

Select Committee on Children's Services – 19 June 2008

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Children's Services Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2008/09 and Annual Report of Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2007-08

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the 2008/09 Equality and Diversity action plan for the Directorate of Children's Services.
2. To consider the report on the 2007/08 Equality and Diversity action plan for the Directorate of Children's Services.

Background

3. The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy requires all Directorates to produce an equality and diversity action plan and report annually.
4. The directorate action plan will be presented for scrutiny in two parts. The first part - the action plan itself - covers:
 - Relationship with other plans
 - Vision and values
 - Key issues and targets
 - Action plan summary
5. The second part is the annual report which is also presented for scrutiny. The annual report covers achievements against the previous year's action plan targets.
6. Overview and scrutiny of corporate equality and diversity issues is included in the terms of reference of the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education. Select committee chairs have agreed that scrutiny of individual directorate's action plans be split up amongst the five committees.
7. This action plan and report have been considered by the directorate policy team. Following scrutiny they will be approved by the appropriate Cabinet Member before publication.

Finance

8. Any costs associated with implementing the action plan will be met from within existing budgets.

Law

9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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 comes into force on 6th April 2007.
12. 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

13. The plan sets out proposed actions for promoting equality and diversity led by the Directorate of Children's Services during 2007/08. Performance indicators or outcomes are identified against targets so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed.

Recommendation

14. That the Select Committee considers and comments on the Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/09 and the Annual Report on the 2007-08 Equality and Diversity Action Plan.



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Director of Children's Services

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List of Background Papers

Guidance for the preparation of directorates' equality and diversity action plans and annual reports (December 2007)