Social Services Disability Scheme focuses on three Primary functions:

- Workforce,
- Service Planning and
- Implementation and Community Engagement.

Therefore the department emphasizes partnership working, utilising local and comparative management information systems, participating in National and International reviews, evaluating divisional and centralised projects and meeting Department of Health standards and targets.

### **Targets 2007-2008:**

- SSD audit recruitment and induction process
- Map partners
- Benchmark Equalities standard
- Develop Disability Equality Standard for Children's
- Develop Disability Equality Standard for Adults
- Ensure the incorporation of Disability standards and competencies in existing Diversity training



## 9. The Social Model of Disability

Author; Janette Davies Chair of Croydon Disability Forum

Understanding the social model of disability enables service providers and public sector staff to identify barriers. These can then be addressed in order to implement the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

The social model has been created and endorsed by disabled people internationally and is widely accepted. This model signifies a shift away from the traditional models as it recognises that disabled people are not disabled because of their impairment, but by the structures or barriers present in society.

There are two different accepted models for defining the causes of disadvantage:

- an individual (or medical) model, and
- a social model

The medical model encourages explanations in terms of the features of an individual's body, whereas the social model of disability encourages explanations in terms of the characteristics of social organisation.

Under the medical model, disabled people's inability to participate in society is seen as a direct result of having an impairment, and not as a result of features of our society which can be changed. When people, such as policy makers and managers, think about disability in this individual way; they tend to concentrate their efforts on "compensating" people with impairments for what is wrong with their bodies.

The experiences of disabled people have shown that in reality most problems are not caused by their impairments, but by the way society is organised. This is not to deny that individual disabled people meet different barriers from one another within society, but these often have collective themes. It is these collective themes that inform the social model.

The social model of disability argues that most of the day to day problems that disabled people face are caused by the fact that society is designed to meet the needs of non-disabled people. What disables people is not a particular condition but the way society reacts to it. For example:

- lack of physical access
- lack of opportunities in education and jobs

- lack of choice
- negative attitudes and assumptions

These barriers, identified by the social model of disability, can be grouped into 3 main headings:

- **Physical or environmental** – examples include steps, stairs, inadequate signs, no visual fire alarms, lack of colour contrast.
- **Organisational** – the way the infrastructure, policies, practices and procedures of an organisation exclude disabled people. Common examples are; an accessible toilet cluttered with mops and buckets or a council tax statement not available in accessible formats
- **Attitudinal** - the way disabled people are perceived, for example as passive, dependent, to be pitied or felt sorry for.

Taking a social approach to disability, and removing the barriers, ensures that responsibility remains with everyone (disabled and non-disabled). It enables organisations to review their own performance, tackling the origins of discrimination that exist internally. It assists in identifying and removing barriers which are within our own control, such as management practices, the way work is organised and building design.

It is also important to recognise that disabled people are Women, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender, Black or Minority Ethnic, young or old, rich or poor and liable to experience discrimination on these grounds too or discrimination on the grounds of their religion or belief. It is therefore important to adopt the social model of disability in all our work in overcoming these forms of discrimination.

Complementary to the social model are the principles of inclusive design. These emerged from an approach to designing buildings and spaces which are accessible to disabled people. Using these principles not just for designing our physical environment but all aspects of service planning creates outcomes which are accessible not just to disabled people but to other groups in society, such as older people or parents with young children.

