

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

Interim Revision (May 2005) pending the drafting of the Diversity Strategy

May 2005

Foreword

At Harrogate Borough Council we believe that equality of opportunity is paramount to service provision in delivering our services and employing people to deliver our services.

We have, over the years, worked towards mainstreaming equalities into the provision of services which reflect the diversity of our community.

This Race Equality Statement as revised outlines our approach to race in accordance with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and specifically addresses the Council's duties under the Act.

We do however, believe that our aim of mainstreaming equality issues in service delivery is the way forward to improve our services for all. We have incorporated the outcomes outlined in this document into our Equality Policy and action plan. We are in the process of devising a diversity strategy and will therefore incorporate the actions outlined in this document into the new policy.

We see equality and diversity as a fundamental part of our aim of involving all local people in the decision making process and ensuring that the Council is accessible and responsive to all.

In achieving this we aim to:-

- Mainstream equalities and diversity into policy, service delivery and political processes.
- Continue to work with our partners to ensure we provide appropriate and all-inclusive services.
- Monitor our performance.

This Race Equality Scheme outlines how we aim to achieve our aspirations in relation to ethnic minority groups within the District.

P M Walsh
Chief Executive

Translations into different languages are available on request.

Harrogate: Race Equality Scheme

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Our Vision and Values

Harrogate Borough Council is a district council located in Yorkshire, north of Leeds and Bradford. The total area under Council control is 32,614 acres, some 505 square miles, and the population is approximately 150,000.

Our vision is

“To make Harrogate District a better place to live, work and visit by
Preserving the heritage,
Enhancing its unique environment
Delivering first class public services
Ensuring everyone can share in its success.

We are committed to the following values

Democratic – take decisions in the public interest

Accountable – accept responsibility for, and explain, our decisions.

Responsive- listen and respond to the needs of people.

Ethical – behave with integrity

Openness – tell people about the council and what it does

Respect – treat people with dignity

1. The Council is underpinned by five corporate principles:-
 1. Value for money – delivering cost effective value for money services.
 2. Sustainability – Preserving and enhancing our environment, communities and services for both this and future generations.
 3. Fairness and Equality - promote equality of opportunity for all and ensure transparent decision making.
 4. Effective Partnership and joint working – work with other stakeholders to achieve shared goals and involve them in our decision making processes.
 5. Accessibility – Provide people with the effective means to access our services and contact us.

Further information on our values and objectives can be found in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2005-2008

Harrogate: Our Approach to Race Equality

The Council's approach has been to integrate equality issues into managerial and service delivery issues. The Council has not given race issues a high profile due to the low ethnic minority population. The 2001 Census information shows that 1.6% of the population are from non-white backgrounds.

Whilst the Council has robust and effective community engagement practices and partnership arrangements, the Race Relations Amendment Act requires the Council to meet certain obligations. This requires a more positive approach to race equality.

In addition, the Council is aiming to meet the Equality Standard for local government.

The Council's approach will be to continue to integrate equality issues into policy, practice and employment.

Making the Scheme Happen

As part of the Council's restructure a new Directorate of Corporate Policy and Improvement was established to ensure that there was clear corporate direction and compliance to Council priorities and objectives.

The Equalities/Diversity agenda is now part of the work of that Directorate and the agenda will be led by the Executive Director, Corporate Policy and Improvement (ED, CPI).

