

# **Advantage West Midlands**

The Regional Development Agency for the West Midlands

## **Disability Equality Scheme**

Approved by the AWM Board, 30 November 2006

Version: 1.4 - January 2010



[www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk)

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## Foreword

As the leader for developing economic prosperity in the most diverse region in the UK outside of London, Advantage West Midlands understands the need to promote the diversity agenda.

To make the kind of transformation that we want to see in this region's performance, we have to deliver sustainable economic regeneration through economic inclusion making sure all our citizens and businesses have the chance to participate in a successful future.

This is what underpins the new West Midlands Economic Strategy, "Connecting to Success" and provides the 'business, people and place' framework for all our and our partners' activity in the region, with vision: "To be a global centre where people and business choose to connect"

As part of our efforts to realise this vision, we are actively promoting disability equality. Disability Equality has two sides: first, it is about making sure that disabled people can share in the success of the region; second, and just as important, it is about enabling and celebrating the contribution of disabled people.

Advantage West Midlands is working to make Disability Equality in the West Midlands a practical reality. Already, we believe we have made great strides in achieving this and our Disability Equality Scheme (DES) is designed to help us progress further.

Our scheme was created with the involvement of disabled people in our region; but we need to continue their involvement as we look to implement the scheme and deliver the DES Action Plan. Therefore, if you would like to be involved, or have any comments, please tell us.



Mick Laverty, Chief Executive

### **3 Introduction**

Advantage West Midlands is committed to promoting disability equality and warmly welcomes the introduction of the Disability Equality Duty.

We as an organisation are pleased to be able to present our first Disability Equality Scheme (DES). Achieving disability equality will be imperative to the region as Advantage West Midlands plays its part in meeting the vision which lies with the heart of “Connecting to Success”, the new West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy: “To be a global centre where people and business choose to Connect”

The Advantage West Midlands Board and the Chief Executive share the aspirations of the “Improving Life Chances of disabled people” report. To this end, we have the following standards.

1. To promote equality so that disabled people who live or work in or visit the West Midlands can enjoy their full human, economic, social and political rights, free from discrimination.
2. To challenge and eradicate discrimination against disabled people.
3. To provide responsive and accessible services for all West Midlands’ disabled people.
4. To embrace the diversity of the West Midlands as a source of strength and opportunity and to promote equality in the workplace so that it is reflective of the diverse population of West Midlands by encouraging exemplary employment practices across all sectors in the region.

The main aim of our Disability Equality Scheme is to make sure that disability equality is not reliant on the commitment of a few individuals, but part and parcel of our everyday business.

## **4 Involvement Strategy, Protocol and Actions**

### 4.1 Why Advantage West Midlands Regional Development Agency has a protocol?

The aim of the protocol is to make a positive impact on promoting Disability Equality by enhancing the relationship that exists between the agency and disabled people. The protocol will help to develop and sustain effective procedures and mechanisms for involvement that result in Disability Equality.

### 4.2 Aims of the Involvement Protocol

This protocol aims to make a positive impact on the way in which we involve disabled people, who appear to the organisation to have an interest in the way we carry out our functions in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme. Effective involvement for us is an essential part of ensuring that the effective identification and prioritisation of equality initiatives is carried out.

### 4.3 Main principles

- To ensure that the independent voice of disabled people is heard at all levels where appropriate.
- To ensure that disabled people are involved in all aspects of development of the Scheme playing a role in identifying barriers
- Setting priorities for action plans
- To aspire to involve disabled people in all their diversity, especially those not usually engaged
- To consider involvement as a process that is ongoing
- To be transparent in all reporting of involvement

### 4.4 Guidelines

- It is recognised that the issue of when and how to proceed with involvement is a complex one.
- Involvement processes should be clear, open and accessible;
- Involvement should take place in partnership with recognised disability organisations
- Involvement needs - resourcing within the Agency. The resource implications of involvement are considered in line with the limited resources of AWM

### 4.5 Advantage West Midlands Involvement aims

- To enable disabled people and disability organisations contribute to the Disability Equality Scheme and help plan priorities and deliver better services
- To enhance collaborative and partnership working and enhance the understanding of Disability Equality

- To enable the agency to move towards greater openness and accountability
- To be part of a continuous Disability Equality Scheme loop where disabled people can see their views translated into action.

#### 4.6 Making it work

The public sector duty requires Advantage West Midlands to involve those disabled people who appear to have an interest in the way in which the agency carries out its functions. This may include former, current and potential customers, staff and the wider community. It is important for us to consider the full diversity of disabled people – in terms of the type of impairment, as well as other dimensions such as ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

It is important to:

- Consider the range of disabled people involved so that it is representative
- Avoid over duplication that will contribute to involvement fatigue and not reflect the diversity required
- Establish who are the groups/organisations representing disabled people
- Establish whether individuals and groups have the relevant knowledge and expertise to participate in the involvement.
- Establish the access needs of the disabled people involved. This affects the involvement approaches used including questionnaires/ surveys, interviews, focus groups, public meetings, (formal and informal) (different venues and accessible venues), also promotional campaigns, and different formats for printed information, for example, large print, audiotape and computer files or email attachments, community languages.

#### 4.7 Working in partnership with the RDN

While there was the involvement of disabled people in the development of this scheme, continued involvement needs to be sustained for the duration of this scheme. Although the Agency has a Diversity Champions Group in place, none of the current members have a disability, so in order to ensure the sustained involvement of disabled people the Agency is working in partnership with the Regional Disability Network (RDN) via The Council of Disabled People to address this.

The RDN produced a report on the basis of a first phase of involvement activity with our DES during 2009. The Agency was pleased with the level of involvement achieved: 74 organisations representing 7,400 individual disabled people across five sub regions. The involvement activity was also warmly welcomed by participants.

#### 4.8 Involvement findings and Agency responses (phase one)

The first phase report raised comments and recommendations (**bold italics**) and our subsequent response is noted below.

### ***Promotional material across the West Midlands to be in multi-accessible formats as standard***

Advantage West Midlands only has control of the material that it publishes directly it does not have any control over materials produced by other organisations in the West Midlands.

In line with the "Disability Discrimination Act 1995 part 3" Advantage West Midlands will undertake to make reasonable adjustments in terms of providing information in alternative formats where appropriate and where requested. It is not feasible however to provide all documents that the Agency produces in all formats as "standard" due to the cost of such an exercise at a time when public sector spending is being reduced.

### ***Measurement of the Disability Equality***

Advantage West Midlands will ensure that clear measures [objectives] are included in the revised scheme.

### ***Input [of disabled people] into Advantage West Midlands Strategic Aims***

Regional Development Agencies are sponsored by the Department of Business Innovation and Skills and has its overarching role, priorities and outputs set by the department at national level. Advantage West Midlands translates the requirements placed upon it by the Department of Business Innovation and Skills into the West Midlands Economic Strategy and its Corporate Plan. The West Midlands Economic Strategy which was launched in December 2007 was subject to a more extensive consultation exercise than any other economic strategy in any other region. Consultation events were delivered both at preferred options stage and final option stage across the sub regions. The consultation events were open to everybody in the West Midlands.

The Agency will ensure that disability organisations and people via networks like the RDN are fully informed of future consultation events in order to work in partnership with the Agency to engage more fully with the disability sector to ensure that future consultation exercises are fully inclusive.

### ***Barriers to enabling Disabled people to engage with the regions economy***

The points raised in the report refer to care support and accessible housing support. Advantage West Midlands has no control over either of these activities so is not able to deliver any specific action against this. However the Agency will ensure that it passes the comments raised to: Local Authorities, the Homes and Communities Agency and the Strategic Health Authority but it has to be made clear that the Agency has no authority to ensure that any of these organisations respond to the comments forwarded.

### ***Absorption of costs by Disability organisations***

This point needs to be raised with the relevant government departments all of whom will have their own Disability Equality Schemes or Single Equality Schemes.

The overarching role of Advantage West Midlands is to help to “create the conditions for growth in the region” if there is a specific example where Disability organisations believe that they are absorbing the costs that Advantage West Midlands should be absorbing please bring them to the Agency’s attentions.

### ***The negative impact of the recession***

Advantage West Midlands on behalf of the West Midlands Economic Task Force produced a booklet on sources of finance for third sector organisations both during and outside of recession. This booklet will be shared with you for information and further dissemination.

Advantage West Midlands funds Regional Action West Midlands to act as the voice of the third sector in the West Midlands and to provide information on support available to the sector. The Agency will ask RAWM to contact you to see if she can provide any additional advice in terms of sources of support available during the recession and beyond.

Advantage West Midlands itself has been and continues to be affected by the recession and as a result has had its budget reduced and anticipates further reductions as part of the governments overall efficiency exercise.

### ***Second phase of involvement***

The Agency is pleased to confirm that it will support a second phase of involvement with the RDN via the Council of Disabled People in order that the information that we have received is considered regionally representative. The Agency will be in touch shortly to organise this to take place early in 2010. As a consequence it will be premature for Advantage West Midlands to publish a revision of the Disability Scheme until the involvement activity is complete.

### ***Rural involvement***

The Council of Disabled People will ensure that the second phase of involvement includes a wider rural representation. This will be funded by Advantage West Midlands.

### ***Wider range of impairment to be investigated***

The Council of Disabled People will ensure that the second phase of involvement includes a wider range of impairment. This will be funded by Advantage West Midlands.

### ***Repeat involvement in areas already covered in phase 1***

The Agency believes that the coverage in phase 1 is already extensive and far higher than involvement activity carried out by many other organisations and with the public sector demands for efficiency gains the Agency will not want to revisit. The second phase of involvement will therefore focus on those geographies and groups not previously covered.

### ***Better Communication links***

The Agency is happy to meet with the RDN and Council for Disabled People to discuss how the activities of the Agency are best communicated to Disability organisations moving

forward within the limited resources available to it. Advantage West Midlands has a website that contains most of the information on the Agency and we are happy to discuss options to improve accessibility.

