

Chief Executive's Directorate

Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2009/10

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy requires all directorates to produce an annual equality and diversity action plan. The policy is supported by commitments and actions in the Council's Equality Scheme. The action plan sets out how a directorate will implement the policy and the Scheme in relation to its responsibilities, service areas and employment practices during the year.
- 1.2 The Chief Executive's Directorate's plan is submitted to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education, before approval by the appropriate Cabinet Member.
- 1.3 Progress with implementing the action plan is reported in the equality and diversity annual report. The Chief Executive's Directorate's annual report for 2008/09 will be submitted to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education at its first meeting of the 2009/10 municipal year.
- 1.4 This action plan covers the period from April 2009 to March 2010 and contains:
 - an explanation of its relationship with other plans
 - a summary of the directorate's equality and diversity vision and values
 - key issues and targets for the plan
 - the action plan summary

2. Relationship with other plans

- 2.1 This action plan will be incorporated in the overall strategic plan for the Chief Executive's Directorate for 2009/10. The strategic plan in turn responds to the Borough's Community Strategy 2005-15 and the three year Council plan.
- 2.2 The overall long-term, policy framework for equality and diversity is set out in the Equality and Diversity Policy. The Equality Scheme, published in April 2007, which brings together the statutory disability, gender and race equality

schemes for the Council, provides the overall three-year equality strategy and action plan.

- 2.3 Council-wide progress in implementing the Equality Scheme is reported each year in the Annual review of equality and diversity, which is submitted to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education (as the select committee with responsibility for corporate equality and diversity issues) and the Cabinet.

3. Vision and Values

- 3.1 The role of the Chief Executive's Directorate is:

“to promote a high performing, customer-focused Council, with accessible, quality public services that measurably improve the quality of life. We aim to achieve this through: corporate leadership and direction, developing our staff, and developing collaborative partnerships that make a difference.”

- 3.2 The directorate maintains its commitment to implementing the Council's equality and diversity policy in relation to its services and employment practices through, for example, the action planning and reporting process, designating responsibility for actions to particular staff, reviewing policies and practices, its engagement processes and continuing training and development.
- 3.3 With effect from 1st April 2009, the Corporate Personnel and Support Services Division of the directorate will transfer to the Directorate of Law and Property, with the creation of a Human Resources and Citizenship Division in that directorate. Actions relating to the corporate personnel and learning and development functions will therefore be incorporated in the Directorate of Law and Property's action plan for 2009/10.
- 3.4 From April 2009 the Chief Executive's Directorate includes the following sections:
- Community Safety
 - Corporate Policy and Research
 - Credit Union
 - Customer Access to Services
 - Elections and Electoral Registration
 - Marketing and Communications
 - Secretariat, Leader's and Mayor's office

- 3.5 The Directorate will continue to take a lead on equality and diversity issues, incorporating overall policy development and the provision of advice and support, but working closely with the Directorate of Law and Property on employment and training issues across the Council. It will continue to provide strategic information to support equality planning and impact assessment processes across the Council and be a key player in partnership work to promote equality.
- 3.6 Within the Directorate, all employees have a responsibility to comply with the requirements of the Council's equality and diversity policy in all dealings with Members, other employees, job applicants, residents, service users and other members of the public, and with other organisations. Training and development needs of employees in the directorate are identified in annual performance review and development discussions with their line managers.
- 3.7 The aim of the directorate is to mainstream equality so responsibility for promoting equality and diversity in employment and services rests with all heads of service. However, a principal officer within the Corporate Policy and Research Team, reporting to the Head of Policy, is responsible for overall equality and diversity policy development work on behalf of both the Council and the Directorate. This includes the preparation, monitoring and review of the Directorate's annual equality and diversity action plan.

4. Key Issues and Targets

- 4.1 The Equality Scheme identifies the key issues, challenges and actions across the Council for the 2007-10 period. Particular priority was given to progressing work through the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group during this period in the following areas:
- developing clearer targets and desired outcomes
 - improving communications around what we do and why, externally and internally, and celebrating success
 - improving approaches to consultation
 - identifying the equality and diversity competencies required for managers and employees
- 4.2 The 2008 annual review of equality and diversity identified three priorities for the next twelve months, and these are also reflected in the directorate's action plan, namely:
- developing and implementing action plans for:

- further access improvements to public buildings, and
- increasing the number of employees with a disability,
- updating the Council's vision for delivering equality, and
- ensuring that equality impact assessments are completed.

These priorities arose from analysis of performance indicators, an external review of the Council's approach to promoting equality and a review of the external auditors 'supporting people with a disability'. More details are given in the annual review (available on the Council's website).

