

Directorate of Children's Services

Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2008/09

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Directorate, along with all directorates of the Council, produces 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 Children's Services, before approval by the appropriate Cabinet Member.
- 1.2 Progress with implementing the action plan is reported in equality and diversity annual reports. The Directorate of Children's Services annual report for 2007/08 will be submitted to the Select Committee on Children's Services at its first meeting of the 2008/09 municipal year.
- 1.3 This action plan covers the period from April 2008 to March 2009. A progress report will be presented to DPT in October 2008 reporting on the first six months progress of the plan. The final report will be presented to the Select Committee in June 2009.
- 1.4 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 Children's Services for 2008/09. The strategic plan responds to the Borough's Community Strategy 2005-15, the Council plan, Children and Young People's Plan 2007 – 11 and the Local Area Agreement.
- 2.2 The overall long-term, policy framework for equality and diversity is set out in the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Equality Scheme provides the three-year equality strategy and action plan for the Council. The combined scheme detailing objectives relating to disability, gender and race was published in April 2007.
- 2.3 Overall progress on implementing the Equality Scheme throughout Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council will be reported in the Annual Review of Equality and Diversity.

3. Vision and Values

- 3.1 The vision of the Directorate of Children's Services is for a borough where the safety and well-being of children and young people is promoted for all so that:
- all children and young people are safe from harm and neglect
 - all children and young people are healthy
 - all children and young people enjoy and achieve in learning
 - all children and young people make a positive contribution to their lives and those of others
 - all young people are supported to achieve economic well-being and achievement when they leave school
- 3.2 The directorate maintains its commitment to implementing the Council's policy in relation to its services and employment practices through, for example; the action planning and reporting process, designating responsibility for actions to particular staff; its consultation processes; continuing training and development and performance review and development interviews for all staff.
- 3.3 The Directorate has an Equality and Diversity Working Group, led by an assistant director with representatives from each division, including the Race Equality Officer who is the directorate officer with overall responsibility for equality and diversity matters. The Equality and Diversity Working Group is responsible for supporting equality and diversity in the directorate and ensuring that all divisions are kept informed of developments.
- 3.4 Specific responsibility for promoting equality and diversity in employment and services within the directorate rests with all divisional heads.
- 3.5 The Race Equality Officer is responsible for overall equality and diversity policy development work on behalf of the Directorate; for reviewing and updating the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Policy; for preparing, monitoring and reviewing the Directorate's annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan and Annual Report.
- 3.6 The Race Equality Officer also leads development work on behalf of the borough's schools to ensure that they are able to fully comply with equality legislation and effective practice. This includes the preparation and distribution of appropriate policy frameworks for school use; advising school leaders and staff and arranging and delivering training related to equality and diversity when required.
- 3.7 The Children's Services Personnel Section, reporting to the Head of Personnel, is responsible for equality and diversity in employment development work and will make a key contribution to the development of the Directorate's policy and action plan.
- 3.8 The Training and Development Officer reporting to the Assistant Director for Policy, Performance and Information is responsible for arranging or advising on appropriate training provision relating to equality and diversity within the Directorate.
- 3.9 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, 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.

4. Key Issues and Targets

4.1 The Equality Scheme identifies the key issues and challenges across the Council for the three years 2007 - 10. Particular priority has been assigned to progressing work in the following areas through the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group, which is the cross-directorate group supporting Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's approach to developing equality and diversity.

- 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

4.2 In the Equality Scheme, the directorate has identified overall equality and diversity priorities for its service areas linked to the three years of the Scheme which are reflected in this action plan. The Equality Scheme priorities are:

- Implement the Special Educational Needs Strategy
- Ensure that the Children's Trust is fully operational in 2007 and that its functions support the aspirations of all children and young people
- Improve transitional arrangements for young people from children's service into adult services with particular focus on vulnerable groups
- Implement measures to secure improved educational and social outcomes for children in care and children with disabilities
- Implement the revised Accessibility Plan ensuring it takes full account of the DDA 2005
- Implement the Dudley Play Strategy

