

Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education – 9-June 2010

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2009/2010

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2009/2010.

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 Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education considered the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Action Plan, which sets out its Equality and Diversity targets for 2010/2011, at its meeting held on 3 March 2010. Attached is the Annual Report which details progress on the targets agreed by Select Committee in the Directorate's Action Plan for the previous year, 2009/2010.
3. This Select Committee has within its terms of reference responsibility for Corporate Equality and Diversity issues, although responsibility for scrutinising individual Directorate's Action Plans and Annual Reports is divided between the five Select Committees.

Finance

4. Any costs associated with the Annual Report will be met from within existing budgets.

Law

5. The range of relevant equality legislation includes:
6. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 replaces 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.
7. 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.

8. 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 on 6 April 2007.
9. Other legislation is in place relating to discrimination on the basis of age, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The Equality Act 2010, which was passed in April 2010 will make a number of changes when it comes into force.
10. 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.

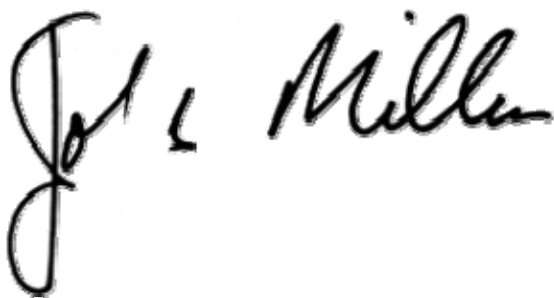
Equality Impact

11. The Annual Report contains details of progress in implementing the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/2010. Performance indicators or outcomes were identified against each target, so that progress in achieving the Action Plan can be monitored and reviewed. Issues relating to Children and Young People are covered in more detail in the Directorate of Children's Services' Action Plan.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that:

- Select Committee for Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education considers and comments on the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2009/2010



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John Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Emma Carver
Principal HR Officer
Supporting the Directorate of the Urban Environment
Telephone: 01384 818826
Email: emma.carver@dudley.gov.uk

**Report to Select Committee for Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education on
9 June 2010**

**Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Annual Report
2009/ 2010**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As part of implementing the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, each Directorate produces an annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan. This identifies working priorities in relation to their services and employment practices. The Action Plan for the Directorate for 2009/2010 was considered by the Select Committee for Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education on 4 March 2009, and approved by the Cabinet Members for the Directorate.
- 1.2 All Directorates also produce an Annual Report, which provides information on the implementation of the Action Plan. The Annual Report is prepared after March, to enable reporting on a full year's progress on agreed actions.
- 1.3 This document is the Annual Report covering the period from April 2009 to March 2010 and contains:
- Key facts about the Directorate, including a workforce profile
 - Key issues from Equality Impact Assessments
 - Achievements against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/2010

2 Key Facts

- 2.1 As at 31 March 2010, the Directorate contains four Divisions.

The four Divisions are:

Culture & Leisure

Culture & Tourism
Sport & Physical Activity
Museums, Parks & Amenities

Planning & Environmental Health

Planning
Environmental Health & Trading Standards

Economic Regeneration & Transportation

Economic Regeneration Strategy
Economic Regeneration Delivery
Engineering, Traffic & Transportation

Environmental Management

Street & Green Care
Waste Care

- 2.2 Underpinning these functions are the relevant Policy and Executive Support Services (including Performance Management, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), and Management Support), which are administrated by the Executive Support Team.
- 2.3 As at 31 March 2010, the Directorate employed **1620** employees. Information relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment's workforce breakdown, as compared to the previous 2 years (2009 and 2008), is indicated in Table 1(a). This can be compared with the Council's profile as a whole which is set out in Table 1(b).

Table 1(a)

**Directorate of the Urban Environment's workforce profile 31 March 2010
(compared with previous 2 years)**

Urban Environment		Female (%)	Male (%)	BME (%)	Disabled (%)
Scale point 34 and above (higher grades)	31/03/10	29.0	71.0	5.6	5.2
	31/03/09	27.3	72.7	4.4	4.8
	31/03/08	27.9	72.1	3.2	4.6
Below scale point 34 (lower grades)	31/03/10	39.2	60.8	3.7	3.5
	31/03/09	39.4	60.6	3.7	3.5
	31/03/08	40.4	59.6	3.7	3.3
Total	31/03/10	38.3	61.7	4.1	3.8
	31/03/09	38.3	61.7	3.9	3.7
	31/03/08	39.2	60.8	3.7	3.8

Table 1(b)**Dudley MBC workforce profile 31 March 2010 (compared with previous 2 years)**

