

Meeting of the Cabinet – 21st September 2005

Report of the Director of Law and Property

Annual Review of Equality and Diversity 2005

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the attached Annual review of equality and diversity for 2005.

Background

2. An annual review of equality and diversity is prepared for the Cabinet and the Select Committee on Economic Regeneration, in response to its lead scrutiny role on equality and diversity, considered the attached report at its meeting on 8th September 2005. The report is the fourth such review prepared for the Cabinet and gives an overview of progress in implementing the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, confirms Council-wide priorities and targets and summarises important developments in equality and diversity such as new legislation and its implementation.
3. The report also includes data on employment in relation to different racial groups which the Council is required to publish by the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001.
4. The Annual Review is supported by directorate annual equality and diversity action plans and annual reports, which set out plans for, and progress with, equality and diversity work in individual service areas.

Finance

5. Any additional financial implications arising from actions taken in response to the report, which will not be met through existing budgets, will need to be identified in due course.

Law

6. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 replaces Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 with 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.

7. 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 will extend this Act by introducing a new duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
8. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. In particular, Section 25 makes it unlawful for the Council in providing facilities or services (such as those arising pursuant to the statutory functions of the Council) to discriminate against any person seeking to obtain or use those facilities or services on the grounds of gender.
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 or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

10. The attached report contains a range of information, monitoring data and analysis relating to the impact of the Council's policies and practices on promoting equality and diversity.

Recommendation

11. It is recommended that:
 - The Cabinet approves the attached annual review of equality and diversity.

John Polychronakis

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John Polychronakis
Director of Law and Property

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List of Background Papers: The Equality Standard for Local Government Guidance notes 1 and 2