

Select Committee on the Environment – 4th March 2010

Report of the Interim Director of Finance

Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2010/11

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the annual equality and diversity action plan for 2010/11 for the Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement.

Background

2. The production of an annual equality and diversity action plan by each directorate is an important commitment in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. The action plan sets out details of how a directorate will promote equality in relation to its areas of responsibility during the coming year and responds to the three year framework established by the Council's Equality Scheme 2007-10.
3. 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 chairmen have agreed that scrutiny of individual directorates' action plans be split up amongst the five committees. The Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement reports to the Select Committee on the Environment.
4. The Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement's equality and diversity action plan for 2010/11 is attached and covers:
 - its relationship with other plans
 - the directorate's vision and values
 - key issues and targets in drawing up the plan, and
 - the detailed action plan.
5. An annual report setting out achievements against the directorate's action plan for 2009/10 will be completed at the end of year.

6. The action plan should be read in the context of planned changes to the structure of the Council. Following the appointment of the Director of Corporate Resources, a new directorate is to be established, bringing together the Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement and the Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources. Consultation and planning will take place during the first half of 2010/11, and the Director of Corporate Resources will report to Cabinet in the autumn with a view to establishing the detail of the emerging directorate, including what services it will provide.
7. The draft action plan has been considered by the directorate management team. Following scrutiny it 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 wide range of relevant equality legislation includes:
 - The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which places 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.
 - 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 introduced a duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
 - The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. A duty on public authorities to promote gender equality under the Equality Act 2006 came into force in April 2007.
 - Other legislation is in place relating to discrimination on the basis of age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
10. 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

11. The plan sets out proposed actions by the Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement for promoting equality and diversity during 2010/11. Many of the actions included in the plan derive from equality impact assessments (EIAs) that have been carried out on the services or policies of the directorate or cover EIAs due to be undertaken in 2010/11. Performance indicators and outcomes are identified against targets so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed.
12. Issues relating to children and young people are covered in detail in the Directorate of Children's Services' annual equality and diversity action plans.

Recommendation

13. That the Select Committee considers and comments on the Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement's equality and diversity action plan for 2010/11.



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List of Background Papers

Guidance for the preparation of directorates' equality and diversity action plans and annual reports (December 2009)