

Meeting of the Cabinet – 27th October 2010

Report of the Director of Corporate Resources

Annual Review of Equality and Diversity 2010

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the annual review of equality and diversity for 2010, a full copy of which is available in the Members' room and electronically on the Council's committee management information system (CMIS).

Background

2. The draft review was considered by the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education on 13th September 2010, in accordance with its lead scrutiny role on corporate equality and diversity issues. The select committee made some comments on the report and agreed to recommend it for approval to the Cabinet.
3. The review, to be found in the Members' room and on CMIS, is the ninth such report and gives an overview of progress in implementing equality and diversity priorities and targets. It meets the various legal requirements for annual reporting of progress on a public authority's race, disability and gender equality schemes, and includes data in relation to the Council's employment policies and practices.
4. The 2010 review highlights the recent changes to equality legislation through the duties in the Equality Act 2010 which were brought into force on 1st October and draws attention to the Government's current consultation on proposals for implementing new public sector equality duties from April 2011. Employees will be supported in understanding the implications of the new legislation through, for example, the provision of up-to-date e-learning courses on equality and diversity which can be accessed through the council's intranet. 'Carers aware' e-learning has already been successfully introduced during the last twelve months which

5. Revised and updated disability and gender equality schemes were published to meet legal requirements in December 2009 and April 2010 respectively. These report in some detail on progress with disability and gender equality work and highlight key issues and actions for the next three years.
6. A wide range of engagement activity continues to be undertaken each year. All directorates work with a number of groups of disabled people, in order to enhance service provision. Various events have been held during 2010 around supporting interested disabled people's organisations in becoming 'user led' to meet commitments made to have at least one such organisation operating in the borough by the end of 2010. The annual BME community engagement event held in partnership with the local health sector on 25th September 2010 was again well attended and gave people the opportunity to discuss community safety, health, learning and other issues in workshops and obtain advice and information from a range of stalls. A Dudley LGBT forum was launched in 2009, has been attended by council representatives, and is looking at issues such as hate crime.
7. The review covers in more detail these and other issues and activities which demonstrate the progress that has been made in implementing the actions in the council's equality scheme documents.

Finance

8. Any costs which might be associated with responding to the issues raised in the report which cannot be met from within existing budgets will need to be assessed in due course.

Law

9. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and Equality Act 2006 place duties on public authorities to promote equality in terms of race, disability and gender and require the production by public authorities of race, disability and gender equality schemes.
10. The Equality Act 2010 replaces the existing anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The first duties of the Act came into force on 1st October 2010.

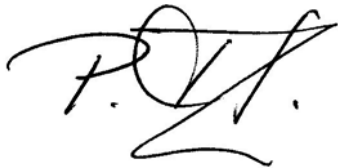
11. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

12. The annual review contains a range of information, monitoring data and analysis relating to the impact of the Council's policies and practices on promoting equality and diversity. More information is given in the Directorate of Children's Services annual equality and diversity action plans and reports on the promotion of equality relating to children and young people.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that Members approve the annual review of equality and diversity 2010.



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Philip Tart
Director of Corporate Resources

Contact Officer: Simon Manson
Telephone: 01384 814713
Email: simon.manson@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Audit Commission 2007/08 and previous years' quartile statistics
Dudley MBC employment monitoring data