

**Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education –
5 March 2008**

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

**Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Action
Plan for 2008/ 2009**

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Directorate of the Urban Environment's annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009.

Background

2. The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy requires all Directorates to produce, on an annual basis, an Equality and Diversity Action Plan.
3. The Directorate of the Urban Environment's Action Plan is presented for scrutiny in two parts. The first part, which is the Action Plan itself, is required to be submitted to this Select Committee and covers:
 - Relationship with other plans;
 - Visions and values;
 - Key issues and targets;
 - Action plan summary.
4. The second part is the Annual Report, which will be presented for scrutiny to this Select Committee in the new municipal year. The Annual Report will cover achievements against the previous year's Equality and Diversity Action Plan.
5. Overview and scrutiny of corporate equality and diversity issues is included in the terms of reference of the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education. Select Committee chairmen have agreed that scrutiny of individual directorate's action plans be split up amongst the five committees.
6. The draft Equality and Diversity Action Plan has been considered by the Directorate Management Team. Following scrutiny it will be approved by the appropriate cabinet member before publication.

Finance

7. Any costs associated with implementing the Action Plan will be met from existing Directorate budgets.

Law

8. 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.
9. 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 has extended this Act with a duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
10. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. In particular, Section 29 makes it unlawful for the Council, in providing activities 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. A new duty on public authorities to promote gender equality under the Equality Act 2006 came into force on 6 April 2007.
11. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

12. The Action Plan sets out proposed actions for promoting and progressing equality and diversity work in the Directorate of the Urban Environment during 2008/ 2009. Performance indicators or outcomes are identified against each target so that progress in achieving the Action Plan can be monitored and reviewed. Issues relating to children and young people are covered in more detail in the Directorate of Children's Services Action Plan.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that:

- Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education considers and comments on the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009.
- Any outstanding actions arising from the review of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2007/ 2008 are incorporated into the 2008/ 2009 Equality and Diversity Action Plan.
- Receive, in mid-2008 from the Directorate of the Urban Environment an Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2007/ 2008, detailing information on the implementation of the objectives outlined in the attached Action Plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Millar'. The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial 'J' and a cursive 'M'.

John Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

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List of Background Papers

Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Action
Plan for 2008/ 2009

Directorate of the Urban Environment

Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Equality and Diversity Action Plan sets out the Directorate of the Urban Environment's objectives for the year 2008/ 2009, for implementing the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. It includes the Directorate's objectives, as well as addressing Equality and Diversity issues existent due to relevant legislation, and taking into consideration the corporate objectives outlined in the Equality Scheme.
- 1.2 All of the targets within the Action Plan relate, and contribute to the six themes contained within the Council Plan.
- 1.3 The Directorate of the Urban Environment is a large Directorate, carrying out a number of diverse functions, which are:

Culture & Leisure

Culture & Tourism
Sport & Physical Activity
Museums, Parks & Amenities

Planning & Environmental Health

Planning
Environmental Health & Trading Standards

Economic Regeneration & Transportation

Economic Regeneration Strategy
Economic Regeneration Delivery
Engineering, Traffic & Transportation

Environmental Management

Street & Green Care
Waste Care

Underpinning these functions, are the relevant policy and support services, a number of which are included within the Policy and Executive Support Team.

- 1.4 A review of the Directorate's achievements against the objectives detailed in its 2007/ 2008 Action Plan will be included in the Equality and Diversity Annual Report, submitted to Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education in summer of this year.

2 Relationship with other plans

- 2.1 The Directorate's Action Plan forms part of the Authority's response to how it will deal with equality and diversity objectives. The priorities and targets relate and contribute, where relevant, to the Council Plan.
- 2.2 The principles and objectives of the Action Plan are also integrated into Service Plans within the Directorate of the Urban Environment, and may be subject to scrutiny as part of external inspection processes.
- 2.3 This action plan will form part of the overall strategic plan for the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

3 Visions and Values

- 3.1 The Directorate supports all aspects of the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, and will take action to implement the Policy both in terms of employment practices and service provision.
- 3.2 All employees of the Directorate have an individual responsibility to comply with the relevant legislation, policies and procedures relating to equality and diversity. This responsibility is applied in the Directorate's dealings with Members, other employees, job applicants, residents, service users, other members of the public and external organisations. Specific responsibilities for ensuring equality and diversity, in both employment and service provision, rests with the Directorate's Management Team, and all Heads of Service, with the support of the Directorate's Principal Personnel Officers. The Head of Policy and Executive Support, a member of the Directorate's Management Team, has the responsibility for co-ordinating this work across the Directorate.
- 3.3 In attempting to ensure that equality and diversity is mainstreamed into service provision, employees of the Directorate undertake relevant training and development in these areas. Information is initially provided as part of an on-site induction, so that employees are immediately made aware of equality and diversity issues, and the role individuals play in extending it into service provision. Other training and development for employees includes recruitment and selection training (which includes information on equality and diversity issues). Refresher training is also offered, ensuring that such employees remain updated in their knowledge and skills.

