



**DIRECTORATE  
OF  
LAW, PROPERTY  
&  
HUMAN RESOURCES**

**EQUALITY & DIVERSITY  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2008/2009**

**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
DIRECTORATE OF LAW, PROPERTY & HUMAN RESOURCES**

Draft – Version 1

## **Introduction**

1. All directorates of the Council produce an annual equality and diversity action plan to develop their work in implementing the Council's equality and diversity policy in relation to their service areas and employment practices. All directorates also produce an annual report on the implementation of their action plan. This is prepared after the end of March so that it can report on a full twelve months progress on action plan targets. The Directorate of Law & Property's equality and diversity draft action plan for 2009/10 was considered by the Select Committee on Community Safety & Community Services on 12th March 2009 and a copy is attached as Appendix 1.
2. This Annual Report sets out the Directorate of Law & Property's activities through 2008/09 in support of the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy. It covers both employment and service delivery issues and summarises progress against Corporate & Directorate equality & diversity objectives.

## **Key Facts**

3. The Directorate of Law & Property produces an annual Strategic Plan which sets out its priorities, objectives and targets for the year and encompasses its equality and diversity action plan. The mission statement for the Directorate is:  
"To support delivery of the Community Plan and Council Plan by providing effective, efficient and innovative services, which meet the agreed current and future, needs of our customers."

## **Structure**

4. The Directorate has been newly formed from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, as part of the Councils remodelling. It has been formed by transferring Personnel & the Corporate Health & Safety team into Law & Property. This report covers the work of the directorate prior to this remodelling.

The Directorate now has 3 divisions:-

- Corporate Property
- HR & Citizenship
- Legal & Democratic Services

## **CORPORATE PROPERTY (CP)**

- Commercial Portfolio (Dudley Open Market & Crown Shopping Centre)
- Property Management & Valuations
- Strategic Asset Management
- Architects
- Building Surveyors
- Business & Support Services
- Planning Supervision
- Security
- Quantity Surveyors
- Engineering (Structural, Electrical & Mechanical)
- Corporate Health & Safety

## **HR & CITIZENSHIP (HRC)**

- Coroner
- Divisional Support Services
- Registration & Citizenship
- Human Resources – Supporting DACHS, Children’s Services, DUE, Chief Executives, Law, Property & Human Resources, Finance & ICT.
- Occupational Health Nurses
- Central Learning & Development
- Training & Development – Supporting DACHS

## **LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES (LDS)**

- Administrative Support
- Community Safety & Child Protection
- Conveyancing
- Debt Recovery
- Democratic Services
- Corporate & Litigation Legal Services
- Licensing
- Local Land Charges

As a Directorate it is important to us that our services improve and that this is confirmed by regular accreditation from independent external assessors e.g.: Investors in People UK, the Cabinet Office (Customer Service Excellence), LEXCEL and ISO. We expect such external reviews in conjunction with benchmarking exercises, to confirm that we have low cost and high performing services.

A key issue is supporting the Corporate Grading & Pay Review.

A key pressure on us is to ensure that spending is managed within approved budget levels. The following internal and external drivers will impact on the Directorate in 2009/10:

- Preparing for the Comprehensive Area Assessment
- Preparing for the Use of Resources Assessment where Key Lines of Enquiry examine approaches to Property and Human Resources.
- Transformation agenda to improve service delivery, achieve value for money, reduce costs and achieve efficiencies.