These principles are;

- Involving disabled people (and other potential customers) in planning the project from the outset and throughout the process
- From the beginning ensure the planned outcome can be inclusive for as many people as possible

- Embrace diversity and difference
- Projects relating to the built environment should be safe, legible and predictable
- Services and facilities that are not accessible are not high quality

# 10. The Corporate Strategy Action Plan:

## Mainstreaming equality for disabled people

**Objective: All departments to apply the social model and inclusive design principles as standard**

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All managers to have the information to implement policy and guidance with staff teams</li>   <li>• Develop greater familiarity with and use of Achieving Access for All policy and guide on promoting equality</li>   <li>Ensure disability equality is promoted in all induction of new staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce management guidelines for implementing “Achieving Access for All” and the Disability Equality Duty</li>   <li>• Organise briefing sessions for managers on “Achieving Access for All”</li>   <li>• All managers to have briefed their teams on implementing “Achieving Access for All”</li>   <li>• Include section on using “Achieving Access for All” in Induction booklet</li>   <li>• Include section on promoting equality in job review and performance management appraisal interviews</li>   <li>• Include a section on disability awareness and DDA 2005 in all corporate induction</li>   <li>• Team leaders and managers to brief all new staff on Achieving Access for All during induction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By March 2007</li>   <li>April –December ‘07</li>   <li>By March 2008</li>   <li>By March 2007</li>   <li>By March 2007</li>   <li>On going</li>   <li>On going</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR&amp;OD and ECPU</li>   <li>HR&amp;OD and ECPU</li>   <li>Divisional Directors</li>   <li>HR&amp;OD and ECPU</li>   <li>HR&amp;OD and Departmental Management Teams</li>   <li>Department Management Teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieving Access for All updated December 2005</li> </ul>

## Mainstreaming equality for disabled people

### Objective: All service planning to be disability equality impact assessed

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Departments to screen all service plans for prioritising disability equality impact assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritisation programme established</li> <li>Timetable for impact assessments in Department Action Plans</li> </ul>	Annually from Dec 2006  Annually from April 2007	Departmental Management Teams  Departmental Management Teams	Prioritisation grid produced and piloted Dec 05 –March 06

### Objective; Raise profile of disability equality throughout the Council

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Develop a strategic overview & consistent corporate approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each department agrees strategic lead(s) from among senior/ middle managers</li> <li>Establish Corporate Disability Group for strategic leads</li> </ul>	Jan 2007  Feb 2007	Department Management Teams  Head of ECPU	Prioritisation grid produced and piloted Dec 05 –March 06

## Mainstreaming equality for disabled people

### Objective; Raise profile of disability equality throughout the Council

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Ensure good communication with disabled staff and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree a corporate strategic lead to chair meetings of corporate group</li> <li>• Sharing of good practice across departments through Corporate disability Group</li> <li>• Disabled staff group and Croydon Disability Forum invited to send representatives to Corporate Disability Group</li> </ul>	<p>Feb 2007</p> <p>On going</p> <p>By Feb 2007</p>	<p>Head of ECPU</p> <p>Corporate Disability Group</p> <p>Head of ECPU</p>	

## Mainstreaming disability equality into the HR & OD Strategy

### Achieving a workforce that reflects the local economically active population

**Objective: Increase the number of workers with a disability recruited and retained by the Council**

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Implement 2 Ticks Disability Symbol commitments	<p>All applicants with a disability who meet the person specification are interviewed and considered solely on their abilities.</p> <p>Revised Job Review/Performance Appraisal procedure will provide a mechanism for all workers at least once a year, to discuss with their manager the support they need to progress in their role and within the organisation this will include workers with a disability.</p> <p>Disability awareness training enables employees to develop the level of awareness needed to implement the 2 ticks commitments. (250 managers trained per year)</p> <p>Report on the implementation of the Two Ticks commitment included in the Annual Report on Employment.</p>	<p>Dec. 2006 on-going</p> <p>Dec 06 onwards</p> <p>Dec 06 onwards</p>	HR&OD	