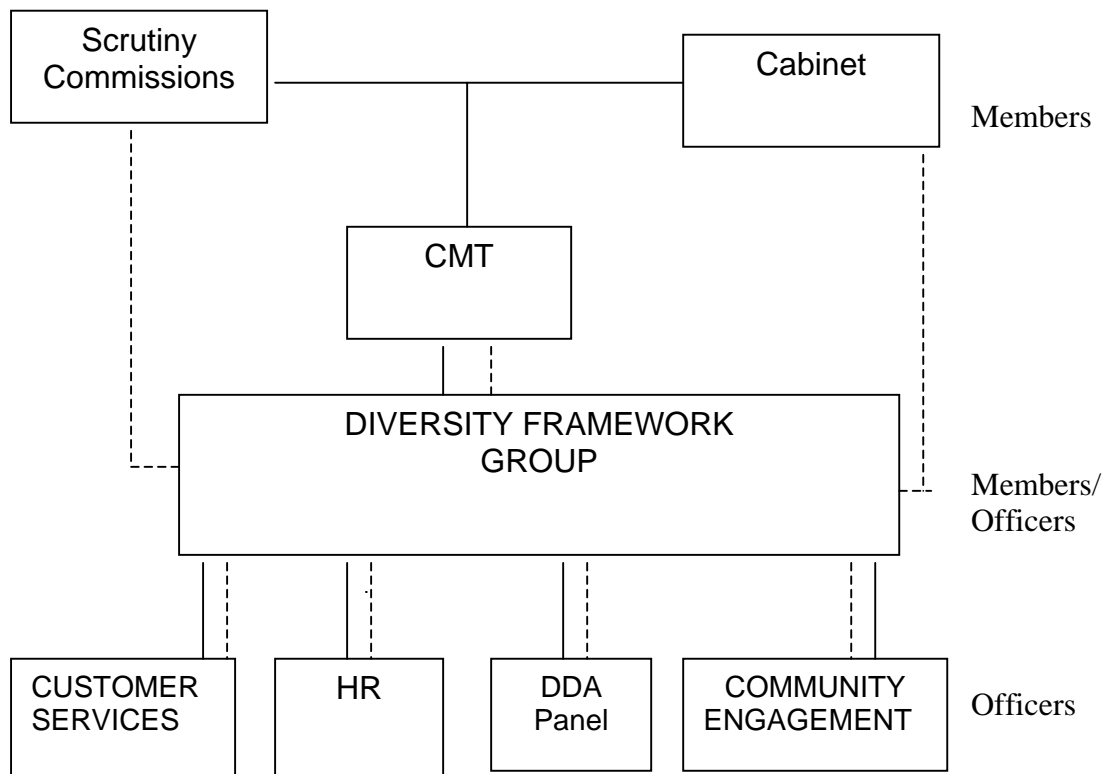
This work will be supported by a joint Member/Officer Group who will develop the strategies and policies, support the implementation and undertake the work to ensure that the Council meet the agreed targets.

The Diversity Framework Group (DFG) will include:-

- The Member Champion
- Two Members of Overview and Scrutiny Commissions
- Lead Director
- Head of HR
- Chair of the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) Panel
- Policy & Performance Manager
- Corporate Projects Officer
- Strategic Policy Officer
- One Head of Service

The Group will report direct to CMT/Cabinet as appropriate.

The attached diagram shows the relationship of this Group within the Council's structure.



Key

- Membership Representation
- _____ Reporting Relationship

Appendix A shows the Council's action plan for the implementation of the Race Equality Scheme over the next three years.

Equality and Best Value

The Local Government Act 1999, Part 1 - Best Value, which came into force on 1st April, 2000, makes it a statutory responsibility on a local authority "to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The statutory duty applies to all Council services which must be reviewed at least once every five years.

The Government's expectations on Best Value are for authorities to demonstrate that the services they provide are effective, efficient and improving over time, ie, that they are provided in the best way possible. This means significant and continuous improvements to every service for which authorities are responsible.

Harrogate Borough Council has integrated equality issues into its Best Value regime. When undertaking a review, an assessment is made of Equality issues relating to the service or theme under review.

In addition to Best Value reviews, the Council reports on its performance on equality issues, on a regular basis to members and in the Performance Plan.

The Equality Standard for Local Government

The Council is committed to improving its performance on equality issues and will aim to meet the various levels within the standard over future years. Further details will be available in the Equality Plan.

Race Equality Scheme: the Legal Framework

The Race Relations Act (1976) made it unlawful to discriminate whether directly or indirectly on racial grounds in employment, education and housing and in the provision of other goods and services. The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 extended these provisions and now includes a general duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations in carrying out their functions and specific duties to promote race equality in policy, service, delivery and employment.

