

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CABINET

14 October 2009

### Report of the Chief Executive

#### Part 1- Public

#### Matters for Recommendation to Council

#### **1 DRAFT EQUALITY STATEMENT**

**To endorse the final draft of the Equality Statement 2009-2012 for onward reporting to Council.**

#### **1.1 Background**

1.1.1 The Borough Council has a statutory duty to prepare a series of schemes setting out its policies and proposals for promoting race, gender and disability equalities. Good practice across the County and nationally is that these separate schemes are best combined into a single statement covering all three equality strands.

1.1.2 The Draft Equalities Statement 2009-2012 draws on the existing policies and actions set in the individual schemes for race, gender and disability and places them into one comprehensive document. The Draft Equalities Statement has been endorsed by Policy Overview Committee at their meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September. Subsequent to Policy and Overview, we have received a recommendation from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, that any consultation and data collection should also include the wider remit of violence against women. This has been added as an action point within the Equality Statement Action Plan.

#### **1.2 Legal Implications**

1.2.1 As stated above, the Equalities Statement seeks to fulfil the Council's statutory obligations with regard to equalities issues. In addition, the new Equality Bill is likely to come into force in the autumn of 2010 and may extend our obligations to cover age, sexual orientation and religion and belief. This is noted in the draft Equality statement and there is provision to update and add to this document as necessary.

### **1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.3.1 It is not expected that there will be any additional financial burdens arising from the adoption of this Statement. The Council has a small annual budget for equalities which we anticipate will cover our responsibilities.

### **1.4 Risk Assessment**

- 1.4.1 The Borough Council has a statutory duty to prepare a series of schemes setting out its policies and proposals for promoting race, gender and disability equalities. A combined equalities statement meets this duty thus avoiding any risks associated with non compliance.

### **1.5 Policy Considerations**

- 1.5.1 Equalities/Diversity  
1.5.2 Customer Contact

### **1.6 Recommendations**

- 1.6.1 That the draft Equalities Statement be recommended for adoption by Council.

Background papers:

contact: Gill Fox

Nil

David Hughes  
Chief Executive