## Mainstreaming disability equality into the HR & OD Strategy

### Achieving a workforce that reflects the local economically active population

**Objective: Increase the number of workers with a disability recruited and retained by the Council**

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Monitor the retention rate of workers who develop a disability whilst in employment	Introduction of the new Management Information System providing more accurate information on the number of workers who develop a disability retained in employment.	October 2006 – April 2007	HR &OD – Occupational Health; Health and Safety	
Work with disability organisations to encourage applications from their members.  Implement the protocol for the recruitment of workers with a disability	Increase in applications from applicants with a disability through disability organisations.  Three Outreach Recruitment Events with Disability Groups and Jobcentre Plus  All applicants with a disability are tracked throughout the whole recruitment process to ensure that they receive fair treatment and that any reasonable adjustments required are made	Dec. 06 onwards  Dec. 06 onwards	HR & OD  HR&OD	
Continue to work with the Workers with a Disability Group and Equalities in Employment Forum to ensure that HR Policies do not adversely impact on workers with a disability.	Participation in policy development by Workers with a Disability through attendance at four Equalities in Employment Forum meetings per year All new HR & OD policies screened by “Workers with a Disability Group “for adverse impact on workers with a disability”	Dec. 06 onwards  On going	HR &OD	



## Mainstreaming disability equality into the HR & OD Strategy

### Achieving a workforce that reflects the local economically active population

**Objective: Increase the number of workers with a disability recruited and retained by the Council**

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Conduct Impact Assessments on all HR&OD policies and procedures to ensure that they do not adversely impact on workers with a disability.	All new HR&OD policies, procedures, to be assessed for their impact on workers with a disability	Dec. 06 onwards	HR&OD	
Promote Access To Work	Increase in use of Access to Work Funds. Use of Access to work monitored.  Information on Access to Work disseminated at Corporate Induction, through the Intranet and disability training.	Dec.06  on-going	HR&OD	
Continue to monitor applications for employment; redeployment; job evaluations	Disabled workers monitored by department.	Dec.06 On going	HR &OD	
Monitor use of the Discipline; Grievance; Managing Performance; Managing Sickness, Dignity at Work procedures	Disabled workers monitored by department	Dec.06 on-going	HR &OD	
Monitor Exit Interviews to find out reasons why workers with a disability leave the organisation	70% of disabled leavers undertake an exit interview. The results used to inform future policy.	Dec.06 on-going	HR &OD	

**Objective: Increasing Work Experience Opportunities for people with a disability**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
Continue to work with internal and external partners, Jobcentre Plus and Disability groups to increase the number of work experience opportunities for disabled jobseekers	Establishment of a Corporate framework for providing work experience opportunities for workers with a disability.	Dec.06 on-going	HR&OD	

## Mainstreaming disability equality into the HR & OD Strategy

### Achieving a workforce that reflects the local economically active population

**Objective: Building up the capacity of the organisation to meet the General and Specific Duties set out in the DDA 2005**

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Continue with Grassroots Training	Take up of grassroots training across the organisation. 100 workers receive Grassroots Training.	Dec.06 on-going	HR&OD	
Include training on disability in employment as an integral part of the Corporate Learning and Development Strategy	Disability training incorporated into the corporate Learning and Development Strategy.  Number of workers receiving disability training appropriate to their level.	Dec. 06 onwards  On going	HR&OD  HR&OD	
Publicise information/articles about disability issues on the intranet and staff magazines.	Good practice guides on the Intranet updated every three months. Three articles included in staff magazines each year.	Dec. 06 onwards		

## Improve Communication with Disabled People

### Objective: Ensure online information is accessible

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Improve the accessibility of the Council's Web site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve AA standard for website accessibility</li> <li>• Create text only version of website</li> </ul>	By July 2007	Divisional Director Service Transformation	
		By July 2007	Divisional Director Service Transformation	

### Objective: Communications strategy to better reflect needs of disabled people

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Review of communications strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of strategy to involve disabled people</li> <li>• Strategy to reinforce Achieving Access for All policy and guidance</li> <li>• Feedback from disability groups shows improvement in accessing information</li> </ul>	Early 2007	Divisional Director Strategy and Communications	
		Early 2007		
		End of 2008	Policy Manager (Equalities Policy)	