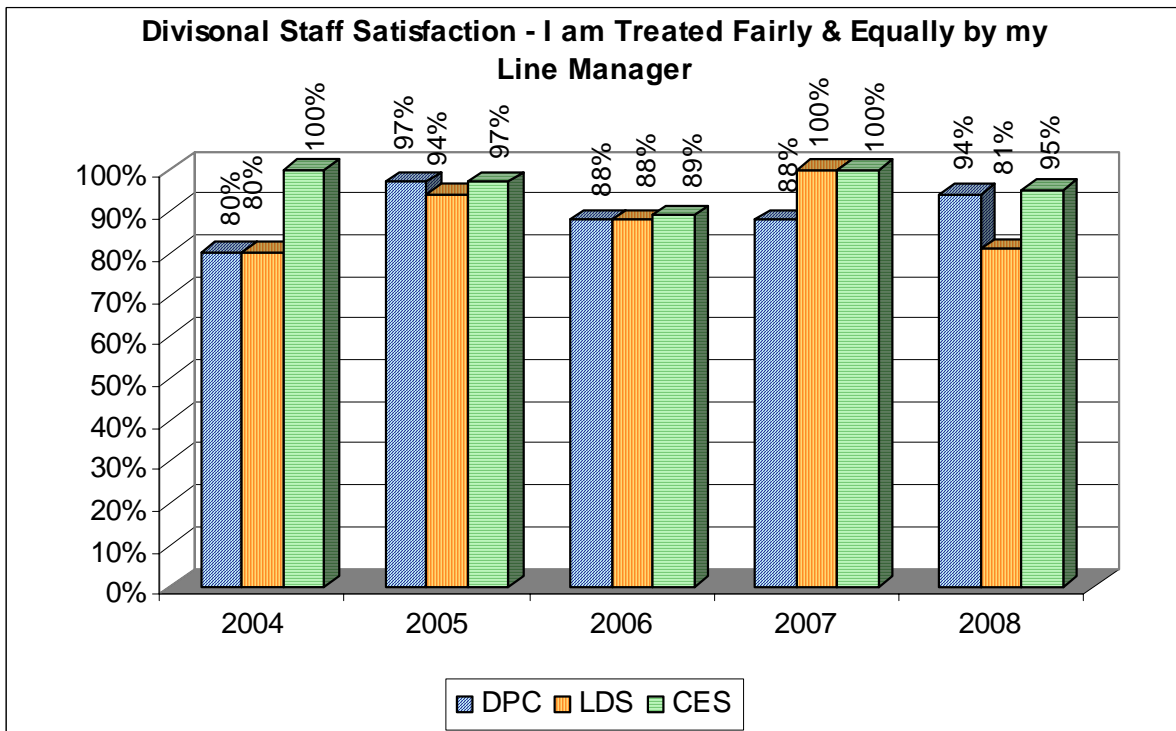
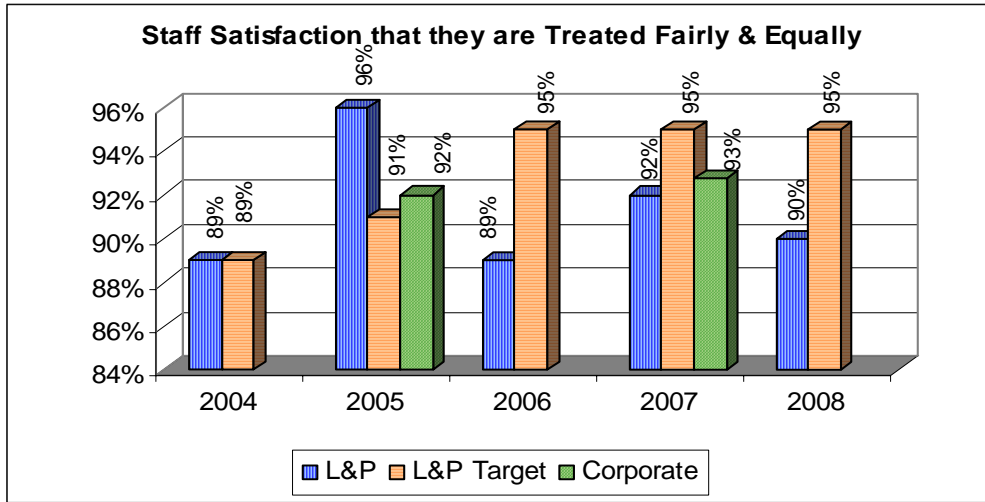
## Employment

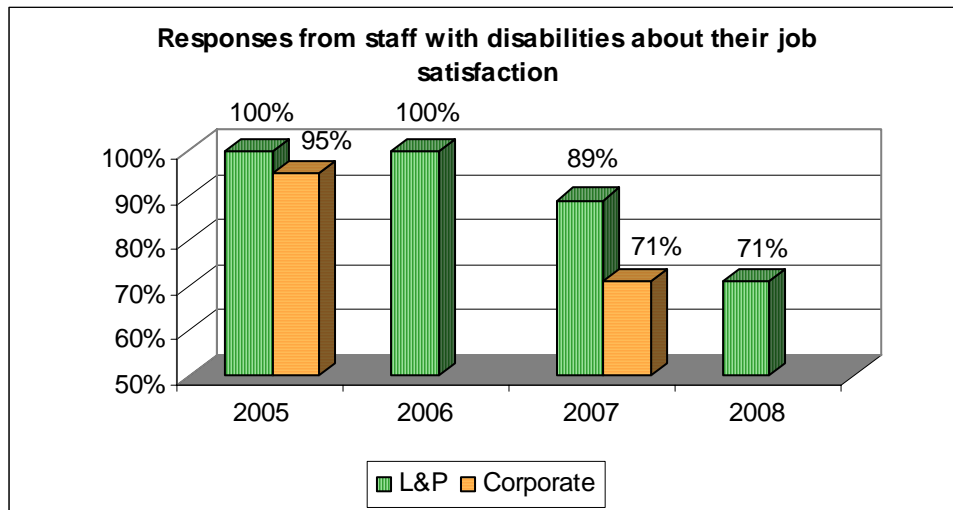
5. The Council's Equality and Diversity policy states that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on any grounds, which cannot be shown to be justified. This applies to recruitment and selection, training, promotion, transfers, pay and employee benefits, employee grievances and discipline procedures and all the terms and conditions of employment. Actions we take in the Directorate to contribute to this aim include:

- The workforce is monitored quarterly by grade, gender, race, ethnic origin and age and the results reported to the Directorate's Management Team.
- Flexible working arrangements are in operation e.g. part time, job share, home working and flexible hours.
- Contact is maintained with staff on long-term leave e.g. illness, maternity.
- Requests by disabled staff for support at work are dealt with on an individual basis and appropriate reasonable adjustments made.
- Staff who leave the organisation are surveyed with regard to their reasons for leaving and the results reported to DMT quarterly.
- Leavers are offered the opportunity to discuss any aspect of their employment and in 08/09 no one took this up.
- Questions are asked on the leavers monitoring form about discrimination/harassment & access/mobility problems. No adverse comments were made relating to these aspects of employment.
- Staff satisfaction surveys are undertaken annually and staff views and requests acted upon. (See graphs that follow)

