
Information item for members of the Urban Environment Scrutiny Committee – 24th March 2014

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Directorate of Urban Environment's Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider as an information item the annual equality action plan for 2014/2015 for the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Background

2. The production of Directorate Equality Action Plans is an important part of the Council's approach to promoting equality. It aims to ensure that all Directorates maintain a focus on planning work to deliver appropriate services, ensuring employees are treated fairly and in meeting the requirements of equality legislation.
3. Overview and scrutiny of corporate equality issues is included in the terms of reference of the Corporate Performance Management, Efficiency and Effectiveness Scrutiny Committee. However, consideration of individual Directorate action plans is split up amongst the different scrutiny committees, with this Committee responsible for the Directorate of the Urban Environment's plan. Following Scrutiny, it will be approved by the appropriate Cabinet Members and then published on the Council's Equality web pages.
4. The Directorate of the Urban Environment's Action Plan for 2014/2015 is attached and sets out actions relating to different service areas within the Directorate. The Directorate's plan also supports the continuing implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and contributes to achieving the overall Council Equality Objectives, published in 2012 in accordance with the specific Public Sector Equality Duties.
5. An Annual Report setting out progress with the Directorate's Action Plan for 2013/2014 will be completed at the end of the year and circulated to the DUE Scrutiny Committee later in the year.

Finance

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

Law

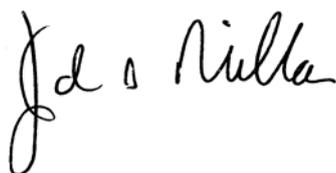
7. The Equality Act 2010 replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The first duties of the Act came into force on 1st October 2010.
8. The general public sector equality duty under the Act came into force on 5th April 2011 requiring public authorities to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, covering the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
9. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 required public authorities to publish equality information by 31st January 2012 (and annually thereafter) and equality objectives by 5th April 2012.

Equality Impact

10. The Equality Action Plan sets out proposed actions for promoting equality in the Directorate of the Urban Environment during 2014/2015. Performance indicators or outcomes are identified against each target so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed.

Recommendation

11. That members of the scrutiny committee consider the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality Action Plan for 2014/15.



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List of Background Papers

Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Directorate of the Urban Environment

Annual Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Equality Action Plan sets out the Directorate of the Urban Environment's objectives for the year 2014/2015 and contributes to implementing the Council's Equality Policy. It includes the Directorate's objectives, as well as addressing equality issues existent due to relevant legislation, and taking into consideration corporate objectives.

1.2 The Action Plan covers the period from April 2014 to March 2015 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 year ahead
- the Action Plan

1.3 The Directorate of the Urban Environment is a large Directorate, carrying out a number of diverse functions, which are:

Culture & Leisure

Sport & Physical Activity
Attractions & Amenities

Planning & Environmental Health

Planning Services
Environmental Health & Trading Standards

Economic Regeneration & Transportation

Economic Development
Traffic & Transportation

Environmental Management

Street & Green Care
Waste Care

Underpinning these functions are the relevant policy and support services, a number of which are included within the Directorate Services Team.

- 1.4 A review of the Directorate's achievements against the objectives detailed in its 2013/2014 Action Plan will be included in the Annual Report produced at the end of the 2013/2014 municipal year.
- 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. As in recent years, these may have some impact on the delivery of the plan during 2014/2015.

2.0 **Relationship with other plans**

- 2.1 The Directorate's Action Plan forms part of the authority's response to how it will deal with equality objectives. The priorities and targets relate and contribute, where relevant, to the Council Plan and the Council's Equality Scheme.
- 2.2 The principles and objectives of the Action Plan are also integrated into the directorate's strategic plan and service plans and will form part of the overall strategic approach for the Directorate of the Urban Environment.
- 2.3 The Council's Equality Scheme sets out the overall approach to advancing equality across the organisation to ensure that progress is made in advancing equality and to ensure that it continues to implement the requirements of the specific public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.4 Council-wide progress in promoting equality is reported each year in the Annual Review of equality, which is submitted to the Corporate Performance Management, Efficiency and Effectiveness Scrutiny Committee (as the scrutiny committee with responsibility for corporate equality issues) and the Cabinet for approval.