Please note, the Agency does not intend to repeat the in depth involvement exercises with over a 100 groups that phase 1 and 2 will produce in future as resources are not available to do this on a regular basis. The Agency will however establish an ongoing Disability Involvement Group with your support and guidance in 2010 in line with the public duty requirement to build upon the involvement activity.

### ***Accessibility of information***

Advantage West Midlands only has control of the material that it publishes directly it does not have any control over materials produced by other organisations in the West Midlands.

In line with the "Disability Discrimination Act 1995 part 3" Advantage West Midlands will undertake to make reasonable adjustments in terms of providing information in alternative formats where appropriate and where requested. It is not feasible however to provide all documents that the Agency produces in all formats as "standard" due to the cost of such an exercise at a time when public sector spending is being reduced.

The Agency is welcomes further discussion in this area to identify specific publications that are required in alternative formats so that we can work together on this.

### ***Care Support and Housing***

The points raised in this section refer to care support and accessible housing support. Advantage West Midlands has no control over either of these activities so is not able deliver any specific action. The Agency will however pass the comments raised to: Local Authorities, the Homes and Communities Agency and the Strategic Health Authority but RDN/CDP have to appreciate that the Agency has no authority to ensure that any of these organisations respond to the comments.

### ***Future consultation events***

The Agency will ensure that either the Equality and Diversity Manager, the Director for Sustainable Communities or other Agency representative as appropriate will attend all future involvement events and will also undertake to invite other organisations to attend; although the Agency has no authority to enforce their attendance.

### ***Benchmarks and measures***

Establishing benchmarks and measures is an integral element of our emerging Single Equalities Scheme which will undergo a 12 week consultation exercise commencing in February 2010 and will be published on the Advantage West Midlands website.

#### 4.9 Actions resulting from involvement phase one

As a result from the involvement activity in partnership with the RDN in 2009, Advantage West Midlands are committed to the following actions highlighted in the table below:

Table 1: AWM actions resulting from involvement activity phase 1 2009.

Action	Date
Deliver a second phase of the involvement exercise as recommended by the Council for Disabled People. The second phase will focus on those geographies (particularly rural) and those impairment groups not included in phase 1. All events will be attended by Advantage West Midlands	Commence January 2010
Invite other organisations to take part in second phase of the involvement exercise. Required organisations to be specified by Council for Disabled People (attendance of others cannot be guaranteed by Advantage West Midlands)	Commence January 2010
Develop draft Single Equalities Scheme incorporating feedback from Disability Involvement exercise	By end of February 2010
Ensure that clear measures are included in the Single Equalities Scheme in order that they can be reported on, on an annual basis	By end of February 2010
Launch 12 week consultation exercise on Single Equalities Scheme	End of February 2010
Provide information where requested and where appropriate in alternative formats	As requested
Establish Disability Involvement Group that will meet on at least a bi annual basis	April 2010
Provide booklet of support available to third sector organisations to Council and Disabled People	December 2009
Pass comments received regarding housing and health to relevant organisations	December 2009
Ensure that awareness is raised of future Agency consultation events across the disability network and that the numbers of Disabled peoples organisations attending are recorded	Ongoing
Consider alternative methods of capturing the number of Disabled people employed by Advantage West Midlands	April 2010
Continue to capture the number of people in Advantage West Midlands attending (disability) Equality and Diversity Training	Ongoing

#### 4.9.1 Refocusing of DES Corporate Objectives

The involvement process (phase one) in partnership with the RDN helped to provide the Agency with expert independent advice and guidance on the delivery of the DES Corporate Objective 2.

In previous versions of the DES, the objective was 9.3.3\* and as a result of involvement phase one has been changed in this version to be more 'SMART'; i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. Objective 2 is now: ***To involve disability organisations and disabled people in the strategic direction of the Agency's work.***

Working in partnership with a regional organisation specialising in disability issues and infrastructure support of disability organisations, the Agency is confident that this involvement activity over two years from 2009-2010 will help to deliver this objective.

\*The objective 'Milestone 9.3.3' as stated in the earlier version of this DES was: [To] Work with other public sector organisations across the West Midlands to draw up a plan of support required in order for disability organisations to become more involved with the public sector.

It was felt that it was more realistic for the Agency to involve disability organisations and disabled people in developing the work of the Agency and not of the whole public sector due to the Agency's primary focus on regional economic development.

#### 4.9.2 Next stages of involvement

The Agency is now going beyond its two year involvement activity with RDN to develop from March 2010 a Regional Strategic DES Involvement Group that will feature the key regional disability organisations to provide independent advice and guidance to the Agency on its strategic direction.

This goes beyond the DES involvement activity which just focuses on one specific objective whereas the strategic involvement group will look all six DES objectives and the overall strategic direction of the Agency.

'Disability organisations' is defined in a wide sense, including large, medium and small organisations from the community, voluntary and social enterprise sector (also referred to as the Third Sector) in the West Midlands region which work with and for disabled people either providing services or enabling representation and consultation.

The involvement group will engage with organisations which are managed by disabled people and/or have a high representation and involvement of disabled people but we will also involve all agencies, charities, etc which can feed in the views and opinions of disabled people into the progress and actions of the Agency's DES.

## 5 Executive Summary

This is the fourth version of the first Disability Equality Scheme (DES) for the Advantage West Midlands' Regional Development Agency (Advantage West Midlands). It describes our journey so far and our next steps to ensuring that Advantage West Midlands plays its part in creating a region where disabled people can live in equality with non disabled people.

Despite progress, there is more to do. Disabled people remain more likely to live in poverty, to have fewer educational qualifications, to be out of work and experience prejudice and abuse, and still routinely find themselves experiencing poorer levels of service.

The DES of Advantage West Midlands has been created and developed along the precepts and guidelines of:

- a) "Improving Life Chances of Disabled People", a government report concerned with promoting equality, challenging and eradicating discrimination, providing responsive and accessible services, and embracing diversity as a source of strength and opportunity.
- b) *The Duty to Promote Disability Equality: Statutory Code of Practice – England and Wales*, which states that: *"At present disabled people do not have the same opportunities or choices as non disabled people. Nor do they enjoy equal respect or full inclusion in society on an equal basis. The poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people are not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from attitudinal and environmental barriers.*
- c) Involvement. The Agency has worked in partnership with the Regional Disability Network and Council for Disabled People to build on the initial involvement work by Gallant 2000 who produced our first scheme. The involvement activity with the RDN is over two phases, the second of which will begin in earnest from the middle of February 2010.

The Duty set out above in b) highlights what is known as 'the social model of disability', and provides a basis for the successful implementation of the duty to promote disability equality."

The Agency's work on disability equality is informed by the social model of disability and as such seeks to remove the barriers that disempower disabled people within the role and responsibility of AWM. Failure to enable access for disabled people to the labour market and entrepreneurial activity is economically inefficient and wasteful of a significant pool of skills and abilities in the West Midlands.

The West Midlands covers an area of 13,000 square kilometres, including Birmingham, the UK's second largest city, and 17 towns and cities with populations over 100,000, population. The population of the West Midlands is 5.4 million people, of whom 646,000 are disabled.

Advantage West Midlands' role is as the leader for developing economic develop jobs e.g. to help people find jobs, safeguard jobs, support higher level skills, encourage entrepreneurship and grow existing businesses. The Agency also promotes the West Midlands as a great place to live, work, do business, study and visit. Ultimately Advantage West Midlands is driven by the value to aim for excellence by working in partnership to make a difference to the key economic challenges faced in the region.

Our evidence base, in section 10, shows that years of legislation, education and persuasion have not removed the barriers faced by disabled people. However, Advantage West Midlands is using its influence and sphere to affect positive outcomes for disabled people in the West Midlands, for example, through our ‘Single Pot’ funding and other programmes.

For the latest examples of existing Advantage West Midlands projects please visit our website [www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk)

We welcome the new public sector duties and our Disability Equality Scheme aims to break down some of the deep-rooted barriers and improve outcomes for disabled people in the West Midlands and disabled visitors to the region.

Nine months was spent producing this Disability Equality Scheme in partnership with Gallant 2000 based in Birmingham. During that time, we have built up a body of evidence, and have involved stakeholders and disabled people in the development of the scheme.

Subsequent work to develop the scheme in this version has been centred on our involvement activity with the Regional Disability Network which operates out of the Council for Disabled People based in Coventry.

We have also worked with other Regional Development Agencies, who through the Equality Leads Group has played a significant part in developing this document with us.

Some quotes from our body of evidence gathered from stakeholders and disabled people:

“Disability Equality needs to have a higher profile and Advantage West Midlands must be better informed about Disability Equality”

“[We need] More accessible transport and buildings. Also better support is needed for disabled people who are looking to come off benefits. This will have a direct result on the social economy and give people a boost to come off benefits and earning a wage themselves. By doing this, they are probably going to be more involved in the community – both at work and at home which will increase the confidence of disabled people due to the fact that we feel that we are contributing towards society”.

“Networking ideas to each other and companies. When did companies stop and ask disabled people their views? We don’t have much voice. [We need] Better education on disability equality”.

Advantage West Midlands has set out six overarching objectives in the DES corporate action plan which looks at how we will ensure the success of our work with disabled people in the West Midlands.

These objectives are:

1. *Leadership and culture* – to make a firm commitment to this work and build a positive and well-informed disability equality culture.
2. *Partnership* – to involve disabled people and their organisations more with our work.
3. *‘Capacity Building’* – to support disabled people and their organisations so that they can inform and influence our actions and their outcomes.
4. *Influence and learning* – to create ways for sharing what works on disability equality between our partners and ourselves.

5. *Measure and monitor* – to meet the disability equality targets and objectives we set for our work and use monitoring systems to check our progress.
6. *Evaluation* – to make sure that we learn what works and what doesn't, including the use of our 'equality impact assessment' process.

In section 11 we outline the evidence based and outcome focused positive actions we need to consider, and how to make these happen.

As Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled People said at the UK Presidency conference 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People', 8th November 2005:

"Disabled people have rightly said that policymakers should do 'nothing about us without us'. None of us can improve opportunities for disabled people effectively - whether in employment or in the services we offer - unless we talk to disabled people and involve them in our decision-making. That is why I see involvement of disabled people as at the heart of the new Disability Equality Duty."

