

DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

2005/ 2006

(a) Introduction/Purpose Of Plan

This Plan sets out the main actions that the Directorate intends to undertake to implement the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and develop fairer and more equitable services during 2005/2006, The plan is informed by and in accordance with national, corporate and Directorate priorities.

The action plan is structured in 4 parts:

- Corporate Equality Targets
- Directorate Priorities
- Service Delivery issues
- Employment issues

This Directorate fully supports the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and this is demonstrated in the aims of the Directorate Strategic Plan and Divisional Business Plans. The Directorate recognises the key role that equality and diversity plays in reducing social exclusion and ensuring fair access to services, where equality of opportunity is a reality for everyone. The work of the Directorate of Social Services is rooted in the values of inclusivity, social inclusion and empowerment.

The Directorate has an Equality and Diversity Steering Group, chaired by the Assistant Director for Business Services, with representatives from all divisions. This group has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of this Action Plan.

b) Relationship With Other Plans

This plan is a Level 3 Plan within the Council's hierarchy of plans. The contents of this plan reflect the:

- Council Plan
- Directorate Strategic Plan
- Directorate Improvement and Modernisation Plan

The content is reflected in the Divisional Performance Plans of the Directorate. This plans builds on the achievements of the action plan for 2004/05. A full annual report will be made of the 2004/05 Plan in the summer of 2005.

However, some of the achievements that can be identified at this time are:

- “Inside-Outside” completed and forum set up for improving services to BME communities
- Appointed specialist advocacy worker to Dudley Advocacy
- Increased access for BME communities to Meals on Wheels
- Monies released for Yemeni and African-Caribbean communities to access day services
- Carers strategy addresses gaps from “We care too” recommendations
- Consultation on multi agency strategy for children with disabilities completed
- BME workers forum re-established

(c) Vision and Values

The Directorate is responsible for the assessment and provision of services to a wide range of service users and carers. It employs over 2200 members of staff across four divisions

- Adult Services – Older People and Physical Disability,
- Adult Services – Learning Disability and Mental Health,
- Children & Families
- Business Services.

N.B. From April 05 Mental Health Services will be an integrated service, with lead responsibility lying with Beacon and Castle PCT

The Directorate’s aim is

‘to ensure the best possible social care services for the people of Dudley Borough to protect and support those most in need’.

In pursuit of this aim the Directorate will: -

- Give people a say in how services are delivered
- Value the work and contribution of staff and carers
- Work in partnership with other agencies and community groups
- Treat people fairly

It is expected that equality and diversity activity will be integrated fully into the mainstream business planning of the Directorate. The resources of the Directorate, across each division are available to support the promotion of equality and diversity in all the Directorate activities.

The Directorate's continued ambitions are that:

- services should be culturally appropriate for the communities it serves
- services should be culturally competent in terms of design
- services should be delivered by culturally competent workers
- the makeup of its workforce should reflect as closely as possible the make up of the Dudley Borough community. (As at 31st December 2004 7.27% of the Directorate staff were B.M.E. This compares with 6.8% of Dudley Borough residents who were B.M.E. as at 2001 Census)

The Directorate recognises the key role that equality and diversity initiatives play in promoting social inclusion and ensuring fair access to services.

The work of the Directorate's Equality & Diversity Steering Group will be supported by a training sub-group. It is recognised that there are both existing and emerging communities of interest to whom the Steering Groups need to relate. The steering group works to D.M.T. agreed terms of reference and reports, as a minimum, twice yearly to D.M.T.

The steering group recognises that there is a strong link between the work of the Group and the Council's leadership role for Community Cohesion. The Director of Social Services has the corporate lead for Community Cohesion and wherever appropriate the group will support the progression of the Community Cohesion agenda.

The Directorate is also supporting the further development of appropriate forums for Black workers. Such forums have direct access to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group and Directorate Management Team.

(d) Key Issues and Targets

The performance management of the Directorate is driven and framed within the national Performance Assessment Framework (PAF). Directorate plans identify activity that supports continued and improving performance against the prescribed performance indicators. Performance against these indicators is reported to Divisional Management Groups and the Directorate Management Team on a quarterly basis for monitoring purposes. Those relevant to the equality and diversity agenda are: -

- PAF D54 (BVPI56) KT: Percentage of items of equipment and adaptations delivered within 7 days
2003-04 Outturn= 73% 4 Blob Rating
- PAF E45: Ethnicity of children in need. The ratio of the proportion of children in need that were from minority ethnic groups to the proportion of children in the local population that were from minority ethnic groups
2003-04 Outturn= 1.2 3 Blob Rating (maximum rating)