## Mainstreaming equality for disabled people

### Objective: Improve feedback through complaints procedure

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
more accessible for disabled people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On line complaints form to be accessible to AA standard as minimum</li> <li>• Forms to be available in hard copies and inaccessible formats on request</li> <li>• Promote awareness and accessing complaints procedure through voluntary sector partners</li> </ul>	<p>By July 2007</p> <p>By July 2007</p> <p>On going from Dec 2007</p>	<p>Divisional Director Service Transformation</p> <p>Divisional Director Service Transformation</p> <p>Divisional Director Service Transformation</p>	
Introduce full equalities monitoring of complaints at every stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All complaints to be monitored by equality group</li> <li>• Reports annually of groups being disadvantaged</li> </ul>	<p>From March 2008</p> <p>From March 2009</p>	<p>Divisional Director Service Transformation</p> <p>Divisional Director Service Transformation</p>	

## Objective: Reduce crime and fear of crime experienced by disabled people

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Support the "Making Croydon Safer for Disabled People Campaign" Increase reporting of harassment & other hate crime against disabled people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist project group to access funding annually to develop campaign</li> <li>• Encourage partners to address the concerns identified in 2005 survey</li> <li>• Develop single hate crime reporting number within contact centre staff</li> <li>• Provide training to staff on receiving calls from victims</li> <li>• Publicise numbers via innovative and accessible means</li> </ul>	On going  On going By March 2007  By March 2007 On going	Safer Croydon Partnership  Safer Croydon Partnership ECPU  ECPU and Victim Support Project Group	

## Better reflect disabled peoples' priorities in decision making

**Objective: Increase the involvement of, and feedback, from disabled people**

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Encourage disabled people's involvement in Croydon Talkabout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review accessibility of Talkabout</li> <li>Work to increase disabled people's participation to at least 15%</li> </ul>	By next recruitment	TBC	
Seek volunteers from among disability community to take part in focus groups, surveys etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Council lists such as Blue Badge Scheme and Disabled Freedom Pass to contact potential volunteers</li> <li>Write to all disability groups seeking volunteers</li> <li>Establish forums for seeking views of volunteers</li> </ul>	Jan – March 2007  Jan –March 2007 On going	ECPU  ECPU  Corporate Disability Group & Department Management Teams	
Investigate the feasibility of establishing an Independent Advisory Group of Disabled People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw up a proposal for establishing the group</li> <li>Undertake a cost benefit analysis and report to Cabinet</li> </ul>	By Jan 2007  By July 2007	Corporate Disability Group Strategic Lead	
Investigate setting up a reference group of disabled people to inform longer term policy development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a working group of Council Officers and representatives of disability groups to investigate draw up proposal</li> <li>Submit proposal with costs for Cabinet approval</li> </ul>	By Dec 2006  By March 2008	Equalities and Diversity Forum  Equalities and Diversity Forum	

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
Increase disabled people's involvement in community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review disabled people's involvement in community organisations funded by Croydon Council</li> <li>• Review funding of community organisations to identify ways of assisting the greater involvement of disabled people</li> <li>• Draw up an action plan for increasing the involvement of disabled people in community organisations</li> <li>• Staff involved with community organisations to provide advice and encouragement on promoting disabled people's involvement</li> </ul>	<p>Jan – June 2007</p> <p>July – Dec 2007</p> <p>Jan – March 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>ECPU</p> <p>ECPU</p> <p>ECPU</p> <p>Divisional Directors / Divisional Management Teams</p>	
Establish a web-based tool to actively involve individuals and communities in local decisions. Reaching those not able or willing to attend meetings/events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate project and report</li> <li>• New users contributing to local decision making</li> </ul>	<p>Dec 06/Jan 07</p> <p>Feb 07 onwards</p>	CVA	Project tested with representatives from disability groups. Promoted through community magazines