We can only become 'the most dynamic and competitive knowledge based economy in the world' by ending the discrimination which limits potential."

## 6 About the West Midlands

The West Midlands region sits at the hub of the national motorway network and has the second highest proportion of the workforce (13.8 percent) employed in manufacturing in Great Britain.

It is also Europe's largest centre for the manufacture of ceramics (the British Ceramics Confederation is based in Stoke) and has the largest concentration of rubber and plastics companies in the country.

The West Midlands region has a population of 5.4 million. Birmingham, the region's biggest city, has slightly over one million inhabitants, making it the second largest city in the UK.

The borough of Birmingham is part of an urban area, which also includes Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton. The region also includes the counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire, as well as the urbanised areas of Stoke-on-Trent, and Telford and Wrekin.

The area is geographically, industrially and culturally diverse. In fact, the West Midlands is the most ethnically diverse area outside of London with 16.4% from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. This rises to 32% in Birmingham. Figures relating to disability are not as robust, but an estimation based on the Annual Population Survey would put the population of working age disabled people in the region at 18.7%.

The West Midlands' GVA per head is less than London, the South East, East of England, East Midlands and the North West, but is slightly ahead of the North East, and Yorkshire and Humber.

However, more data on disability in the West Midlands Region is needed to facilitate the Advantage West Midlands Economic Strategy and provide measured outcomes for disabled people.

### 6.1 Table 2: Economic Activity Rates

By economic activity, we are considering those people who are in work or who are available to work. As a comparison, disabled people of working age and disabled people who are both DDA and work-limiting disabled are also included.

As an economic development agency, we are keen that more disabled people gain employment or develop businesses as this will help in addressing the £12bn productivity gap in the region; therefore we need to see the economic activity rate for working age disabled people increase by at least 10% over the life of this scheme.

Variable	Number	Total Working Age Population	%
% of working age who are disabled	613,500	3,283,000	18.7

Variable	Number	Total Working Age Population	%
% of working age who are both DDA & also work-limiting disabled	386,300	3,283,000	11.8
% of working age who are DDA only disabled	129,000	3,283,000	3.9
Economic activity rate working age – disabled	331,400	613,500	54
Economic activity rate working age – both DDA & also work-limiting	147,700	386,300	38.2
Economic activity rate working age – not disabled	2,207,600	2,669,500	82.7

Data source: Annual population survey: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 19th January 2010]

## 7 About Advantage West Midlands

As one of the nine Regional Development Agencies, Advantage West Midlands' aim is to achieve sustainable economic development; it's our job to ensure that West Midlands remains an economically sustainable and inclusive success story for the short, medium and long term.

Our Corporate Plans that set out the contribution that Advantage West Midlands will make to the delivery of, "Connecting to Success" the West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES) over the next three years. We work closely with our partners to ensure that the work we do makes best use of the resources available to the region and contributes towards achieving the Vision: 'To be a global centre where people and business choose to connect'

Connecting to Success, the West Midlands Economic Strategy for 2008 to 2011 was launched in December 2007 and the accompanying Delivery Framework was first launched in May 2008 and is updated annually. The West Midlands economic strategy provides the framework and defines the actions necessary for the region's economic development and regeneration activity.

A successful and vibrant economy requires a balanced and strong contribution from all three components. It is impossible to influence the drivers of economic growth and achieve long-term prosperity without positive improvement in all three areas. A healthy and dynamic business base is essential to creating wealth and employment, but it is dependent upon a strong supply of high-quality human capital and consumers. Finally, neither businesses nor individuals will prosper unless the location where they are based meets their particular needs.

In common with other regions, the West Midlands faces a number of global challenges:

- Climate change
- Continued globalisation
- Demographic change
- The march of technology

The West Midlands also faces a set of challenges that are more specific to the region.

These relate to:

- Skills
- Enterprise
- Innovation
- Economic inclusion
- Transport

These challenges are a core focus of the West Midlands Economic Strategy. Its development has also been underpinned by three underlying principles, which we have sought to embed across the Strategy:

1. Pursuing equality, reaping the benefits of diversity
2. Valuing the natural environment

### 3. Supporting urban and rural renaissance

In meeting the first underlying principle, we must ensure that all communities (including disabled people) within the region benefit from economic growth.

This is achieved by investment in:

- People: to tackle the barriers to employment that affect too many [disabled] people in the West Midlands.
- Business: to tackle the barriers for business to start-up, growth, competitiveness and innovation. While much of our activity crosses all industry sectors, our focus is prioritised in the creative and production industries, innovation, life sciences and environmental sectors
- Places: and infrastructure to develop areas of West Midlands which need better homes, facilities, jobs, transport systems and roads as well as reducing any barriers to development such as derelict land and disused buildings. This led to our work to bring elements of the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympics Games to West Midlands.
- Marketing and promotion: The Agency must at all times let everyone know that West Midlands is a great place to live, work, do business, study and visit

West Midlands's issues are too big for The Agency to tackle alone. Much of our role is based on sharing what works and trying to influence partners and their work.

Currently, AWM is developing its operation along an Investment and Performance Framework (IPF). IPF is a structure for organising Agency activity into coherent bundles of 13 Strategic Functions. The IPF ensures lessons learnt from evaluation are embedded in investment planning, decision making and project development. The Strategic Functions (SFs) are the way in which we are organising our investment planning activity. Each SF has a 'logic chain' which sets out the rationale for intervention and investment.

Each SF has a budget allocation and an expected 'return on investment' (how much Gross Value Added will be generated in the Region for every £1 of AWM investment). These are set out and have been agreed by Government in the Agency's Corporate Plan. Governance and management arrangements for SFs are currently being developed and will involve the establishment of Strategic Function Boards.

It will provide clearer evidence of Agency performance and impact and mechanism for making sure you have the information and support available to apply lessons learnt and good practice in what we do. The IPF will provide a clearer focus on what messages to communicate (not just the funding but the strategy and impact) and tighter control and accountability mechanisms for finance and reporting. At an Agency level IPF should result in:

- better projects, more focused influencing and better outcomes
- ability to track outcomes better
- ability to show what impact we are having on region

The IPF will be supported from an equality perspective with application of our Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) tools on the Economic Strategy as the influence that our Economic Strategy has on our work and the work of others is great. More information regarding IPF is provided in section 18, Appendix B.

The RDA's lead on Equality is the London Development Agency and all RDA lead officers meet quarterly and share practice and guidance on disability amongst other issues of equality and inclusion. For more information on our Economic Strategy, IPF and our plans please visit [www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk)

## 7.1 Key Regional challenges and Disability

The West Midlands Region faces specific challenges relating to:

Skills – Enterprise – Innovation - Economic inclusion -Transport

These challenges are a core focus for Advantage West Midlands:

### 7.1.2 Skills

All Skills team sponsored projects operate an equal opportunities policy in line with the wider ambitions of the Agency. An example of this policy in practice, outlined in a recent funding application for West Midlands Graduate Internships from our partners at Aston University, is demonstrated below:

*The Project will not only operate an Equal Opportunities policy throughout its Partnership, but will also endorse this to all businesses and graduates. The concept of Equal Opportunities will run throughout this Project from promotion, through matching and training, and into evaluation... When promoting this Project we will take active steps to engage a diverse client group across gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, disability, age and sexuality. We will monitor the Equal Opportunities data at each month end to check our effectiveness in reaching a broad group, and if this demonstrates any group is not taking part we will take action to affect some change in that group.*

The Graduate Advantage project is aimed at removing barriers to employment for West Midlands graduates by providing experience of work and employability training. To support their commitment to promote equal opportunities and diversity in their target group Graduate Advantage are now working with Remploy to offer the same opportunities to disabled people with a disability, learning difference or health condition. Remploy specialise in removing employment barriers for disabled people and were the obvious partner to work with Graduate Advantage to widen the scope of the project. The additional support from Remploy for graduates with disabilities is completely free.

When graduates apply for support, Remploy work with them to maximise their employability skills by: developing their CV, improving their communication and presentation skills and boosting their confidence. Remploy then help disabled graduates find a work placement and offer continued support throughout the placement. Graduate Advantage cannot offer this type of specialist service so collaborating with a partner like Remploy ensures that the offer to graduates and businesses encompasses a more diverse group of people.

### 7.1.3 Enterprise

It is recognised that with the right type of support enterprise allows disabled individuals to fulfil their potential, gain confidence and independence and create their own financial security. However, in order to do this business support needs to be tailored towards the needs of these individuals in order to overcome the additional barriers of setting up and growing a business.

Through the work of the Centres of Expertise, Advantage West Midlands is looking to ensure that all mainstream business support and enterprise services are diversity proofed to ensure that the offer meets the needs of diverse groups and individuals and encourages them to access the support that is available.

In addition to this the Agency recognises that not all support services can be provided through mainstream support especially at the engagement and pre-start-up stages of the enterprise journey. Therefore the Agency is looking to provide funding for extra services which will look to address the additional barriers many disabled entrepreneurs need to overcome.

The Agency provides guidance to Business Link via the knowledge bank which was developed in terms of equality and diversity contacts and support via the Economic Inclusion Team's Project Development Fun. Hence, in this sense it could be argued that the Agency pays due regard to disability in manufacturing. Another example is where MAS have worked with Remploy with regard to the access and the employment of disabled people.

The Agency does support the manufacture of products to help people with disabilities, through the Medical Technologies Cluster. For example, the development of Assistive Living technology – products or services, which enables individuals with a mobility, sensory or cognitive disability to retain greater independence, mainly in the home, but also outside. AWM has invested in two key projects which supports this aim – the Medical Technologies Innovation Project and the Health Design and Technology Institute. Agency investment in these projects is worth £810,000 and £4,245,000 respectively.

The projects involve two demonstrator and development facilities in the region, and both projects actively involve end user representation (disabled people) in the design, development and assessment of new products and services. One early outcome has been the development of a new set of architectural guidelines for universal housing that can easily be adapted to the user's specific need, without requiring costly amendments.

