
REPORT TO:	FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	18 JUNE 2009	CATEGORY: DELEGATED OPEN
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES	DOC:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	LAKBIR BASI (01283 595822) Lakbir.basi@south-derbys.gov.uk	REF: LB
SUBJECT:	CORPORATE EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS SCHEME 2008-2011 – ANNUAL REPORT	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM05
WARD (S) AFFECTED:	All	

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Elected Members approve the actions listed in **Appendix A** to progress to 'Achieving' status under the revised National Equality framework by March 2010.
- 1.2 To note the key Achievements and outcomes from the Corporate Equality Fairness Scheme for the year ending March 2009.
- 1.3 That Members note the publication of the New Equality Framework for Local Government.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To report progress made on the Council's Equality and Fairness Scheme and action plan and to propose actions to move towards 'Achieving' status under the revised National Equality framework. A copy of the Scheme is available from the Council's intranet – click on:
http://harvey/corporate/organisationaldevelopment/policy/equalities/Equality_and_Fairness/view.
- 2.2 The Council's progress on addressing equality issues within the workforce is a new requirement of the Use of Resources Assessment completed by the External Auditor. The actions detailed in this report will evidence continued progress in this area.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Elected Members will be aware the Council published its Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme in April 2008. This single scheme brought together the already published Disability, Gender and Race Equality schemes and included plans to tackle discrimination and harassment on the basis of age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- 3.2 This was developed following extensive consultation with our employees, service

users, partners and other stakeholders. A key change was renaming our scheme to include the word 'fairness'. This reflected feedback from the people we consulted who considered that this presented a clearer intention on our part to treating people fairly in everything we do as a service provider, employer and leader of the community.

- 3.3 The Council adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government in October 2003 as a framework to help with the consistent introduction of equalities and fairness in the way we provide services and employ people. The Equality Standard was developed to help councils achieve and maintain high standards of equality in employment and service delivery.
- 3.4 The Standard had 5 levels of achievement and the Council achieved level 2 of the standard in March 2008 and have a target of reaching level 3 by April 2010. This level determined that the Council had a robust approach to assessing needs/requirements and consulting with stakeholders on equality issues.
- 3.5 This report forms an update on the Council's equalities performance and progress towards reaching 'Achieving' status under the revised National Equality Framework that was introduced in April 2009.

4.0 Progress made during 2008/09

- 4.1 A detailed list of achievements against the action plan for the Corporate Equality and Fairness scheme are appended to this report. Outlined below are some of the key outcomes achieved during 2008/09.

Priority Actions

Several priority actions were identified when progress was reported last year and progress against these targets is listed below:

Priority Actions 2008/2009			
No	Action	Responsible Head of Service	Achievement to 31 March 2009
1.	Ensure a cross service Team of employees has been Trained to conduct Equality Impact Risk Assessments (EIRA)	Head of Organisational Development	A core group made up of employees from each service were trained in July 2008.
2.	Complete a pilot programme of EIRA for Housing and Organisation Development	Head of Housing Head of Organisational Development	Pilots completed and extended to include Financial Services
3.	Complete the development of a programme of EIRA for all services and begin conducting assessments in other service areas	Head of Organisational Development	Initial assessments in Housing, Personnel, Finance, Customer Services, IT.

No	Action	Responsible Head of Service	Achievement to 31 March 2009
4.	Rollout a programme to ensure all employees receive equality awareness training	Head of Organisational Development All Service Heads	Programme rolled out. 9 sessions delivered resulting in 105 employees trained.
5.	Begin work on improving how we collect information and monitor our services	All Service Heads	All services have amended their systems to ensure they gather equalities information.
6.	Begin work on improving how we consult and engage with stakeholders	Head of Organisational Development	Several consultation exercises conducted throughout the year, leading to service improvements. Polish included as a standard translation on Council documents.

4.2 Section 8 of the Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme sets out the Council's corporate equality targets. These targets were developed through a consultation and engagement process with a range of external and internal stakeholders during the drafting of the Corporate Scheme. The Corporate targets give services an opportunity to support the Council's Equality and Fairness agenda. Section 8 not only sets out the main corporate targets but also the Council's priorities for the first year of the scheme. A more comprehensive list of targets and how services have met them can be found in **Appendix B**.

