

**Select Committee on Environment**  
**– 27th June 2006**

**Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services**

**Annual Report for Housing Services on Equality and Diversity 2005/06**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider the former Housing Services Directorate's equality and diversity annual report for 2005/06.

**Background**

2. The production of an annual equality and diversity action plan and annual report by each Directorate is a requirement of the Council's equality and diversity policy. The former Housing Services Directorate (which is now part of a wider Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services) produced an Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2005/06, which was considered by Select Committee on the Environment at its meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2005. Attached is the annual report which details progress on the equality and diversity targets agreed by that select committee.
3. The Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2006/07 for the new Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services was considered and agreed at a meeting of Good Health Select Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2006 and Select Committee on Environment on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2006.

**Finance**

4. Any costs associated with the annual report will be met from within existing budgets.

**Law**

5. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 replaced Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 with 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.
6. 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 will extend this Act by introducing a new duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
7. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. In particular, Section 29 makes it unlawful for the Council, in providing facilities or services (such as those arising pursuant to the statutory functions of the Council), to discriminate against any person seeking to obtain or use those facilities or services on the ground of gender. The Equality Act 2006 introduces a new duty on public authorities to promote gender equality.

8. 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**

9. The annual report contains details of progress in implementing the former Housing Services Directorate's equality and diversity action plan. Performance indicators or outcomes were identified against each target so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed. The Community Representatives Panel was involved in drawing up the action plan.

### **Recommendation**

10. That Members consider and comment on the former Housing Services Directorate's equality and diversity annual report for 2005/06.



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**Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services**

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**Background papers:** Annual Report for Housing Services on Equality and Diversity for 2005/06

## **Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services**

### **Annual Report for Housing Services on Equality and Diversity 2005/06**

#### **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The Council's equality and diversity policy requires all directorates to produce an annual equality and diversity action plan to develop their work in implementing the Council's equality and diversity policy in relation to their service areas and employment practices. All directorates also produce an annual report on implementation of that action plan. This is prepared after the end of March so that it can report on a full year's progress on the previous year's action plan targets. The new Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services equality and diversity action plan for 2006/07 was approved by the Select Committee on Environment on 30 March 2006 and Good Health Select Committee on 29 March 2006.
- 1.2 This document is the annual report and covers the period from April 2005 to March 2006. The report contains:
- Key facts about Housing Services
  - Achievements against the former Housing Services Directorate's equality and diversity action plan for 2005/06.

#### **2.0 Key Facts**

- 2.1 The Council currently manages and maintains 23,823 properties (as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006) which includes a range of property types, including traditional and non-traditional houses, bungalows and flats.
- 2.2 Housing Services employs 1033 staff (as at 31 March 2006) and its' workplace profile is set out in the table 1 below, together with the profile for last year for comparison purposes.

**Table 1: Workforce Profile for Housing Services 31 March 2006**

	Female		Male		BME		Disabled	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Scale Point 34 &amp; above</b>	45	28.5	113	71.5	7	4.4	3	1.9
<b>Below Scale Point 34</b>	347	39.7	528	60.3	26	2.8	26	3.0
<b>Total (as at 31/3/06)</b>	392	37.9	641	62.1	33	3.2	29	2.8

<b>Total (as at 31/3/05)</b>	384	37.5	641	62.5	39	3.8	29	2.8
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**Table 2: Workplace Profile for Dudley MBC 31 March 2006**

	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>BME*</b>	<b>Disabled</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Scale Point 34 &amp; above (excluding schools) #</b>	48.0	52.0	8.0	2.0
<b>Below Scale Point 34 (excluding schools) #</b>	69.3	30.7	5.2	1.3
<b>Total (excluding schools)</b>	66.4	33.6	5.6	1.4
<b>Total (including schools)</b>	74.6	25.4	4.6	0.8

\* BME figures exclude those employees for whom no ethnic origin data is held.

# Grade breakdown excludes schools due to the different grading structure for teachers.

- 2.3 Labour turnover for Housing Services during 2005/06 was 6.53%. Housing Services recruited 69 employees in 2005/06, of whom 56% were female (43% craft staff), 0% were disabled and 7% were from a BME background. A more detailed analysis of recruitment data does, as in previous years, still point to areas of concern within the recruitment process in terms of appointing of BME and disabled applicants, who in the case of the former, continue to apply and then be shortlisted in the same proportion but the proportion falls dramatically for those appointed, and in the case of the latter, the proportions of disabled applicants is small anyway.

