

Select Committee on Community Safety & Community Services – 13th March 2008

Report of the Director of Law & Property

Directorate of Law & Property - Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2008/09

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the annual equality and diversity action plan for 2007/08 for the Directorate of Law & Property.

Background

2. The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy requires all Directorates to produce an equality and diversity action plan annually.
3. The directorate action plan will be presented for scrutiny in two parts. The first part - the action plan itself - is required to be presented to Select Committee before 31st March and covers:
 - Relationship with other plans
 - Vision and values
 - Key issues and targets
 - Action plan summary
4. The second part is the annual report, which will be presented for scrutiny to the first meeting of the Select Committee in the new municipal year. The annual report will cover achievements against the previous year's action plan targets.
5. Overview and scrutiny of corporate equality and diversity issues are included in the terms of reference of the Select Committee on Community Safety and Community Services. Select committee chairmen have agreed that the scrutiny of individual directorate's action plans be split up amongst the five committees.
6. This 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

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

Law

8. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 replaces Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 with 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.
9. 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 will extend this Act by introducing a new duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
10. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. In particular, Section 29 makes it unlawful for the Council, in providing facilities or services (such as those arising pursuant to the statutory functions of the Council), to discriminate against any person seeking to obtain or use those facilities or services on the ground of gender. A new duty on public authorities to promote gender equality under the Equality Act 2006 came into force on 6th April 2007.
11. 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

12. The action plan sets out proposals for moving forward equality and diversity work in the Directorate during 2008/09. Performance indicators or outcomes and named officers are identified against each target so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed.

Recommendation

13. That the Select Committee considers and comments on the Directorate of Law & Property equality and diversity action plan for 2008/09

John Polychronakis

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List of Background Papers

Directorate of Law & Property's Equality & Diversity Action Plan for 2008/09.