Priorities targets for 2008/09

4.3 An example of how we've achieved each target is detailed below:

- **Improving how we consult and engage with stakeholders;**

Disability Discrimination Act 2005 - Access audit commissioned for Eureka Park where consultations took place with SDCVS, "Walking for Health" group and Friends of Eureka Park. The consultant, a wheelchair user, conducted a full audit of the park accompanied with SDCVS and the Friends Of group. He looked at every aspect of the park, from parking, footpaths, buildings to play areas, seating and signage. The report produced a series of recommendations, both corporate and park-based, to comply with the DDA and various legislation.

Other examples include the Council conducting Youth and Older Peoples' needs surveys which were used to develop services and service user at Rosliston Forestry Centre helping test and advise on potential purchase of an all terrain mobility scooter.

The Housing Tenants Forum is made up of council tenants and is regularly consulted on service issues.

- **Improving how we collect information and monitor our services**

All services have been looking at ways of finding out more about the people who use our services. One way has been to ask service users to provide information about their age, disability or not, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This has been achieved through surveys and questionnaires or where they have accessed or applied for our services. In the past year a section asking for equalities information has been added to several application forms and questionnaires including:

- Healthy Lifestyles Questionnaire
- Planning Decisions
- Local Development Framework
- Customer Services Monitoring
- Private Sector Housing Monitoring
- Older Peoples and Young Peoples Needs Surveys
- Housing Services Tenants Surveys
- Housing BME Survey
- Housing Repairs Satisfaction Forms

- **Raising awareness about equality and diversity issues amongst our workforce**

In the past year we have organised a series of training events for our employees and as a result all new employees have received equalities awareness training. Training sessions for other staff have also been organised and for the year ending, 31 March 2009, 105 staff have attended the awareness training. An ongoing programme of training has been developed to ensure that every employee receives awareness training.

A series of Staff Briefings have also been produced during the year to keep employees aware of developments in equalities and fairness including briefings on:

- Achieving Level 2 of the Equality Standard
- A new Hate Incidents Reporting Procedure
- The launch of the Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme

The role of Corporate Equality and Fairness Group was reviewed which provided a refocus for the Group

Three training and awareness events were organised for and attended by 28 Elected Members.

A team of employees made up of volunteers from each service were trained on how to conduct equality impact risk assessments.

The development of the Equality Impact Risk Assessments Framework and accompanying documentation to be used in assessments.

Services received support and advice on developing equalities monitoring systems so that service delivery could be monitored

- **Putting in place ways to reduce disability, gender and race inequality**

amongst our workforce

- The Council has approved an Equal Pay Policy and is completing a formal Pay & Grading Review in partnership with the Trades Unions.
 - Retention of the two ticks disability symbol
 - Continued working with external stakeholders to develop approach towards equality issues
 - Working with Occupational Health services to identify adjustments to enable employees with a health problem or disability to remain at work. This includes the provision of various resources and adaptations.
 - Completed Equality Impact Risk Assessment on all employment policies
 - Implemented Leadership and Management programmes open to all employees to encourage development opportunities from those under represented at certain levels within the Council.
- **Completing a programme of equality impact assessments for our policies and practices where they affect people.**

During the past year a group made up of employees from each service, were trained to carry out equality impact assessments. A programme of pilots was agreed and initial assessments were done for Housing, Personnel and Finance. The outcomes of these assessments have been reported to the Values and Attitudes Forum and the Corporate Equality and Fairness Group. The assessments will be published on the Council website and intranet site.

5.0 Looking ahead – a new framework, same challenge?

- 5.1 The Equality and Fairness Scheme Action Plan will be rolled forward so the Council can continue to progress under the National Equality framework by March 2010.

Equality Framework for Local Government

- 5.2 The Improvement and Development Agency published a new Equality Framework for Local Government in March 2009. The new Framework builds on the previous Standard but contains many new features and aspires to be simpler, smarter, proportional and relevant. It is based on 3 levels rather than the 5 levels for the Standard. The levels are

- Developing
- Achieving
- Excellent

- 5.3 The framework recognises the work Councils have already undertaken under the Standard and there are arrangements to retain progress already achieved. For South Derbyshire this means when we achieve Level 3 under the old standard we will be able to migrate over to the New Framework at the 'Achieving' Level.
- 5.4 The priority for the year ahead is to ensure we meet our target to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and begin to put in place changes to ensure we comply with the new Equality Framework. A revised action plan to achieve this is shown at **Appendix A**.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 There are likely to be financial implications associated with a number of the actions set out in the Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme (training for example), however these will be contained within existing budgets.

7.0 Corporate Implications

7.1 The Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme sets down the Council's approach and will underpin all the key priorities within the Corporate Plan.