## STAFF SATISFACTION RESULTS

Directorate staff satisfaction surveys are undertaken annually and staff views and requests acted upon. (See graphs below)





6. The analysis of leavers in 2008/09 compared with the Directorate profile at the end of March 2009 is shown in the table below. **The figures in brackets are the 2007/08 figures as a comparison.**

	<b>No. of Leavers</b>	<b>% of Leavers</b>	<b>L&amp;P Workforce profile (%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Mar 09</b>
Black African	1 (0)	8 (0)	0 (0)
Indian	1 (1)	8 (8)	3 (3)
White British	10 (11)	84 (92)	89 (89)
Male	6 (5)	50 (36)	45 (46)
Female	6 (7)	50 (64)	55 (54)
Disabled	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (3)
Not Disabled	12 (12)	100 (100)	96 (97)

Reasons given for leaving were – voluntary resignation and retirement.

7. Full data about employment across the Council, including that which meets the requirement for employment monitoring by racial group under race relations legislation, will be published in the Corporate Annual Review of Equality & Diversity 2009 which will be prepared for the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education and the Cabinet in September 2009.

## 8. Recruitment and Selection

- Job advertisements include positive action statements to encourage disadvantaged groups to apply.
- We aim to have mixed sex interview panels and anyone involved in recruitment is trained in recruitment and selection skills in accordance with Council policy.
- Staff recruitment is monitored to gauge the range of applicants (by gender, ethnic origin, disability, age and grade) and their success in reaching the different stages of the recruitment process.
- A questionnaire is sent out with the application forms, anyone who decides not to proceed with their application is asked to complete the questionnaire and send it back, the comments we received from this were as follows:
  - 1 x Job too demanding
  - 1 x Application form received too late – In response to this comment, the answering machine message was amended to advise applicants of alternative methods of applying for the post if the closing date was drawing near.

The interview process is monitored by surveys after interviews to control the quality of the process. All comments that have been received have been positive.

At the end of March 2009, the directorate had recruited 8 employees in 2008/09 of which 50% were female, 12% were disabled and 13% were from a BME Background. The summary analysis of appointments within Law & Property compared to that for the Council is set out in the table below:

	Directorate L&P				Council	
	No. Applicants	%	No. Recruited	%	% Applicants	% Recruited
Female	91 (105)	62 (75)	4 (11)	50 (61)	48 (77)	68 (82)
Ethnic Minority	16 (45)	12 (32)	1 (4)	13 (22)	13 (16)	8 (9)
Disabled	2 (4)	1 (3)	1 (1)	12 (6)	3 (3)	4 (2)

**(The figures in brackets are for March 2008 to enable comparison)**

## 9. Workforce Information

The Directorate's workforce profile at the end of March 2009 compared with that for the Council is set out in the table and graphs below:

**Table 1 (a)**  
**Directorate workforce profile 31 March 2009**

	Directorate L&P	
	No. 211 (224)	%
Female	115 (120)	54 (54)
Ethnic Minority	20 (22)	10 (10)
Disabled	8 (8)	4 (2.3)