Targets set out in the action plan to increase the numbers of BME and disabled staff have been partially met and revised targets have been set out in the 2006/07 action plan.

2.4 **Table 3: Allocations to BME Households for 2005/06**

<b>Applications (as at 1 April 2006)</b>	10.7%
<b>BME Applications Housed (1/4/05-31/3/06)#</b>	14.8%

# Applications housed from the Waiting and Homeless Lists

- 2.5 Information on homelessness activity is collected and reported to government on a quarterly basis. In 2005/6, a total of 2009 households approached the authority for assistance because they were homeless or feared becoming homeless, and of these Housing Services accepted a full rehousing duty to 448, and were able through housing advice intervention to prevent homelessness for a further 138. Households from BME backgrounds were significantly over represented, accounting for 16% of all presentations and 20% of all full duty acceptances. The Homelessness Strategy is currently under review, to include consideration of this issue, and will be the subject of a report to Cabinet in September. In terms of

gender, 14% of households with a full rehousing duty were headed by a male and 61% by a female (the remainder by couples), whilst the presence of a physical disability was the main or secondary reason for priority need in 29 cases. There continued to be high demand for service from young people, with 85 16-17 year olds amongst the 2009 presentations.

- 2.6 An analysis of available repairs data (i.e. where a tenant's ethnicity is recorded) is shown in table 4, below.

**Table 4: Repairs Data for 2005/06**

	<b>BME %</b>
<b>Repairs logged 1/4/05 – 31/3/06</b>	5.4
<b>Repairs completed 1/4/05 – 31/3/06</b>	5.3

It must be noted that repairs completed during the year are not necessarily the same repairs logged during the year.

As reported previously, a general comparison of the proportions does seem to point to the absence of bias at the 'front end' of the system. Further, a Race Equality Scheme review of the repairs service has now been completed and the resulting action plan will be formally reported upon in next year's equality and diversity action plan. This contains a more qualitative analysis and details the impact of the service on BME tenants.

- 2.7 An area of concern is the numbers of 'refusals' listed on the Housing Management information database in terms of ethnicity. These are tenants for whom no ethnicity background data is held on the database. This figure is improving for new tenancies in that of all applications made for housing as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006, only 7% 'refused' to disclose ethnic background. A problem remains with older existing tenancies that don't turnover very often. The directorate is attempting to improve on the completeness of its' database by undertaking a census "Tailoring Our Services", which is designed to help with updating tenants records with a range of diversity indicators including ethnicity. The exercise is due to complete by the end of June 2006.
- 2.8 Subsequent to the production of the 2005/06 Equality and Diversity Action Plan for Housing Services, the former Directorate held an Away day at which managers felt that there was a need for an overarching Directorate diversity strategy in order to put equality and diversity work into the overall directorate context. As a result, a Housing Services Diversity Strategy Statement was produced in consultation, over the summer 2005. This Strategy Statement sets out the wider equalities agenda and Housing Services objectives within that agenda, and the associated action plan details targets to be achieved against seven equality and diversity related objectives.

The action plan referred to above has informed the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services Equality and Diversity action plan for 2006/07

which will be monitored through the normal Directorate strategic plan monitoring process.

### **3.0 Race Equality Scheme Reviews**

- 3.1 In accordance with the timetable for the Council's Race Equality Scheme, Housing Services has now completed its Year 3 service reviews on Asylum Seekers service, Dudley Borough Direct, House sales, Income collection, Repairs service and Travellers service. The resulting action plans have been implemented.

### **4.0 Achievements against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2005/06**

- 4.1 Achievements against the 2005/06 Action Plan are set out at Appendix A, which reports on the Housing Services contribution to corporate equality and diversity priorities, and Appendix B, which reports on progress against the former Directorate's own priorities.