#### 7.1.4 Innovation

Innovation continues to be a key driver in support of the Agency's Disability and Equality Scheme. Through its continued investment and support of major technological achievements and the transfer of knowledge from its world class Universities, support for all within our communities is developed through ground breaking activities regardless of disability and in the search for equality.

Collaboration of our industries and Universities are leading to quite unprecedented and exciting new opportunities for all, inspired by innovation and reflected in the regions ability to develop the knowledge from its richness in diversity for the prosperity and benefit of all those who live and work in our region. A clear example of this would be our regions leading edge work in Biomedical research that uses the drive of innovation in the development of improved treatments for obesity and heart disease. Another might be the technological creativity and design brought to bear through our investment in medical technology, to meet the needs of our ageing society, and the many innovative products developed to improve the quality of life of those in this growing sector.

We also support a number of other key technologies that also strive to benefit our region through Environmental, New media, Transport, Energy and ICT activities. Each of these strives to provide opportunities for all to contribute from our wealth of knowledge in the region, with no barriers, and mindful and supportive of the needs of our action plan for disability and equality.

#### 7.1.5 Economic Inclusion

The West Midlands Economic Strategy identified that worklessness (exclusion) accounts for 20% of the region's output gap. To address that, the west Midlands Economic inclusion panel was set up by the Agency, involving partners from across the public, private and third sector. The baseline report on worklessness highlighted those groups experiencing the highest levels of worklessness. In particular, 58% of those in the West Midlands with a mental health problem are workless. 40% of Incapacity Benefit claimants are claiming because of a mental health problem.

The Panel set up a Task and Finish group to specially address those on incapacity benefit,, with the aim of identifying key new actions that could be taken at a regional level that would supplement existing national and local initiatives. The group will be reporting its findings and recommendations to the next meeting of the Panel, focused on how the health service can play a greater role in supporting other partners work in addressing worklessness.

The Agency has developed its Connections to Opportunities Programme, a £11 m programme, aimed at those most disadvantaged in the labour market. The specification for the Programme identified disabled people as one of the overall target groups. Each local Strategic Partnership has been asked to develop a programme against that overall specification. A number of those have included disabled people as one of their targets. The evaluation plan for the programme requires beneficiary monitoring of participants, including recording whether they have a disability.

The Agency has supported major projects aimed specifically at disabled people – for example, a capital building project for the Beacon Centre for the Blind.

The Agency is now creating a set of Strategic Functions, one of which is Access to Employment (Economic Inclusion). The Strategic Function has a focus on attaining economic inclusion for all. It also recognises in relation to equality and diversity that worklessness has different causes amongst different groups which need to be addressed accordingly. The approach of supporting local organisations through the Connections to Opportunities programme should help ensure customised solutions are developed for groups experiencing specific disadvantage and difficulties in entering the labour market.

#### 7.1.6 Transport

The Agency's work on transport policy is underpinned by the projects and studies funded from "the transport policy and feasibility fund". In our application for funding for this project we state that:

“A key element of the Transport Policy Research and Feasibility Fund will be to make the best use of existing transport networks, for example through increasing the availability of public transport and maximising the use of technology and new infrastructure where required. This will improve internal and external connections and for all sectors of our society; enabling key centres to be fully accessible, thus creating a more inclusive and productive society.

Each element of the Transport Policy Research and Feasibility Fund will be taken forward to help deliver the Agency’s equality and diversity action plan: Relevant standards will be implemented throughout the contracting, delivery and evaluation processes. Promotion of supplier diversity and good practice in equality and diversity will be promoted where possible.”

This statement is currently being delivered through the work that we are supporting such as:

- The North Staffordshire Integrated Transport Project which will develop the business cases for providing a first class, accessible public transport network for the area; and
- The Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) 2-year work programme that is developing a regional transport programme for the future that will have a positive impact on carbon and economic growth; improve health, security, safety and quality of life and promote equality of opportunity for all to achieve a fairer opportunity.

The standards have been implemented by ensuring that consultancy support for projects and research, whether procured directly by the Agency or through partners such as local authorities; is obtained via fair, open and accessible means.

## 7.2 AWM Disability Equality Case Study: Tourism

### *Advantage West Midlands' strategy for tourism in the West Midlands*

Tourism is important economically and socially for the West Midlands – and will be increasingly so in the years up to and including 2012. Advantage West Midlands is seeking to develop tourism in the region, and understands it must pay particular attention to access.

The Tourism & Leisure industry is vital to the economic well-being of the West Midlands. In 2001, there were approximately 124 million visits to the region, generating £4.8 billion, and supporting 305,000 employees across 28,000 businesses.

The West Midlands is particularly strong in business tourism, primarily driven by the NEC and the region's central location. In leisure tourism, among hundreds of attractions, we have the world-famous "Shakespeare Country", and the most visited theme park in the country, Alton Towers.

The Tourism & Leisure Cluster Business Plan is very closely aligned to the West Midlands Visitor Economic Strategy (2004) and is overseen by Tourism West Midlands, the regional strategic body for tourism and leisure.

The vision for this cluster is for the West Midlands to be recognised for its continuing growth, and for the excellence of a number of sophisticated, world-class urban and authentic rural destinations for business and leisure visitors, which showcase the region's creativity and its heritage, celebrate its diversity and set new standards for quality and sustainability.

### *Background information about tourism and disability*

In 2003, the UK population took some 151 million domestic holidays with 41% of these trips including hotel stays. A 2005 survey of the UK's leading hotel groups (*No Room at the Inn - The Hotel Industry is Failing Disabled People* Leonard Cheshire, 26 July 2005) found that for many hotel companies inclusive access for disabled people is far from a priority. The survey uncovered many potential shortfalls in levels of service across the board:

Less than half of the hotels surveyed (46%) said that they offered fully accessible bathing facilities in their "accessible" rooms.

Less than a third of hotels said that they had lifts with Braille buttons.

A third of hotels said that their "accessible" rooms did not provide half size wardrobes or lower rails, to enable wheelchair users to hang up their clothes.

Only one of the 30 hotels surveyed said that it had a text phone installed.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) research found that 20% of disabled people interviewed faced barriers accessing goods and services. This was confirmed by a National Opinion Poll (NOP) survey on behalf of the DRC that found that 70% of disabled people with mobility and sensory impairments have difficulty accessing goods and services. The survey also reported that the factors most likely to cause difficulty for disabled people are steps at

the entrance of the building, heavy external/internal doors, use of disabled parking by non-disabled customers, no lifts or lack of accessible toilets.

Research on service providers' awareness of the DDA found that 70% were not aware of any laws that give rights to disabled customers. This is even more surprising given that it is estimated that the annual spending power of disabled people is £80 billion.

### *Policy Approach*

A commitment to improving standards of accessibility is central to "Winning: A tourism strategy for 2012 and beyond", the national tourism strategy - in particular, a commitment to Delivering a first-class welcome to all visitors. Alongside regional and national partners, Advantage West Midlands are signed up to delivering this strategy.

At regional level, our revised Visitor Economy Strategy was published in March 2008; implicit within this strategy which takes a market-led approach to identifying growth opportunities, is the need to be customer and quality driven. High standards of accessibility (physical access and service provision) are central planks of this approach.

This strategy is now entering its final year and in reviewing and evaluating activity, we will seek to build on appropriate comparator access measures.

Our general approach to the topic is to regard good standards of access, and equality in service/employment provision as integral components of responding to market opportunities, and in destination/place building - the concept of place building being a key strand in both the Visitor Economy Strategy and West Midlands Economic Strategy. Good standards of access and design are recognised as being integral elements of vibrant and economically successful destinations.

### *Activities*

Across the Agency's tourism and leisure investment and activities, a number of specific examples of our commitment to disability equality and improving accessibility can be highlighted;

#### *Olympics and Paralympic Games*

An integral element of the Agency's Olympics programme is support to deliver the potential of the Paralympic games, including training camps - the Royal College for the Blind in Hereford has been listed as a potential training camp venue in the official guide

Support and sponsorship to secure high profile sporting events for the region in the lead up to the 2012 games, including the World Blind Football Championships (Hereford) in 2010, and World Wheelchair Basketball Championships (Birmingham) in 2010. Support for high profile events of this type can act as showcases for ability and talent, in addition to contributing directly to economic growth targets

#### *Business Support and Advice*

Support and advice on accessibility issues is an integral element of Business Link West Midlands core support offer to tourism businesses. Feedback from the Regional Centre for

Tourism Business Support project indicated strong levels of demand for advice, particularly from smaller businesses. Support and advice has concentrated in helping businesses to understand and meet their statutory obligations, and in communicating clearly with consumers about accessibility of their services and products

We have distributed a new 'Easy does it' guide (produced by VisitBritain) to businesses via our business-led Destination Management Partnership (DMP) network - the guide has been designed to help businesses improve their accessibility.

*Support for 'Welcome All' training for the sector (through DMP network)*

Showcasing and promoting excellence in access standards via promoting an 'Access for All' category in the region's tourism excellence awards

### *Marketing*

We are currently developing our visitor consumer website to work towards accessible design standards

### *Capital Investments*

Advantage West Midlands has invested significantly in major strategic tourism developments where high levels of accessibility have been integral – good examples include the Cold War Exhibition at RAF Cosford and the ongoing World Class Stratford programme/redevelopment of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

### *Risks to tourism*

There are considerable risks to this industry in the West Midlands, some of them highlighted by the Report, *Accessible Destinations 2012 above and beyond the Disability Discrimination Act 2005*.

At a time when the profile of disability accessibility issues is being raised, there is a high level of inaccessibility within the region. This has the following implications for 2012:

### *Recommendations and Responses*

In looking into Tourism as a case study for AWM and disability equality, consultants Gallant 2000 made several recommendations. Our current responses are highlighted in the right-hand column.