**Table 1(b).**  
**Dudley MBC workforce profile 31 March 2009 (compared with previous two years)**

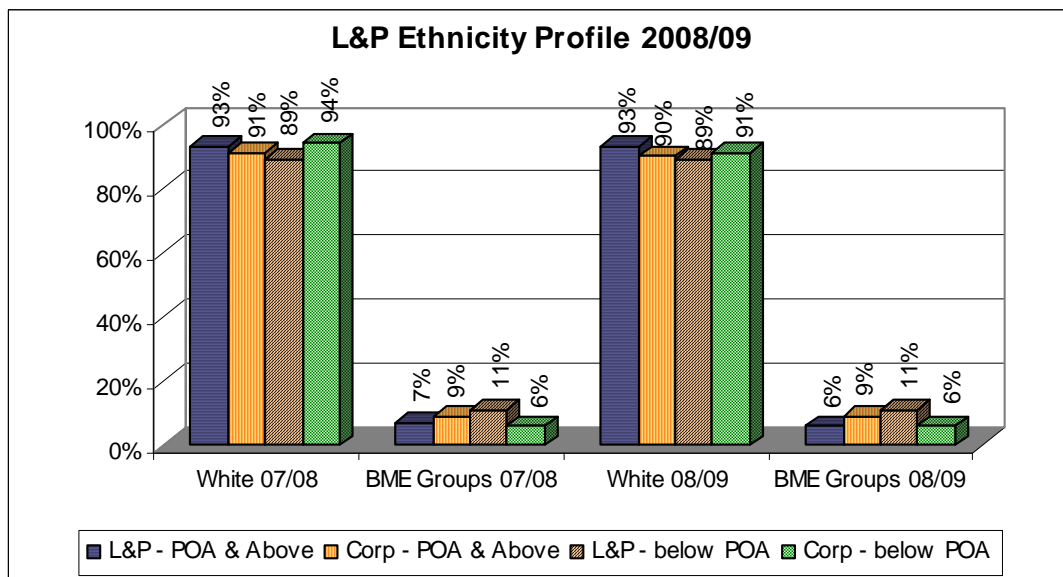
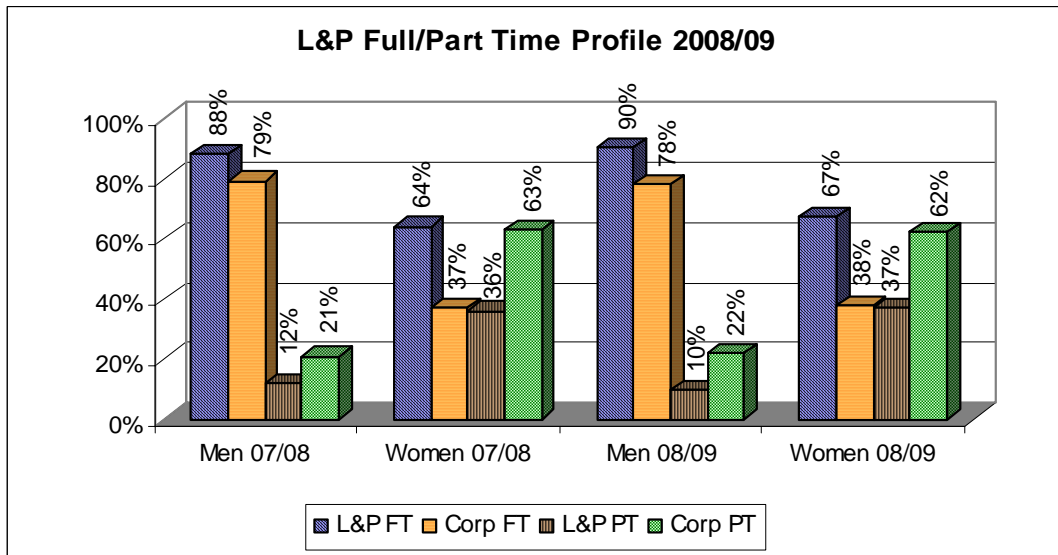
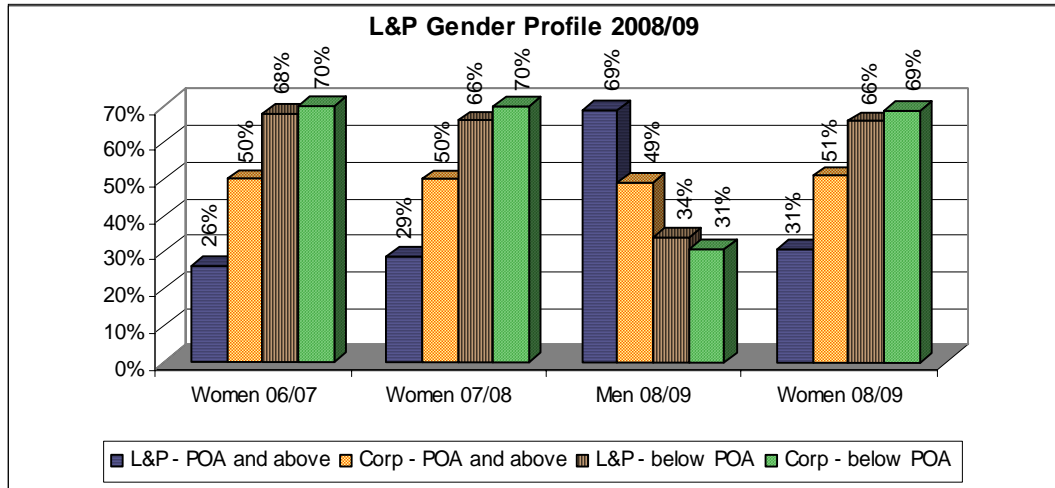
<u>Dudley MBC</u>		Female (%)	Male (%)	BME* (%)	Disabled (%)
<b>Scale point 34 and above (higher grades) (excluding schools)#</b>	<b>31/03/09</b>	<b>51.1</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>4.5</b>
	31/03/08	50.3	49.7	9.1	4.6
	31/03/07	49.6	50.4	8.9	4.3
<b>Below scale point 34 (lower grades) (excluding schools)#</b>	<b>31/03/09</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>
	31/03/08	69.5	30.5	6.2	2.6
	31/03/07	69.7	30.3	5.9	2.2
<b>Total (excluding schools)</b>	<b>31/03/09</b>	<b>66.5</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>2.9</b>
	31/03/08	66.6	33.4	6.6	2.9
	31/03/07	66.9	33.1	6.4	2.5
<b>Total (including schools)</b>	<b>31/03/09</b>	<b>75.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>1.8</b>
	31/03/08	74.9	25.1	5.5	2.0
	31/03/07	74.8	25.2	5.1	1.7

Notes: Scale point 34 on 31 March 2009 equates to a salary of £28,500 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





## **10. Complaints of Discrimination or Harassment**

There have been no complaints of discrimination or harassment within the Directorate, from either employees or interviewees for vacant posts.

