

## **DIRECTORATE OF ADULT, COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES**

### **ANNUAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2008/09**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Adult, Community and Housing Services Directorate, along with all directorates of the Council, produce an annual equality and diversity action plan. This sets out how the directorate will implement the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and Equality Scheme in relation to its responsibilities, service areas and employment practices during the year. The plan is submitted to the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care, before approval by the appropriate Cabinet Member.
- 1.2 Progress with implementing the action plan is reported in the equality and diversity annual report. The Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services annual report for 2007/08 will be submitted to the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care at its first meeting of the 2008/09 municipal year.
- 1.3 This action plan covers the period from April 2008 to March 2009. The plan contains:
- an explanation of its relationship with other plans
  - a summary of the directorate's equality and diversity vision and values
  - key issues and targets for the plan
  - the action plan summary

#### **2. Relationship with other plans**

- 2.1 This action plan will form part of the overall strategic plan for the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services for 2008/09. The strategic plan responds to the Borough's Community Strategy 2005-15 and the three-year Council plan.
- 2.2 The overall long-term policy framework for equality and diversity is set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Equality Scheme, published in April 2007, brings together the statutory disability, gender and race equality schemes for the Council and provides the three-year equality strategy and action plan for the Council.

- 2.3 Overall progress in implementing the Equality Scheme will be reported in the Council's Annual Review of Equality and Diversity, which is submitted to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education and the Cabinet.

### 3. Vision and Values

- 3.1 The Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services mission statement is:

**“We will help people to lead fulfilled and independent lives in homes of their choice in safe and active communities”**

As part of Dudley Council, the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services is committed to providing the best quality public services for local people and creating opportunities for local people to succeed. As a council, we recognise and value the diversity of backgrounds, skills and needs within the borough. We work hard to respond to these needs and serve the different people of Dudley fairly and efficiently to improve quality of life for everyone. Dudley Council will:

- **Listen** to what local people say
- **Respond** to what they tell us
- Be **accountable** to local people for our performance
- Provide **value** for money

As a Directorate, we will contribute to the main aims of the Council Plan under the six themes and embrace the leadership values in all that we do in *Caring Matters; Environment Matters; Learning Matters; Regeneration Matters; Safety Matters; Quality Service Matters.*

- 3.2 The Directorate consists of 3215 staff as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 and is split into the following divisions:

- Building Services
- Housing Management
- Housing Strategy and Private Sector Housing
- Learning Disabilities and Mental Health
- Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning
- Older People and People with Learning Disabilities
- Policy, Performance and Resources

- 3.3 Within the Directorate, all employees have a responsibility to comply with the requirements of the Council's and the Directorate's equality and diversity policy in all dealings with Members, other employees, job applicants,

residents, service users and other members of the public, and with other organisations.

All employees in the directorate have at least an annual performance review and development discussion with their line manager where training and development needs are identified.

- 3.4 Specific responsibility for promoting equality and diversity in employment and services within the directorate rests with all divisional heads. However, the Strategy Manager – Equality and Diversity, within Housing Strategy and Development, reporting to the Head of Service – Housing Strategy and Development, and a Policy Officer within Policy, Performance and Resources reporting to the Head of Equality and Diversity, are responsible for assisting with overall equality and diversity policy development work on behalf of both the Council and the Directorate. This includes the preparation, monitoring and review of the Directorate's Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan. Corporate Personnel, reporting to the Head of Personnel and Support Services, is responsible for equality and diversity in employment development work on behalf of both the Council and the Directorate and makes a key contribution to the Directorate's policy and action plan. The two Training and Development Managers, reporting to the Head of Personnel and Support Services, are responsible for arranging or advising on appropriate training provision relating to equality and diversity across the Council and within the Directorate.

#### **4. Key Issues and Targets**

- 4.1 The Equality Scheme sets out the Council's Action Plan for implementing its Equality and Diversity Policy and identifies key issues, challenges and actions across the Council for 2007-10. In particular, it will look to build on the assessments of policies and functions undertaken through previous Race Equality Schemes and to undertake wider Equality Impact Assessments of policies and services over the next three years.
- 4.2 The priorities for 2008/09 Equality Impact Assessments for the Directorate are set out below. They include Equality Impact Assessments that have been carried forward to 2008/09, due to delays in organising training for Service Managers in conducting impact assessments.