4.3 In addition the following priority objectives have been identified in the Children and Young People's Plan:

- Improve (all) outcomes for children and young people in the care of the council
- Improve (all) outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Improve access to CAMHS
- Reduce rates of teenage pregnancy and the incidence of sexually transmitted infections
- Encourage children and young people to follow healthy lifestyles
- Tackle the harm caused by alcohol and reduce the prevalence of 'binge drinking'
- Promote positive choices not to take illegal drugs or to smoke
- Reduce the perception and fear of bullying
- Raise achievement at KS1 and KS2
- Raise achievement in maths at KS1 and KS2
- Raise achievement at KS3
- Raise achievement in maths at KS3
- Reduce the number of first time offenders

- Increase the impact of children and young peoples' views being heard
- Reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS)
- Develop more resilience in the labour market through better 'work readiness/preparation' through 14-19 and Education Business Partnership

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 It will be the explicit responsibility for the lead officers for each priority objective to coordinate the actions contained in this plan with advice, support and guidance from the Race Equality Officer as directorate lead officer.

6. The Action Plan

6.1 The action plan is set out in the following tables.

- **Table 1:** Equality impact assessments identified in the Council's Equality Plan 2007-10.
- **Table 2:** Equality actions supporting the Children and Young People's Plan priority objectives based on the Every Child Matters Outcomes as identified in the Directorate Strategic Plan.
- **Table 3:** Equality actions supporting Directorate of Children's Services continuing equality and diversity development work.

7. Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Policy (Attached for information)

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Table 1: Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2008-09 – Equality impact assessments identified in the Council's Equality Plan 2007-10

Equality impact assessments identified in the Council's Equality Scheme for completion by 2008 to be carried over for completion by 2009 (March)			
Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date / milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
Transitional arrangements for young people into adult services (Su Roxburgh/ DACHS manager)	Complete equality impact assessments listed in Dudley Council's Equality Scheme and those carried over from 2007–08 Equality and Diversity Action Plan.	31 st March 2009	Impact assessments completed
Services for children in public care (Roy Perrett)			
Services for children with learning difficulties and disabilities (Jo Tasker/Su Roxburgh)			
Youth service curriculum (Dewi Williams)			

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date / milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
Health Promoting Schools' Lifestyle Survey (Julia Simmonds)			
Complaints Policy (Lorraine Tozer)			
ICT Services – hardware and software (Kam Mavi)			
Dudley Play Strategy (Lindsay Newton)			

Table 2: Equality actions supporting the Children and Young People’s Plan priority objectives based on the Every Child Matters Outcomes as identified in the Directorate Strategic Plan

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>Every Child Matters: All Outcomes</p> <p>Improve outcomes for children and young people in the care of the council. (Pauline Sharrat)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differential outcomes between different ethnic and gender groups and/or children with disabilities.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity between different equality groups evident in numbers of children and young people in care assessed as having an emotional or mental health disorder through the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire</p>
	<p>Consider quality of known data and develop proposals to improve it if required.</p>		<p>Reduced or no disparity between different equality groups evident in the number of moves made by children in care of the LA.</p>
			<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups in stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
			<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups of children in care reaching level 4 in English and Maths at Key Stage 2</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups of children in care achieving 5 A* to C GCSE or equivalent</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups evident in the numbers of young people looked after by the council, who are not in education, training or employment</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: All Outcomes</p> <p>Improve outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. (Pauline Sharrat)</p>	<p>Audit known cohort and analyse for possible equality differentials evident in outcomes.</p> <p>Develop, publish and implement 'Disability Accessibility Strategy' to include proposals for creating a register of children who are disabled in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups evident in the numbers of pupils with Special Educational Needs achieving Key Stage 2 English and Maths threshold</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups evident in the numbers of pupils with Special Educational Needs achieving 5 A* to Cs GCSE, including English and Maths</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups evident in the numbers of young people with learning difficulties or disabilities who are not in education, employment or training</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: Be Healthy</p> <p>Improve access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. (Pauline Sharrat)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differentials in access between different equality groups (disability, gender and race) and develop and implement strategy for addressing any disparity.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups in accessibility to CAMHS</p>
<p>ECM: Be Healthy</p> <p>Reduce rates of teenage pregnancy and reduce the incidence of sexually transmitted infections. (Jane Porter)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differentials between rates of teenage pregnancy between different equality groups and develop and implement strategy for addressing any disparity. As above for young people with sexually transmitted diseases.</p> <p>Target support programmes, where appropriate.</p>		<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups in rates of teenage pregnancy.</p>
<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups in rates of sexually transmitted infection among young people.</p>			