## **11. Training and Development**

- The Directorate has held Investors in People accreditation since 1997 and aims to maintain the award when it reappplies every 3 years. We were re-assessed in September 2006 and received a positive report. We will apply for the new Directorate in 2009.
- All staff are expected to receive an annual Performance Review and Development interview called a Two Way Assessment where they discuss with their line manager their work performance, training and development needs and agree an action plan for the next 12 months. There is also a mid year review. This did not happen in all areas in 2008/2009 and is an area for improvement in 2009/2010.
- Staff are trained and developed in appropriate skills to help them do their jobs.
- Staff receive training in equality issues, e.g. disability and racism awareness, as appropriate to their role.
- Training and development activity is monitored by gender, ethnic origin and disability.

## **12. Service Delivery**

The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy states that services to all sections of the community will be appropriate, accessible and effective and will avoid discrimination and prejudice. Direct services to the public are mainly provided by Licensing and Registrars.

## **13. External Accreditation for Customer Services**

Prior to the remodelling of the directorate, Corporate Estate Services and Licensing were credited with the Customer Services Excellence Award which replaced the Charter Mark accreditation. This is an independently awarded accreditation only achieved by providing evidence and a rigorous site visit.

**14. Equality Impact and Needs Assessment**

- Reviews of services and policies and impact assessments or proposed policies are undertaken as required, in accordance with guidance published by the Council.
- In 2008/09, Equality Impact Assessments have been completed for Democratic Services Dudley Open Market and Registration & Citizenship services

**15. Communication and Information**

- Information for service users can be provided on request in a variety of formats, including community languages, large print, Braille and cassette tape.
- A few staff can provide basic interpreting in a number of community languages and British Sign Language; for more complex issues and written translations, use is made of the Council's Access Project.

**16. Customer Consultation and Service Monitoring**

- Consultation is carried out through a variety of Customer Focus/Liaison Groups (which represent service users from different areas of the community) feedback forms and surveys.
- Results of consultations are monitored to ensure that all sections of the community are receiving fair access and outcomes from the public services we provide.
- Complaints are dealt with in accordance with the Council's Customer Feedback Procedure.
- Consultations with the public/customers are used to shape policy, which affects our customers eg: for Licensing and market trader allocations.

## **External Customer Satisfaction**

### **17. Legal & Democratic Services**

Licensing consultation during 2008 was focused on several areas of work and was conducted with several different client groups.