7.2 Ensuring fair and equal treatment both in employment and services is a fundamental right for people and the Council accepts its responsibility both as an employer and community leader.

7.3 Information, training and advice to support the implementation of the Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme will be provided by the Organisational Development Unit.

8.0 Community Implications

8.1 Having fair and equal access to services based on an assessment of need and proportionality has to be provided to members of the community. The Council has to understand and recognise the diversity within the community and appreciate why and how differences or needs can be best served.

8.2 Having actively engaged key stakeholders with the development of the Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme, publicising our progress and achievements is important. This will be done through established networks already in place such as the Value & Attitudes Group, chaired by Councillor Mrs Patten, as well as working with partner organisations such as the CVS.

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 The Council continues to make positive progress in line with the Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme and will put in place our plans to ensure we treat everyone fairly regardless of gender, race, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation. The Scheme will set out how we intend to tackle unfair discrimination, harassment and promote equality of opportunity for everyone. The Scheme will form the basis of our programme of promoting equity, fairness and diversity across the organisation and the wider community.

10.0 Background papers

National Equality Framework for Local Government:

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=9491107>

Appendix A

Equality Framework For Local Government 'Achieving' Level Action Plan

No.	Action	Target	Timescale	Responsibility
1.0	Equality impact assessments are used as part of the process of setting equality objectives. Equality objectives are subject to consultation with Equality and Fairness Group and Values and Attitudes Forum.	Ensure that all departments and service areas set targets based on equality objectives devised through completed impact assessments and participation of designated community, staff and stakeholder groups	31 March 2010	All Service Areas
2.0	Once objectives are set work commences to achieve targets.	Ensure that action on achieving targets has started	31 March 2010	All Service Areas
3.0	Agree with services a reporting timetable for equalities data collected for services.	Set timetable within action plans for creating/adapting information and monitoring systems within service areas	30 September 2009	Head of Organisational Development
4.0	Revise equality awareness training to include details about new Equality Framework and Equality Bill.	Provide training for all staff on the detailed implementation of the Equality Standard including action plans and updates on legal and other developments	30 June 2009	Head of Organisational Development

Appendix A

Equality Framework For Local Government 'Achieving' Level Action Plan

No.	Action	Target	Timescale	Responsibility
5.0	Provide training to Equality and Fairness Group and Values and Attitudes Forum on the new Equality Framework, the public duties to promote equality and action planning.	Provide information and appropriate training on action plans to support scrutiny process	30 November 2009	Head of Organisational Development
6.0	All contractors are made aware of Council's Equality and Fairness policies and procedures	For agencies delivering services on behalf of the local authority, include within contracts a requirement to deliver an effective and appropriate service, fairly and without unlawful discrimination	30 November 2009	Head of IT and Business Improvement
7.0	Identify managers and contractor staff and earmark for equalities training. Deliver training as appropriate.	Provide training for managers on the implementation of the Standard with contractors and partners	30 November 2009	Head of IT and Business Improvement Head of Organisational Development
8.0	Provide Contractors with Council's monitoring categories for monitoring contractor workforce and service provision.	Establish monitoring of contracts to secure equal employment and equal service delivery targets	30 June 2009	Head of IT and Business Improvement
9.0	Analyse workforce profile data and population data for South Derbyshire District	Set employment equality targets for recruitment, staff retention, and workforce profiles in terms of the six equality strands.	30 November 2009	Head of Organisational Development

Appendix B

Achievement against the Corporate Equality Targets

1.0 Consult and involve service users, employees and other organisations in our work on equality and fairness.

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
<p>Disability Discrimination Act audit for Eureka Park. Consultations took place with South Derbyshire CVS, "Walking for Health" group and Friends of Eureka Park. The consultant, a wheelchair user himself, conducted a full audit of the park accompanied with SDCVS and the 'Friends Of' group. He looked at every aspect of the park, from parking, footpaths, buildings to play areas, seating and signage. The report produced a series of recommendations, both corporate and park-based, to comply with the recommendations of DDA and various legislation.</p>	<p>Head of Leisure and Community Development</p>
<p>Youth and Older Peoples Needs Surveys conducted to determine user needs and were used to develop services.</p>	<p>Head of Leisure and Community Development</p>
<p>A service user at Rosliston Forestry Centre helped test and advise on the potential purchase of an all terrain mobility scooter.</p>	<p>Head of Leisure and Community Development</p>

