

Meeting of the Cabinet – 9th December 2009

Report of the Interim Director of Law, Property and Human Resources

Review of the Disability Equality Scheme

Purpose of Report

1. To consider a revised disability equality scheme for the Council, a full copy of which is available in the Members' room and electronically on the Council's committee management information system (CMIS).

Background

2. The production of a disability equality scheme is a requirement of specific duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 for all listed public authorities. The scheme must be reviewed every three years. The Council published its first disability equality scheme in December 2006, in accordance with these requirements. The scheme was subsequently incorporated into a wider combined equality scheme with the statutory race and gender equality schemes in April 2007. A non-statutory supplement to this scheme covering age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender was added in June 2009 following approval by the Cabinet.
3. The Equality Bill contains proposals for changing the requirements for producing equality schemes but, should they become law, the earliest the proposals would come into force would be April 2011. The Government Office for Disability Issues has therefore reiterated the need for a new three year disability equality scheme to be produced by public authorities.
4. Progress with implementing the scheme has been reported in the annual reviews of equality and diversity, the latest review having been approved by the Cabinet at its October meeting. Disabled people have been involved in implementing and reviewing the scheme and in identifying actions for the revised scheme. More details are given in the document itself.
5. As with the first disability equality scheme, it is proposed to incorporate this in the wider single equality scheme in 2010, so it will require some further modification to ensure a consistent approach is maintained across all equality areas.

Finance

6. The costs associated with the arrangements set out in the scheme will be met from existing budgets.

Law

7. Specific duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 require public authorities to produce a Disability Equality Scheme every three years.

Equality Impact

8. The scheme details the Council's approach to promoting disability equality and to assessing the impact of its policies and services on disabled people. The annual reviews of equality and diversity report on how this work is progressing.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that Members approve the revised disability equality scheme.



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List of Background Papers: Disability Equality Schemes: the three-yearly review –
Office for Disability Issues