## Better promote independent living

### Objective: Increase the number of disabled residents of Croydon in employment

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
<p>Work with employers to change the negative perceptions of recruiting and retaining disabled staff within South and Central London by setting up a project to create business solutions to recruiting and retaining disabled employees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a steering group comprised of representatives from the London Boroughs of Croydon, Lambeth and Southwark, key private sector partners and other statutory and community agencies</li> <li>• Establish a Community Involvement Company responsible for delivering the key outputs of the project.</li> <li>• Appoint a Chief Executive, 2 consultants and an officer Manager</li> <li>• Deliver 2 hours of consultancy advice to a target of 450 businesses in south and Central London</li> </ul>	<p>By mid 2007</p> <p>By Mid 2007</p> <p>By mid 2007</p> <p>By December 2009</p>	<p>Divisional Director , Partnership Business and Community</p> <p>Steering Group</p> <p>CIC Board of Directors</p> <p>Chief Executive of the Community Involvement Company</p>	<p>'Opportunities Network' of employers set up in 2005 with private sector funding</p>

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
<p>To work with partner agencies to develop a range of practical support, including a new case worker role, which will facilitate the reintegration of a cohort of people with a range health conditions back into the work force. The focus of the project will be in supporting reintegration within small and medium size enterprises in the London Borough of Croydon and the surrounding commutable area.</p> <p>Target Groups            People with long term health conditions            People experiencing work-related stress            People with mental health problems            People with physical disabilities or sensory impairment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 individuals identified and provided with casework support</li> <li>• 25 individual development plans agreed</li> <li>• 5 employment champions trained</li> <li>• 6 mentors trained</li> <li>• 10 individuals reintegrated into a local small or medium sized enterprise;</li> <li>• 5 individuals referred on to alternative employment pathways (self employment/ entrepreneurship);</li> <li>• 5 individuals referred on to further training/ skills acquisition or education</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To link existing strategic employment initiatives, job brokerage and support projects, to enable the work of the Project to be sustained after funding stream ends and thus ensure that the good practice and support developed is sustained locally</li> </ul>	By end of 2007	Partnership, Business and Community Division	

**Objective: Improve access to the built environment (buildings, pavements, town centres etc.)**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
Meet all priority one actions from DDA Audit of Council premises open to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2006/7 priorities completed</li> <li>• Review and set new priorities</li> <li>• On target to complete all priority one work by March 2011</li> </ul>	March 2007 March annually March 2009	Access Officer/	

**Objective: Develop an Independent Living Centre for Croydon**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
Investigate ways of developing the Accessibility Centre into an independent living centre	Phase 1: Development of website to enable viewing of equipment available	By Dec 2006	Centre Management	
	Phase 2: Creation and staffing of an onsite shop with staffing by disabled people	By Dec 2007	Centre Management	
	Phase 3 formation and sustainability of an Independent Living Centre run by and for disabled people	On going	Centre Management	
Learn from experience in other authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange visit to other Independent Living Centre</li> </ul>	By April 2007	S. Services & ESDU	

## Objective: Improve access to sports and leisure facilities

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
<p>Ensure council leisure services don't discriminate against disabled people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the usage of leisure centers for level of use by disabled people through annual customer surveys.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	ECSS, Leisure Manager	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through annual survey identify any groups underrepresented and investigate reasons for non use</li> </ul>	Ongoing	ECSS, Leisure Manager	<p>Linked to above. Also, awareness training underway for Parkwood Leisure staff, facilitated by CVA</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review accessibility of council sports facilities using data from access audits</li> </ul>	Ongoing		<p>DDA Action Plan produced. Works to be completed when funding available or when centers are redeveloped</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an audit of sports clubs and Council facilities in the borough, to identify gaps in usage by people with disabilities</li> </ul>	Ongoing	ECSS (Policy Advisor)/ SPA Task Group	<p>SPA Strategy 2005-2008 Disability swimming club currently using Purley Pool</p>