Recommendations	Agency Response
a. Ensure that there are access standards in place	Principles of the DDA are implicit within the regional tourism strategy and the Agency's role in implementing it
b. The report <i>Accessible Destination 2012</i> to be reviewed with regard to all the issues above.	To be considered alongside other up to date market intelligence. A specific access question was built into the 2009 UKTS survey, the main domestic national tourism survey. A new tourism strategy for England is scheduled for publication in march 2010 – the national accessible framework is being reviewed as part of this process and will provide a context for ongoing regional activities.
c. Positive profiling of accessibility within tourism in the region.	<p>The region's visitor website is scheduled for a redesign in spring 2010; the Tourism team will consider how best to profile accessible destinations and products with the redesigned site.</p> <p>The Agency also attends the national Regions Access Group; and identified best practice will be dissemination to regional partners. Via this and other tourism networks, AWM will encourage tourism partners to consider access issues. Accessible tourism is an eligible topic for support for Destination Management Partnerships; a 3 year programme, supporting sub-regional tourism partnerships.</p>
d. Ensure training material in Welcome All reflects the disability equality not disability awareness content.	Welcome All is a privately owned training course – course content is not in AWM's control. AWM will work with People First (regional skills council for tourism and hospitality sector) to ensure that courses available for the sector address this issue - research on disability awareness training has recently been considered by the Regions Access Action Group.
e. Ensure that a move towards Access Analysis and standards are adopted.	The Agency will raise awareness of the recommendation towards an analysis approach with our private and public sector partners, including Business Link
f. Ensure that Tourism business support business adviser has appropriate knowledge to facilitate service.	Regional centre for tourism business support has been absorbed into the core Business Link offer – core adviser skills will be addressed in consultation with Business Link.
g. Ensure standards are adhered to, as well ensuring that projects meet the Value for Money and other key criteria, such as social and environmental frameworks.	Not a tourism-specific issue - would need to be addressed as an element of reviewing Agency-wide procurement and contracting standards
h. Ensure that the capital grant scheme has conditions attached to its procurement relating to disability equality	Not a tourism-specific issue - would need to be addressed as an element of reviewing Agency-wide procurement and contracting standards
i. Ensure expanding use of an "Access Statement" to reflect the Access Analysis approach	VisitEngland has produced a standard access template <a href="http://www.enjoyengland.com/corporate/corporate-information/Industry_Services/Sustainability-and-Accessibility/Accessible-Tourism/Access-Statements.aspx">http://www.enjoyengland.com/corporate/corporate-information/Industry_Services/Sustainability-and-Accessibility/Accessible-Tourism/Access-Statements.aspx</a> which will be promoted to businesses
j. Support the development or promotion of a Directory of Accessible venues and accommodation using the standards discussed above for the West	The region does not have any plans to produce any new paper-based regional accommodation guides or tourism brochures at present. Consideration will be given to incorporating appropriate online content onto the region's

Midland region	<a href="#">visitor website</a>
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## **8 Advantage West Midlands' Disability Equality Scheme**

The aim of our Disability Equality Scheme is to mainstream disability equality into Advantage West Midlands by building it into the way we work wherever relevant. This Disability Equality Scheme looks at how we can close the gaps in results and experiences for disabled people compared with non-disabled people.

This scheme is both a strategy and an action plan describing the journey from where we are now to where we want to be in the area of disability equality.

Our Disability Equality Scheme will benefit from the valuable lessons learned in our race equality work and from our Race Equality Scheme (RES) e.g. have wide involvement from the outset and set realistic objectives.

Many of our ways of working have already been revised to make sure the Advantage West Midlands promotes equality for all minority groups. The next stage is to make these processes turn into positive outcomes.

## **9 DES Corporate Action Plan**

A key priority at Advantage West Midlands is to achieve the necessary organisational culture change to embed Disability Equality.

Culture as emergence.

The evidence gathered so far points to the impossibility of adequately tackling discrimination by relying solely on individuals.

According to the anthropologist Mary Douglas, culture is not static is but something that everyone is constantly creating, affirming, and expressing. She writes about, "...the admonitions, excuses, and moral judgements by which the people mutually coerce one another into conformity." (Douglas 1985)

In this view, culture is not imposed from outside, but created from within; any programme that attempts to change culture by a process of command and control is likely to miss the mark.

The single most important ingredient in promoting disability equality at Advantage West Midlands is creating a culture based on accurate knowledge and positive attitudes on disability and one in which disabled people are involved from the start. This culture will be achieved in a number of ways including training, leadership, and the presence of disabled people in our workforce.

Advantage West Midlands has six key objectives underpinning the corporate plan:

1. *Leadership and culture* – to make a firm commitment to this work and build a positive and well-informed disability equality culture.
2. *Partnership* – to involve disabled people and their organisations more with our work.
3. *‘Capacity Building’* – to support disabled people and their organisations so that they can inform and influence our actions and their outcomes.
4. *Influence and learning* – to create ways for sharing what works on disability equality between our partners and ourselves.
5. *Measure and monitor* – to meet the disability equality targets and objectives we set for our work and use monitoring systems to check our progress.
6. *Evaluation* – to make sure that we learn what works and what doesn't, including the use of our 'equality impact assessment' process.

### **9.1 Implementing the Action Plan**

Our action plan will run from December 2007 to December 2011. This is consistent with our existing Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2007-11 and in line with other public sector bodies who will need to review and revise their DES by December 2010.

The action plan is evidence based and outcome focused and actions have been built on findings from previous sections. It is designed to go beyond process and strategy and help us deliver measurable outcomes, which narrow gaps between disabled and non-disabled people's experiences.

While we have identified individual teams within Advantage West Midlands to deliver this Disability Equality Scheme, an underlying principle of this work is that we will be relying on the support and commitment of our partners e.g. the LSC, local authorities, the voluntary sector, the business community and regional partners to achieve success.

We use our Economic Strategy themes to divide up the actions. The action plan then looks at our role as an employer and procurer as well as implementing with relevant training our Equality Impact Assessment process. Equality Impact Assessment will feature at the development stage of projects and key policies.

## **9.2 Reviewing our corporate action plan**

The Agency will work with disability champions across the West Midlands to produce a six monthly review of this Disability Equality Scheme, which will be presented to the Advantage West Midlands Board. The report will be shared with directors, the senior management team, and all staff.

A variety of review methods will also be used against each objective including monthly performance reports, our Economic Strategy snapshot reports, the West Midland's Annual Business Survey, staff and partner surveys, mystery shopping and access analyst and direct feedback from disabled West Midland's. The Agency's HR recruitment database will allow us to look at disabled people's progress through each stage of our recruitment and selection processes.

### Review dates

April 2008

October 2008

April 2009

December 2009

June 2010

December 2010 (Final)

## 10 Objectives of the DES Action Plan

Disability Equality Scheme Objective	Objective	Timescale	Evidence and Progress	Responsibility
<b>1. Leadership and Culture:</b> making a firm commitment to build a positive, well-informed, and effective, disability equality culture				
	To make a commitment to disability equality and show leadership	2009-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board Champion in place (Di Rayner) from 2008 to present</li> <li>• Disability Access Audit of premises every two years. Next DAA due October 2010</li> <li>• Funded Diversity Week in 2008 (£50,000) and 2009 (£67,000)</li> <li>• Funded 15 staff to gain level 2 or 3 qualification in Managing Equality and Diversity; 13 of 15 completed with remaining two to complete in 2010</li> <li>• Successfully completed “Two Ticks” audit by Job Centre Plus every year since 2002</li> <li>• Advantage West Midlands website now adheres to W3C guidelines, WCAG 2.0 and Section 508. The website accessibility audit was performed by the Shaw Trust Website Accessibility Accreditation Service which is endorsed by The Guild of Accessible Web Designers (GAWDS).</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership Team and Board Members</p> <p>HR Team and E+D Manager</p> <p>Communications Team</p>
	Each Directorate to volunteer equality and diversity champions	2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity Champions Group in place (Feb 2008) chaired by a Director and attended by Board E+D Champion and representatives from each directorate</li> </ul>	Leadership Team, Functional Directors

	Disability Equality training for all Agency staff and Board Members	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory DES briefings delivered by DES consultant developers (Gallant 200) between October and November 2007</li> <li>• Agency support of Employers Forum on Disability events in 2009</li> </ul>	E+D Manager and Training Manager
	Disability audit of AWM Board to identify any barriers	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed in 2007. Audit revealed that of 13 Board Members one had a mobility impairment</li> </ul>	Board Support Team
	Build links with partners who have expertise in disability and promote awareness of disability equality in the region	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DES development work and DES mandatory briefings facilitated by Gallant 2000 in 2007</li> <li>• DES Involvement project with the Regional Disability Network via the Council of Disabled people in 2009 and 2010. AWM has invested in excess of £30,000 for this project</li> <li>• Partnered with the Employers Forum on Disability on two occasions in 2009 to promote the disability equality issues in the region</li> </ul>	E+D Manager, Training Manager  Director for Sustainable Communities  E+D Manager
	To strengthen the Equality & Diversity function across the Agency by leadership and available resources.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2009, the Agency's Leadership Team funded 15 staff to gain level 2 or 3 qualification in Managing Equality and Diversity; 13 of 15 completed with remaining two to complete in 2010</li> </ul>	Leadership Team
<b>2. Partnership:</b> Involving disability organisations and				

disabled people in the strategic direction of the Agency's work.				
	To publish and promote Disability Equality Scheme so that it is known and understood across the West Midlands.	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agency has a DES Involvement project with the Regional Disability Network via the Council of Disabled people in 2009 and 2010. AWM has invested in excess of £30,000 over two years for this project</li> <li>• The Agency has reviewed and re-published its DES on its website about every six months since December 2006</li> <li>• The Agency has delivered mandatory DES briefing sessions to its staff</li> <li>• During 2010 the Agency is reviewing its E+D Induction and refresher training to feature more strongly its equality duties on race, gender and disability</li> </ul>	<p>Director for Sustainable Communities and E+D Manager</p> <p>Communications Team and E+D Manager</p> <p>E+D Manager, Training Manager</p> <p>E+D Manager, Training Manager</p>
	To develop an Independent Disability Equality Scheme Advisory or Involvement Group	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agency will be developing a strategic involvement group of key disability organisations in the region from March 2010 that will meet every three months</li> </ul>	<p>Director for Sustainable Communities and E+D Manager</p>
<b>3. Capacity Building:</b> to support disabled people and their organisations so that they can inform and influence our actions and their				

outcomes				
	To map the existence and capacity of organisations of disabled people in West Midlands in partnership with other public sector organisations	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This will be delivered via the DES Strategic Involvement Group starting in March 2010 in partnership with members of the above group.</li> <li>• 7 of the 26 (27%) organisations who received funding from AWM's 'Diversity Week' in 2009 were disability focused organisations</li> </ul>	E+D Manager
	To consider advice and guidance from the DES Strategic Involvement Group	2010-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agency will, subject to available resources and in line with its role and responsibility support the capacity of disability organisations in the region. For example, in 2009 AWM provided the Council for Disabled People nearly £8,000 for new ITC infrastructure and equipment to improve their work with disability organisations and disabled people</li> </ul>	Director of Sustainable Communities and Leadership Team
<b>4. Influence and Learning:</b> sharing what works on disability equality between our partners and ourselves				
	To work closely with the Disability experts at regional and national level	2010-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well established regional working with the Regional Disability Network, Gallant 2000 and Bluemouse Disability Consultants. At national level developed links with Employability and the Employers Forum on Disability</li> <li>• The DES Strategic Involvement Group starting in March 2010 will also further meet this objective</li> </ul>	E+D Manager, Director for Sustainable Communities