4.3 In the Equality Scheme, directorates also identified overall equality and diversity priorities for their service areas linked to the three years of the Scheme which were to be reflected in its action plans. Given that the directorate has been substantially restructured during this time these priorities are now less relevant to the directorate. Instead, key priorities of the 2009/10 plan include:

- work to improve and coordinate the Council's approach to promoting equality across all equality strands, particularly in anticipation of the likely duties for public authorities in the forthcoming Equality Act, covering age, religion or belief and sexual orientation equality - the draft Bill is expected in the spring
- the continuing development of community cohesion work with the appointment of a community cohesion manager to drive the development and implementation of the community cohesion strategy
- implementing the actions arising from equality impact assessments (EIAs) and undertaking further EIAs – these are providing increasing data and intelligence about the impact of our services and other activities, so that action planning is increasingly based on clear evidence about the needs of different communities and the impact that our services have.

4.4 Whether as part of EIAs, or of other activities, the directorate undertakes a range of consultation and engagement which feeds into the action plan. The directorate contributed to the Council-wide BME community consultation event in November, running a workshop around community cohesion. Action for Disabled People and Carers continue to be involved in helping to improve the directorate's services. The community safety team held the recent 'face the people' events. Further improvements to engagement will be promoted through the substantially revised community engagement database, which is due to be launched in the spring, and the Dudley Community Partnership

community engagement strategy, in which the directorate has been heavily involved.

- 4.5 Where items in the attached action plan respond directly to the actions set out in the Equality Scheme, references to the corresponding action in the Scheme are included in brackets e.g. (ES1.3).

5. The Action Plan

- 5.1 The detailed action plan for 2009/10 is set out at the attached appendix.

Chief Executive's Directorate
February 2009

Chief Executive's Directorate – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2009/10

Appendix

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
Priority 1 Develop clearer targets and outcomes			
CE1. Undertake further equality impact assessments (EIAs) in the directorate	(1) Undertake EIAs of the following during 2009/10 (ES1.3): Sustainable Community Strategy (AWr) Community safety strategy (DH) Borough wide alcohol strategy (SH) Drug strategy action plan (SH) Domestic abuse strategy (AB)	Complete by March 2010	EIAs completed within the timescales Improvement actions identified and scheduled
CE2. Improve the approach to EIAs across the Council	(1) Develop further the equality intranet site to give to staff clearer guidance and good practice in undertaking EIAs (ES1.5) (SM)	June 2009	Improvement in quantity and quality of EIAs
	(2) Produce a guide to data sources and equality data collection (ES3.15; 4.13) (AWr/SM)	July 2009	

CE3. Improve equality and diversity policy development and performance management	(1) Produce the Annual review of equality and diversity for the lead Select Committee on corporate equality issues and Cabinet by September each year to report on progress with implementing the Equality Scheme (ES1.6) (SM)	September 2009	Legal requirements met Clear presentation of key performance information to improve equality performance management
	(2) Trial combined central directorates equality group (SM)	From April 2009	Improved coordination, sharing of good practice and performance management
	(3) Undertake initial self-assessment of all directorates against the new Equality Framework (ES1.10) (SM/EDAG)	April/May 2009	Areas for improvement identified and programmed
	(4) Prepare evidence portfolio following self-assessment (ES1.10) (SM/EDAG)	June/July 2009	
CE4. Assess the implications of the Equality Bill for the Council and prepare for the introduction of the Act	(1) Assess new duties and outline action required (SM)	Report to EDAG – June 2009; Corporate Board – July 2009	Understanding of new legal requirements
	(2) Include other equality strands within the Equality Scheme (ES1.9) (SM/EDAG)	Draft April 2009 Cabinet – June 2009	Improved identification and coordination of action for all equality strands
	(3) Draw up revised Council vision for equality (SM/EDAG)		

Priority 2. Improve mechanisms for consultation and involvement			
CE5. Promote engagement with all communities in the Borough	(1) Launch community engagement toolkit and guidance (LP)	April 2009	Improved quality and coordination of community engagement
	(2) Support the promotion of the BME community consultation event in 2009 (JW)	November 2009 (prov.)	Successful event held in 2009/10. Feedback leading to service improvements
	(3) Develop new annual programme of involvement of Action for Disabled People and Carers in EIAs (SM)	June 2009	Programme agreed Feedback from ADC leading to service improvements
	(4) Develop further routes for consultation on LGB&T issues (SM)	March 2010	Improved understanding of impact of services on these communities
	(5) Develop engagement with young Muslim women across the borough through the PVE programme and plan and deliver capacity building events (RO)	March 2010	Contribution to NI 35 (building resilience to extremism) Detailed information on neighbourhoods
Priority 3. Improve communications			
CE6. Celebrate diversity of borough and workforce	Support the local promotion of a range of culturally diverse events (JW/EDAG)	March 2010	Wider range of events celebrated
CE7. Improve access to information	Incorporate findings from the marketing and communications EIA into the marketing and communications toolkit (BH/SM) (ES3.7; 3.16)	June 2009	Improved access to Council communications

