

Appendix1

Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services Directorate

Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2007/08

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Adult, Community and Housing Services Directorate, along with all Directorates of the Council, produce an Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan. This sets out how the Directorate will implement the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and Equality Scheme in relation to its responsibilities, service areas and employment practices during the year. The plan is submitted to the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care, before approval by the appropriate Cabinet Member.
- 1.2 Progress with implementing the Action Plans is reported in Equality and Diversity Annual Reports. The Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services annual report for 2006/07 will be submitted to the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care at its first meeting of the 2007/08 Municipal Year.
- 1.3 This Action Plan covers the period from April 2007 to March 2008. The Plan 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

2. Relationship with other Plans

- 2.1 This Action Plan will form part of the overall Strategic Plan for the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services for 2007/08. The strategic plan responds to the Borough's Community Strategy 2005-15 and the three-year Council plan.
- 2.2 The overall long-term, policy framework for equality and diversity is set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Equality Scheme provides the three-year Equality Strategy and Action Plan for the Council. (The combined scheme consisting of the Disability Equality Scheme, published in December 2006, a revised Race Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme required to be published by 30th April 2007, is being prepared for publication in April 2007.)

2.3 Overall progress in implementing the Equality Scheme will be reported in the Annual review of equality and diversity

3. Vision and Values

3.1 The Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services mission statement is

“We will help people to lead fulfilled and independent lives in homes of their choice in safe and active communities”

As part of Dudley Council, the Directorate of Adult, Housing and Community Services is committed to providing the best quality public services for local people and creating opportunities for local people to succeed. As a council, we recognise and value the diversity of backgrounds, skills and needs within the Borough. We work hard to respond to these needs and serve the different people of Dudley fairly and efficiently to improve quality of life for everyone. Dudley Council will:

- **Listen** to what local people say
- **Respond** to what they tell us
- **Be accountable** to local people for our performance
- Provide **value** for money

As a Directorate, we will contribute to the main aims of the Council Action Plan under the six themes and embrace the leadership values in all that we do in *Caring Matters; Environment Matters; Learning Matters; Regeneration Matters; Safety Matters; Quality Service Matters*.

3.2 The Directorate consists of 3184 staff as at 31st December 2006 and is organised into the following divisions:

- Building Services
- Housing Management
- Learning Disabilities and Mental Health
- Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning
- Older People and People with Physical Disabilities
- Policy, Performance and Resources
- Housing Strategy and Private Sector Housing

3.3 Within the Directorate, all employees have a responsibility to comply with the requirements of the Council's and the Directorate'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.

All employees in the Directorate have at least an annual performance review and development discussion with their line managers where training and development needs are identified.

- 3.4 Specific responsibility for promoting Equality and Diversity in employment and services within the Directorate rests with all Divisional Heads. However, a Principal Corporate Housing Policy Officer within Strategy and Development, reporting to the Head of Service Strategy and Development, and a Policy Officer with Policy, Performance and Data Quality reporting to the Head of Service Equality and Diversity, are 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. Corporate Personnel, reporting to the Head of Personnel and Support Services, is responsible for equality and diversity in employment development work on behalf of both the Council and the Directorate and makes a key contribution to the Directorate's Policy and Action Plan. The two Training and Development Managers, reporting to the Head of Personnel and Support Services, are responsible for arranging or advising on appropriate training provision relating to equality and diversity across the Council and within the Directorate.

4. Key Issues and Targets

- 4.1 Whilst the priorities from the Action Plan are covered in more detail in the corporate driven template the significant issues and key direction of travel for the Directorate are by definition covered within the overarching priorities identified within The Equality Scheme.

- 4.2 The cornerstone of these priorities are as follows:-

a) Developing clearer targets and desired outcomes. The Directorate prides itself on its outcome measured service delivery infrastructure. The clarity of targets and outcomes will be a product of ensuring equality impact assessments are done in line with agreed guidelines; linked to a monitoring regime founded high quality information and vision to ensure robust strategic development. Impact assessments are planned across all key service areas with particular emphasis on ensuring full diversity monitoring data is extended to all key service delivery issues. (See Priority 1.1 to 1.41)

b) Improving communications both externally and internally. This will be done in a manner that celebrates the success of the Directorate and the Council. Central to this will be the work to both increase the Registration of the Directorates workforce who are disabled in Conjunction with an awareness raising campaign for managers and employees of the Job Centre Plus Positive about Disabled People Status.

A further element of this priority will be work on improving signage, extending the telecare provision and improving the accessibility of Directorate service through closer links with Dudley Council Plus. An integral part of the Directorate's development planning will be efforts to promote volunteering

particularly those opportunities to enhance the involvement of disabled people in public life. The Directorate is now ideally placed both by its pivotal position and as the largest Directorate in the Council to play a significant facilitating and resource role. (See Priorities 2.1 to 2.12)

c) Improving approaches to consultation:- To ensure high satisfaction rates across all service issues then this will only be extended by understanding more clearly and in greater depth the diverse needs of our wide customer base. The Directorate will use the models of consultation it has used in the past and extend these across the wide range of Council service areas to ensure a consistency of approach and a clear direction of purpose. (See Priorities 3.1 to 3.13)

d) Identifying the relevant competencies required for managers and employees. Whilst many areas of the present Directorate have a proportion of staff in line with the population in Dudley there are significant areas in Housing Services where more work is required to meet the employee composition elsewhere within the Directorate. The Women into Construction programme and the work with DORCAS has been particularly significant in Building Services and this serves as a springboard to promote Housing Services as a high quality employer of choice. All appropriate staff will receive timely training and development opportunities to ensure Housing Services remain within the Commission of Racial Equality Code of Practice. (See Priorities 4.1 to 4.26)

4.3 In the Equality Scheme, the Directorate has also identified overall equality and diversity priorities for their service areas linked to the three years of the Scheme which are to be reflected in its action plans. The Equality Scheme 2007-08 priorities for the Directorate under key component areas are as follows:

1. **Older Peoples Services** – Home Care Services
 - Residential Services
2. **Physical Disabilities** – Strategy for Physical and Sensory Impairments
3. **Policy, Performance and Resources** – Statutory (Social Care) Complaints
4. **Learning Disabilities and Mental Health services** – Raising employment potential
5. **Housing Services** – Data monitoring and employment issues
6. **Libraries Archives and Adult Learning**– Promoting the cultural, social heritage and extending Adult Learning Provisions in the Borough.

4.4 These key issues have been used as a framework for the Plan. It should be noted that within the Equality Scheme the Gender Equality elements are currently being developed in time to meet the statutory deadline for the publication of a Gender Equality Scheme of 30th April 2007.

4.5 The Race Equality Scheme is also being redrafted in order to incorporate this within the overall Equality Scheme. This Directorate Action Plan therefore largely reflects the actions in the Disability Equality Scheme published in December 2006 covering general equality and disability equality actions. (Entries on the Action Plan are cross-referenced with

actions identified in the Equality Scheme.) Future directorate action plans will be able to reflect the Equality Scheme in full.

4.6 The Disability Equality Scheme was developed with the involvement of disabled customers and employees, particularly Action for Disabled People, Carers and the Employees with Disabilities Group.

5. The Action Plan

5.1 The action plan is set out in the following tables. A new template for these has been adopted for the 2007/08 action plans to match that used for other strategic planning in the Council, particularly the Council Plan and Directorate Strategic Plans, in order to promote integration and coordination of planning and performance management arrangements.

Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services
March 2007