<u>Dudley MBC</u>		Female (%)	Male (%)	BME* (%)	Disabled (%)
Scale point 34 and above (higher grades) (excluding schools)[#]	31/03/10	51.3	48.7	8.8	4.5
	31/03/09	51.1	48.9	9.2	4.5
	31/03/08	50.3	49.7	9.1	4.6
Below scale point 34 (lower grades) (excluding schools)[#]	31/03/10	69.2	30.8	7.1	2.6
	31/03/09	69.3	30.7	6.3	2.6
	31/03/08	69.5	30.5	6.2	2.6
Total (excluding schools)	31/03/10	66.4	33.6	7.3	2.9
	31/03/09	66.5	33.5	6.8	2.9
	31/03/08	66.6	33.4	6.6	2.9
Total (including schools)	31/03/10	75.2	24.8	6.0	1.7
	31/03/09	75.0	25.0	5.6	1.8
	31/03/08	74.9	25.1	5.5	2.0

Notes: Scale point 34 on 31 March 2010 equates to a salary of £28,600 approx.

*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

3 Equality Impact Assessments (April 2009 – March 2010)

3.1 The Directorate has reviewed a number of services and functions during 2009/2010. Equality Impact Assessments have taken place for Building Control, Street Cleansing (graffiti), Public Halls and Town Centre Partnerships and a summary of the outcomes of these reviews are outlined below.

(a) Building Control

The service is responsible for meeting the duty placed on Local Authorities to enforce building regulations. These regulations aim to ensure a minimum standard of construction to provide a safe environment for people and also to provide construction that is energy efficient and buildings that are accessible to all users. The majority of building owners will devolve the process of making an application for approval to a builder, architect or other building professional;

however applications can be received from householders, tenants, landlord and commercial bodies. Contact with service users is therefore reactive to the requirements of the individual making the contact.

Existing customer satisfaction surveys monitor by ethnic origin and indicate that all groups appear satisfied with the service. Consideration has been given to providing support where English may not be the first language of the customer/applicant.

Significant resources are allocated to ensuring access to the built environment for all users and regular consultation on planning applications with Access in Dudley is ongoing and will continue. The Council's Access Officer is also based within the Building Control Service.

Future actions resulting from this assessment relate to expanding the Building Control section of the website to improve available information for service users and looking at the feasibility of ways to possibly improve the monitoring data available for the customers of the Building Control service.

(b) Street Cleansing (grafitti)

Areas where graffiti occurs can start to feel run down and even threatening, creating a poor impression not only of the place but the people living there. Dudley MBC has a responsibility for removing graffiti from its own assets including buildings, monuments, street furniture, bus shelters and name plates. There is a further role to play in tackling the problem of graffiti through enforcement, crime prevention, education and diversionary activities. The removal of graffiti is contained within the Street Cleansing Service with an additional service in the Parks area of Green Care Service, both within the Street and Green Care Section, whilst enforcement and education are located within Waste Care Section. Performance is monitored by Team Managers. All incidents are dealt with within five days and in addition a quick response target of 90 minutes is given to incidents of a highly offensive nature. Current priorities include improving the local environment by targeting the reduction of graffiti in recreation areas and public rights of way. The National Indicator 195 measures the presence of graffiti across ten land class sections. Enforcement and education plays its part in reducing the number of incidents across the Borough. As a result of this assessment, it is recommended that monitoring the effectiveness of the service will continue and that ways to gain better customer insight and utilise best practice will be developed. Actions will therefore include further consultation to determine the extent of the issue of racist and offensive graffiti in the community and further work on education and raising awareness.

(c) Public Halls

The Council has 4 main Public Halls which are Dudley Concert Hall, Stourbridge Town Hall, Brierley Hill Civic Hall and Cornbow Hall. The Halls service aims to offer a selection of accommodation for a wide range of uses to the widest possible range of potential audiences and hirers. The halls can be hired by any private individual or organisation, from inside the borough predominantly but also by people from outside the borough. Some difficulties exist in detailed monitoring of the types of people attending and currently the corporate feed-back form is sent with bookings paper-work and is used to provide monitoring information. The Halls receive many enquiries from BME community members and the Halls' catering policy enables ethnic caterers to provide any foods required from their

preferred ethnic supplier. Tiered tariff structures ensure that hiring is affordable to the broadest range of community commercial hirers.

The age of the buildings and restriction of space means there is a limit to reasonable improvements and therefore issues regarding physical access are the most likely. A lot of work has been done in recent years and continues in order to improve physical access to halls and accommodation and all Halls have suitable access for people with physical disabilities including appropriately adapted toilets. Feedback from member of the Action for Disabled People and Carers group has been sought as part of this assessment.

Actions arising following on from this assessment are focused on making better use of feedback forms to provide better monitoring information and responding to suggestions raised through the Action for Disabled People and Carers group.

