

# The Corporate Approach

There is strong political and managerial support within Gravesham Borough Council to the race equality agenda. This approach is driving forward the theme of community cohesion within the council's own organisational structure, as well as providing a basis for improving services tailored to the needs of the local community and individual services users.

The council's Leader has a key role in leading the council's executive team, which is committed to championing the benefits of social inclusion and community cohesion. The Lead Member for Community Well-being, along with Cabinet Members, have clearly defined work plans and roles, which include a strong commitment to race equality. There is a firm political and corporate commitment not only to consult with minority ethnic communities on key strategic and policy areas, but also to ensure through the use of more innovative consultation methods, that engagement with harder to reach groups within the community is continuously improved.

Gravesham has deliberately avoided developing a specialist race equalities team, and has adopted an alternative corporate approach to race equality across the authority. A top level Community Cohesion Group was set up by the authority in 2003 to advise and coordinate community cohesion and race equality issues across the council and this has been a major driver for change. The group is chaired by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, and includes an officer from North West Kent Racial Equality Council, and the Lead Cabinet Member for Community Well-being. The group is responsible for coordinating the development, implementation and review of the Race Equality Scheme, as well as driving best practice and change within the council's corporate culture.



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Top Tip	Purpose
Structure and objectives	Ensure that the scope and what will constitute success is understood and supported by all stakeholders and service users.
Effective planning	Be clear of the critical path and how you intend to remain on track.
leadership	Be confident about leadership skills and capability to achieve success.
resourcing	Ensure you are ready for the future and make plans for developing service provision.
resourcing	Ensure that sufficient resources are available to manage and deliver.
Maintain continuity	Look towards maintaining continuity of personnel and project management teams.
Monitoring and evaluation	Identify and promote your track record for managing similar projects, programmes and strategies or similar. Make sure that these are reflected in your future work where appropriate and don't be afraid of replicating something when you are confident that the ethos is right.
Monitoring and evaluation	Learn from experience and set maturity targets.
Monitoring and evaluation	Be prepared to continually revisit your goals and objectives to ensure that they are not compromised and remain relevant.
Staff development and training	It is essential that all staff are given access to regular training opportunities in current equalities issues in order that it becomes embedded in the business culture of all areas of service delivery.
Cascading and dissemination	Develop sound and effective dissemination mechanisms for communicating decisions made at a corporate level in this area and throughout the organisation.
Core competencies	Introduce core competencies for staff on equality issues.
Effective performance management	Develop a performance management framework which has equality issues at its core.