

Select Committee on Community Safety & Community Services – 11th June 2009

Report of the Interim Director of Law and Property

Directorate of Law, Property & Human Resources Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2008/09

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the Directorate of Law, Property & Human Resources equality and diversity annual report for 2008/09.

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 Community Safety & Community Services considered the Directorate of Law, Property & Human Resources action plan, which sets out its equality and diversity targets for 2009/10, at its meeting held on 12th March 2009. Attached is the annual report which details progress on the targets agreed by that select committee in the directorate's action plan for the previous year, 2008/09.
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 has extended this Act with a duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.

8. 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. A new duty on public authorities to promote gender equality under the Equality Act 2006 came into force on 6th April 2007.

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.
Other legislation is in place relating to discrimination on the basis of age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Equality Impact

10. The annual report contains details of progress in implementing the Directorate of Law, Property & Human Resources equality and diversity action plan for 2008/09. 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

11. That the Select Committee considers and comments on the Directorate of Law, Property & Human Resources equality and diversity annual report for 2008/09.



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List of Background Papers

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