	To assist other Regional Development Agencies with disability equality, including conferences and knowledge sharing	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well established knowledge sharing via the RDA Lead E+D Group that meets quarterly and with regular email exchanges</li> <li>Agency has funded an equality scheme benchmarking project with legal firm Hammonds. This is also a best practice initiative and the findings will be shared with all RDAs. Due for completion March 2010</li> <li>All RDAs were invited to the two Agency supported events facilitated by the Employers Forum on Disability events in 2009. The Agency is likely to continue this support on an in-kind basis</li> </ul>	E+D Manager
<b>5. Measure and monitor:</b> use monitoring systems to check our progress against disability equality objectives and targets.				
	To build disability means of measurement into tenders and contracts	2009-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Agency is introducing equality and diversity elements into the procurement process via the PQQ (pre qualification questionnaire)</li> <li>The Agency conducted a project in 2009 to assist suppliers on its panel gain accreditation in a national equality and diversity standard, "Equality Assured". This was piloted with legal and professional services suppliers</li> <li>The Agency has adopted the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) into its project processes and integrated it into its latest project application form launched December 2009.</li> </ul>	Procurement Team  E+D Manager  Project Office Team

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will assist to inform project monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>EQIA processes for strategic functions and policies will be developed during 2010</li> </ul>	
<b>6. Evaluation:</b> Learning what works and using findings of conducted EQIAs (Equality Impact Assessments) to analyse delivery.				
	To learn what works and what doesn't including through our 'equality impact assessment' process.	2010-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project and Contract Managers to feedback how well EQIA feeds through into project monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>Strategic Function Leads and Policy Leads to feedback how EQIA has informed strategic function and policy objectives</li> <li>Reporting on equality impact evaluation to Leadership Team, Board and staff</li> </ul>	Evaluation and Performance Team  Evaluation and Performance Team  E+D Manager

## **11 The disability evidence base**

It is important to note that the figures used can only relate to those disabled people who feel able to self declare, so may not fully represent an accurate picture of need and outcome. We will look at the evidence that exists in relation to disabled people against a backdrop of what is happening in West Midlands as a whole.

### **11.1 The evidence of disability inequality**

In 2003, of the approximately 646,000 people of working age in West Midlands who declared they were disabled people, 37.5% were employed. This is slightly down on the proportion of disabled people employed in the UK (40.5%), but much lower than the total West Midlands employment rate in 2003 of 58.9%. Employment rates are lower still for disabled women and disabled people from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. Disabled people with mental health issues have by far the lowest employment rate of all groups at 18%.

In 2002, the economic activity rate (those who are in employment and those who are unemployed but actively looking for work) for disabled men was 54% and for women 46%. The economic activity rate for disabled people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups was 43% compared with 63% for white groups.

Disabled people in West Midland with higher-level qualifications have relatively high activity rates (75%) whereas those with no qualifications have very low activity (28%). This pattern is the same for non-disabled people, but their activity rates are generally much higher. The gap in activity rates between disabled and non-disabled people is greatest for those with no qualifications.

Disabled people living in the West Midlands are less likely to find work in management and professional occupations, and more likely to find work in routine, less well-paid jobs. Of disabled workers, 38% were employed in managerial, professional, and technical occupations compared to 53% of non-disabled workers. However, 37% of disabled workers were employed in lower paid jobs compared with 26% of non-disabled workers.

Disabled workers are more likely to work part-time (26%) compared with non-disabled workers (19%). More specifically, 38% of disabled women worked part-time compared with 32% of non-disabled women.

Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no qualifications whatsoever. Labour force survey winter 2001/02, ONS

Disabled people are around five times as likely as non-disabled people to be out of work and claiming benefits. There are 2.9 million disabled people to be out of work and claiming benefits. Labour force survey 2001/02 ONS

Only 13% of adults with learning difficulties are in work. White paper, Valuing People 2001.

Only 39.5% of Year 11 Pupils in Special Schools in 2002 got one or more GCSEs A\* -G, compared to 95% in mainstream education.

#### **Data sources:**

- Barriers to Self Employment for Disabled People, Small Business Service,
- 2003 Labour Force Survey 2003

- Gaining and retaining a job: the Department for Work and Pensions' support for disabled people. National Audit Office 13 October 2005
- Michael Floyd, Self Employment and Disabled People in the United Kingdom
- Disability Rights Commission statistics that characterise disabled people's lives in the UK, 2003
- Office of National Statistics (ONS)

## **12 Gaps in Outcomes**

The evidence outlined in this section of the Disability Equality Scheme shows that in all the areas in which Advantage West Midlands operates there are considerable gaps in outcomes and experiences for disabled people compared with non-disabled people. Rather than describe in this section how Advantage West Midlands will address these gaps, this evidence base and the gaps in outcomes will inform directly our action plans.

### **12.1 Gaps in Evidence**

Gathering the evidence for this section of the Disability Equality Scheme also highlighted that gaps exist in the evidence available on the experiences and outcomes of disabled people in relation to the areas in which Advantage West Midlands operates e.g. the numbers and needs of potential disabled entrepreneurs.

## **13 Appendices**

### **13.1 A: Legal definitions of disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) says: “A person has a disability if he has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Some people think this focuses too much on a ‘medical model’ of disability.

The code of practice for the DDA 2005 moves this issue on by explaining that, “The poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from attitudinal and environmental barriers.”

Advantage West Midlands shares this view and believe that disability should be defined as cultural – including processes and systems within organisations.

This is the ‘social model’ of disability, and gives Advantage West Midlands a way of framing its legal duties into practice.

Advantage West Midlands is working to reduce the barriers that exclude disabled people who have impairments.

#### **13.1.2 FAQs on Disability - taken from the Code and based on the medical model**

When is a person disabled? A person has a disability if he has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

What is a ‘substantial’ adverse effect? A substantial adverse effect is something, which is more than a minor or trivial effect. The requirement that an effect must be substantial reflects the general understanding of disability as a limitation going beyond the normal differences in ability that might exist among people.

What is a ‘long term’ effect? A long term effect of impairment is one which has lasted at least 12 months, or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months, or which is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected. Effects that are not long term would therefore include loss of mobility due to a broken limb likely to heal within 12 months, and the effects of temporary infections, from which a person would be likely to recover within 12 months.

What are normal days to day activities? They are activities, which are carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis. The term is not intended to include activities that are normal only for a particular person or group of people, such as playing a musical instrument, or a sport, to a professional standard or performing a skilled or specific task at work. However, someone who is affected in such a specific way but is also affected in normal day-to-day activities would be covered by this part of the definition.

The test of whether impairment affects normal day-to-day activities is whether it affects one of the broad categories of capacity listed in Schedule 1 to the Act. They are mobility, manual

dexterity, physical co-ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand, or perception of the risk of physical danger.

What about people who have recovered from a disability? People who have had a disability within the definition are protected from discrimination even if they have since recovered.

What does 'impairment' cover? It covers physical or mental impairments; this includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing.

Are all mental impairments covered? The term 'mental impairment' is intended to cover a wide range of impairments relating to mental functioning, including what are often known as learning disabilities.

What about treatment? Someone with impairment may be receiving medical or other treatment, which alleviates or removes the effects (though not the impairment). In such cases, the treatment is ignored and the impairment is taken to have the effect it would have had without such treatment. This does not apply if substantial adverse effects are not likely to recur even if the treatment stops (i.e. the impairment has been cured).

Does this include people who wear spectacles? No. The sole exception to the rule about ignoring the effects of treatment is the wearing of spectacles or contact lenses. In this case, the effect while the person is wearing spectacles or contact lenses should be considered.

Are people who have disfigurements covered? People with severe disfigurements are covered by the Act. They do not need to demonstrate that the impairment has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Are there any other people who are automatically treated as disabled under the Act? Anyone who has a diagnosis of HIV, Cancer or Multiple Sclerosis is automatically treated as disabled under the Act. In addition, people who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist are automatically treated under the Act as being disabled. People who are not registered or certified as blind or partially sighted will be covered by the Act if they can establish that they meet the Act's definition of disability.

What about people who know their condition is going to worsen over time? Progressive conditions are conditions that are likely to change and develop over time. Where a person has a progressive condition he will be covered by the Act from the moment the condition leads to an impairment which has some effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, even though not a substantial effect, if that impairment is likely eventually to have a substantial adverse effect on such ability.

Are people with genetic conditions covered? If a genetic condition has no effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, the person is not covered. Diagnosis does not in itself bring someone within the definition. If the condition is progressive, then the rule about progressive conditions applies.