Priority 4. Improve equality and diversity competencies of employees			
CE8. Implement new approaches to training to reach more employees	Work with Law and Property Directorate to design an e-diversity training course for employees (ES1.16) (SM)	During 2009/010 (revised target)	Increase in employees receiving training
Priority 5. Employment issues			
CE9. Increase % of employees with a disability	Work with Law and Property Directorate to implement action plan arising from external auditors' review 'supporting people with a disability' (SM)	Range of target dates included in the action plan	Increase % of employees with a disability
Priority 6. Promote community safety and community cohesion			
CE10. Improve analysis and understanding of anti-social behaviour (ASB) data in order to target responses more effectively	(1) Review regularly monitoring data and trends relating to ASBU activity (PB)	Annual review – April 2009 Monthly reviews from May 2009	Targeted action on ASB Fewer repeat incidents
	(2) Link tension monitoring information to ASBU data and activities (RO)	Quarterly reviews from April 2009	
	(3) Respond to place survey results and ASB incident data with targeted activities (AWi)	From April 2009	Fewer incidents within ASB hotspots
CE11. Ensure that the Domestic Abuse Strategy reflects the needs of all	Equality impact assess all services that form part of the current Domestic Abuse Strategy (AB)	Domestic abuse co-ordinators to be trained by June 2009	Revised strategy reflecting outcomes of EIA

communities.		Individual services assessed by October 2009	
CE12. Respond to the young persons substance misuse needs assessment by establishing why fewer young women than young men access the specialist substance misuse treatment service	(1) Undertake consultation with young women (SH/AH)	October 2009	More young women accessing the young persons specialist substance misuse service, where appropriate
	(2) Develop action plan following outcome of consultation (SH/AH)		
CE13. Respond to the adult drug treatment needs assessment by establishing why fewer young people aged 18-24 who misuse cocaine do not access drug treatment services	(1) Undertake consultation with client group (DR/EH)	October 2009	Increased engagement of 18-24 year olds with drug treatment services, where appropriate
	(2) Ensure relevant services are provided through drug treatment services (DR/EH)	July 2009 and review after consultation	
CE14. Ensure new service level agreements (SLAs) for the adult drug treatment services, drug intervention programme and young persons specialist substance misuse service address equality issues	(1) Convene group to undertake EIA of SLAs (SH/EH)	May 2009	Robust service level agreements in place to ensure that relevant and effective services are delivered within Dudley Borough
	(2) Amend SLAs to respond to findings of the EIA (SH/EH)		

CE15. Progress community cohesion work	(1) Develop community cohesion delivery plan (RO)	Draft by May 2009	NI 1(improved community cohesion)
	(2) Work with the Directorate of Children's Services to develop a plan for engaging schools in PVE activity and consider how to use available funding (RO)	October 2009	Contribution to NI 35 (building resilience to extremism)
Priority 7. Access to elections process			
CE16. Increase participation in electoral registration and elections	(1) Issue 18 th birthday cards with guide to elections to new electors as a reminder to vote (AM)	From December 2009	Increase in turnout at elections
	(2) Distribute pictorial guide to voting to people with learning disabilities via leaning disability groups and services (AM)	May 2009	

Glossary

ASB – anti-social behaviour

ASBU - Anti-social Behaviour Unit

EDAG – Equality and Diversity Advisory Group

EIA – equality impact assessment (process to establish what impact a service or policy has on various equality groups)

HR – human resources

LGBT – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

NI – national indicator (a new set of national indicators replaced the best value performance indicators from April 2009)

PVE – preventing violent extremism (the Council is a Pathfinder for the national PVE programme)

Lead officers for actions

AB – Anne Boden; PB – Peter Burford; SH – Sue Haywood; AH – Audrey Heer; DH – Dawn Hewitt; BH – Barry Hutchinson;
EH – Elaine Hopwood; SM – Simon Manson; AM – Alison Mason; RO- Rosina Ottewell; LP – Leighton Pendry; DR – Dee Russell;
AWi – Andy Winning; AWr – Andy Wright; JW – Jason Whyley;