

Chief Executive's Directorate

Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2011/12

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The drawing up of directorate action plans is an important part of the Council's equality and diversity policy ensuring that all directorates maintain a focus on work to promote equality and fairness in providing services and amongst their employees.
- 1.2 The Chief Executive's Directorate's plan is submitted to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education, before being approved by the appropriate Cabinet Member.
- 1.3 All directorates also produce annual reports on their equality action plans. These are prepared at the end of the financial year in order to reflect a full year's activity and reported to the relevant select committee at its first meeting of the new municipal year.
- 1.4 This action plan covers the period from April 2011 to March 2012 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
- 1.5 It should be noted the action plan was drawn up against a background of some uncertainty due to the need for the directorate to plan and implement budget reductions as part of the council's overall savings package. These may have some impact on the delivery of the plan during 2011/12.

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 2011/12. The strategic plan in turn responds to the

Borough's refreshed Community Strategy 2010-13 and the three year Council plan.

- 2.2 The council has in the past drawn up an Equality scheme which complies with legal requirements to frame its overall approach and key actions. While a specific document will no longer be a statutory requirement from April 2011, the overall equality scheme will be reframed to comply with the new requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The revised disability and gender equality schemes published in December 2009 and April 2010 respectively and the supplement covering age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender equality approved by the Cabinet in June 2009, anticipating the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, provide a good starting point.
- 2.3 Council-wide progress in promoting equality 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 for approval.

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, undertaking impact assessments and reviewing policies, its engagement activities and continuing training and development.

- 3.3 As at April 2011, the Chief Executive's Directorate includes the following sections:

- Community Safety
- Corporate Policy and Research
- Customer Access to Services
- Elections and Electoral Registration

- Marketing and Communications
- Secretariat, Leader's and Mayor's office

3.4 The Directorate takes a lead on corporate equality and diversity issues, incorporating overall policy development and the provision of advice and support, but working closely with the Corporate Resources Directorate on equality 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.

3.5 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.

3.6 The directorate aims 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 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 As noted, the Council's equality scheme is currently being revised and will take on board the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

4.2 The Cabinet approved a ten year equality and diversity vision for the Council in June 2009, alongside the equality scheme supplement.

4.3 The 2010 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:

- ensuring that the changes introduced by the Equality Act 2010 are responded to in changing policies, procedures and practices, supported by training and briefings, particularly through the introduction of e-learning on equality,

- continuing action aimed at improving the recruitment and retention of disabled employees, and
- continuing to embed equality impact assessments and reviewing the approach in the light of the Equality Act 2010

More details are given in the annual review (available on the Council's website).

- 4.3 For the directorate, the key priority for 2011/12 is to analyse, understand and implement the new requirements brought in by the Equality Act 2010, both for its own work areas, but also in providing a lead across the council and in working with partners. The first parts of the Act came into force in October 2010, with new public sector equality duties being brought in from April 2011 onwards.
- 4.4 The directorate undertakes a range of engagement, needs assessment and equality impact assessment work which feeds into the action plan. In terms of engagement activity, the directorate contributes in arranging, running workshops and providing information stalls for the Council-wide BME community consultation event each autumn. It has worked during 2010 with the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services on supporting disabled people's organisations to become user-led. Action for Disabled People and Carers continues to be supported through the directorate's funding of Dudley Council for Voluntary Service and is involved developing plans and improving services. The community safety team have arranged annual 'face the people' events on behalf of the Safe and Sound Partnership. Directorate staff are involved in supporting the development of the Dudley Borough Interfaith Network, Dudley LGBT forum and a number other groups, as well as providing good practice advice and training to other employees and partners.

5. The Action Plan

- 5.1 The detailed action plan for 2011/12 is set out at the attached appendix.

Chief Executive's Directorate
February 2011

Chief Executive's Directorate – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12

Appendix

Objective	Detailed action/target (and lead officer)	Target Date/ milestones	Planned outcome/performance indicator
Priority 1 Policy development and performance management			
CE1. Assess and implement the requirements of the Equality Act 2010	(1) Publish equality information to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (AW/SM)	From 31 July 2011	Meet legal requirements as a minimum Key priorities and actions identified Improved outcomes for protected groups
	(2) Produce a revised Equality scheme/strategy in light of the Equality Act duties and statutory code of practice (SM)	December 2011	
	(3) Identify and publish equality objectives for the Council in response to the requirements of the Equality Act (SM/CEDLG)	March 2012	
	(4) Revise promoting equality through procurement guidelines to respond to new statutory guidance (SM)	September 2011	
CE2. Improve equality data and performance management	(1) Update council's equality impact assessment guidance in light of Equality Act 2010 (SM)	June 2011	More effective process in place