##### **Building Services**

- The implementation of a web enabled repairs reporting system for customers
- Sustainability Strategy

## **Housing Management**

- Implementation of Choice Based Lettings across the whole Borough
- The development of floating support for private sector tenants through the existing tenancy sustainability service
- Pilot of Gardening scheme for elderly and disabled tenants
- Implementing the Tenant Participation Service Improvement Plan

## **Housing Strategy and Private Sector Housing**

- Adoption of the private sector renewal strategy
- The promotion of the landlord and property accreditation scheme
- The development of an Enforcement Policy in accordance with the Regulators Compliance Code
- Development of an Older Persons' Housing Strategy

## **Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning**

- Library modernisation
- Post Inspection Action Plan
- Archives new build project
- 19+ learning and skills strategy
- Archives Collection Policy
- Increase awareness of borough history and community relevance
- Consultation to scope the extent of local community engagement

## **Mental Health and Learning Disabilities**

- Proposed LIFT (Local Improvement Finance Trust) Projects
- Redesign of Mental Health Adult Day Services

## **Older People and Physical Disabilities**

- Work towards the Transforming Social Care Agenda
- Development of a sheltered housing strategy
- The implementing of a revised carers strategy

## **Policy, Performance and Resources**

- Revised Statutory (Social Care) Complaints framework
- User involvement and engagement
- Key projects and programmes

4.3 In addition, particular priority has been assigned within the Equality Scheme to progressing work through the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group in the following areas:

- developing clearer targets and desired outcomes

- improving communications around what we do and why, externally and internally, and celebrating success
- improving approaches to consultation
- identifying the equality and diversity competencies required for managers and employees

4.4 The revised Equality Impact Assessment guidance was piloted within the Housing Management division during 2007/08, on the new Choice Based Lettings scheme. Level 1 of the assessment process was completed and the recommendation was to proceed to the fuller Level 2 assessment, due to the potential for adverse/differential impact of the proposed policy on a number of groups. However, a key outcome of the Level 1 assessment was the identification of the need for a Vulnerable Persons Strategy to be developed and this is currently being drafted.

To proceed to Level 2, there is a requirement to gather further and more qualitative data than is currently available, in order to assess the impact of the policy fully. A regime to collect this monitoring information is being implemented, together with the setting up of focus groups to engage service, and potential service, users to explore any differential or adverse impacts. Members are also receiving regular progress reports on the process.

## **5. The Action Plan**

5.1 The action plan is set out in the following tables. The template for the 2008/09 Action Plan is adopted from 'Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council Equality and Diversity Policy - Guidance for the preparation of Directorates' Equality and Diversity Action Plans and Annual Reports,' produced December 2007. This reflects requests from members for a less complex presentation of the 2008/09 plan.

Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services  
March 2008

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed Action Target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p><b>Targets, Outcomes and Strategic Developments</b></p>	<p>Produce Annual Directorate Equality and Diversity report 2007/08 for the June/July Select Committee (RSS/SN)</p>	<p>June 2008</p>	<p>Select Committee informed of previous years progress on Equality and Diversity within DACHS</p>
	<p>Produce Annual Directorate Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2009/10 for the March Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (RSS/SN)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>DACHS Equality and Diversity Action Plan leads to better service delivery in relation to Equality and Diversity</p>
	<p>Produce a Physical and Sensory Disabilities Strategy by July 2008 (AA)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Physical and Sensory Disabilities Strategy meeting needs of client group.</p>
	<p>Develop widening participation strategy for targeted learning provision. Increase percentages of learners from priority groups</p>	<p>July 2008</p>	<p>MIS data evidencing increased participation in learning from priority groups</p>

**DACHS Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/09**

**Appendix**

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed Action Target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	To increase the number of people in the borough who are in receipt of a direct payment to meet their care needs, in particular BME people (AA)	March 2009	Staff trained and raised awareness in user groups of the benefits of direct payment
	All team plans to contain specific targets relating to BME peoples needs (AA)	March 2009	Team managers ensuring inclusion in their plans and monitor progress.
	BME communities having increased their awareness of extra-care housing (SB)	March 2009	3 specific events during the year to raise awareness of extra-care housing for BME elders

