
REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	18th JUNE 2015	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	KEVIN STACKHOUSE (Ext. 5811)	DOC REF:
SUBJECT:	CORPORATE EQUALITIES AND SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 AND ACTION PLAN 2015/16	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM17

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members approve, for publication, the Corporate Equalities & Safeguarding Annual Report for 2014/15. This is attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 That Members note progress made against the 2014/15 Corporate Equalities & Safeguarding Action Plan attached at **Appendix 2**
- 1.3 That Members approve the Corporate Equalities & Safeguarding Action Plan for 2015/16, attached at **Appendix 3**.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to annually publish a report to demonstrate it has considered the aims of the Equality Duty.
- 2.2 To seek approval for the Corporate Equalities & Safeguarding Annual Report 2014/15. This will be published on the Council's website.
- 2.3 To note progress made in 2014/15 for delivering the actions contained in the Equalities & Safeguarding Action Plan.
- 2.4 To approve the Corporate Equalities & Safeguarding Action Plan for 2015/16.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public authorities and others carrying out public functions to consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work, in

shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees. In particular to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

3.2 The Duty covers the following 'protected' groups:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Gender
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief (and non-belief)
- Sexual orientation
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (with regard to eliminating discrimination)

3.3 There is no explicit legal requirement to collect and use equality information across the 'protected' groups, in order to have 'due regard' to the aims of the Equality Duty. However, the Council needs to understand the impact of its policies and practices with 'protected' groups.

3.4 To demonstrate compliance, the Council must publish relevant and appropriate information. This can be evidenced in a variety of ways, such as the minutes of a meeting to the publication of data that supports a key decision providing it is accessible to the public. This information may be contained within another document.

3.5 The publication of the Corporate Equalities Report demonstrates the impact of the Council's employment functions on its employees and how service users are affected by its policies and practices. This can be found in **Appendix 1**.

3.6 A number of case studies which have been used in the Corporate Equalities Report to demonstrate compliance'. These are summarised below:

Objectives.

- (a) Providing services that reflect the communities of South Derbyshire and are accessible to users –
 - "*Housing tenancy participation*". This includes repairs and maintenance, supported housing, communications and updates from local, regional and national networking events.
 - "*Help with money and welfare reform*". This includes the Moneyspider Credit Union, improving credit ratings, administration of housing and council tax benefits, supporting our tenants to manage their welfare benefits and tenancy arrangements.
- (b) Work with partners to help younger people access employment opportunities in South Derbyshire –
 - "*Helping young people into the 'world of work'*". This includes holding Youth Training Fairs, Job Clubs and work experience placements.

- (c) Enhance opportunities for vulnerable people to access suitable housing to live independently at home for longer –
 - *'Oakland Village'*. Award winning purpose built accommodation to enable older people to live independent lives.

Meeting the aims of the 'Duty'

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment.
 - *'Safer Communities'*. This includes Liberation Day, Interfaith Week, reporting hate crimes, events like 'Prison Me, No Way' and working with partners to deliver diversionary activities in 'hotspot' locations.
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity
 - *'Affordable homes, homelessness support and housing advice'*. This includes the appointment of a Homeless Case Worker.
 - The Community Partnership Scheme
 - *'Leisure and recreational activities'*. This includes summer holiday activities and the Village Games Project
- (c) Fostering good relationships
 - *'Social cohesion'*. This includes taking steps to get Elected Members and Officers involved in staging events and activities that they can participate in as well as promoting and supporting both national and local community events.
 - *'The Dreamscheme'*. A youth project that encourages 8-15 year olds to take part in activities that benefit their local community. The participants are rewarded with points that can be redeemed for group trips and activities.
- (d) *General*
 - *'Understanding our diverse communities'*.
 - *'Assessing the impact of our services, policies and activities on our diverse communities'*.
 - *'Communicating and engaging with our communities to ensure that we deliver services appropriate to them'*.

Progress made during 2014/15

3.7 A number of key actions have also been delivered in the Equalities and Safeguarding Action Plan. These are shown in **Appendix 2**. Outlined below are some of the key outcomes achieved during the period:

- Equalities Profile of the District updated using newly released data from the 2011 Census
- Working in partnership with the South Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Service to make a difference to our communities in South Derbyshire by working with groups such as Shout Out and the Older Peoples Forum
- Undertaking a proportionate and balanced approach when considering the Equality Duty in the development of policy options
- Implementing recommendations made by a third party peer review and an external audit assessment
- Strengthening and developing the Council's internal Equalities & Safeguarding Group. This has included considering the number and type of safeguarding and hate crime incidents being reported, including any feedback from partner agencies. The composition of the Group has been reviewed to include a Customer Services representative
- Publication of the annual Workforce Profile and Equalities Reports

- Delivering safeguarding awareness training sessions to more than 150 participants. This has led to an increase in the number of safeguarding incidents being reported

Activities planned for 2015/16

3.7 The Council will continue to deliver activities in line with its Equalities Policy, having due regard to the three aims of the Equality Duty. These are shown in detail in **Appendix 3** but are summarised below:

- Through the Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Group we will aim to drive improvement, and focus on issues that matter locally
- To publish the Housing Tenancy Agreement and other related housing policies in an easy read format, following consultation
- We will publish progress on these activities through the Annual Report.
- Continue to work in partnership with the South Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Service and provide support to community events
- Deliver the Council's Equalities and Safeguarding Action Plan for 2016/17

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The Council's commitment and approach to having due regard to the Equality Duty is set out in its Policy Statement and Annual Equalities Report, which will be implemented through the Council's Performance Management Framework.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 In supporting the Council's vision of making 'South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit,' the Council has a number of 'values' that lie at the core of everything it does. These help us to make a difference for both our employees and our communities within South Derbyshire.

6.2 The Council wants all of its communities to be strong places of togetherness and belonging. This is again demonstrated in the Annual Equalities Report.

7.0 Background Papers

Government Equalities Office, '*Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty*', June 2011.