	(2) Undertake equality impact assessments of: Local Compact (SM) Domestic abuse strategy (update) (AB) Relevant budget proposals (GT)	March 2012	EIAs completed within the timescales Improvement actions identified and scheduled
	(3) Work with directorates to develop a plan to close some of the data gaps arising from the publishing of equality information (AW/SM)	December 2011	Improved data to inform service design
	(4) Provide advice and support to Census coordinator to ensure high response rates to the 2011 Census from communities with historically lower response rates (NL)	By May 2011	Accurate data about the borough's population
	(5) Revise approach to annual review of equality and diversity for the lead Select Committee on corporate equality issues and Cabinet (SM)	September 2011	Clear presentation of key performance information to improve equality performance management
Priority 2. Community engagement			
CE3. Undertake further work with partners on promoting the involvement in public life of people from protected groups	(1) Support community engagement events such as the BME community engagement event in 2011 (JW/SM)	September 2011/ ongoing	Successful event held in 2011. Feedback leading to service improvements

	(2) Continue work with existing forums such as Action for Disabled People and Carers, the Dudley LGBT Forum and the Dudley Muslim women's network (SM/RO/NB/JH)	March 2012	Increased engagement and involvement Feedback leading to service improvements Improved understanding of impact of services on these communities
	(3) Work through the DCP Stronger Communities steering group on developing an inclusive approach to the voluntary and community sector in Dudley (AW/SM)	March 2012	People from protected groups engaged
	(4) Working with DACHS, respond to the implications of the Localism Bill through preparing proposals for local community engagement that provide opportunities for involvement of people from protected groups (GT)	March 2012	Engagement reflects local populations
	(5) Run partnership community engagement training and network events covering engagement with harder to reach communities (LP)	March 2012 ¹	No. of attendees Improved engagement skills
Priority 3. Communications			

CE4. Provide access to equality information	(1) Inform the council, partners and public of key cultural and civic dates and publish information about international and national events on the internet (JW)	Throughout year	Council, partners and the public aware of key diversity and civic dates to inform planning and service delivery
	(2) Update the council's equality web pages to reflect the Equality Act 2010 and provide access to equality information published under the Act (JW/SM)	December 2011	Colleagues and the public are informed of changes to the Equality Act and the council's revised action plan
CE5. Improve access to information for disabled people	Identify actions to improve further the accessibility of the council's website for disabled people (JJ/E-Communications Group)	March 2012	More information readily accessible
Priority 4. Employment and training			
CE6. Improve employee equality competencies	(1) All employees in directorate to complete e-learning course on equality (GT)	March 2012	Improved knowledge and skills of employees
	(2) Contribute to HR Division's review of equality training for employees (SM)	During 2011 (revised target)	Increase in employees receiving training Improved feedback
Priority 5. Community safety and cohesion			
CE7. Update approaches to cohesion and tension	(1) Review the implications of the Government's integration strategy (RO)	May 2011	Updated community cohesion action plan

monitoring	(2) Widen buy-in to tension monitoring process (RO)	March 2012	Improved monitoring information from broader base of sources
CE8. Review and update the domestic abuse strategy	(1) Review findings from the domestic abuse service improvement review (BD/AB)	Findings available May 2011	Up to date strategy in place
	(2) Update the existing strategy in light of the review (AB)	Update by December 2011	
CE9. Improve analysis and understanding of anti-social behaviour in order to target responses more effectively (carried forward)	(1) Review monitoring data and trends relating to ASBU data and activities (AWi)	Quarterly from April 2011	Targeted action and repeat incidents
	(2) Implement findings from corporate ASB Review (AWi)	From July 2011	New streamlined processes in place and improved customer satisfaction
CE10. Improve community safety equality data and intelligence	Work with partners to ensure robust data is available about protected groups for needs assessments and the strategic assessment in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (BD/SH)	December 2011 and ongoing	Needs assessments reflect protected groups Services designed to respond to identified needs
CE11. Respond to substance misuse issues amongst the young (under 18s) BME	(1) Continue to monitor the number of young people from BME communities who access the service (AH/SH)	March 2011	Numbers of young BME people using the young persons specialist

population	(2) Identify any barriers to young people from BME communities accessing the service (AH/SH)		substance misuse service reflects level of need
Priority 6. Access to elections process			
CE12. Increase participation in electoral registration and elections	(1) Issue pictorial guide with all postal voters ballot packs (AM)	May 2011	Increased turnout
	(2) Send voting guide to all rising 18's who will be eligible to vote in elections for the first time (AM)		
	(3) Place copy of pictorial guide to voting and guidance to voters in alternative languages in all polling stations (AM)		
Priority 7. Contingency and disaster management			
CE 13. Meet the needs of diverse communities in planning a disaster response	(1) Review multi lingual literature available for rest centres (GT)	March 2012	Improved disaster response capability
	(2) Continue involvement in community cohesion planning and training (GT)		
	(3) Continue efforts to involve different faith communities in response to extreme events (GT)		

Glossary

ASBU – Anti-social behaviour unit

BME – black and ethnic minority

CEDLG – Corporate Equality and Diversity Leadership Group (officers group)

DACHS – Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services

DCP – Dudley Community Partnership

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 Trans

Lead officers for actions

NB – Nina Bahia; AB – Anne Boden; BD - Bob Dimmock; SH – Sue Haywood; AH – Audrey Heer; JH – John Hodt; JJ – Jan Jennings; NL - Neil Langford; SM – Simon Manson; AM – Alison Mason; RO - Rosina Ottewell; LP – Leighton Pendry; GT – Geoff Thomas; JW – Jason Whyley; AWi – Andy Winning; AWr - Andy Wright