

Service being assessed	Member Services
Who will be involved in completing this assessment?	Robin Hodds – Service Manager Member Services
Date of Review	31 May 2011
Date of Next Review	31 May 2012
What is the purpose of the service?	To provide information and support to Councillors and members of the public on the Council's democratic process
Is this assessment being undertaken because of changes to the service? If so what are they?	Assessment being undertaken as part of Council's annual review of equalities information, not because of change to service/policy.
<p>The purpose of this assessment is to understand how services can help the Council to meet its duties under Equalities legislation. The duties can be summarised as</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eliminate discrimination 2. Advance equality of opportunity 3. Foster good relations between different parts of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection process for Councillors is open and inclusive (anyone on the Register of Electors is entitled to stand as a Councillor subject to meeting the nomination criteria) • Venues for all Council meetings are in convenient locations and covered by public transport and comply with accessibility legislation. • Agenda and minutes can be provided in alternative formats on request

<p>How does this service help the Council to do this, in particular in relation to the categories specifically mentioned in legislation - Race, Gender/Sex, Disability, Age, Religion/Belief, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy & Maternity and in respect of Duty 1 only – Marriage and Civil Partnerships?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures in place to deal with any incidences / cases of discrimination, victimisation or harassment • Inappropriate comments by Members / Officers are dealt with by procedures in the Constitution • Members receive training and information on all corporate legislation • Appropriate action is taken to respond to any complaints received from the public
<p>How will you know that service is working as it should?</p>	<p>Any complaints received / compliments / comments</p>
<p>What data have you used to help you make this assessment?</p>	<p>Constitution Verbal feedback from Members and the public</p>
<p>Is there any additional data that you need to collect to help in continuous improvement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of profile of Councillors by protected characteristic • Review of meeting venues and times of meetings • Review of how information is published and where to improve participation by the public
<p>How have you ensured that this service has been designed from a customer's perspective and how have you involved customers in that process?</p>	<p>The majority of meetings which are open to the public are held in the evenings with plans to hold Area Committee meetings in other parts of the Borough within the next few months. Customer perspective has been gained through consulting with Members, who represent the views of their ward.</p>

<p>Has any other consultation been carried out, including to ensure that we have taken into consideration the needs of those not currently using the service?</p>	<p>Through the democratic process, elected Councillors determine times and dates of meetings and the way the Council operates as a whole and shapes the service Member Services offers to them and the public. No other public consultation has taken place.</p>
<p>What is, or what do you expect to be the impact of the way you work on different parts of the community, including those covered by equality legislation?</p>	<p>Who benefits?</p> <p>All members of the public benefit from the support offered to their Councillors and to the democratic process within the Borough/Council.</p> <p>Who should be expected to benefit but don't – Why not?</p> <p>The assessment shows no negative impact for Councillors and the public in the provision of democratic services.</p>
<p>On the basis of what you have found out, which of these options will you now follow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major changes • Adjust the policy • Continue the policy • Stop and remove the policy <p>This is a review – not a new policy or service. As and when it is proposed to change the service or policies, new assessments will be completed.</p>
<p>What now needs to be done and by who?</p>	<p>Member Services Manager and Leader of the Council meet annually to review meeting times and venues and set up the Committee Timetable.</p> <p>Will include in next review how information is made available and published to the public.</p>

	<p>Will seek to include a regular article in the Borough News and a local newspaper about how the Council's democratic process works and how to get involved. Also information about when meetings are held and where.</p> <p>Will create a profile of current Councillors and identify ways to encourage all sectors of the community to feel able to stand for election (action over next 2 years)</p>
Signed off by	Robin Hodds, Service Manager Member Services