**Housing Services – Progress Report on the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2005/06**  
**Housing Services Contribution to Corporate Equality & Diversity Priorities**

<b>Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority (and Lead Officer)</b>	<b>Council Plan Priority</b>	<b>Housing Services Contribution</b>	<b>Target Date/ Milestones</b>	<b>Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Progress/Final Outcome</b>
1. Race Equality Scheme (a) Complete Year 3 reviews (Year 3 Review Managers)	Local People Matter	Year 3 review Managers have received the training on carrying out reviews and will complete reviews by due date. Year 3 reviews are : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asylum Seekers Service</li> <li>- Contact Centre</li> <li>- House sales</li> <li>- Rent Collection</li> <li>- Repairs</li> <li>- Travellers Service</li> </ul>	Complete reviews by 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2005	Achievement of the Councils RES Action Plan.	All reviews complete.
(b) Complete a review of the Scheme and publish a revised scheme. (Principal Corporate Services Officer)		Support Corporate work through membership of the Council's Equality and Diversity Advisory Group.	Revised scheme to be published by 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2005	Achievement of the Councils RES Action Plan	Scheme reviewed and revised scheme published by deadline

<b>Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority (and Lead Officer)</b>	<b>Council Plan Priority</b>	<b>Housing Services Contribution</b>	<b>Target Date/ Milestones</b>	<b>Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Progress/Final Outcome</b>
<p>2. The Equality Standard for Local Government (a) Achieve Level 2 of the Standard</p> <p>(b) Develop an action plan for achieving Level 3 of the Standard</p> <p>(Principal Corporate Services Officer)</p>	Local People Matter	<p>Support corporate work through membership of the Council's Equality and Diversity Advisory Group.</p> <p>Support corporate work through membership of the Council's Equality and Diversity Advisory Group</p>	<p>Achieve Level 2.</p> <p>Develop Action Plan by July 2005.</p>	<p>Progress towards achievement of appropriate level of Equality Standard.</p> <p>Progress towards achievement of appropriate level of Equality Standard.</p>	<p>Level 2 achieved March 2005</p> <p>Level 3 action plan drafted by December 2005. However, revised standard to be launched in June 2006, details of which will be progressed through EDAG.</p>
<p>3. Disability issues (a) Implement the actions contained within the Disability Access Strategy. (Assistant Directors: Strategy and Private Sector and Building Services)</p>	Local People Matter	A sub-group of the Directorate's Diversity Group has been set-up to take forward the implementation of the Strategy within the Directorate.	Progress to be reviewed quarterly by DMT and bi-annually by EDAG.	Improvement of access to Council Services for disabled people.	A Disability Access Improvement Action Plan identifying the actions, responsibilities, timescales in relation to Housing Services' responsibilities under the Disability Access Strategy was completed January 2006 and has now been implemented.



Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority (and Lead Officer)	Council Plan Priority	Housing Services Contribution	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/Final Outcome
<p>4. Employment issues</p> <p>(a) Work towards targets established for employees from BME communities and disabled employees in all Directorates.</p> <p>(b) Complete a further audit of employees to enable them to declare whether or not they regard themselves as meeting the statutory definition of disability.</p> <p>(c) Achieve a figure of at least 96.5% of employees who have declared their ethnic origin. (Personnel Officer)</p>	Local People Matter	<p>A sub-group of the Directorate's Diversity Group has been set-up to look at employment issues. It has established targets to address under-representation within the workforce. SEE APPENDIX B, PRIORITY 4.</p> <p>An exercise to update the employee database for both ethnicity and disability was carried out in 2004. The Directorate will follow this up and aims to achieve the 96.5% target for ethnicity by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2005 and to increase the number of employees declaring themselves disabled by the same date.</p>	<p>Review recruitment statistics annually.</p> <p>Complete audit and update database by March 2006</p>	<p>To ensure the workforce is a fair representation of the community in which it works.</p> <p>Increase numbers of employees declaring a disability from 2004/05 baseline.</p> <p>Ensure the employee database is accurate for ethnicity of employees.</p>	<p>SEE APPENDIX B, PRIORITY 4</p> <p>98% of staff and 80% of craft staff have declared whether or not they regard themselves as disabled.</p> <p>100% of staff and 99.5% of craft staff have declared their ethnic origin.</p>

<b>Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority (and Lead Officer)</b>	<b>Council Plan Priority</b>	<b>Housing Services Contribution</b>	<b>Target Date/ Milestones</b>	<b>Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Progress/Final Outcome</b>
5. BVPI 2b (a) Achieve an improved score against the BVPI corporate health PI on equality.	Local People Matter	Support corporate work through membership of Council's EDAG.	By 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2006. EDAG will review in October 2005.	Achievement of an improved score from 2004/05.	Data currently being collected/collated for 2005/06 score. Improved monitoring process to be implemented as part of Council's performance management system.