## Mainstreaming equality for disabled people

**Objective: All departments to apply the social model and inclusive design principles as standard**

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a programme of events/activities within the sports development programme to increase participation for all target groups, including people with disabilities</li>   <li>• Continue to improve access to extended provision for people with disabilities in Croydon (Increase number participating from 4,435 by 5%)</li>   <li>• Continue to engage harder to reach groups to take part in physical activity, including people with disabilities (Increase participation by 30% of these target groups)</li> </ul>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>March 2007</p> <p>March 2007</p>	<p>ECSS (Sports Dev. Officer (SDO) Disabilities)</p> <p>ECSS (Sports Dev. Officer (SDO) Disabilities)</p>	<p>Service Plan 2006/07 ECSS (Community Physical activity Co-ordinator)</p> <p>Service Plan 2006/07</p> <p>Service Plan 2006-2007</p>

## Objective: Increasing Amount of Accessible Housing

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
<p>Increase the availability of accessible housing in the private rented/owner occupier sections</p>	<p>Encourage all new housing development, including affordable housing, to be designed to the lifetime homes standard and for 10% to be wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable</p>	<p>From July 2006 2008-10 affordable housing programme</p>	<p>Head of Planning Control Asst Director of Housing (Finance and Investment)</p>	
	<p>Adaptations carried out to the homes of council tenants, with an annual budget of £1m in 2006/07 and £0.75m in subsequent years</p>	<p>About 120 tenants assisted in 2006/07, and 90 in subsequent years</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Housing (Finance &amp; Investment)</p>	
	<p>Disabled facilities grants to help people in private sector homes, with an annual budget of £1.1m</p>	<p>About 110 grants in 2006/07</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector)</p>	
	<p>Develop an adaptations strategy, in particular to ensure effective use of resources and to reduce waiting times for assessments</p>	<p>2007/08  2008</p>		

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
	<p>Support from the Council's Staying Put Home Improvement Agency to help people apply for grants, arrange improvement works or adaptations, and carry out minor works to help people returning from hospital</p> <p>Handyperson service to carry out minor repairs for older people (many of whom have disabilities)</p>	<p>Deal with 400 enquiries, complete 250 jobs and 350 minor repairs in 2006/07</p> <p>250 households helped in 2006/07</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector)</p> <p>Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector)</p>	
<p>Provide an adequate level and range of high quality supported housing services</p>	<p>Commission a range of services for: 343 people with mental health problems, 61 people with physical disabilities and 163 people with learning disabilities</p> <p>Implement the commissioning priorities set out in the 5 year Supporting People Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- commission a new support service to enable older people with learning disabilities to live in sheltered housing</li> </ul>	<p>2006/07</p> <p>2006/07</p> <p>- commission in 2006/07 and place 2 people</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Housing (Strategy &amp; Service Improvement)</p>	

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase provision for homeless people with mental health problems</li> <li>- convert an accommodation-based scheme to a floating support scheme for people with HIV/AIDS to better meet needs and preferences</li> <li>- open a new 40-unit extra care (special sheltered) scheme for older people who are mentally or physically frail</li> </ul> <p>Update the commissioning plan once future resources are known</p> <p>Seek opportunities with housing associations for “core and cluster” supported housing for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities (with capital funding)</p> <p>Review access arrangements into supported housing for people with mental health problems and introduce a single referral route with clear prioritisation criteria</p>	<p>- October 2006</p> <p>- December 2006</p> <p>2008/09</p> <p>March 2007</p> <p>2006 - 08</p> <p>2007/08</p>	<p>Director of Social Services</p> <p>Assistant Director of Housing (Strategy &amp; Service Improvement)</p>	