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: Be Healthy</p> <p>Encourage children and young people to follow healthy lifestyles (Healthy eating) (Jane Porter)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differentials between equality groups.</p> <p>Target support programmes, where appropriate.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups in rates of obesity among primary school aged children in reception year and year 6.</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups in rates of children and young people's participation in high quality PE and sport, with a focus on 16+</p>
<p>ECM: Be Healthy</p> <p>Tackle the harm caused by alcohol and reduce the prevalence of 'binge drinking'. (Jane Porter)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for differentials between rates of alcohol use by children and young people from different equality groups and develop and implement strategy for addressing any evident disparity.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups of young people reporting that they have been drunk in the last 4 weeks through the Tellus survey</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: Be Healthy</p> <p>Promote positive choices not to take illegal drugs or to smoke. (Jane Porter)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for differentials between rates of drug use and smoking by children and young people from different equality groups and develop targeted strategy.</p> <p>Develop robust procedures, to enable reporting and routine monitoring of bullying and harassment incidents to ascertain whether fear of bullying is justified.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups of young people reporting that they smoke in healthy life style survey (LAA)</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity between equality groups of young people reporting their involvement in drugs through the healthy life style survey</p>
<p>ECM: Stay Safe</p> <p>Reduce the perception and fear of bullying. (Lindsay Newton)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for differentials between rates of complaints of bullying between different equality groups including lesbian and gay young people and/or those who think they might be.</p> <p>Develop specific support programmes, including training for front line staff to address prejudice driven bullying.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reporting procedures in place and initial analysis undertaken.</p> <p>Data analysed by equality indicators.</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	<p>Develop suitable methodology and processes to allow pupils from a range of sexual orientations to report bullying and harassment incidents discretely and without fear.</p> <p>Develop specific procedure to encourage reporting of homophobic bullying and harassment.</p> <p>Develop support programme to ensure sensitive support is available to victims of bullying.</p> <p>Develop procedures to increase confidence of victims to report bullying incidents</p>		<p>Support programmes in place and training programmes initiated,</p> <p>Reporting of homophobic bullying reflects the national estimates of the likely number of incidents. (The School Report: Stonewall)</p> <p>Support programme in place.</p> <p>Increased confidence reflected in surveys and questionnaires.</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: Enjoy and Achieve</p> <p>Raise achievement at KS1 and KS2. (Jane Porter)</p> <p>Raise achievement in maths at KS1 and KS2. (Jane Porter)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differentials between equality groups and review existing projects for their effectiveness so far.</p> <p>Implement effective strategies to address any disparities in outcome data.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in achievement at level 2 and above at Key Stage 1</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in progression by 2 levels in English and Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (floor)</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in achievement at level 4 and above in Maths at Key Stage 2</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: Enjoy and Achieve</p> <p>Raise achievement at KS3. (Jane Porter)</p> <p>Raise achievement in maths at KS3. (Jane Porter)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differentials between equality groups and review existing projects for their effectiveness so far. Implement strategies to address any disparities in outcome data.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in achievement at level 5 and above in English and mathematics at key stage 3 (LAA)</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in progression by 2 levels in English and mathematics between key stage 2 and key stage 3</p> <p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in numbers of children reporting fun and interesting lessons at school through the Tellus survey</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: Make a Positive Contribution</p> <p>Reduce the number of first time offenders. (Pauline Sharrat)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differentials between first time offender rates of children and young people from different equality groups.</p> <p>Target support programmes tailored to identified need.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in numbers of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17.</p>
<p>ECM: Make a Positive Contribution</p> <p>Increase the impact of children and young peoples' views being heard. (Lindsay Newton)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible differentials between different groups being involved.</p> <p>Develop processes targeting groups that have had little or no involvement.</p> <p>Work with partners to identify opportunities to promote involvement in public life for children and young people with disabilities.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in numbers of children and young people who feel that they have an influence through the Tellus Survey.</p>
<p>ECM: Achieve economic well-being</p> <p>Reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) (Pauline Sharrat)</p>	<p>Analyse existing data for possible equality differentials between young people not in education or training.</p> <p>Develop effective projects to target pupils from at risk groups.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in numbers of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (to include Young offenders & Teenage mothers)</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>ECM: Achieve economic well-being</p> <p>Develop more resilience in the labour market through better 'work readiness/preparation' through 14-19 and Education Business Partnership. (Jane Porter)</p>	<p>Identify any differentials between different equality groups and target support to these young people.</p>	<p>31st March 2009</p>	<p>Reduced or no disparity evident between equality groups in achievement of a Level 2 qualification (NVQ or equivalent) at the age of 19</p>

