

Select Committee on Community Safety & Community Services - 12th March 2009

Report of the Interim Director of Law & Property

Directorate of Law & Property - Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2009/10

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the annual equality and diversity action plan for 2009/10 for the Directorate of Law & Property.

Background

2. The production of an annual equality and diversity action plan by each directorate is an important commitment in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. The action plan sets out details of how a directorate will promote equality in relation to its areas of responsibility during the coming year and responds to the three year framework established by the Council's Equality Scheme 2007-10.
3. Overview and scrutiny of corporate equality and diversity issues is included in the terms of reference of the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education. Select committee chairmen have agreed that scrutiny of individual directorate's action plans be split up amongst the five committees.
4. The Law & Property's Directorate's action plan for 2009/10 is attached and covers:
 - its relationship with other plans
 - the directorate's vision and value
 - key Issues and targets in drawing up the plan, and
 - the detailed action plan.
5. The annual report setting out progress with the directorate's action plan for 2008/09 will be presented to the first meeting of the select committee in the new municipal year.
6. The 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 wide range of relevant equality legislation includes:
 - The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which places 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.
 - 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 introduced a duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
 - The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. A duty on public authorities to promote gender equality under the Equality Act 2006 came into force in April 2007.
 - Other legislation is in place relating to discrimination on the basis of age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
9. 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

10. The action plan sets out proposals for moving forward equality and diversity work in the Directorate during 2009/10. 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.
11. Issues relating to children and young people are covered in detail in the Directorate of Children's Services' annual equality and diversity action plans.

Recommendation

12. That the Select Committee considers and comments on the Directorate of Law & Property equality and diversity action plan for 2009/10



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Philip Tart
Interim Director of Law & Property

Contact Officer: Caroline Glover, Directorate of Law & Property
Telephone: 01384 815353
Email: caroline.glover@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Guidance for the preparation of directorates' equality and diversity action plans and annual reports (December 2008)