<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
Ensure social housing (council and housing association) homes meet the needs of people who want to live independently	<p>Fund housing associations to develop 12 wheelchair units in 2006 -08 programme</p> <p>Carry out works in relation to the sheltered housing quality standard in council sheltered schemes (e.g. adjustable height kitchen work tops, lever taps, ramps and handrails) as part of an ongoing programme of works</p> <p>Provide access to 17 move-on homes (social rented) for people with mental health problems, 2 for people with learning disabilities and 1 for people with physical disabilities</p>	<p>2006/08</p> <p>2006/07</p> <p>2006/07</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Housing (Finance &amp; Investment)</p> <p>Assistant Director of Housing (Needs &amp; Resources)</p>	
Monitor outcomes of services for disabled people and consult service users	<p>Outcomes of housing services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- housing applications and allocations of homes</li> <li>- Housing Advice, Options and Homeless Persons Unit</li> </ul> <p>Grant assistance for private residents</p> <p>Evictions of council tenants to identify any disadvantage to vulnerable groups</p> <p>Consult disabled residents (council and housing association tenants and council leaseholders) on issues relating to social housing through the Housing Disability Panel</p>	<p>2006/07</p> <p>2006/07</p> <p>2006/07</p> <p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Housing (Needs &amp; Resources)</p> <p>Assistant Director (Private Sector Housing)</p> <p>Assistant Director of Housing (Housing Management)</p> <p>Assistant Director of Housing (Housing Management)</p>	

## Monitor Progress on Achieving Equality for Disabled People

### Objective: Involve disabled people in reviewing progress

Action	Outcomes & Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility/ Division	Achievements to date
Establish Mystery Shopper Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify funding for mystery shopping</li> <li>• Reach service level agreement with CDF</li> <li>• Departments to identify action plan objectives suitable for mystery shop</li> <li>• Identify strategic actions for mystery shopping</li> <li>• Mystery shopping exercises undertaken</li> <li>• Report of outcomes to CDG and Departments</li> <li>• Mystery shops repeated</li> </ul>	By March 2007 By April 2007 By April 2007  By April 2007  By Dec 2007  January 2008  By Dec 2008	ECPU ECPU Department Management Teams Corporate Disability Group Croydon Disability Forum Croydon Disability Forum  Croydon Disability Forum	
Directly seek feedback on user experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop focus groups and surveys to inform of progress</li> </ul>	By Jan 2008	Corporate Disability Group and Department Management Teams	

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility/ Division</b>	<b>Achievements to date</b>
Regularly review progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action plans to be reviewed every 6 months by Corporate Disability group</li> <li>• CDG report at 6 monthly intervals to CMT</li> <li>• Departments to report quarterly to Corporate Management Team</li> <li>• Annual report of progress to Cabinet</li>   <li>• Update and publish revised action plans annually</li> </ul>	<p>May annually</p> <p>June annually</p> <p>On going from</p> <p>Dec 2007</p> <p>July Cabinet</p> <p>November annually</p>	<p>Strategic lead on Disability</p> <p>Strategic Lead on Disability</p> <p>Chief Officers</p> <p>Head of ECPU</p> <p>Corporate Disability Group</p>	
Review whole strategy after 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDG to review strategy</li>   <li>• Report to CMT</li> <li>• Report to Cabinet</li> <li>• Consultation on new strategy</li>   <li>• Draft of strategy for Cabinet approval</li> <li>• New strategy published</li> </ul>	<p>Start January 2009</p> <p>May 2009</p> <p>July 2009</p> <p>June –September 2009</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>End of November 2009</p>	<p>Strategic Lead on Disability</p> <p>Strategic Lead on Disability</p> <p>Corporate Disability Group</p> <p>Head of ECPU</p> <p>Head of ECPU</p>	

# 11. About Croydon

Croydon is the largest of the 33 London Boroughs with a Census 2001 population of 330,587. Croydon is one of the youngest boroughs with two thirds of its population under the age of 45. Croydon is also a diverse borough with 36% of the population from a Black or Minority Ethnic Community.

48,663 residents (14.7%) declared on the Census 2001 return that they had a long term illness, health problem or disability compared with 15.5% for London generally and 18.2% nationally.

An audit of Council staff conducted during February and March 2006 resulted in 12.4% declaring they had a disability or long term illness. This compares favourably with national trends in the number of disabled people employed in the public sector (see table below).