<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ milestones</b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
	<p>Undertake development work through the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group to integrate other equality strands within the Equality Scheme by April 2009 and meet the requirements of the equality standard for local government in this regard (RSS/SN)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Further equality strands incorporated in to Equality Scheme</p>
	<p>Continue to progress work against the Equality Standard for Local Government and to establish Action Plans to achieve subsequent levels of the revised standard (RSS/SN)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Action plans in place for achievement of next level of the revised Equality Standard</p>

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Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed Action Target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	The emerging Physical Disability, Direct Payments, Commissioning, and Transition strategies will ensure the needs of vulnerable client groups are met and that we promote independence, well being and choice. (SB)	March 2009	Needs of vulnerable client groups being met via promotion of independence, well being and choice.
	To improve the availability of diversity data covering strategic functions to inform strategic planning (AL)	March 09	Better informed planning process
	Assess the feasibility of redesigning an existing young person's housing scheme into a foyer scheme (JF/GW)	July 08	Feasibility study completed and potential funding source identified
	To develop an Older Persons housing strategy for an ageing population(JF)	March 09	Strategy produced and action plan being implemented to ensure that people are able to live in homes of their choice
	Contribute to an effective planning process for proposals to develop 5 extra care schemes in the Borough (GW)	March 09	Achieve successful planning applications

<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ milestones</b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
	To complete traveller accommodation and needs assessment survey (HB)	May 08	To have a better understanding of gypsy / traveller needs for the borough and wider region and develop Traveller Accommodation and Needs Strategy based upon findings of final survey report
	Ensure that mandatory grants to facilitate adaptations to enable properties to be accessible to disabled occupiers are delivered timely and in a consistent and efficient manner by training staff in disability awareness(HB)	On-going	Development of robust policies and procedures
<b>Communication Improvement</b>	To arrange an annual BME corporate consultation event for the Council. (RSS)	March 2009	Improved communication with BME Communities regarding council services and support mechanisms
	To arrange quarterly visits to BME groups to support the annual BME consultation event (RSS)	March 2009	Improved communication with BME Communities regarding council services and support mechanisms

<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ milestones</b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
	To organise two BME community consultation surgeries for the Director and the Chief Executive (RSS)	March 2009	Improved access for BME Communities to Corporate Board
	Continue to target making improvements to signage to the Council's buildings during 2008/09 (AD)	March 2009	Improved signage across council buildings
	Increase library opening hours by 75 hours per week (JW/JB)	March 2009	Improved access and communication for the public
	To increase the number of borrowers in independent living using the home library service by 10% (JW/JB)	March 2009	Greater number of vulnerable adults in independent living being supported by home library service
	To improve recording of ethnicity on library users records. (JW/JB)	March 2009	Increased number of records with ethnicity data recorded

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<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ milestones</b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
	Engaging emergent readers with the 6 book challenge. (JW/JB)	March 2009	Increased number of readers taking the 6 book challenge.
	Delivery of 2 learning days on local history aimed at local BME community. (GR)	March 2009	Increased awareness of history of the borough and its relevance to the community.
	3 consultation events to improve local communities engagement with archive services. (GR)	March 2009	Consultation completed, archives aware of extent of non involvements of communities.
	To increase use of the books on prescription scheme (JW/JB)	March 2009	Books on prescription being utilised within the borough
	Delivery of Government initiative: Boys into Books with Pupil Referral Units	2008	Books delivered to Pupil Referral Units

<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ milestones</b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
<p><b>Consultation Feedback and Satisfaction Improvement</b></p>	<p>To consult with users and carers on issues affecting disabled people. Continue to meet quarterly with Action for Disabled and Carers group. (AA)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>ADC group regularly being consulted on issues affecting disabled people</p>
	<p>Maintain and improve learner forum activities - ACL</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Learners and potential learners feedback collated and informing curriculum provision</p>
<p><b>Employment Initiatives</b></p>	<p>Seeking to ensure that the employee composition of all divisions within DACHS reflects the diversity of the communities within the borough, particularly to increase the number of BME employees to 7% by March 2009, through quarterly reporting to DMT and DMG's of progress against targets and improvement plans in Strategic Workforce Information report. (SH/AP)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Increased overall representation of BME staff across the Directorate and greater consistency of composition between divisions</p>

