

## **Accessible Information Policy**

**LEAD OFFICER:** Jane Salt, Head of Customer Services  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Jane Salt, Head of Customer Services

**Summary and Recommendation: that the report on the monitoring of the Council's Accessible Monitoring Report be received.**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Executive in June 2007 agreed an Accessible Information Policy which introduces guidelines to provide a framework for Copeland Borough Council to make information and services available to everyone.
- 1.2 The Committee will recall that it has an item on its work plan for a monitoring report to assess the effectiveness of this policy. As the policy has now been in place for six months the opportunity has been taken to provide this report.

### **2. ARGUMENT**

- 2.1 Every member of the public has a right to access our service.
- 2.2 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a duty on local authorities to publish race and disability equality schemes. This includes making our information accessible to everyone.
- 2.3 This means that people have a right to our information in a language or format that suits them.

### **3. Use of the policy**

- 3.1 Managers have reported that the policy has been referred to on several occasions since it was introduced. Sometimes this has been merely as a point of referral for writing other documents but also when interpretation or translation services have been required.
- 3.2 To date Managers have not made use of the interpretation services but have needed the translation service on 2 occasions and documents in large print have been requested and provided 3 times. The cost of the interpretation and translation services has to date been approximately £100.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 Whilst there has been minimal use of the policy so far it does show there is a need for it and it does provides clear guidance as and when staff need to refer to it.
- 4.2 Additionally it is worth noting that we have not received any complaints regarding limited access to information.
- 4.3 It also helps the Council in fulfilling its Equality and Diversity obligations and in its aim to reach a higher level in the Equality Standard for Local Government.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)**

None

#### **6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

None

#### **7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN**

It will promote equal opportunity throughout Copeland.

**List of Background Documents:** The Accessible Information Policy

**List of Consultees:** None

#### **CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES**

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	None
Impact on Sustainability	None
Impact on Rural Proofing	None
Health and Safety Implications	None
Project and Risk Management	None
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Will ensure Equality of Opportunity
Children and Young Persons Implications	None
Human Rights Act Implications	Will ensure Equality of Opportunity
S151 Monitoring Officer	

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision    NO