

Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services Annual Equality Action Plan 2012/13

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Directorate action plans form an important part of the Council's equality policy by making sure that all directorates have a continuing focus on advancing equality and achieving fairness in the services for which they are responsible and amongst their employees.
- 1.2 The Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services (DACHs) plan is circulated to the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, before being approved by the Lead members for Adult Care and Housing, Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning.
- 1.3 All directorates also produce annual reports on the progress achieved through their equality action plans. These are prepared at the end of the financial year, in order to reflect a full year's activity, and circulated to the relevant scrutiny committee at its first meeting of the new municipal year.
- 1.4 This action plan covers the period from April 2012 to March 2013 and contains:
- an explanation of its relationship with other plans
 - a summary of the directorate's equality vision and values, roles and responsibilities
 - key issues and targets for the plan
 - the action plan
- 1.5 The action plan has been drawn up against the background of the directorate continuing to need to deliver budget reductions as part of the council's overall savings package. These may have some impact on the delivery of the plan during 2012/13.

2. Relationship with other plans

- 2.1 This action plan will be incorporated in the overall strategic plan for DACHs for 2012/13. The strategic plan in turn responds to the Borough's refreshed Community Strategy 2010-13 and the three year Council plan.

- 2.2 The council's Equality Scheme sets out the overall approach to advancing equality across the organisation. A revised equality scheme has been drafted and is being submitted to the Cabinet in March 2012. This contains overall equality objectives for the council in line with the specific public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.3 Council-wide progress on equality is summarised each year in the annual review of equality, which is circulated to the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee (as the scrutiny committee with responsibility for corporate equality issues) and the Cabinet for approval.

3. Vision and Values

- 3.1 The Directorate's ambition is "To ensure that all we do improves the health and well-being of individuals and their communities across the Borough", by listening, learning and acting.

Underpinning this ambition is a set of strategic and divisional priorities. The strategic priorities are:

- enabling and embedding personalised, community based support
- developing sustainable and high quality services which deliver value for money for local people
- involve and engage with people in a meaningful and timely way
- strengthening and improving communities to provide choice and opportunity

The Directorate is committed to providing the best quality public services for local people and creating opportunities for local people to succeed. We work hard to respond to needs and serve the different people of Dudley fairly and efficiently to improve quality of life for everyone.

- 3.2 As at April 2012, the Directorate includes the following divisions:

- Adult Social Care
- Housing Services
- Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning
- Strategic and Private Sector Housing
- Quality and Commissioning

- 3.3 The Directorate ensures that it continues to focus on equality through the action planning and reporting process, designating responsibility for actions to particular staff, completing impact assessments and reviewing policies, undertaking engagement activities and continuing training and development.
- 3.4 The aim of the directorate is to mainstream equality and diversity so responsibility for promoting equality and diversity in employment and services rests with all heads of services. The overall responsibility for strategic equality and diversity policy development work on behalf of the Directorate rests with the Assistant Director (Strategy and Private Sector) supported by key officers and the directorate's Equality and Diversity group. This includes the preparation, monitoring and review of the Directorate's Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan.
- 3.5 All employees have a responsibility to comply with the requirements of the Council's Equality policy in all dealings with elected members, other employees, job applicants, residents, service users and other members of the public, and with other organisations. Training and development needs of employees in the directorate are identified in annual performance review and development discussions with their line managers.

4. Key Issues and Targets

- 4.1 As noted, the Council's Equality Scheme is currently being revised and will be in place for the 2012/13 municipal year. This contains a number of key equality issues for the council over the three years and key equality objectives.
- 4.2 The 2011 annual review of equality identified priorities for the next twelve months, pending the publishing of the revised equality scheme for the council, namely:
- publishing equality information and objectives in line with the specific duties in the Act
 - developing a new equality strategy in line with the Act and recognising a reduction in resources
 - implementing improvements in equality impact assessments
 - continuing the roll out of e-learning on equality, and
 - the recruitment and retention of disabled employees.
- 4.3 A full report on these priorities will be included in the annual review of equality. However, to provide a brief summary of progress to date: equality information has been published through the council's web pages; a new

equality scheme containing objectives has been drafted for the Cabinet in March 2012; revised guidance for equality impact assessments has been drawn up and implemented for example in support of the budget process.