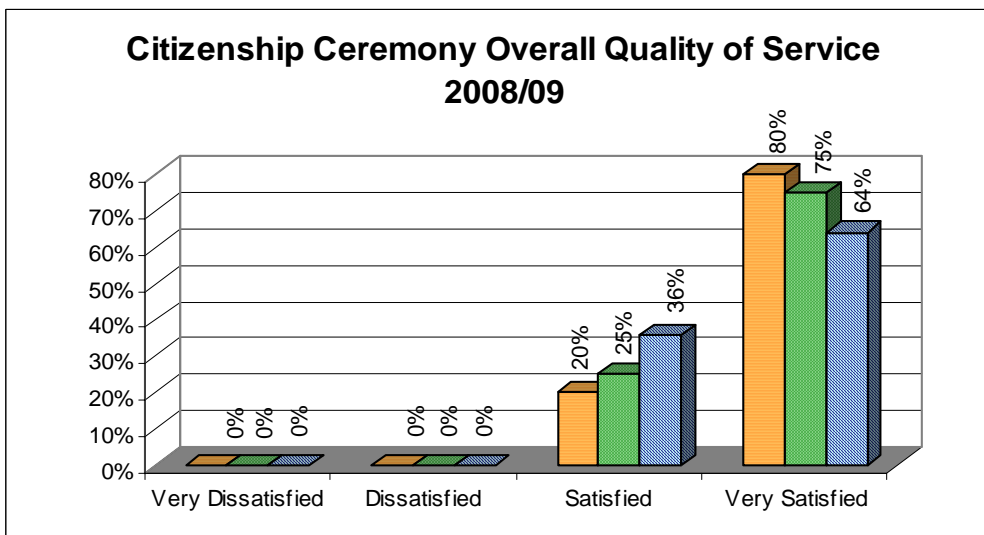
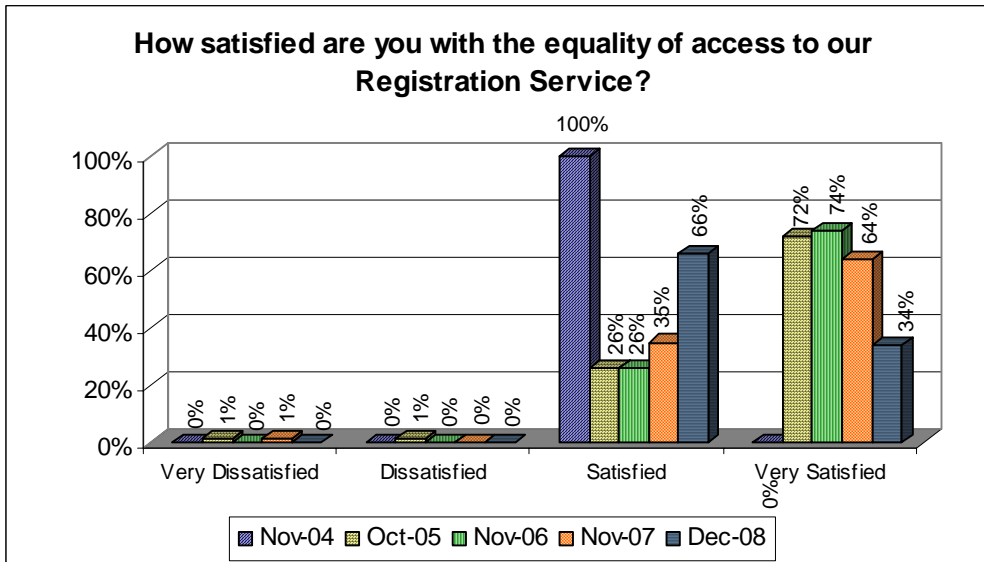
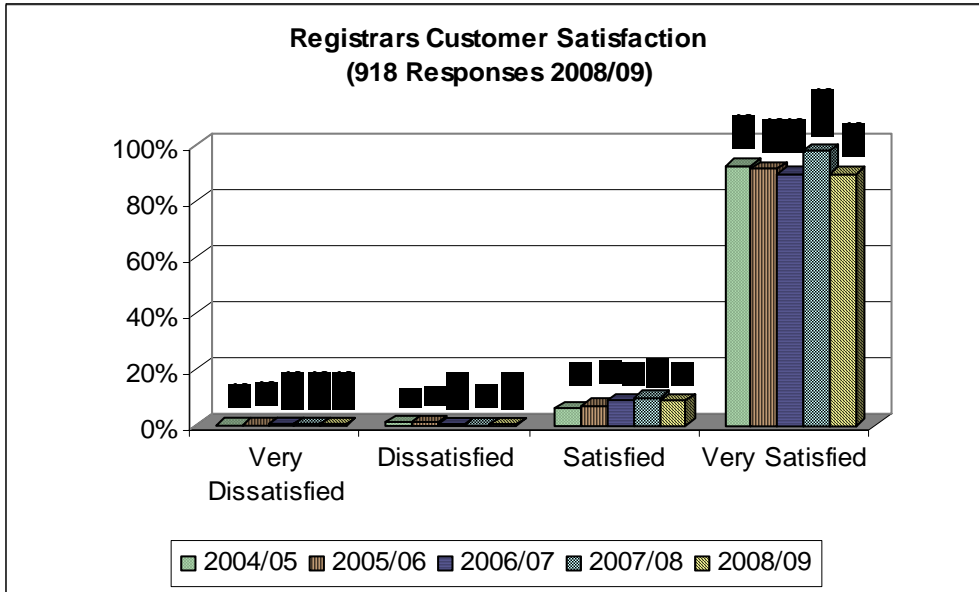
The general public were surveyed in relation to the impact of the changes to the Licensing Act and their satisfaction with the Boroughs taxi and private hire drivers. It was most pleasing to note that 91% of those surveyed rated the service provided by Dudley MBC licensed private hire vehicles and hackney carriages as satisfactory/very satisfactory.

Consultation was also carried out with a group of lady taxi drivers from ethnic minority groups. The consultation was carried out by way of a Focus Group on the advice of the Dudley Centre of Equality and Diversity.

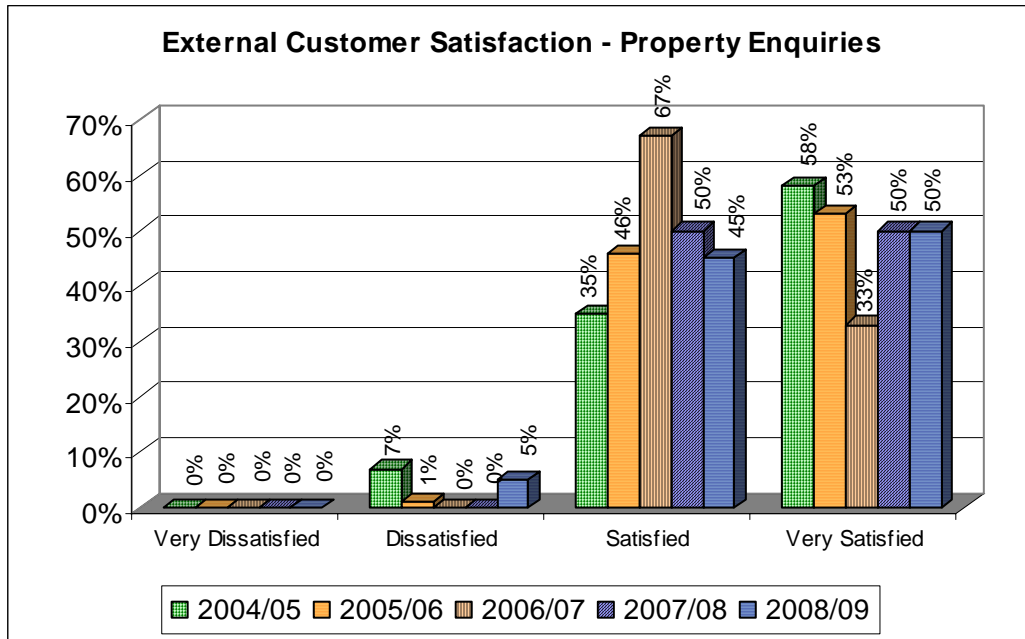
The ladies felt that all members of staff treat them with respect and sensitivity, their opinions are valued, they are praised for their efforts, in showing initiative and they gained good experience and knowledge through undertaking the Disability Awareness for drivers Course.