The specific duties include the publication of a race equality scheme, which outlines how organisations plan to tackle race discrimination, and approach and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations. Specifically the race equality scheme should include the following:

- A summary of functions which are relevant to the duty to promote race equality and arrangements for:
- Assessing and, consulting on the likely impact of policies on the promotion of race equality;
- Monitoring policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality;
- Publishing the results of such assessments, consultation and monitoring;
- Ensuring public access to the information and services provided;
- Training staff in connection with the duties imposed by the act and the specific and general duties

In addition there are specific duties relating to employment including:-

Monitoring the ethnicity of:

- Staff in post;
- Applicants for jobs;
- Promotion;
- Training

And for organisations that employ more than 150 staff they must monitor:-

- grievances;
- disciplinary action;
- performance appraisal (when these results in benefits and sanctions);
- training; and
- dismissals and other reasons for leaving

Function and Policies

Harrogate Borough Council - Functions

In order to fulfil its responsibilities under the Act, the Council has determined which functions provided by the Council are relevant to the Act.

The Council considers all functions are relevant to the Act (either directly or indirectly) but feels that many services will have a greater impact than others.

In order to identify those services, the Council has undertaken an assessment of Council functions (using a self-assessment approach) to identify the priority services that are relevant to the Act. This assessment is set out in Appendix B.

Policy and Strategy

The Council recognises that policy and strategy have an impact on the public. The Council currently considers the potential impact in developing policies on equality considerations, including race, as an item in its Committee report system. This will form the core part of our impact assessment work and approach.

The Council will review its policies and strategies and will assess the impact in terms of potential discrimination.

In doing so the Council will take into consideration:-

- Demographic data.
- Comparative policies.
- Consultative methods.
- Specific research.

Scrutiny of new and current policies will be undertaken by the Scrutiny Commissions where impact on race and equality will be taken into consideration.

Future policies will be assessed for the potential impact on ethnic groups. A range of methods will be used for the assessment purposes including those outlined above, together with data on complaints and ethnic monitoring data obtained at various stages.

Consultation

Consultation and the involvement of the public in its work is a major priority for Harrogate Council. We use a range of consultation strategies for this purpose. We believe that public involvement is essential to the democratic accountability and responsiveness of our Council. We take seriously our duty to consult, and

importantly to listen to the results of consultation. We aim to have sound evidence of public views to help make informed decisions.

Consultation takes place in a number of ways, eg, public meetings, working with partners and other agencies, focus groups, parish councils, consultative meetings, etc.

Consulting with and involving local people in decisions are central to the vision and values of the Council. To this end we have an established 'Community Engagement Initiative' which contains our statement of intent which is as follows:

The Council asks people:

- How they wish to be consulted.
- What information, relating to the District, they require.

The Council informs people:

- By increasing their awareness of the issues under discussion.
- By making information about Council services more easily available and accessible.
- By making appropriate use of new technology.

The Council involves people:

- Using mechanisms which ensure that those involved in consultation are broadly representative of the community in ways which recognise the diverse nature of the District.
- Using the information gained to inform Council policy and the decision making processes, including those for the planning and delivery of services.
- By allowing them to express their views on issues and options which are to be brought before the Council and to make those views known to the relevant decision making body before the decision is taken.

The Council improves people's access:

- By providing a range of channels for local people to take part in the consultation and research carried out by the Council.
- By providing a variety of ways to access all council services.

The Council monitors and reviews:

- The effectiveness of the whole process on a regular basis.

In developing this initiative in practice we have a range of activities in place; including running special meetings and forums; specific consultations on particular areas and targeted surveys. We have recently developed a three-year consultation plan for 2005-2008 which sets out all of the major planned consultation work; this will be published on the Council's website and circulated to partner organisations. We have also developed a detailed community engagement work plan for 2005/2006, which includes a review of the way the Council consults hard to reach groups and a

joint project with the voluntary sector on engaging with people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

However, more generally we want to encourage ethnic minorities to play an active part, (although we recognise that in Harrogate they form a small proportion of the population) as this scheme, and our work on other equality areas, develop over the next 1-3 years.

Monitoring and Assessment

Monitoring the impact of our work in relation to this scheme forms one part of our approach to equality. Our aim is to ensure that we are providing our services in a fair and equitable way, and also to take action if we find that the needs of particular groups are not being met.

We consider the concept of snap shot surveys to be the most appropriate mechanism to undertake data collection. Such surveys are concerned with collecting specific data for a defined period of time for particular issues.

Details of monitoring arrangements for individual department and service will be developed and will form part of departmental action plans in due course as part of this scheme.

All data collected is confidential and will be summarised in user friendly reports which will explain the data collected, determine any patterns, and make recommendation for any further action. All such reports will be available to staff and public in the appropriate form.

