



working
for equality

NEWRY AND MOURNE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EQUALITY UNIT CHARTER

Our Mission Statement (*our purpose*)

“ To enable the Council to make decisions and deliver its services having recognised the impact of its actions in terms of promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, performance management, good communications and member services ”

We Promise

- a warm and courteous welcome for all
- an equitable value for money service to all our stakeholders
- a transparent and helpful service
- to measure and report on our performance against our service standards
- the provision of fully accessible information, meeting local needs
- to communicate in an easy to understand manner
- to promote equality of opportunity and good relations to all
- a prompt and helpful response to all enquires
- to respond quickly and effectively to all complaints received

How can you help us improve?

We welcome your suggestions for improving our services and will regularly engage with you to ensure that we meet your needs. We invite you to make a comment orally or in writing and can also be accepted via the telephone or electronically to any of the Equality Unit Officers or directly to Brenda Byrne on brenda.byrne@newryandmourne.gov.uk

Charter News

The cost of our service for 2008/09 is as follows:

Equality Unit net budget as a % of Council's net budget = 0.36%

Cost of Equality Unit's net budget per head of population = £0.85

Newry and Mourne District Councils Equality Unit has implemented a number of improvements to its services as follows:

- equality proofing on corporate documents
- equality screening of all policies and the potential impact of Councils decisions
- reviewed the Household Panel
- implementation of a 24 hour media response
- provision of information in alternative formats upon request
- Disability Action Plan to promote positive attitudes to people with a disability
- review of corporate policies re. events and photocalls
- developing an enhanced Good Relations Programme through Peace III Funding

Planned Improvements for the Future

1. creation of a policy development and management framework for Council
2. implementation of Healthy Eating Policy at corporate events
3. achievement of Corporate Service Excellence on a corporate basis
4. provision of a diversity guide
5. further training on diversity, racism and good relations issues

Your Right to Complain

A complaint is simply defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction with a service which requires a response.”

The complaint procedure is available to all the Equality Unit stakeholders or anyone acting on their behalf. The Equality Unit has established an effective complaint procedure which:

- is easily accessible and promoted
- is easy to understand and use
- operates promptly within a specific timetable established to deal with complaints
- ensures that the complainant is kept informed at all times about what is happening to their complaint
- is fair, with a full and unbiased enquiry
- is confidential, in order to ensure fairness to the complainants and staff
- provides a response that fully addresses the matters raised in the complaint within a reasonable time frame
- is continually reviewed to monitor its effectiveness and fed back into service delivery

Customers/individuals may submit a complaint to the Equality Unit's administration officer either verbally or in writing.

The Equality Unit has a specific procedure to deal with customer complaints and as part of that procedure it is noted that the Equality Unit will acknowledge the receipt of complaints within 5 working days and respond to the complaint in full within 15 working days. Where it will not be possible to respond in full within this period, due to the need to conduct internal enquiries, the complainant should be informed of that situation within 15 days, and every 5 days thereafter, and the performance will be monitored on a regular basis.

In addition, the Equality Unit aims to resolve 90% of complaints received within 15 working days.

We welcome your suggestions for improving our services.

If you have any comments or would like further information about our Charter please contact the Equality Unit at 028 3031 3095 or email [Regina Mackin at regina.mackin@newryandmourne.gov.uk](mailto:regina.mackin@newryandmourne.gov.uk)

Our Charter is available in
alternative formats upon request



Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication.

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