3.0 **Visions and Values**

- 3.1 The Directorate is covered by all aspects of the Council's Equality Policy, and will take action to implement the policy both in terms of employment practices and service provision.
- 3.2 All employees of the Directorate have an individual responsibility to comply with the relevant legislation, policies and procedures relating to equality. This responsibility is applied in the Directorate's dealings with members, employees, job applicants, residents, service users, other members of the public and external organisations. Specific responsibilities for ensuring equality in both employment and service provision, rests with the Directorate's Management Team, and all Heads of Service, with the support of Corporate HR and Organisational Development who provide advice to the Directorate. The Directorate

Services Team Manager, a member of the Directorate's Management Team, has the responsibility for co-ordinating this work across the Directorate.

3.3 In attempting to ensure that equality is mainstreamed into service provision, employees of the Directorate undertake relevant training and development in these areas. Training and development needs of employees in the Directorate are identified in annual performance review and development discussions with their line managers. Current and future training for employees of the Directorate will be through a corporate e-learning training package and stand-up group training sessions, which employees in the Directorate are encouraged to undertake during 2014.

4.0 **Key issues and targets for 2014/2015**

4.1 The Council's overall commitment to Equality is set out in the Equality Policy, and the Equality Scheme details the Council's Action Plan for promoting equality objectives.

4.2 The Directorate's priorities in formulating its 2014/2015 Action Plan are based around the following key issues:

(1) **Equality Scheme**

The Directorate action plan is linked to the Corporate Equality Scheme, which sets out the Council's approach to promoting equality across all its services and employment. The Council has identified in its Equality Scheme the issues and challenges which need to be addressed and a number of Equality Objectives have been outlined in the scheme.

(2) **Equality Impact Assessments**

An impact assessment is a systematic and thorough way of appraising a service and the impact that it will have on different groups and communities. The aim of an impact assessment is to assess whether that policies and services are unfair or discriminatory in the way that they impact on different groups in the community, and provides an opportunity to address any areas of adverse impact identified and positively highlight where equality has been progressed for different groups.

During 2014/2015 equality impact assessments will be undertaken for new or revised strategies and policies, new or changed service areas, and when considering budget proposals.

(3) **Directorate Equality Priorities**

The Directorate has identified its overall equality priorities and the 2014/2015 action plan objectives contribute towards achieving some of these priorities.

The Directorate's overall equality priorities are as follows:

- To ensure that DUE services continue to be accessible to all;
- To ensure that changes in service delivery introduced through legislation / statutory requirements consider the impact on protected groups;
- Continue the improvements to the numbers of employees within the Directorate from under-represented groups
- To improve employee knowledge and skills;
- To ensure equality impact assessments are undertaken against proposed / future budget savings, mapped against protected characteristics where appropriate;
- To ensure the delivery of actions identified within Equality Impact Assessments;
- To ensure Directorate compliance against the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4.3 The Directorate's specific objectives for 2014/2015 relating to equality are detailed in this action plan. Actions can be identified through carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment, be linked to service plans or relate to specific initiatives or work ongoing in a particular service area during the 12 months covered by this action plan.

4.4 Particular priority, where appropriate, will be assigned to supporting corporate equality priorities identified in the 2012 annual review of equality and the revised equality scheme, and progressing work through the Corporate Equality and Diversity Leadership Group.

5.0 **Consultation**

5.1 The Directorate undertakes or is involved in a wide range of consultation about its services and strategic priorities. Members of the Directorate's Disability Consultation Group, which comprises of relevant Directorate officers, representatives from Access in Dudley and residents of the borough, continue to give an input into how we can improve the Directorate's services. The Directorate Management Team has been involved in determining the priorities identified in this Action Plan.

6.0 **Monitoring**

- 6.1 Progress regarding the achievement of the objectives detailed in the action plan will be monitored by the Directorate's Management Team and the Directorate's Equality Group.

7.0 **The Action Plan**

- 7.1 The action plan follows the corporate equality action plan template and is set out in the following tables.