## Proportions of people<sup>a</sup> in public sector employment by disability and sex; Great Britain; spring 1998 to spring 2004, not seasonally adjusted

	Per cent						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Women							
Disabled	13.6	14.6	13.9	14.5	16.3	15.8	16.4
Not disabled	22.7	22.6	23.6	24.0	23.8	24.1	25.2
Men							
Disabled	7.8	8.0	8.1	8.3	7.6	8.4	8.8
Not disabled	13.4	13.6	13.7	13.5	13.1	13.3	13.8
All							
Disabled	10.5	11.2	10.9	11.3	11.8	12.0	12.4
Not disabled	18.0	18.0	18.5	18.6	18.3	18.6	19.3

Source: Labour Force Survey

<sup>a</sup> People of working age (women aged 16 to 59 and men aged 16 to 64).

The Labour Force Survey of 2001/2 estimated that 17% of the working age population of Croydon had a disability or work limiting condition with 61.5% economically active (either in work or actively seeking work). There are no figures to show the level of employment by disability locally however a range of national surveys has shown that people with mental health issues and learning difficulties are the least likely to be in employment.

## 12. Glossary of Terms

Black and Minority Ethnic	People who identify as being part of an ethnic or racial group other than White British
Built environment	This covers more than just buildings. It also covers the ground around buildings, pavements, roads, shopping centres, parks, public toilets. In fact anything that wasn't put there by nature.
DDA	The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) was passed in 1995 and became law in 1996. And covers employment and Services. In 2005 another DDA became law which put a statutory duty on all public bodies to promote equality for disabled people.
Deaf	The accepted convention within the British Deaf Association is to use the term Deaf (with a capital D) to refer to people who have a positive deaf identity. They often see themselves as being part of a linguistic community and may not identify as being disabled.
Disability Action Plan	Each Department is required to produce an annual plan which sets out the specific actions that department will be taking to achieve progress on compliance with the DDA and the targets set in the Corporate Disability Action Plan. Departmental Disability Action Plans will be very similar to the Corporate Action Plan in Section 10.

Disability Rights Commission (DRC)	This is an organisation set up by the government, but not part of the government, to assist in ensuring that disabled people can get their rights under the legislation. The DRC issues guidance and advice to employers, service providers and disabled people. It can investigate organisations which breach the law and in some cases will help disabled people go to court to get their rights.
ECSS	Environment, Culture, Sports and Services Department covers Libraries, Arts, Leisure Centres, Refuse Collections, Highways and much more.
Hate crime	Hate crimes are any crimes against individuals or groups where the motive is a form of hatred or prejudice. These crimes can include calling people hurtful names, bullying, damage to property, beating up, stabbing and, at its most extreme, murder.
HR&OD or Human Resources	The Council division which deals with policy on recruiting and employment of staff plus health and safety matters, training and Occupational Health
Inclusive design	This is a method first adopted by architects to ensure our buildings and environment can be accessed by everyone on an equal basis. This is now expanded to include the way we design services, policies etc.
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)	Lesbians and Gay men are people who are sexually attracted to people of their own gender. Bisexuals are men and women who are attracted to people of their own and opposite gender. Transgender people have a gender identity which is different from their sex at birth.

Local Strategic Partners	Croydon Council works with many organisations – public, private, and voluntary to ensure that the people of Croydon have the services they need. Our main strategic partners are the major service providers; Health and Police.
Physical features	In relation to the law, this covers a wide range of objects, such as steps, roadside kerbs, seating, lighting, fixed signs, gates, doors, reception desks, counters public telephones and much more.
Service Development Plan	Council Departments are expected to continually look at there services and identify improvements. What each department will do to improve services is set out in a service development plan. Service Development Planning takes place between December and March each year.
Social Inclusion	By this we mean everyone being able to fully participate in the activities and facilities of our community on an equal basis.
Workers with a Disability Group	This is a group of disabled employees of Croydon Council who meet in work time to support each other and make recommendations for improving life at work for disabled staff of Croydon Council