The ladies also requested that they could wait in another room from other drivers when attending the Licensing Office and that more language support be given to them when attending courses and meetings as some technical areas are not always understood. These requests have been implemented wherever possible.

## 18. HR & Citizenship



## 19. Corporate Property



### 19. Achievements against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/09

The achievements against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/09 are set out in the following table.

**Directorate of Law & Property – Progress Report on the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/2009**

<b>Objective (and lead officer)</b>	<b><u>Detailed action/target</u></b>	<b><u>Target Date/ milestones</u></b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>	<b>Progress/final outcome</b>
<b>Priority 1. Quality Service Matters – Consult With &amp; Market Our Services To Customers</b>				
<p>1.1 Consultative Group of female Ethnic Minority Taxi/Private Hire Drivers to ensure that their cultural needs are met.</p>	<p>Legal &amp; Democratic Services Licensing – Philip Tart</p>	<p>May 08 – July 08</p>	<p>% of female driver satisfaction with service provision</p>	<p>The group were very satisfied with the courtesy of all licensing staff ,and felt that they had gained knowledge and experience through the Disability Drivers Awareness course</p> <p>There were two major outcomes from the consultation a) Licensing staff ensure that lady taxi drivers are offered a seat in the reception hall when attending the Licensing Office. and b) Translation of documents or help is offered to all lady taxi drivers from the ethnic minorities when attending meetings or courses.</p>
<b>Priority 2. Quality Service Matters – Widening Our Appeal As An Employer</b>				
<p>2.1 Promotion of careers in construction related services to women and ethnic minorities through job fairs, school promotional events and work placements.</p>	<p>DPC Brian Gordon</p>	<p>April 06 – December 09</p>	<p>Work placements offered to Dudley or other school children</p>	<p>15 work placements offered and undertaken to date. Two students have followed up by stating that they wish to pursue a career in the Construction Industry. Great credit due to staff in Dudley for facilitating this undertaking.</p>

<p>2.2 To target ethnic and female groups when advertising professional construction related posts.</p>	<p>DPC Brian Gordon</p>	<p>April 06 – December 09</p>	<p>Attendance at promotional events to give information on careers in construction related services.</p>	<p>As experienced within construction nationally. This has been a difficult objective to influence. However we have succeeded in providing detailed information for schools regarding careers as well as attending careers events.</p>
<p>2.3 Work with Corporate Employees with Disabilities Group to identify any improvements to our recruitment process that could increase applications from people with disabilities.</p>	<p>DPC Brian Gordon</p>	<p>April 08 – December 09</p>	<p>Consult with Directorate representatives when considering advertising of posts.</p>	<p>Directorate representatives were very happy with how the recruitment process functioned and raised no specific items of concerns or suggestions for improvement.</p>
<p>2.4 Through our application surveys, review with people who apply for packages for vacant posts in the Directorate who then don't apply for the post to see what deterred them.</p>	<p>DPC Brian Gordon</p>	<p>April 07 – December 09</p>	<p>Elicit from enquirers reasons why they didn't apply. Use information to improve job attractiveness to specific groups.</p>	<p>This exercise proved unfruitful with regard to useful information primarily due to enquirers' reluctance to engage as well as too few posts to advertise</p>



<p>2.5 Through our application surveys, review take-up of unpaid work experience placements for those applicants who were unsuccessful and are unemployed.</p>	<p>DPC Brian Gordon</p>	<p>April 07 – December 09</p>	<p>Satisfaction of unsuccessful applicants offered unpaid work experience</p>	<p>There was no take up of work placements for this period.</p>
<p><b>Priority 3 – Quality Service Matters – Ensure All Staff Are Treated Fairly &amp; Equally</b></p>				
<p>3.1 Briefing of all Senior Managers within the Directorate regarding relevant employment legislation relating to Equality and Diversity and its impact on employees.</p>	<p>Corporate Personnel Margot Worton</p>	<p>March 09</p>	<p>100% of Managers receive relevant guidance on legislation relating to Equality &amp; Diversity and its impact on employees.</p>	<p>Any changes to legislation are updated through DMT with any further briefings that may be required identified and completed.</p>
<p>3.2 Review need for update/refresher briefing.</p>	<p>Central Personnel Margot Worton</p>	<p>March 09</p>	<p>Briefings provided if required.</p>	<p>Ongoing as above.</p>