- PAF E47: Ethnicity of adults and older people receiving assessment
2003-04 Outturn= 1.07 3 Blob Rating (maximum rating)
- PAF E48: Ethnicity of adults and older people receiving services following assessment
2003-04 Outturn= 1.15 No Blob Rating yet
- PAF E67: Children in need with disabilities
2003-04 Outturn= no data available yet
- PAF C29: Adults aged 18-64 with physical disabilities helped to live at home
2003-04 Outturn= 4.2 3 Blob Rating
- PAF C30: Adults aged 18-64 with learning disabilities helped to live at home
2003-04 Outturn= 3 5 Blob Rating
- PAF C31: Adults aged 18-64 with mental health problems helped to live at home
2003-04 Outturn= 2.8 5 Blob Rating

The Directorate Management Team recognises the need to recruit, train and maintain a diverse workforce in order to respond to the needs of diverse communities. The Directorate's Human Resource Strategy identifies measures aimed at attracting, developing and retaining a skilled and committed workforce. The role of the Workforce Planning and Development Board is critical in supporting the progression of agreed priorities including Equality & Diversity priorities.

In pursuit of the ambitions outlined in section C, the Directorate has identified service areas and priorities for 2005/06. These areas and priorities reflect the modernisation agenda for social care and the Directorate's intention that equality and diversity considerations should be at the heart of all our modernisation activity.

CORPORATE EQUALITY TARGETS

Employment Issues

- To work towards targets established for employees from Black and minority ethnic communities and disabled employees in all directorates
- To audit employees to enable them to declare whether or not they regard themselves as meeting the statutory definition of disability
- To achieve a figure of at least 96.5% of employees who have declared their ethnic origin

Equality Standard

- To develop the application of the standard within the Directorate in line with the agreed way forward for the council achieving level 2 and working towards level 3

Race Equality Scheme

- To complete service reviews set out in year 3 of the scheme by 31st May 05
- Complete a review of the scheme and publish a revised scheme
- Implement R.E.S. Action Plan for 2005/06

BVP2B

- To achieve an improved score against the best value corporate health performance indicator on equality BVPI2B “The duty to promote race equality”

Disability Issues

- To implement the actions contained within the council’s Disability Access Strategy

DIRECTORATE PRIORITIES

Culturally Sensitive Service Provision

- To provide culturally sensitive services
- To improve the availability of culturally appropriate care at home services for people within the full range of communities represented within the borough
- To commission culturally sensitive services delivered by BME providers

Translation and Interpretation

- To develop the business of the service taking full account of the council’s Access to Services initiative

Partnership Working

- To progress the foyer initiative
- To establish a Reviewing Officer post for disabled children

Consultation

- To maintain dialogue with Community Reps. Panel
- To maintain consultation with BME communities
- To ensure on-going dialogue with minority communities about all aspects of services to Children and Families
- To consult with users and carers on issues affecting disabled people

SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES

Training

- To enhance services for looked after children from BME groups and disabled children through provision of training and information

Carers

- To increase the number of carers receiving an assessment and carer specific services and address the issues from the “We Care Too” report and recommendations
- To ensure BME communities are aware of their responsibilities regarding private fostering

Housing with Care

- To support the provision of Extra Care Sheltered Housing

Local Public Service Agreement

- To achieve targets identified in Local Public Service Agreement

Direct Payments

- To increase the take up of Direct Payments among BME service users

Improvement of Mental Health Service for the BME Communities

- To monitor and extend ethnic composition of staff in mainstream services i.e. PCT and SSD to ensure that workforce is representative and culturally competent

Domestic Violence

- To work with Dudley’s Women’s Refuges to implement new information systems
- To work with Dudley Women’s refuges to undertake a DDA audit of their facilities
- To review domestic violence children in need data

Enhancement of Learning Disability Service

- To improve access of LD services to BME communities.
- To secure greater presence of BME issues on the agenda of Learning Disability Board in particular addressing unmet need
- To further develop leadership skills in Learning Disabilities and BME issues and services (Leadership Support Programme)
- To Prioritise service of Apna Group, Ehsas Carers and Dudley Advocacy’s BME project
- To maximise resources for BME Learning Disabled people and Carers

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Workforce

- To ensure that the training provided supports the objectives of the Equality and Diversity plan
- To enhance skill mix and further promote multi-skilling and cultural awareness
- To improve the recruitment of male workers within social care

- To improve the recruitment of disabled staff
- To undertake 'Race Equality through Leadership' audit