Directorate of the Urban Environment
March 2014

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Transparency

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 2</p> <p>Safeguarding in Care Homes To organise safeguarding sessions to raise awareness of the roles & responsibilities of officers when visiting care settings</p> <p>Lead Officer: Dolores Nellany</p>	<p>Discuss with key stakeholders the aims of Safeguarding in Care Homes initiative</p> <p>Work with the Falls Prevention Team in DACHS to encourage uptake of training by care homes on falls prevention as a result of accidents being reported to the Food & Occupational Safety Team</p> <p>Organise sessions to familiarise professionals with safeguarding issues in care homes</p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p>	<p>Improving information sharing and promoting safeguarding and wellbeing for service users in care homes</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Transparency

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 3</p> <p>Traffic Regulation Orders To implement an Annual Programme for Traffic Regulation Orders; which builds on the outcomes from the Scrutiny Review</p> <p>Lead Officer: Martyn Holloway</p>	<p>Carry out Equality Initial Assessment of the Traffic Regulation Order process</p> <p>Development of prioritisation criteria that takes account of the needs of protected groups</p> <p>Implementation of an Annual Programme of Traffic Regulation Orders</p>	<p>April 2014</p> <p>June 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p>	<p>Ensuring a robust selection and prioritisation is applied for all Traffic Regulation Order requests</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Accessibility

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 4</p> <p>Assisted Collection Scheme To formalise the Assisted Collection Scheme which takes into account the needs of protected groups</p> <p>Lead Officer: Heidi Marsh-Geyton</p>	<p>To review the criteria and procedures for Assisted Collections</p> <p>To ensure crews are aware of the procedures and the needs of the customers who are eligible for the service</p>	<p>March 2015</p> <p>March 2015</p>	<p>Provide an Assisted Collections Scheme for those with specific needs</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Accessibility

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 5</p> <p>Access to Leisure Services To consider the impact on protected groups when reviewing the management options for the delivery of Leisure Services</p> <p>Lead Officer – Andy Webb</p>	<p>Complete an Equality Impact Assessment which considers the equality impact on Leisure Services</p> <p>Following the review, ensure that any documentation including future contracts takes account of the need to maintain equality of access by protected groups</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">September 2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2015</p>	<p>Leisure Services delivery options take into account the impact on equality</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Accessibility

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Visits to Museums</p> <p>To implement actions to improve access to exhibitions in line with the outcomes of the Equality Initial Assessment</p> <p>Lead Officer – Stuart Connelly</p>	<p>Consider and understand visitor profile having particular regard to protected groups</p> <p>Identify actions available to increase visitor numbers from under-represented groups</p> <p>Ensure annual planning of exhibitions gives consideration to likelihood of attracting interest and visitor numbers from protected groups</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">April 2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">June 2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2015</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Increased visitor numbers from under-represented groups</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Fairness

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 8</p> <p>Community Infrastructure Levy To ensure equality & diversity issues are taken into consideration when determining projects</p> <p>Lead Officer: Helen Martin</p>	<p>Submit to Planning Inspectorate for Independent Examination</p> <p>Public Examination</p> <p>Planning Inspectors Report published</p> <p>Adoption of Dudley Community Infrastructure Levy</p>	<p>April 2014</p> <p>June - August 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p>	<p>To ensure future proposals help tackle discrimination or disadvantage, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations between different protected groups</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Fairness

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 9</p> <p>Economic Strategy Consultation To review the Economic Strategy consultation process in line with the recommendation from the Economic Regeneration Strategy Equality Initial Assessment</p> <p>Lead Officer – Wayne George</p>	<p>Develop a consultation engagement questionnaire linked to economic regeneration strategy priorities</p> <p>Undertake a stakeholder review which incorporates protected groups</p> <p>Joint engagement exercise to consult on plans for economic growth taking into account the development of specific sites and priority sectors</p>	<p>April 2014</p> <p>May 2014</p> <p>July 2014</p>	<p>Individuals from protected groups will have a greater opportunity to comment on development opportunities within the Borough</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Fairness

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Statement of Community Involvement Refresh</p> <p>To ensure that protected groups have the opportunity to comment when the local authority carries out consultation and public engagement for the various planning documents to be produced</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lead Officer: Helen Martin</p>	<p>Identifying protected groups to facilitate community involvement in consultation & engagement</p> <p>Determine methods of community involvement and its impact on protected groups</p> <p>Adoption of Statement of Community Involvement</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">February 2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">April 2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">February 2015</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">To ensure that the refreshed methodology enables participation by protected groups in influencing matters relating to planning documents</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2014/2015

Fairness

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Training</p> <p>To ensure employees within the directorate have undertaken equality training</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lead Officer: Jackie Scott</p>	<p>Ongoing implementation of equality training across the directorate</p> <p>Roll out of equality group training sessions for those that do not have access to a PC</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">March 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2015</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Improved employee awareness and understanding of equality in their work place</p>