A corporate monitoring framework will be developed in order that all equality monitoring in place in the Council is assessed and evaluated on a regular basis.

Access and Information Provision

We are committed to good customer care, openness and transparent decision making. We provide a wide range of information in different formats for communication and information purposes.

Training

Some training on equality issues has taken place. We also integrate race equality and diversity issues into our recruitment and selection and discipline at work courses. Equality is also addressed as part of the induction process.

Training will continue to be part of our review system and training will continue in the following areas

- General training for all employees and members to ensure that they are aware of our policy on equality and duties under the RRAA and how they affect all employees and work undertaken.

- Specific skills training for those who will be developing and implementing areas of equality considerations or who are decision makers in respect of policy and other relevant areas.

Employment Duties

Monitoring and Assessment: What We Do

We have developed an effective system for obtaining monitoring data on all applicants applying for jobs at Harrogate and have virtually a full monitoring profile of employees working in the Council. We produce annual reports on our monitoring data, including analysis data on ethnicity, gender, disability and age.

We have developed our monitoring data as part of this scheme to cover grievances and disciplinaries and leavers. The data will be published on an annual basis. The data will be published in the Best Value Performance Plan,, on the Internet and any other media considered appropriate. Where action is required in respect of the analysis of information collected, we will make this clear and as appropriate consult on any initiatives that we may develop in this area.

Dealing with Complaints

Harrogate has a detailed system for making complaints across the Council. This is available from libraries and Council offices.

In respect of equality issues and race specifically, we do not currently monitor complaints. The reason for this is that we are aware that this area can present practical difficulties as often individuals who wish to complain do not necessarily want to provide such personal information. In the future therefore we intend to taking action in the following three areas:-

- Develop the concept of utilising short surveys to be used for specific periods of time and pilot these in terms of complaints in some departments.
- Develop a co-ordinated system across the Council in order to assess potential corporate issues and any identified patterns across the organisation.
- Produce an annual report on complaints to include an analysis of any equality issues. This would form part of our continuing assessment of the R.E.S and our equal opportunities policy.

Procurement, Funding and Working with Partners

The RRAA applies to public authorities but places 'indirect requirements' on contractors, and organisations that a public authority may fund or work in partnership with. When work is outsourced, by the Council, it is reasonable that any contractors should also meet the requirements placed on the Council. It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that this happens in practice. If not, the Council is vulnerable to complaints or potentially may be in contravention of the RRAA.

In Harrogate we already take some account of equal opportunity in respect of our procurement arrangements and in our work with partners. In summary:-

- In the procurement process, potential suppliers are required to provide detailed information on their approach to equality and provide evidence that they have relevant systems in place.
- Similarly, in our work with the voluntary sector we expect them to have equal opportunity approaches and systems in place. Where they do not, we can provide relevant guidance.

We feel our current system complies with the RRAA. However we intend to introduce some changes in respect of larger contractors in order to obtain information on how their opportunity policy operates in effect over periods of time. This may involve receiving agreed monitoring reports. To progress this approach with contractors we will:-

- Notify relevant current and future contractors of our obligations under the RRAA and the potential impact this may have on public authority contractors.
- Agree, with relevant current contractors (and future suppliers), the appropriate information we will need to have on a continuing basis.
- Where appropriate, provide guidance to contractors on how they might approach this area.

Information on our work with contractors and partners, and the voluntary sector will form part of our continuing review and assessment system set up to monitor progress on the R.E.S. and our equal opportunity policy.

Summary

In establishing the Race Equality Scheme, the Council is reinforcing its commitment to equalities and meeting its obligations under the Race Relations Amendment Act. In doing so, the Council is committing itself to a process which mainstreams race and other equality and diversity issues into its policy development, service delivery and performance management arrangements.

A Race Equality Scheme will be published every three years and progress will be reviewed annually.

Feedback

The Race Equality Scheme will be available in the following places:-

- The Council's website - www.harrogate.gov.uk
- Libraries
- Council Offices

Our partners and other public bodies in the District will receive a copy of the Scheme.

