

Select Committee on Children's Services – 25th March 2009

Report of the Interim Director of Children's Services

Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2009/10

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/10 for the Directorate of Children's Services.

Background

2. The production of an annual equality and diversity action plan by each directorate is an important commitment in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. The action plan sets out details of how a directorate will promote equality in relation to its areas of responsibility during the coming year and responds to the three year framework established by the Council's Equality Scheme 2007-10.
3. Overview and scrutiny of directorate equality and diversity issues is included in the terms of reference of the Select Committee on Children's Services. Select committee chairs have agreed that scrutiny of individual directorate's action plans be split up amongst the five committees.
4. The Directorate of Children's Services Action Plan for 2009/10 is attached and covers:
 - its relationship with other plans
 - the directorate's vision and values
 - key issues and targets including Children and Young People's Plan priority objectives
 - Directorate activities not covered in the C&YPP or the Council's Equality Plan, and
 - appendices outlining the detailed action plan.
5. The annual report setting out progress with the directorate's action plan for 2008/09 will be presented to the first meeting of the select committee in the new municipal year.

6. The draft action plan has been considered by the Directorate Policy Team. Following scrutiny it will be approved by the appropriate Cabinet Member before publication.

Finance

7. Any costs associated with implementing the action plan will be met from within existing budgets.

Law

8. The wide range of relevant equality legislation includes:
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which places a general duty on public authorities to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.
 - The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in connection with employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services and the disposal or management of premises. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 introduced a duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
 - The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. A duty on public authorities to promote gender equality under the Equality Act 2006 came into force in April 2007.
 - Other legislation is in place relating to discrimination on the basis of age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
 - Further legislation directly targeted towards children and young people includes The Children Act 2004.
9. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

10. The plan sets out proposed actions for promoting equality and diversity led by the Directorate of Children's Services during 2009/10. The equality impact is expected to be significant and positive for all targeted groups. Many of the actions included in the plan derive from the Directorate's response to evidence, both local and national, of inequalities in the provision of services to children and young people. Some of the actions included in the plan derive from equality impact assessments (EIAs) that have been carried out on the services or policies of the directorate or cover EIAs due to be undertaken in 2009/10. Performance indicators and

outcomes are identified against targets so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed.

Recommendation

11. That the Select Committee considers and comments on the Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/10.



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List of Background Papers

Guidance for the preparation of directorates' equality and diversity action plans and annual reports (December 2008)