Table 3: Equality actions supporting Directorate of Children’s Services continuing equality and diversity development work.

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>DCS complies with its statutory equality and diversity responsibilities, agreed council processes and good practice in equality and diversity.</p> <p>David Silvera</p>	<p>Draft and disseminate appropriate policies, plans and guidance to enable the directorate to be in full compliance with statutory responsibilities and locally agreed activities.</p>	<p>March 2009 (Action plan)</p> <p>June 2009 (Annual report)</p>	<p>Equality and diversity action plan and annual report produced. Other relevant documents produced. Contribution made to corporate policy development.</p>
<p>DCS implements the New Performance Framework for Local Authorities & Local Authority Partnerships.</p> <p>David Silvera</p>	<p>Provide advice, guidance and support on equality and diversity issues contributing to directorate initiatives progressing the new single set of performance indicators</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Equality and diversity related issues fully integrated in to development work in this area.</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>Schools fulfil their equality responsibilities through strategic planning.</p> <p>David Silvera</p>	<p>Advise schools of developments in their equality responsibilities and provide policy development materials, advice and guidance on their use.</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Schools aware of their obligations and have access to policy development materials. Relevant documents drafted and published and support given to establish their use in schools.</p>
<p>The LA and schools fulfil their statutory responsibilities to process and respond to racist incidents.</p> <p>David Silvera</p>	<p>Collate and disseminate annual data relating to racist incidents in schools. Revise relevant documentation as necessary. Provide advice and support to schools tackling racist incidents.</p>	<p>June 2009</p>	<p>Annual racist incident data published in relevant reports. Advice and support given when necessary.</p>

Objective (and lead officer)	Detailed action/target	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>Schools implement their equality policies effectively.</p> <p>David Silvera</p>	<p>Provide training, advice and support for schools on development work relating to equality and diversity.</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Training, advice and support given.</p>
<p>The LA promotes social cohesion and reduces community tension.</p> <p>David Silvera</p>	<p>Work with the local community, other council directorates and partner agencies to monitor community tension with particular attention to that which affects or involves children and young people and contribute to initiatives to promote cohesion.</p>		<p>Contribution to projects addressing this issue.</p>

Equality and Diversity Policy

*Putting children and young people first
in Dudley*

John Freeman: Director of Children's Services

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Directorate of Children's Services

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Directorate of Children's Services equality and diversity policy provides the overall framework for meeting its commitment to promoting equality and diversity. The Directorate recognises the need to tackle discrimination and to promote equality between different groups in the community whilst also addressing the diverse needs of individuals. The policy covers the Council/Directorate's own employment policies and practices, the provision of services and its wider community leadership role.

The Equality and Diversity Policy responds to and is supported by a wide range of other documents.

Key Council documents

- The overall strategy for the Borough – the Dudley Borough Challenge, the Community Strategy for 2005-20 – has as its vision the promotion of stronger communities throughout the Borough. A primary aim throughout the strategy is to promote greater equality so that all people are able to make a full contribution to society.
- The Council Plan sets out the Council's contribution to achieving the aims of the Community Strategy. It states that: "Dudley Council is committed to making sure that local people get the best possible quality public services and are given every opportunity to realise their potential. We recognise and value the diversity of backgrounds, skills and needs within the borough and work hard to respond to these. We aim to serve the people of Dudley borough fairly and efficiently so we can improve the quality of life for everyone."
- The Equality and Diversity Policy provides the overall framework for statutory equality documents – the Race Equality Scheme, the Disability Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme. These are brought together as the Council's Equality Scheme.