2.0 Provide services that are inclusive, responsive and accessible to everyone.

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
Translation Strapline - working with our partners to determine what translation needs we have in the district, we amended our translation strapline to make council documents available in Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Polish, Punjabi and Urdu on request.	All Heads of Service
The Council purchased a Portable Hearing Loop for use by community groups. The portable hearing Loop was handed over to South Derbyshire CVS who loan out the equipment for use by groups.	Head of Organisational Development
Respite care and disabled facilities for overnight accommodation at Rosliston Forestry Centre.	Head of Leisure and Community Development
Sports coaching sessions for disabled people and supported walking schemes for groups e.g. 50+ groups, BME and disabled peoples groups.	Head of Leisure and Community Development
For the annual election canvass the canvassers are supplied with a script which translates the requirements into various languages. Also anyone who chooses to register by telephone has the option to listen to the requirements in six different languages.	Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
Our website has been revised to make it clearer and easier to navigate. The Council also has 5 Kiosks at various sites around the District to provide access to our website.	Head of IT and Business Improvement
Customer Services Visiting Officer visited 8 residents of a Residential Care Home in Church Gresley and completed National Travel Card applications for them. She was also able to take their photographs and provide a complete service. These residents are now able to travel on local buses free of charge with the help of relatives and carers.	Head of Customer Services
Two Polish customers visited the offices with an interpreter, these customers were also hearing impaired. The interpreter was under the impression that the customers needed to complete a housing form but through signing to the interpreter and with assistance from customer service staff it was a Rent Deposit Scheme application that they needed. Customer Services Staff were able to give correct and helpful information to the two customers.	Head of Customer Services

3.0 Tackling Harassment and Victimisation

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
Developed a new Hate Incidents Reporting Procedure and added training about Hate Incidents to the Equalities awareness training	Head of Organisational Development. Head of Customer Services
Publicised and provided support for the 'Stop Hate Crime' 24 Hour Helpline	Head of Leisure and Community Development

4.0 Make Sure that equality and fairness is central to our decisions about policies and services

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
Conducted Initial Equality Impact Assessments, the results of these assessments will in some cases result in changes to policies to ensure better equality outcomes.	All Heads of Service.
A full equality impact assessment of the Policy on Fees and Charges has resulted in a change where promoting equalities is a factor that can now be used when setting level of fees and charges.	Head of Finance and Property Services

5.0 Promote positive images of the varied roles played by men and women, disabled people and black and ethnic minority people in our community

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
Disabled Sportsperson award is included in the South Derbyshire sports award evening.	Head of Leisure and Community Development

6.0 Reduce Inequality within our workforce

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
The Council has approved an Equal Pay Policy and has completed work on a Pay & Grading Review in partnership with the Trades Unions.	Head of Organisational Development.
Retention of the two ticks disability symbol	Head of Organisational Development.
Working with Occupational Health services to identify adjustments to enable employees with a disability to remain at work. This includes the provision of various resources and adaptations.	Head of Organisational Development.
Completed EIRA on all employment policies used by the Council	Head of Organisational Development.
Implemented Leadership and Management programmes open to all employees to encourage development opportunities from those under represented at certain levels within the Council.	Head of Organisational Development.

7.0 Improve awareness of equality issues within our organisation

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
In the past year we have organised a series of training events for our employees and as a result all new employees have received equalities awareness training. Training sessions for other staff have also been organised and for the year ending, 31 March 2009, 105 staff have attended the awareness training. An ongoing programme of training has been developed ensure every employee receives awareness training.	Head of Organisational Development.
A series of Staff Briefings have also been produced during the year to keep employees aware of developments in equalities and fairness including briefings on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieving Level 2 of the Equality Standard ○ A new Hate Incidents Reporting Procedure The launch of the Corporate Equality and Fairness Scheme	Head of Organisational Development.
The role of Corporate Equality and Fairness Group was reviewed which provided a refocus for the Group	Head of Organisational Development.
Three training and awareness events were organised and attended by 28 Elected Members.	Head of Legal & Democratic Services.
A team of employees made up of volunteers from each service have been trained on how to conduct equality impact risk assessments.	All Heads of Service
The development of the Equality Impact Risk Assessments Framework and accompanying documentation to be used in assessments.	Head of Organisational Development.
Services received support and advice on developing equalities monitoring systems so that service delivery could be monitored.	Head of Organisational Development.

8.0 Make sure when we buy goods and services and when we work with other organisations, we make a positive contribution to equality

Achievement to 31 March 2009	Responsible Head of Service
Revised the Procurement Strategy to ensure equalities is taken into account when procuring goods and services	Head of IT and Business Improvement