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<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ milestones</b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
	<p>Ensuring that all staff receive appropriate and timely training and development opportunities relevant to their job roles, through implementation of training strategy and training plan and ensuring PRD processes are applied consistently. (SH/AP)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Workforce reports indicate that all groups of staff have consistent access to learning and development opportunities</p>
	<p>Implement measures to retain people with disabilities in the DACHS workforce and continue to increase the % of staff who declare a disability (SH/AP)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Quarterly strategic workforce monitoring demonstrates that improvement plans are in place and that targets are achieved</p>
	<p>Workforce data concerning both race equality and disability equality is collected and reported (SH/AP)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Quarterly strategic workforce reports to DMT and DMGs demonstrate that improvement plans and targets are in place and being met</p>

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Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed Action Target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	Support implementation of corporate policy for reporting of racist incidents (SH/AP)	March 2009	Number of incidents reported and monitored alongside Discipline and Grievance Data in quarterly workforce information.
	Building services to continue initiatives designed to develop a more diverse workforce, particularly within under-represented groups. (AD)	On-going	The existence of a more diverse workforce

**DACHS Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/09**

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<b>To collect and maintain diversity data</b>	To monitor levels of Housing Assistance uptake across different service users to see if targets are being met(HB)	June 08	Utilise data to inform service provision
	To undertake analysis of why particular groups do not take up Housing Assistance (HB)	June 08	
	To monitor users of nuisance noise service to ensure that the policy & procedure addresses the appropriate equality & diversity issues. (HB)	June 08	
	To undertake analysis of why particular groups do not use the service (HB)	June 08	
	To introduce quarterly report monitoring(HB)	Ongoing	
	To carry out comprehensive review of computer support/ software systems (HB)	May 08	

<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ milestones</b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
<b>Community Cohesion Initiatives</b>	To progress and develop cohesive links with BME groups (SF)	March 09	Development of a new service to provide support to refugees to integrate further into the local community to encourage community cohesion
	To progress improvement & establish co-ordination of multi agency approach (RSS)	March 09	
	To encourage refugees to attend tenants' forums/residents' groups (SF)	March 09	Increased presence of refugees at tenants' forums/residents' groups
<b>Communication Improvement</b>	To ensure that policy implications arising from the Black Country Tension Monitoring and Community Cohesion are communicated on a quarterly basis across the directorate through quarterly reports to the Directorate's Diversity Group and to DMT. (RSS)	March 09	

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Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed Action Target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	Continue the two year programme to provide 900 households with an extended Telecare service (AD)	March 09	
	To rollout the contract for the phased replacement programme to modernise the alarm call systems installed within sheltered housing schemes and ensure compatibility with Telecare.(AD)	March 09	
<b>Quality service matters</b>	To progress Equality Impact Assessments across the Directorate and ensure compliance with the programme (as set out in para 4.2 of main report), including timescales (RSS)	March 09	
	To organise Equality Impact Assessments training program for identified managers, as appropriate (RSS)	March 09	

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed Action Target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	To develop a CRE Code of Guidance service improvement plan to address issues identified by the gap analysis undertaken in 07/08 within HM (PD)	March 09	To ensure compliance with the statutory code of guidance
	To continue to modernise the adaptations programme in line with the national agenda		
	Achieve and improve the score against BVPI 156 on Access to Buildings (DH/AA)		

<p><b>Key</b> AA – Ann Askew - Head of Physical Disability Services SB – Sue Beach – Head of Community Care Services (Older People) JB – Jen Beardsmore – Head of Service Library Operations SF - Steve Forbes – Strategy Manager SH – Sharon Hartill - Head of Personnel MM - Mike Marshall - Head of Commissioning AP – Andrew Packer – Head of Personnel APs – Ann Parkes – Head of Learning Disability Service GR – Gillian Roberts – Borough Archivist RSS– Resham Sandhu - Head of Race Equality and Communication Services JW – Jayne Wilkins – Head of Service Strategy and Development</p>	<p>SN – Saroj Norman – Strategy Manager, Equality and Diversity AD – Andy Dingley – Asset Manager- Buildings PD – Patricia Dolan – Acting Area Housing Manager HB – Helen Barlow – Head of Private Sector Housing JF – Jo Forbes - Strategy Manager, Housing and Supporting People GW – Gordon Wilkes – Strategy Manager, Housing &amp; Development</p>
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