Are any conditions specifically excluded from the coverage of the Act? Yes. Certain conditions are to be regarded as not amounting to impairments for the purposes of the Act.

These are: addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine, or any other substance (other than as a result of the substance being medically prescribed), seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever), except where it aggravates the effect of another condition, tendency to set fires, tendency to steal, tendency to physical, or sexual abuse of other persons, exhibitionism voyeurism. Also, disfigurements which consist of a tattoo (which has not been removed), non medical body piercing, or something attached through such piercing, are to be treated as not having a substantial adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **13.2 Appendix B: Advantage West Midlands Investment Performance Framework (IPF)**

We have developed a framework through which performance against the Corporate Plan can be tracked, monitored and evaluated. The Investment and Performance Framework (IPF), meets two basic requirements:

Internally - a framework through which performance against the Corporate Plan can be monitored, tracked and evaluated, as well as a logical means to allocate investment resource strategically and rationally; and

Externally - to demonstrate to the government how performance against the Corporate Plan will be assessed going forward.

The key driver for this work is our increased emphasis on performance reporting and maximising our effectiveness in terms of delivering economic impact.

Under the IPF all of our interventions have been organised into 12 Strategic Functions. Each one has a specification, including a logic chain, that sets out the rationale, objectives, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact to be achieved.

### **16.2.1 The 12 Strategic Functions**

1 International Business: Supporting domestic firms to ensure that they are able to make the most of international trade. Attracting foreign investment to the region to help to grow the economy.

2 Market Opportunities (through Clusters): Support to industries, through clusters and clustering, to exploit market opportunities (this includes activities to support environmental technologies & energy sector).

3 Tourism & Culture: Supporting the region's tourism offer through support to businesses, marketing to visitors, leadership and coordination of the tourism sector (e.g. on quality, visitor information, sustainable tourism and business support) and 2012-related tourism and cultural activities.

4. Improving Competitiveness: Enterprise & Business Development Generic and specialist business support activities to ensure that the region's businesses and potential businesses are able to find, access and use appropriate support to start and grow their enterprises and improve their performance.

5 Finance for Business Seeks to ensure that businesses have access to a range of finance sources that are not currently accessed through or are underprovided by the private sector, including: equity based finance; Business Angel networks; loans; specialist grants & investment readiness.

6 Technology Capacity & Business Innovation Improving the region's performance in relation to innovation so that it is equipped to undertake world class research and development, can attract and retain technology-led businesses, is able to bring together the research sector with businesses and can use innovation to respond to market needs.

7 Skills for Business Investing in high-value skills for the future economy, including the investment by businesses in skills of their workforce, the retention and utilisation of graduates in the region's economy and leadership/management skills.

8 Land & Buildings for Economic Growth Facilitation and provision of land and buildings (including employment, mixed use, community developments in both urban and rural contexts) to support economic growth.

9 Infrastructure & Asset Development Developing and upgrading transport, public realm, communication, waste and energy infrastructure to improve the region's economic performance and minimise carbon emissions.

10 Sustainable Living & Working Changing attitudes to sustainability and consumption in relation to living and working practices.

11 Access to Employment (Economic Inclusion) Filling gaps in the provision of mainstream providers in relation to matching and connecting people with employment opportunities.

12 Regional Leadership Regional coordination and leadership of intelligence, policy development and wider marketing functions.

13 RDPE

The IPF was approved by government in August 2009 as part of the Updated Corporate Plan (2009-11).

### 13.3 Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Framework

ADV-PF-XX			
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK			
POLICY/Framework			
ISSUE NUMBER	DATE OF ISSUE	CHANGE NUMBER	NEXT REVIEW DATE
1	April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2009	XXXX	March 2010

#### AIM

The aim of this document is to provide Agency staff with an understanding of the framework within which the Agency conducts and publishes Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) for projects, key Agency policies and strategies in order to maximise the Agency's opportunities to support economic inclusion, tackle discrimination and promote equality.

#### BACKGROUND

The Agency has a statutory duty to promote race, gender and disability equality. The Agency also has duties to promote equality in the field of employment, which relate to age, sexual orientation, religion and belief and trans-equality.

An impact assessment can highlight a project, policy or strategy that is likely to have an impact (positive or negative) on various groups or in a given area(s). The principle aim is to demonstrate the thinking or consideration of equality and diversity and how this can be addressed by economic inclusion or similar interventions to close the output gap.

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) also support the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), AWMs Corporate Objectives; in particular CO6 (Sustainable Communities), CO8 (Raising Ambitions and Aspirations) and CO11 (Organisational Performance), The Agency's Business Plan 2009-10, the Board Approved Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2007-11 and the Leadership commitment set out in the Equality and Diversity Policy 2009.

The EQIA business case for the Agency is that it simultaneously supports our statutory duty to promote race, gender and disability equality, the EU Employment Duties to promote equality in relation to age, sexual orientation and faith/religious beliefs and strengthening the business, people and/or place impact of our projects and key policies or strategies; ultimately the Agency's drive to be excellent in everything that it does.

Hence EQIAs support the 'mainstreaming' of equality and diversity into the Agency's functioning and culture.

## **ABOUT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EQIAs)?**

The EQIA is a tool to support the structured information gathering and decision making process and to record the likely or actual impact of a current or proposed policy, project or strategy on equality issues in relation to age, gender, ethnicity/race, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief.

EQIAs are usually a 'predictive' tool, but can also be retrospective in that they will assess and evaluate the actual impact of project, policies and strategies post project delivery or policy implementation. EQIAs should assess:

- likely or actual equality impacts
- direct and or indirect equality impacts
- positive and adverse equality impacts
- proportional or disproportional equality impacts
- targeted / prioritised beneficiaries or non beneficiaries
- What adjustments can be made to off-set or prevent negative impacts

Conducting EQIAs will enable the Agency to publish them as may be required for any public scrutiny of its projects, policies and strategies.

The discovery of negative impact should not be seen as a threat but as part of good policy development.

## **OWNERSHIP**

The Agency's strategy and policy position regarding EQIAs is supported by the Leadership Team and managed by the Economic Inclusion Team in partnership with Project Office.

Project Office have a responsibility to ensure that the published Outline Proposal and Full Application forms are designed to capture the equality and diversity information required and connect with the questions set out in the EQIA.

Project Sponsors will be responsible for working with applicants to ensure that they conduct an EQIA during project development and no later than the Outline application stage.

Project and Contract Managers carrying out an Outline assessment or Full appraisal have a responsibility to ensure that an EQIA has been carried out in line with the Agency's published guidance. The Economic Inclusion Team or Project Office can provide support if required.

Policy Managers have a responsibility to ensure that an EQIA is conducted where appropriate during the development stage of any new policy. The lead Policy Officer would conduct the EQIA and would seek the support of the Economic Inclusion Team if required.

## **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Agency's policy for the management of EQIAs within Advantage West Midlands is as follows.

- All project applications to the Agency for funding needed to be supported with a completed EQIA at the project development or outline stage and before progress to the full application stage.
- An EQIA must be completed in addition to the equality and diversity question posed at the Outline (question 4.6) and the Full application (question 5.1) stages.
- For key Agency policies and strategies, an EQIA must be conducted by the Policy Manager during development of the policy.
- EQIAs must be supported by relevant data or evidence driven. For example, where demographic data suggests that area X has a higher than average ageing population and high unemployment amongst men and young BME people, it would be wholly reasonable for the EQIA to focus on age (older people and young BME) and gender (male unemployment) as a minimum, without necessarily going into other strands of equality such as disability, sexual orientation and religion and belief.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

*The Project Sponsor is responsible for:*

- Checking that the applicant has answered any question(s) relating to equality and diversity on the outline application form
- Encouraging the completion of the EQIA by the applicant and that the rationale for its completion is understood
- Acknowledging the completion of the EQIA form by stating their name, position, date and any comments
- Liaise with Project Office and the Economic Inclusion Team to ensure that the required equality and diversity guidance and advice is provided if necessary

*The Project and Contract Manager is responsible for*

- Ensuring that the EQIA has been completed
- Reflecting any stated equality outcomes in the contract
- Acknowledging the completion of the EQIA form by stating name, position, date and any comments if not done so by the Project Sponsor

*The Project Office is responsible for providing Agency staff with the necessary support and guidance throughout the Delivery stage. The Project Office shall also assess projects to check for compliance with this procedure.*

Policy Managers are responsible for conducting an EQIA during the development or review of any key policy or strategy. The lead Policy Officer would conduct the EQIA and would seek the support of the Economic Inclusion Team if required.

## **THE EQIA PROCESS (for project applications and policy development or review)**

All project applicants need to complete an EQIA with due consideration to:

- What the project is aiming to do; who is it aimed at, where will it be done and how

- The supporting evidence e.g. demographic data, reports
- How beneficiaries or target groups have been consulted or involved
- Monitoring; what will be monitored and how
- The likely positive impacts
- Any likely negative impact; and if identified how will they be managed if possible within the project?
- EQIA must be completed in addition to the respective question on equality and diversity in the outline and full application forms

All policy leads need to complete an EQIA for the development or revision to key Agencies policies and strategies and pay due consideration to:

- What the policy is aiming to do; who is it aimed at and how it will be implemented
- The supporting evidence e.g. demographic data, reports
- How beneficiaries or target groups have been consulted or involved
- The likely positive impacts of the policy
- Any likely negative impact; and if identified how will they be managed if possible within the project?

## 13.4 Appendix D: Glossary of terms

**Accessibility:** This term refers to the methods by which people with a range of needs (such as disabled people, people with children, or people whose first language is not English) discover and use services and information. For disabled people, access in West Midlands means the freedom to participate in the economy, in planning for the West Midlands, and in the social and cultural life of the community.

**Advantage West Midlands:** The Regional Development Agency and the regional leader in developing economic prosperity for the West Midlands.

**Advantage West Midlands Regional Partners:** Organisations providing services and support to the West Midlands who work with Advantage West Midlands to help meet Advantage West Midlands' objectives including Transport, The West Midland Police Authority, The West Midlands Fire & Emergency Planning Authority, The West Midlands Housing Authority, and The West Midlands Regional Assembly.