**Housing Services – Progress Report on the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2005/06**  
**Housing Services Equality and Diversity Priorities**

<b>Housing Services Equality and Diversity Priorities (and Lead Officer)</b>	<b>Council Plan Priority</b>	<b>Detailed Action/Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ Milestones</b>	<b>Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Progress/Final Outcome</b>
1. Race Equality Scheme. Implementing the three year programme (Principal Corporate Services Officer)	Local People Matter				<b>SEE APPENDIX A PRIORITY 1</b>
2. BME Housing Strategy(Principal Strategy Manager)	Local People Matter	Implement the three year Action Plan. Agree and implement monitoring mechanisms and implement an Evaluation system as part of the Action Plan.	Issue final BME Housing Strategy by April 2005. Implement an evaluation system by June 2005.	To improve access to the public sector housing market for BME communities	Finalisation of strategy deferred until December 2006 to ensure regional coherence and enhanced consultation round

Housing Services Equality and Diversity Priorities (and Lead Officer)	Council Plan Priority	Detailed Action/Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/Final Outcome
<p>3. Service Delivery issues</p> <p>(a) Key Lines of Enquiry on Diversity (Principal Corporate Services Officer)</p> <p>(b) HM Information Database (Housing ICT Manager)</p> <p>(c) Customer Communication Working Group (Marketing &amp; Information Manager)</p>	Local People Matter	<p>Carry out an audit of where the Directorate is against the Diversity KLOE and formulate an action plan to address gaps in service provision</p> <p>Monitor reliability of data currently held and ensure new data input is accurate.</p> <p>Carry out review of translation and interpretation Services and implement Development Plan within agreed timescales.</p>	<p>Review quarterly</p> <p>March 2006</p>	<p>To ensure that the Directorate addresses the different needs that customers have.</p> <p>To ensure the Directorate has accurate profiles of service users so that resources can be directed where necessary.</p> <p>To improve access to services by BME users.</p>	<p>Audit completed. List of recommendations referred to DMT. Findings used to inform Housing Services Diversity Strategy Statement Action Plan.</p> <p>A report has been prepared for regular distribution to Housing Management which identifies the number of tenancies for which valid ethnicity data is known, presented as a proportion of total number of tenancies. A further report identifies the proportion of tenancies for which ethnicity data is held but have responded with refusal to answer. This helps Housing Management identify their success rate in capture and input of required information.</p> <p>Report on review of translation and interpretation services yet to be produced – awaiting the outcome of remodelling proposals within DACHS.</p>

Housing Services Equality and Diversity Priorities (and Lead Officer)	Council Plan Priority	Detailed Action/Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/Final Outcome
4. Employment issues	Local People Matter	<b>SEE ALSO APPENDIX A PRIORITY 4</b>			
(a) To progress the corporate employment priorities		To increase BME employee representation, Personnel Team to work with partners and others to promote job opportunities, organise events and work experience placements, consult on good practice, work with applicants and update recruitment literature.	Achieve 3% craft/manual and 6% staff BME representation by March 2006 and 7% overall over next 3 years. Targets to be reviewed annually.	To ensure the workforce is a fair representation of the community in which it works.	BME representation as at April 2006 is: 2.28% craft staff 5.48% staff.
b) To ensure the completeness and accuracy of the Directorate's employee database. (Personnel Officer)		Personnel Officer will work with corporate personnel to ensure the accuracy of the database.	Database to be accurate by September 2005.	To achieve accuracy within the Employee database for more effective monitoring.	Information held on Delphi (internal Housing Personnel database) and PSE (corporate HR database) is the same. The PSE Implementation Team will be working with each Directorate on the development of the reporting side of PSE.