Key Directorate documents

- Directorate Strategic Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- Equality and Diversity Annual Report

This policy is also reflected in the wide range of other policies, plans and documents of importance to promoting equality and diversity.

There is an increasing range of equality legislation which the Directorate needs to respond to in its policies and practices, including those related to employment, in its provision of services and in its community leadership role. While this policy is not driven solely by legislation, it recognises the importance of ensuring that the Directorate of Children's Services can meet its statutory duties.

Relevant legislation includes:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2006
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2005
- Education and Inspections Act 2006

2. Overall Objective of the Policy

The overall objective of the Directorate's equality and diversity policy is to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds

in all its functions including, in particular, all those functions affecting children and young people; its employment policies and practices, its services, and in its engagement with partners and with the communities of the Borough.

The Council aims to ensure that no children or young people, residents, service users potential or existing employees, or any other person receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, skin colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependants, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, social class, where the person lives or spent convictions.

The Directorate recognises that:

- discrimination may occur on more than one ground at the same time
- equality of opportunity cannot be achieved by always treating all people alike

The Directorate is committed to meeting its duties under equality legislation and legislation concerned with children and young people and aims to follow the good practice guidance as well as that set out in the statutory codes of practice.

3. Aims of the Policy

In meeting the overall objective of the policy, a number of more detailed aims have been identified covering general aims, services and employment.

General aims

The Directorate supports fully Dudley Council's aims with particular emphasis on the need:

- to provide community leadership on equality and diversity issues and to work with its partner organisations and the community to make the Borough a place to live, work and visit free from discrimination and harassment;
- to incorporate equality and diversity principles from the start in all its policies, plans and strategies;
- to undertake equality impact assessments to judge the impact of its policies and services and to determine the needs of its children and young people and their parents and carers, its employees and potential employees, its customers and other people from the Borough's communities;

- to identify the equality and diversity outcomes it wants to achieve for its children and young people, their parents and carers, its employees, customers and communities;
- to reflect the diversity of the Borough in its publications, events and other marketing and communications activities;
- to accept the definition of institutional racism set out in the Macpherson Report, to seek to address institutional racism and other forms of discrimination;
- to accept the definition of a racist incident set out in the Macpherson Report, to deal with such incidents with due seriousness;
- to follow the social model of disability;
- to apply the principles of this policy in its procurement activities and in services commissioned through other organisations;
- to work towards achieving level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and to undertake self-assessment, scrutiny and audit of its progress.

Service provision aims

The Directorate aims:

- to provide appropriate, accessible and effective services and facilities to all sections of the community without discrimination or prejudice;
- to provide clear information about its services in appropriate formats or languages which meet people's needs;
- to monitor its services to ensure that all sections of the community are receiving fair access and outcomes and take action to address any inequalities that are apparent;
- to consult with and involve all sections of the community, including children and young people, in identifying needs and in decisions about services;

- to respond promptly and fairly to any complaints that are received about Directorate services including those of discrimination.

Employment aims

The Directorate fully supports the Council's aims:

- to ensure that its employment policies and procedures do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any group or individual on any unjustifiable grounds;
- to make the profile of its workforce at all levels as representative of the Borough's population as possible;
- to monitor its employment processes by age group, disability, gender, racial group and religion or belief and take action to address any inequalities that are apparent;
- to promote a culture of fairness and respect in all its employment policies, procedures and practices
- to provide appropriate training for employees on equality and diversity issues;
- to make use of the Race Relations 1976, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and subsequent legislation, which allow for initiatives to encourage under-represented groups to apply for posts or access specific training where appropriate;
- to contribute to the Council-wide review of its pay structures to ensure all employees are rewarded fairly;
- to protect its employees from harassment and investigate all claims of harassment that are made;
- to respond to the particular needs of employees, including those relating to religion or culture.

4. Responsibility for the Policy

Responsibility for the policy rests with the Council's Cabinet. The Controlling Group will nominate a Cabinet Member with lead responsibility for Children's Services and

for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for effective implementation, monitoring and review of the policy.