If any person or organisation wishes to comment on the Race Equality Scheme, please write to:-

The Chief Executive
Harrogate Borough Council
Council Offices
Crescent Gardens
HARROGATE
North Yorkshire
HG1 2SG

Alternatively, you may email your comments to jennifer.watson@harrogate.gov.uk

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME - ACTION PLAN

Interim – pending the development of a diversity strategy

Action	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Responsibility
Training for Elected Members, senior managers and other appropriate employees in their responsibilities under the RRAA.	✓			Diversity Group
Introduce guidance/systems to help meet the general and specific responsibilities.	✓			Diversity Group
Commence “relevant” service/function impact reviews.	✓	✓	✓	Senior Management
Include assessment of accessibility as part of each Best Value review.	✓	✓	✓	Senior Management
Assess new policies for impact on ethnic minorities.		✓	✓	Senior Management
Incorporate equality into scrutiny arrangements.		✓	✓	Diversity Group
Review our consultation methods for involving ethnic minorities.	✓			Community Engagement Group
Develop monitoring arrangements for each service/department and include in departmental action plans.		✓	✓	Senior Management
Publish information and proposed action for monitoring and assessment arrangements.		✓	✓	Senior Management/ Corporate Improvement Department
Develop corporate monitoring framework to evaluate/publish equality monitoring.			✓	corporate Improvement department
Publish ethnic monitoring employment data.	✓	✓	✓	Human Resources
Develop/participate in District-wide equality forum with partners, community and voluntary bodies.		✓	✓	Diversity Group
Develop a system to assess potential corporate issues in relation to ethnic minority issues as part of the complaints system.		✓		Corporate Improvement Department
Produce an annual report on complaints incorporating equality issues.			✓	Corporate Improvement Department
Keep under review the provision of publication and information to ethnic groups.		✓	✓	Diversity Group
Notify relevant current and future		✓	✓	Senior Management

Action	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Responsibility
contractors of obligations under the RRAA.				
Provide guidance to contractors on how they can comply with their obligations.		✓	✓	Diversity Group/Procurement Group
Review and publish performance against the Racial Equality Statement.	✓	✓	✓	Corporate Improvement Department

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF FUNCTIONS

As part of the duty of RRAA there is a requirement to provide a summary of functions which are relevant to the duty to promote race equality.

The Council's policy to mainstream equality issues would mean that it recognises all of its functions are relevant in this aspect of the work. However, given the low ethnic population there was a need to assess functions to identify the areas where specific policies relating to race would have the greatest impact and benefit. To do this a sample self-assessment approach was adopted based upon the key issues. These are as follows:-

- (1) Service affect on public
Is the service a front-line service that affects the public directly?
Is it a support service that affects public indirectly?
These were rated High/Medium/Low
- (2) Is service provided to a specific group – eg Asian, Disabled etc?
These were rated Yes/In Part/No
- (3) Have complaints been received that might indicate discrimination of a particular ethnic Group?
These were rated Yes/No
- (4) Have any concerns been raised about the function in respect of any internal/external inspection – eg Best Value, Ofsted, Audit Commission, Scrutiny
These were rated Yes/No
- (5) Does monitoring of race data take place of the particular function
These were rates Yes/No
- (6) Have any other issues been raised relating to race within this function
These were rated Yes/No

An overall priority was then agreed and allocated.

Following assessment it was clear that the services rated “High” were:-

- (1) Front line direct service to customers (eg Leisure, Car Parking etc)
- (2) Regulatory Services
- (3) Employment issues

Notwithstanding these assessments the target group to which any work would be directed is so small that as a single issue it would be a low priority and hence the decision to mainstream the work via equality issues.

The attached table sets out the results of the self-assessment.

RACE RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT 2000 – PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES/FUNCTIONS

SERVICE/ FUNCTION	Service Profile		Special Group	Complaints	Issue of Concern	Monitoring	Other issues/ Impact	Overall Priority
	Direct	Indirect						
<u>Office of the Chief Executive</u>								
Elections	High		No	No	No	?	No	High
Corporate Policy & Improvement								
Strategic Policy		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Best Value Reviews		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Policy & Performance		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Community Engagement	High		No	No	No	Yes	No	High
Diversity/Equalities/Inclusion		High	No	No	No	Yes	No	High
Risk Management		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Procurement		Medium	No	No	No	No	No	Medium
Civil Contingencies	High		No	No	No	No	No	Low
Customer Services Project	High		No	No	No	No	No	High
Overview & Scrutiny		High	No	No	No	No	No	High
Communications & Media	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Community Services								
<u>Housing</u>								
Needs assessment/allocations	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Homelessness/Housing Advice	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Housing Strategy and Policy		High	In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Affordable Housing Development	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Public Housing management, maintenance, repairs, etc	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Housing support for the elderly	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Tenancy & Estate Management	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Mediation	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Private Sector Housing	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
<u>Environment</u>								
Waste management	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Pest control/Trade waste	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Street/Environmental Cleansing	Low		No	No	No	No	No	Low
Environmental Strategy		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Public Conveniences	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Home Energy conservation	High		In part	No	No	No	NO	High