(d) Town Centre Partnerships

The Brierley Hill and Dudley Town Centre Partnerships consist of a network of partners working in the best interests of the town centres. The Partnerships give the Council the opportunity to consult on the proposals, developments and issues for the town centre and therefore will affect and benefit the business communities, residents, visitor attractions, religious groups, community groups and visitors to the town.

4 **Achievements against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/2010**

- 4.1 Table 2 (attached) reports on the achievements against the Directorate's objectives outlined in the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/2010.

Table 2**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/ 2010**

Objective	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/ Final Outcome
<p>DUE 1 Complete equality impact assessments for 2009/2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Building Control- Street Cleansing- Public Halls- Town Centre Partnerships	March 2010	<p>Identified equality impact assessments completed within the timescales</p> <p>Integration of identified actions into Service Plans</p> <p>Achievement of Equality Scheme objectives</p>	<p>Identified equality impact assessments for Building Control, Street Cleansing (graffiti), Public Halls and Town Centre Partnerships completed.</p> <p>Actions identified through impact assessments will be addressed in future Directorate Equality and Diversity Action Plans</p>
<p>DUE 2 Provide the updated access guides to publicly accessible council buildings in electronic format.</p>	March 2010	Completed access guides available in electronic format.	<p>All access guides for DUE publicly accessible buildings are available in electronic format.</p> <p>Work has commenced on the remaining access guides with a target completion date for all access guides of December 2011.</p> <p>Access guides are now available in alternative formats of large print, audit and on demand in Braille.</p>

<p>DUE 3</p> <p>Involve Access in Dudley in the planning consultation process.</p>	<p>March 2010</p>	<p>Access in Dudley involved in the planning consultation process.</p> <p>Access in Dudley consulted on major building control projects.</p>	<p>Meetings have been held throughout the year with Access in Dudley on a fortnightly basis.</p> <p>Access in Dudley have been consulted on major building control projects i.e Brierley Hill Health Centre</p> <p>Following the regular meetings with Access in Dudley, comments are the sent directly to the relevant planning officer</p>
<p>DUE 4</p> <p>A review of disabled parking places on all Council Car Parks (as detailed in the Parking Order)</p>	<p>March 2010</p>	<p>Complete review of disabled parking places.</p> <p>Identified car parks that need disabled bays to comply with Parking Order.</p>	<p>Review completed September 2009.</p> <p>Due to changed advice regarding the % of disabled parking spaces required, 10 out of 67 car parks were identified as having an under-provision of disabled spaces.</p> <p>Following this review, it is anticipated that this issue will be resolved for all 10 car parks by the end of 2010/2011</p>
<p>DUE 5</p> <p>Introduction of increased recycling opportunities for people living in high rise flats.</p>	<p>March 2010</p>	<p>100% of all residents within the Borough to have access to recycling.</p>	<p>20 out of 26 High Rise blocks now have access to the recycling service.</p>

			The remaining 6 blocks have either refused the service or alternative possibilities are being explored.
<p>DUE 6</p> <p>Review the DUE website to ensure it is accessible for people with a disability.</p>	March 2010	DUE website reviewed and updated as appropriate.	<p>The DUE website has been reviewed and input sought from the Directorate's Disability Consultation group.</p> <p>ICT services and MARCOMMS have been liaised with regarding updates to the website and discussions are ongoing to determine possibilities to improve accessibility to the website for people with a disability.</p>
<p>DUE 7</p> <p>To assess and improve the data available on users of the Trading Standards service, in order to identify any particular groups that do not use the service and the reasons why this is the case.</p>	March 2010	<p>To obtain more comprehensive data of users of the service</p> <p>To introduce systems to monitor current and future impact on service users and to identify any possible barriers to accessing the Trading Standards service.</p>	<p>Trading Standards have engaged with various groups in order to identify any particular requirements that these groups may have. This includes the Directorate's Disability Consultation Group, the Chinese Business Community and the Muslim Community.</p> <p>Trading Standards have liaised with Consumer Direct and as a result work is ongoing in order to provide data on users of the services.</p>

		To identify specific groups that are non users or low users of the service to target education and awareness the services offered by Trading Standards.	The customer satisfaction survey has been reviewed to assist in obtaining equality monitoring data.
DUE 8 Establish an agreed method for carrying out Muslim burials in accordance with religious requirements.	March 2010	A method for carrying out Muslim burials to be agreed and established. Establish the feasibility of operating a 7 day burial service.	Consultation is ongoing with the Muslim community on this issue and regular meetings are taking place. Additional factors for consideration have come to light and representatives of the Muslim community are working with the authority to reach a satisfactory conclusion.