
REPORT TO:	FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	10 SEPTEMBER 2009	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	LAKBIR BASI (5822)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Lakbir.basi@south-derbys.gov.uk EQUALITY FRAMEWORK ACTION PLAN	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM05

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve the action plan and related actions for obtaining the 'Achieving' level of the National Equality Framework.
- 1.2 To approve that the cost for the external assessment of £3,500 will be met from existing budgets.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To outline the actions necessary for progressing to the 'Achieving' Level of the new Equality Framework for Local Government by the end of March 2010 that is a target within the Council's Corporate Plan

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Members will be aware of the Council's achievement of reaching Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government in March 2008. In May 2008 a report was submitted showing how the Council met Level 2 and outlining plans for progressing to Level 3 of the Equality Standard by March 2010.
- 3.2 In March 2009, the I&DeA (Improvement and Development Agency) introduced a new Equality Framework for Local Government which differs from the old Standard and is progressed through three levels instead of five. The three levels are:
 - Developing
 - Achieving
 - Excellent

- 3.3 The introduction of this Framework means the Council is now working towards the 'Achieving' Level rather than Level 3 of the old Standard. This new Framework has been introduced in such a way as to ensure progress achieved under the old Standard is not lost and can be used towards progression under the revised arrangements.
- 3.4 Work has been undertaken to translate the Council's progression under the old Standard into the requirements of the new Framework and progress is on target. This means the Council is on target to reach 'Achieving' Level by March 2010. Confirmation of the 'Achieving' Level will be through an accreditation undertaken by external assessors.
- 3.5 In order to progress the National Equality Framework, therefore, the Council will have to take the following actions:
- Apply to the I&DeA for accreditation
 - Gather evidence in support of the Council's application
 - Prepare a submission to the I&DeA
 - Invite assessors on site to assess the Council's performance.

Action Plan

- 3.6 An action plan has been developed internally to ensure that the requirements of the new Framework at 'Achieving' status will be met. A copy of this action plan is available from the intranet by clicking on the following link;
http://harvey/corporate/organisationaldevelopment/policy/equalities/Ach_action_plan/view.
- 3.7 The Council's submission will be prepared by Council's Policy Officer (Equalities) between now and mid December 2009 so that we self declare before the end of the year. Alongside this the necessary arrangements for the external assessment to be completed in January 2010 will be made. This will enable the Council to reach the 'Achieving' status before March 2010.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of the external assessment of £3,500 will be a one-off cost for the current financial year and will be met from existing budgets.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 Equality and Fairness cuts across all our Corporate Plan themes with its emphasis on fairness, inclusion and providing opportunities for everyone to achieve their full potential. Equality and fairness is about putting in place practices that allow South Derbyshire to engage with all the communities we serve and developing our staff to recognise how society is changing and responding to change in order to provide services that people want. Equality and Fairness:

- encourages vibrant communities which are important in developing a strong and growing economy – **Sustainable Growth and Opportunity**.
- promotes independent living and tackling hate crimes and anti-social behaviour that has a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups – **Safe and Secure**.

- promotes leisure and different cultural activities by involving people from different communities and cultures – **Lifestyle Choices**.
- ensuring we continue to meet community needs by engaging with all of South Derbyshire's communities – **Value for Money**.

5.2 Making progress against the Equality Framework helps the Council improve by better understanding what services our communities need so that we can deliver these ourselves or in partnership with other organisations.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 Making progress against the Equality Framework helps the Council support the emerging Community Strategy themes:

- **Healthy Communities**
- **Safer Communities**
- **Sustainable Development**
- **Vibrant Communities**
- **Children and Young People**

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Within the Council's Corporate Plan 2009/14, a target has been included to reach 'Achieving' status under the national Equality Framework by March 2010. The actions detailed in this report should enable this target to be achieved.

8.0 Background Papers

- Finance and Management Committee 1 May 2008 – 'Achieving Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government:

<http://cmis.south-derbys.gov.uk/CmisWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=2471>.

- Equality Framework For Local Government 'Achieving' Level Action Plan:

http://harvey/corporate/organisationaldevelopment/policy/equalities/Ach_action_plan/view