The Cabinet Member, in consultation with other Members, officers and communities as appropriate, will identify a number of key issues to be the focus for particular action for equality and diversity work during each year or other appropriate time period.

The Director of Children's Services is responsible for implementing the policy within this Directorate. An assistant director has delegated authority to lead on Equality and Diversity supported by a dedicated officer for equalities. The assistant director will act as a champion for promoting equality and diversity and chair meetings of the Directorate Equality and Diversity Working Group which will also support this work.

All Directorate employees and any other person acting for, or on behalf of, the Directorate has an individual responsibility to comply with the requirements of this policy in all aspects of the Directorate's work in which they are involved.

5. Rights Under the Policy

The policy assigns rights alongside responsibilities.

Any customer who feels that they have been unfairly treated is entitled to submit a complaint to the Directorate which will be dealt with through the Council's customer feedback procedure.

Job applicants who feel that they may have grounds for complaint should refer to the 'Fair Deal for Job Applicants' and contact the Head of Personnel and Support Services, Chief Executive's Directorate.

Racist incidents should be reported through the Directorate's Standard Operating procedure for Reporting and Recording Racist Incidents.

Hate crime incidents can be reported also to the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour (Hate Crime) Coordinator, or to other identified reporting centres across the Borough, and action will be taken through the Dudley Race/Hate Incidents Group.

Employees who believe that they are suffering from harassment or bullying can raise the matter through the Council's combating harassment and bullying procedure or approach the Council's trained harassment support contacts. For other complaints

related to this policy and arising from an employee's employment, the employee should raise the matter through the Council's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Any serious concerns that an employee may have arising from this policy about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of officers or Members of the Council, or others acting on behalf of the Council, not covered by the above, can be reported under the Confidential Reporting Policy.

The Directorate will seek to protect individuals from any form of victimisation arising from their taking action in relation to their rights in law or making any complaint through the Council's procedures arising from this policy.

6. Implementation of the Policy

The Children's Commissioner and Assistant Director for Children's Services has delegated authority to lead on Equality and Diversity supported by a dedicated officer for equalities. Officers from each division meet on a regular basis as the Directorate Equality and Diversity Working Group. They ensure that equality and diversity issues are implemented in the work of their respective divisions. The lead officer for Equalities attends the (Corporate) Equality and Diversity Advisory Group to ensure that corporate initiatives and responsibilities are shared in the Directorate's work.

The Council has published an Equality Scheme, incorporating the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes required by legislation, which sets out in more detail its approach to promoting equality in these areas. The Equality Scheme, which is fully supported by this Directorate, will be reviewed at least every three years.

The Directorate of Children's Services will prepare an annual equality and diversity action plan which will be linked with its annual strategic plan and reflect the objectives in the Children and Young People's Plan which responds to the contents of the Council's Equality Scheme and the annual reviews. Progress in achieving the action plan will be reported in the Directorate's annual report. Common guidelines will be used in the production of the action plan and annual report to promote consistency and comparability. Action plans and annual reports will be scrutinised by the Select Committee for Children's Services and approved by the relevant Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

7. Review

The policy will be reviewed at least every three years in line with the requirements to review the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes.

8. Further Information

A number of the relevant Dudley MBC documents referred to in the policy are available on the Council's website <http://www.dudley.gov.uk> .

Staff will find a wide range of information on the Council's intranet website by following the links below:

http://insidedudley/education/library/planspoliciesan_/equalityanddive_/default.htm

<http://insidedudley/finance/test%20msu/Equal%20Opps%201/Default.htm>

For advice, information and copies of relevant external documents e.g. statutory codes of practice, useful websites include:

Commission for Racial Equality <http://www.cre.gov.uk>

Disability Rights Commission <http://www.drc-gb.org>

Equal Opportunities Commission <http://www.eoc.org.uk>

Age Positive (Department of Work and Pensions)

<http://www.agepositive.gov.uk/index.cfm>

Department of Communities and Local Government <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

Improvement and Development Agency <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk>

Stonewall <http://www.stonewall.org.uk>

Department for Education and Skills <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/>

Every Child Matters: Change for children

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/>

For enquiries about the policy, or copies of relevant documents, contact:

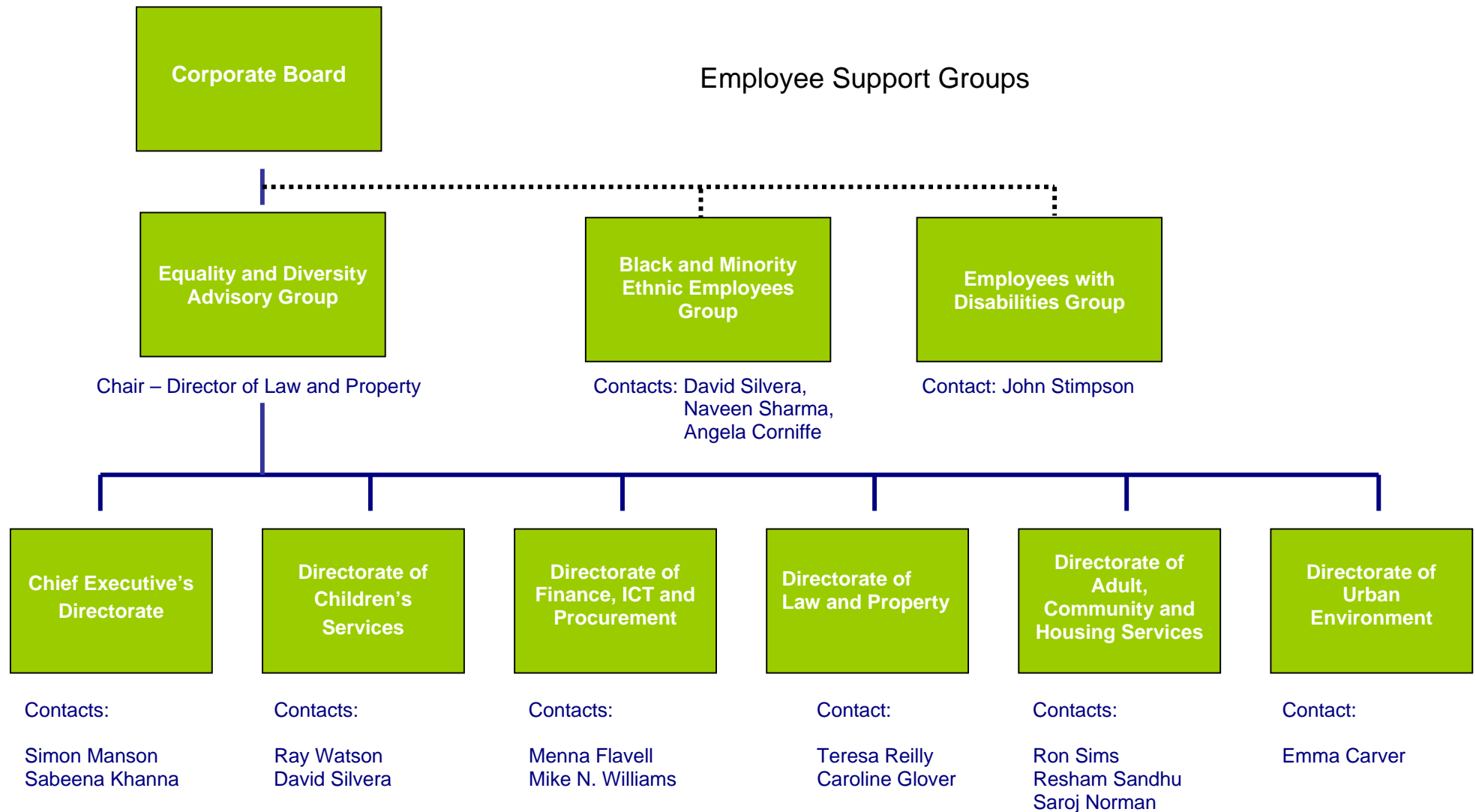
David Silvera: Directorate of Children's Services Equality Officer.

david.silvera@dudley.gov.uk

9. Notes

This document is available on request in large print, on audiotape and in community languages.

Appendix 1. Equality and Diversity - Council Structure Chart



Appendix 2. Equality and Diversity – Member and Committee Responsibilities