<b>Priority 4. Quality Service Matters – Develop Clearer Targets &amp; Outcomes</b>				
<p>4.1 Undertake and improve the approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)</p>	<p>Undertake EIAs of the following services during 2008/09</p> <p>Dudley Open Market (Julie Jones)</p> <p>Democratic Services (Steve Griffiths)</p> <p>Registration &amp; Celebratory Services (Jayne Catley)</p>	<p>Complete by March 09</p>	<p>EIAs completed within timescales</p> <p>Improvement actions identified</p>	<p>All EIA's completed.</p>
<b>Priority 5. Implement The Council's People Management Strategy</b>				
<p>5.1 Continue to implement the remaining elements of the People Management Strategy 2006 – 08 relevant to promoting equality,</p>	<p>Corporate Personnel Margot Worton</p>	<p>April 08 – March 09</p>	<p>Deliver our contribution to Corporate targets.</p>	<p>The People Management Strategy is being updated and new elements will be implemented in line with published timescales and PI's.</p>

**Directorate of Law & Property – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/10**

<b>Objective</b>	<b><u>Detailed action/target (and lead officer)</u></b>	<b><u>Target Date/ milestones</u></b>	<b>Planned outcome/performance indicator</b>
<b>Priority 1. Quality Service Matters – Ensure High Levels Of Customer Satisfaction</b>			
<p>1.1 Introduce, (in partnership with Dudley College), the Road Passenger Vehicle Driving NVQ level 2 qualification. In order to increase the skills and qualifications of private hire and hackney carriage drivers and improve the service they provide to their customers.</p>	<p>Following pilot course at Dudley College (Brierley Hill Campus) which commenced Jan/Feb 2009 Review and evaluate course with partner agency and the private hire hackney carriage trade.</p> <p>Legal &amp; Democratic Services Licensing – Janet Elliot</p>	<p>Review and evaluate course April 2009.</p> <p>Give consideration to making it a condition of licence that all private hire and hackney carriage drivers undertake the course</p> <p>June 2009.</p>	<p>Private hire and hackney carriage drivers, 96% of whom are from ethnic minority groups, gain the NVQ qualification .The customer service levels received by the users of private hire cars and hackney carriages is improved.</p> <p>Following significant numbers of drivers completing the course a consultation exercise will be undertaken with the travelling public.</p>

**Priority 2. Quality Service Matters – Widening Our Appeal as an Employer**

<p>2.1 Continued promotion of careers in professional construction related services to women and ethnic minorities through close liaison with schools careers advisors, school careers events and work placements within Corporate Property.</p>	<p>Corporate Property To give work placements as wide an experience as possible to all professional disciplines within Corporate Property.  Lead Officer: Andy James</p>	<p>April 2009 – March 2010</p>	<p>Number of placements undertaken by Dudley or other school children or students during the year.</p>
<p>2.2 To improve staff and public access to public buildings with regards to the relevant element of the Audit Commissions value for money review of how the Council is “Supporting People with Disabilities”.</p>	<p>A review of the Council’s performance monitoring arrangements following benchmarking and best practice with other local authorities and top performing councils.  Lead Officer: Paul Bickerdike</p>	<p>May 2009</p>	<p>Improved access for staff and members of the public in line with best practice.</p>

**Priority 3. Improve equality and diversity competencies of employees**

<p>3.1 Implement new approaches to training to reach more employees</p>	<p>Review approach to Equality &amp; Diversity as a competency. Implement E-diversity training for employees. (ES1.16)  Lead Officer: Sarah Treneer</p>	<p>March 2010</p>	<p>Increase in employees receiving training.</p>
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**Priority 4. Quality Service Matters – Develop Clearer Targets & Outcomes**

<p>4.1 Undertake and improve the approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)</p>	<p>Undertake EIA's of the following services during 2009/10 (ES1.3)</p> <p>Citizenship &amp; Registration Jayne Catley</p> <p>Licensing Janet Elliot</p> <p>Training &amp; Development Phil Cutler/Sarah Treneer</p>	<p>May 2009</p> <p>May 2010</p> <p>May 2010</p>	<p>EIA's completed within timescales Improvement actions identified</p>
<p>4.2 Review the actions identified in completed Equality Impact Assessments.</p>	<p>Julie Jones - Dudley Open Market Steve Griffiths – Democratic Services</p>	<p>May 2010</p>	<p>Have the actions identified made a difference to delivery of the service (measured by customer feedback).</p>
<p>4.3 Improve equality and diversity policy development and performance management.</p>	<p>Trial combined central Directorates Equality Group (Law &amp; Property, Finance, ICT and Procurement and Chief Executives Directorates)</p> <p>Lead Officer: Caroline Glover</p>	<p>From April 2009</p>	<p>Improved co-ordination, sharing good practice and performance management and challenge for each others Equality Impact Assessments.</p>

**Priority 5. Develop and start to Implement An HR Strategy for the Council**

5.1 Develop and implement HR strategy for the Council which includes equality impact assessments, on updated and new HR policies.	Develop draft strategy for Cabinet approval.  Lead Officer: Teresa Reilly	HR Strategy to be approved by end of September 2009	Improved Council approach to HR.
5.2 Implement equality related elements of strategy.	Complete review of EIA of recruitment policy. Outstanding objective from Chief Executives.  Lead Officer: Sharon Hartill.	November 2009	Improved approach to recruitment.