**BLFW:** Business Link for West Midlands.

**Brownfield land:** Both land and premises are included in this term, which refers to a site that has previously been used or developed and is not currently fully in use, although it may be partially occupied or utilised. It may also be vacant, derelict or contaminated. This excludes open spaces and land where the remains of previous use have blended into the landscape, or have been overtaken by nature conservation value or amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring development.

**Capacity building:** Activities that aim to increase the capacity of voluntary and community organisations. It can include training, advice, and specialist expertise. Central Government is increasingly interested in local authorities and other agencies procuring services delivered by voluntary organisations instead of delivering those services directly.

**Community cohesion:** Concern about community cohesion came out of the recent unrest in some of the northern cities such as Oldham. The aim of various community cohesion initiatives is to appreciate and celebrate diversity between people in local communities, promote understanding and reduce hostilities.

**Diversity:** Diversity relates to the individual differences that people have and how these are understood and valued. Understanding and valuing the difference that exists in all of us as individuals and the groups we belong to is important. Using diversity creatively and positively can incur benefit for people, organisations and society.

**Economically active population:** Those who are in employment and those who are unemployed but actively looking for work.

**Economically inactive:** those who are not in employment and not actively seeking work.

**Employment rate:** the number in employment expressed as percentage of everyone in that age group (in this case, all those of working age)

Equalities groups: Where not explicitly stated, this includes black and minority ethnic groups, disabled people, women, those from faith communities, older people, those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and other groups who may experience disparities in opportunity from realising their potential.

Equality: Equality relates to the fair and/or equal treatment of people who can be defined or self-define to one or more common group characteristic based on for example their age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief in relation to other people who share one or more common group characteristic. Equality (of opportunity) is often related to and supported by a legal framework, which makes it illegal to discriminate against people because they belong to one or more defined or self-defined identity groups.

NB: Whilst there is a clear difference between Equality and Diversity, they are nonetheless interconnected; therefore The Agency needs to respond simultaneously to equality legislation and be pro-active in diversity in order to optimise the benefits as, “Neither equality nor respect for difference (diversity) is a sufficient value in itself. The two must be held together, mutually challenging and supportive” (The Runnymede Trust, Multi-Ethnic Britain, 2000).

FE: Further Education.

Greenfield sites: Land that has not previously been used or developed.

ICT: Information and Communication Technology.

Inclusive design: Designing an environment that can be used equally by everyone, regardless of disability, age, ethnicity, or gender.

Inward investment: It is the injection of money from an external source into a region, in order to purchase capital goods for a branch of a corporation to locate or develop its presence in the region.

LSC: Learning and Skills Council, responsible for planning and funding high quality vocational education and training for everyone in England.

Procurement: The process by which public sector bodies purchase services from both private and voluntary sector organisations.

Public realm: This is the space between and within buildings that are publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces.

RDA: Regional Development Agency.

SBS: Small Business Service, a government agency that works with the public, private and voluntary sectors to make the UK the best place to start and grow a business.

SME: Small and medium sized enterprises. These are businesses employing between 10 and 250 people. Micro businesses are those businesses employing less than 10 people.

Social exclusion: What can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown.

Social inclusion: The position from where someone can access and benefit from the full range of opportunities available to members of society. It aims to remove barriers for people or for areas that experience a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown.

Sub regions: Sub regions are the primary geographical features for implementing strategic policy at the sub regional level.

Urban renaissance: Urban renaissance is the rediscovery of the opportunities offered by cities to accommodate a changing population, work and leisure patterns, through the creation of practical, attractive, safe and efficient urban areas that offer a vibrant and desirable quality of life.

West Midlands Skills Commission: A strategic association of key agencies involved in the planning, delivery and support of employment, training and labour market policy and mainstreaming the integration of equalities into policy development, implementation, evaluation and review. Each part of the organisation accepts its own responsibility for promoting equality of opportunity and challenging discrimination.

## 13.5 APPENDIX E: Disability in the UK

### Disability in the UK – 2005

There are approximately 10 million disabled adults in the UK covered by the Disability Discrimination Act; this figure represents around 18% of the population. Family Resource Survey 2003-2003

There are 6.8 million disabled people of working age -- about 19% of the working population. Labour Force Survey June 2005.

However, in autumn 2004, only 50% of disabled people of working age are in employment compared to 81% of non-disabled people of working age. Labour Force Survey, June 2005

71% of disabled people with higher education qualifications are in employment compared with 88% of non-disabled people. Of those with no qualification, 23% of disabled people are in employment compared with 62% of non-disabled people. Labour Force Survey, June 2005.

The rate among disabled graduates (14%) is higher than that for non-disabled adults with no qualifications.

Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no qualifications. Labour Force Survey, June 2005

The incidence of disability increases with age. While 9% of adults aged 16-24 are disabled, this increase to about 44% in the 50 to retirement age category. Labour Force Survey, June 2005

In 2004, 40% of the English population are over 45 – the age at which the incidence of disability begins to increase. National Office of Statistics, Census Update 2003 Labour Force Survey, June 2005

One in every three people either has a disability or has a close relative or friend who is disabled. Office of National Statistics, Census 2001

## **13.6 APPENDIX F: Introduction to the Disability Equality Duty**

13.6.1 Advantage West Midlands is a Regional Development Agency (RDA) and as such we are required to develop a Disability Equality Scheme. In order to fulfil this duty, we have been working with disability organisations and disabled people to produce this Disability Equality Scheme (DES).

It has set us on a tough journey and many valuable lessons have already been learnt; future learning will also take place. Our Disability Equality Scheme is a living-working document and, while the aims will stay the same, we should be making sure that our plans and projects reflect changes both in the West Midlands landscape and also in progress made by Advantage West Midlands.

### **13.6.2 The Disability Equality Duty**

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, all public bodies will have a duty to promote disability equality (similar to the duty to promote race equality under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000). This takes effect from December 2006 and aims to change the way our laws work in this area: no longer relying on individual disabled people making a complaint, but instead expecting the public sector to be positive in removing barriers.

### **13.6.3 General duty**

The Act sets out what is known as the general duty as follows:

Public authorities must, in carrying out their functions, have due regard to:

Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons

Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act

Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities

Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons

Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life

And take steps to take account of a person's disability, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

The new duties will also require Advantage West Midlands to consider its role in tackling the effects of any of its own and others' previous decisions which failed to give due regard to disability equality.

13.6.4 According to the Statutory Code of Practice, Advantage West Midlands needs to do the following to meet the general duties:

Carry out impact assessments

Collect and study evidence and identify and address gaps

Prioritise actions

Involve disabled people

Let people know what we are doing

Set an example to others

Train our staff on disability equality issues and our Disability Equality Scheme

Work with others to deliver disability equality

#### 13.6.5 Specific duty

As a named public authority, Advantage West Midlands also has a specific legal duty to prepare a Disability Equality Scheme, which sets out:

How disabled people were involved in development of the scheme

The 'functions' of Advantage West Midlands

How we are doing now on disability aims

How evidence will be collected and used in future

The way we will assess the impact on disabled people

Our work as an employer

Our three-year action plan

Ways to monitor and review our performance on disability equality

## 14 Acknowledgements

Advantage West Midlands's Regional Development Agency would like to thank those disabled people of the West Midlands who have been involved in the development of our first Disability Equality Scheme and subsequent versions.

We acknowledge all who have contributed to our Disability Equality Scheme, especially all staff of Advantage West Midlands and disabled people of the West Midlands. Special thanks are extended to Gallant 2000, based in Birmingham who co-ordinated the putting together of our Disability Equality Scheme and The Regional Disability Network and Council for Disabled People for their excellent partnership work around involvement.

### *Organisations*

Access to Business

The Council for Disabled People

The Disability Support Centre

Equal Pathways

Equal 4 All

LCAC – and Disability Information and Access Services

Institute Social Entrepreneurs

Disabled People Network Solihull

The Regional Disability Network

Sign of the Times

### *Individual's contribution*

Pamela Sissons

Susan Hughes

L. Allen

Mike Bradley

Clarie Finch

Peter Etheridge

J. Kelly

David Thickbroom

Andy Beaton

Sirf Khan

Kevin Arblaster

Mark Lynes

Kevin Downes

Deborah Burns

Steven Rose

Ralph Oakley

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Disability Discrimination Act 2005

The Duty to Promote Disability Equality: Statutory Code of Practice - England and Wales  
Disability Rights Commission (Code of practice 2005)

Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled People - UK Presidency conference 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People', 8th November, 2005

For more information on the social model

[www.drc-gb.org/citizenship/howtouse/socialmodel/index.asp](http://www.drc-gb.org/citizenship/howtouse/socialmodel/index.asp)

'Able to Work', Report of the National Employment Panel's Employers' Working Group on Disability, January 2005

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Michael Floyd, Self Employment and Disabled People in the United Kingdom

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Employers' and Service Providers' Responses to the DDA in 2003 and preparation for 2004 changes, Heaven et al, 2004,

Official DWP figures, Dec 2004

Statistics and Tourism Research website ([www.staruk.org.uk](http://www.staruk.org.uk))

No Room At The Inn - The Hotel Industry is Failing Disabled People" Leonard Cheshire, 26 July 2005

RNID website

Labour Market Trends August 2002

Race, faith, age, gender, sexual orientation and disability

UK Presidency conference 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' in the London Docklands on Tuesday 8th November 2005.

## **16 We welcome your views**

The scheme is a living document and Advantage West Midlands Regional Development Agency welcomes comments and suggestions from disabled people, partners, community groups, stakeholders and other interested parties.

The plan will be reviewed annually and further information published on our website:

[www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk) ('Supporting People' tab then 'Equality and Diversity' from the list)

Contact for Advantage West Midlands:

Mr. Kwabena Osayande, Equality and Diversity Manager, Economic Inclusion Team

Tel: +44(0)121 503 3243      Email: [kwabenaosayande@advantagewm.co.uk](mailto:kwabenaosayande@advantagewm.co.uk)