SERVICE/ FUNCTION	Service Profile		Special Group	Complaints	Issue of Concern	Monitoring	Other issues/ Impact	Overall Priority
	Direct	Indirect						
<u>Public Protection</u>								
Occupational Health & Safety	Medium		No	No	No	No	No	Medium
Licensing: Premises, Personal, taxi/hackney carriages, animal welfare and trade licensing and registration	High		No	No	No	No	No	High
Air Quality Management, Pollution Control, Contaminated Land, Private Water Supplies monitoring	Medium		In part	No	No	No	No	Medium
Public health complaints and dog wardens	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Food safety, infectious disease control, public water supply quality	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Community Safety & CCTV	High		No	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Leisure and Museums</u>								
Sports and Leisure Facilities	High		In part	Yes (1) ?	No	No	No	High
Community Development inc facilities	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Sports Development	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Museums and Arts	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Parks and Open Spaces</u>								
Parks	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Outdoor Games/Playground/ Play Equipment	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Crematorium, Cemeteries, Closed Churchyards	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Development Services</u>								
<u>Planning</u>								
Development Control	Medium		No	No	No	No	No	Medium
Building Control	High		No	No	No	No	No	High
Forward Planning		Medium	No	No	No	No	No	Medium
AONB	Medium		No	No	No	No	No	Medium
<u>Highways & Transport</u>								
Traffic Management, Highway Services and Road Safety	Medium		In part	No	No	No	No	Medium
Parking Services inc representations	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Street Lighting and Amenities	Low		No	No	No	No	No	Low
Concessionary Fares	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High

SERVICE/ FUNCTION	Service Profile		Special Group	Complaints	Issue of Concern	Monitoring	Other issues/ Impact	Overall Priority
	Direct	Indirect						
<u>Property Management</u>								
Building Management and Facilities, Electrical Building and Mechanical Services		Medium	In part	No	No	No	No	Medium
Public Building Works and Construction Projects	Medium		No	No	No	No	No	Medium
Estates Management	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Markets & Farmers' Markets	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Economic Development</u>								
Business Support and Advice/Inward Investment/ Marketing and Promotion	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Regeneration	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Workspace Projects	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Customer Services (inc out of hours emergency service)</u>	High		No	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Resources</u>								
<u>Information Technology & Development</u>								
Information, Technology & Dev't	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Website inc accessibility	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Legal and Democratic Services</u>								
Member Services		Medium	In part	No	No	No	No	Medium
Electoral Registration	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Legal Services, Debt Management and Recovery	Medium		No	No	No	No	No	Medium
Land Charges Searches	Medium		No	No	No	No	No	Medium
<u>Human Resources</u>								
Human Resources Policies/Advice		High	In part	No	No	No	No	High
Recruitment and retention	High		In part	No	No	Yes	No	High
Corporate Training and Development		High	In part	No	No	No	No	High
Occupational Health		Medium	In part	No	No	No	No	Medium
Health and Safety		Medium	In part	No	No	No	No	Medium

SERVICE/ FUNCTION	Service Profile		Special Group	Complaints	Issue of Concern	Monitoring	Other issues/ Impact	Overall Priority
	Direct	Indirect						
<u>Financial Management</u>								
Accountancy Services and Strategic Finance		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Internal Audit		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Payments (Creditors and Salaries/Wages)		Low	No	No	No	No	No	Low
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
<u>Revenues and Benefits</u>								
Benefits (Council Tax and Benefits)	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Council Tax & Non- Domestic rates	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Cashiers and systems	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Harrogate International Centre								
Conference & Exhibitions	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Holiday & Business Tourism	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High
Entertainments	High		In part	No	No	No	No	High