4.4 Within the draft equality scheme key issues and challenges for the borough have been identified around:

- the needs of an ageing population
- high and rising unemployment levels amongst young people
- child poverty and troubled families
- impact of welfare reforms
- health inequalities
- the impact of the Localism Act and the development of 'our society in Dudley'
- respect and dignity – hate crime, harassment and domestic abuse
- council employment issues – development of leadership and management skills, equality training, implementing the pay and grading structure, tackling underrepresentation in the workforce.

4.5 Arising from the key issues and challenges, a number of equality objectives have been set out in the scheme (approved by Cabinet) and those relevant for the Directorate to contribute towards have actions identified in this plan. The full list is as follows:

- (a) Narrow the gap in educational achievement between underachieving protected groups of children and young people and the borough average (Director of Children's Services)
- (b) Narrow the gap in educational achievement between looked after children and the borough average (Director of Children's Services)
- (c) Develop affordable housing provision such as extra care housing to meet needs of an ageing population (Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services)
- (d) Develop a financial inclusion strategy by March 2013 which identifies initiatives and actions to support protected groups (Director of the Urban Environment)
- (e) Ensure that the actions of the council and its partners in response to the community rights in the Localism Act and in developing our society in Dudley advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations (Chief Executive)
- (f) Improve awareness and reporting of, and responses to, hate crime (Chief Executive)
- (g) Improve awareness of domestic abuse amongst those communities which have low reporting rates with the aim of increasing reporting (Chief Executive)

- (h) Improve the levels of recruitment and retention of disabled employees and other underrepresented groups in the council's workforce (Director of Corporate Resources)
 - (i) Implement the new pay and grading structure within the council from 1 April 2012, addressing equal pay and other issues (Director of Corporate Resources)
 - (j) Improve the equality related knowledge and skills of employees (Director of Corporate Resources)
 - (k) Develop and implement a clear and transparent framework for employees that identifies the development needed for current and future leaders and managers working at all levels (Director of Corporate Resources/Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services)
- 4.6 The Directorate undertook a range of engagement, needs assessment and equality impact assessment work during 2011/12 which feeds into this Action Plan.

5. The Action Plan

- 5.1 The detailed Equality Action Plan for 2012/13 is set out at the attached Appendix.

Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services
March 2012

Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services
 Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2012/13

Appendix

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
Priority 1 : Enabling and embedding personalised, community based support			
Giving people real choice and control	Target engagement in learning for adults with poor literacy language, numeracy and digital skills (KM).	March 2013 and termly monitoring	Increase %of adult learners 19+ achieving learning outcomes and qualifications in literacy, language, numeracy learning Increase % of learners in Family Learning who are better able to support their children’s learning.
	Ensure that the Dudley Making it Real programme embeds personalised support to diverse communities. (BC)	March 2013	Engagement of local communities’ partners and stakeholders in the co-design, delivery and review of local support. An increase in personalised and community based support.

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	Ensure that the Dudley Making it Real programme embeds personalised support to diverse communities. (MV/BC)	Throughout 2012/13	Enhancing quality of life for people with care and support needs.
	Development of Adult Social Care Strategy (MV)	Throughout 2012/13	Monitorable emphasis on prevention and early intervention, ensuring people have a positive experience.
	Through the Learning Disabilities review ensure services for people with learning disabilities are of the highest quality and meet diverse needs.(MV)	Throughout 2012/13	Support that enables people to experience a positive experience of care and support. Support that enables people to regain their independence
Priority 2 : Developing sustainable and high quality services which deliver value for money for local people			
Vibrant and diverse markets	To include actions from EIAs carried out throughout 2011/12 into divisional/team plans for 2012/13 and ensure all service improvements identified are embedded. (ALL)	April 2012	More informed, targeted and improved service planning and delivery

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	To ensure staff complete the corporate e-learning programme on equality.(BC)	March 2012	Awareness of equality raised across the workforce
	Quality Strategy to support the Directorate with a Quality Assurance framework. (BC)	March 2013	To develop a quality assurance framework and embed an approach to quality which has equality at its core.
	To develop a Financial Inclusion Strategy (DC)	March 2013	Strategy produced and agreed to ensure protected characteristic groups are supported
	As part of the capital programme review, give consideration to increasing resources for aids and adaptations provision (DC)	March 2013	Increased resources for public sector adaptations
	To build on and ensure accuracy of customer profile information. (DC)	March 2013	Enhanced service delivery and planning to meet future needs.
	To set up a computerised management system for retention of traveller site applications to enable monitoring.(RS)	March 2013	Computerised management system set up to monitor applications

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	New emerging traveller households to be made aware of application process and encouraged to submit applications to reflect true extent of demand for plots (RS)	March 2013	Scale and demand for plots identified to inform service development
	To expand equality strand information on the traveller site application form and computerised case management system to reflect all protected characteristic groups (RS)	March 2013	Expanded equality strand information collected to ensure compliance with PSED and the needs of all groups
Priority 3 : Involve and engage with people in a meaningful and timely way			
Excellence in customer care Effective information and advice to help people make informed choices Person centred services	Expanding our engagement to increase involvement ensuring that the opinions of local people have an impact on service delivery. (BC)	March 2013	Encourage more effective engagement leading to greater involvement in decision-making on service development.
	To enhance the use of a standardised questionnaire to ensure the needs of service users in relation to adult safeguarding are met (BC)	March 2013	To improve the adult safeguarding process

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	To empower stakeholders to be able to scrutinise, influence and change our service to meet their needs (DC)	March 2013	Clear evidence trail to demonstrate stakeholder involvement in service design and delivery
	To arrange an annual BME corporate consultation event. (RS)	Sept 2012	Clear evidence trail to ensure feedback influences wide range of policy considerations. Feedback built into planning for future events.
	To arrange a series of community consultation surgeries and community visits to BME groups (RS)	Throughout 2012-13	Clear evidence trail to ensure surgeries and visits feed into the service development process

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	Provide access to and provision of information and advice to strengthen individuals in their local communities. (KM)		Increase in: Number of library activities and numbers attending; Number of library engagement activities and numbers engaged Number of adult learners 19+ engaged in informal learning / engagement activities Number of adult learners receiving discreet IAG support.

Priority 4 : Strengthening and improving communities to provide choice and opportunity

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
<p>Improved health and well-being Promoting independence To have a competent and confidant workforce</p>	<p>Target learning engagement for employability with priority groups and in priority neighbourhoods to support the reduction of worklessness agenda. (KM)</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Increase in : % adult learners 19+ who say their health & well being has improved as a result of learning % adult learners 19+ who have gained in confidence % adult learners 19+ who have improved their skills and knowledge Number adult learners 19+ who have gained employment</p>
	<p>Commission an effective local healthwatch organisation for Dudley to promote even better outcomes in health and in social care; and provide information advice and guidance to support people access and make choices about services. (BC)</p>	<p>Stakeholder event planned May/June. Additional consultation to be agreed.</p>	<p>Develop a stronger and more representative voice for patients, public and users of services to enhance health and well-being outcomes for all communities.</p>

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
	To respond to the implementation of Welfare Reform through training of staff and review of resources and systems (DC)	Sept 2013	Staff trained to improve service delivery
	To develop a fuel poverty strategy (DC)	March 2013	Fuel Poverty strategy developed and integrated with financial inclusion strategy and welfare reforms
	To redesign the ASB service provision in line with the consultation outcomes (DC)	March 2013	Redesigned service to respond to service needs
	To respond to the Localism Act changes to the RTB legislation (DC)	March 2013	To ensure local policies are properly aligned to emerging legislation
	To review housing allocations/transfer in the light of legislation and the need to make best use of stock (DC)	March 2013	Review conducted and agreed
	To continue to attend the Regional UKBA Contract Delivery Group.(RS)	March 2013	To ensure national asylum seeker issues continue to be recognised at a local policy development level

EIA Programme 2012/13 by Division

Adult Social Care	Adult Care Strategy Learning Disability Review New Bradley Hall Consultation
Housing Services	Customer Access Strategy Impact of Welfare Reforms Craft Staff Pay Agreement Impact of Local Lettings Plans Tenancy Sustainment for Young People
Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning	Black Country Libraries Project Volunteers in Adult Community Learning
Strategic and Private Sector Housing	Strategic Policy on Tenancies Borough's Housing Strategy 2012-2015 Homelessness Strategy Refresh 2012 Green Deal / Retrofit approach
Quality and Commissioning	Redesign of DACHS internal Transport service Impact of changes in learning and development HWIT (HIMMT) Joint Workforce Strategy Health Watch Quality Strategy

Glossary

HWIT	Health and Wellbeing Improvement Team
HIMMT	Health Improvement and Modernisation team
E&D	Equality and Diversity
RTB	Right To Buy
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty

Lead Officers for actions

BC – Brendan Clifford, DC – Diane Channings, KM – Kate Millin, MV – Maggie Venables , RS – Ron Sims