4 **Key issues and targets for 2008/ 2009**

The Council's overall equality and diversity commitment is set out in the Equality and Diversity Policy, and the Equality Scheme details the Council's Action Plan for promoting equality and diversity objectives.

4.1 The Directorate's priorities in formulating its 2008/ 2009 Action Plan are based around the following key issues (attached as appendix).

(1) **Equality Scheme**

The Directorate Action Plan is linked to the Corporate Equality Scheme, which sets out the Council's approach to promoting equality and diversity across all its services and employment. Our identified actions for 2008/ 2009 therefore look to help achieve and develop some key priorities identified within the Equality Scheme:

- Improve access to buildings and information
(Priorities 2, 3, 4 & 7 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009);
- Improve consultation and engagement processes with disabled people
(Priorities 3, 4, 7, 8 & 9 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009);
- Improve communications around what we do and why
(Priorities 4, 6 & 7 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009);
- Improve the cultural competencies of employees
(Priority 5 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009);
- Improve consultation and engagement processes with BME communities
(Priority 7 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009).

(2) **Equality Impact Assessments**

An impact assessment is a systematic and thorough way of appraising a service and the impact that it will have on different groups and communities. The aim of an impact assessment is to ensure that policies and services are not unfair or discriminatory in the way that they impact on different groups in the community.

Further to the Race Equality Impact Assessments completed in previous years, the Directorate has a programme of full impact assessments for 2008/ 2009 (one for each Division of the Directorate) ***(Priority 1 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009)***, with a further ongoing prioritised programme of impact assessments to be determined for future years. The Equality Impact Assessments to take place between April 2008 and March 2009 are:

- Equality Standard for Sport (to achieve intermediate level)
- Food Safety & Communicable Disease Services
- Business Support – Economic Regeneration Strategy
- Recycling

These are services that have been prioritised for a full impact assessment as they have been identified as having a significant effect on the public.

(3) **Directorate Equality and Diversity Priorities for 2006-2009**

The Directorate has identified its overall Equality and Diversity Priorities for 2006-2009. Promoting equality and diversity and ensuring that the Directorate has employees who have the necessary skills and abilities to deliver the vision and priorities are key components, and the 2008/ 2009 Action Plan objectives reflect this.

- Seek to improve the number of employees in the Directorate with a disability, from a BME background, or who are female
(Priorities 6 and 7 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009);
- Continuation of the Directorate's Disability Consultation Group, which proactively seeks the involvement of the Borough's disabled residents in the delivery of Directorate services;
- To improve the usage of leisure and sports facilities by people with a disability
(Priority 2 – Action Plan for 2008/ 2009);
- To continue to raise awareness of people from a BME background to the services offered by Trading Standards and Environmental Health;
- To increase the participation of young people from minority ethnic communities in the Prince's Trust Team, Business and XL clubs;
- Briefing of all Senior Managers within the Directorate regarding relevant employment legislation relating to equality and diversity and its impact on employees.

4.2 The Directorate's specific objectives for 2008/ 2009 relating to equality and diversity are detailed in this Action Plan.

4.3 Particular priority will be assigned to progressing work through the corporate Equality and Diversity Advisory Group; in particular we will support action plans put in place to progress with the Equality Standard for Local Government and achieve the levels required.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The Directorate undertakes or is involved in a wide range of consultation about its services and strategic priorities. Members of the Directorate's Disability Consultation Group have been consulted regarding the proposed Action Plan. The Directorate Management Team has been involved in determining the priorities identified in this Action Plan.

6 Monitoring

- 6.1 Progress regarding the achievement of the objectives detailed in the Action Plan will be monitored, and reported to the Continuing Improvement Group and the Directorate's Management Team.

7 The Action Plan

- 7.1 The Action Plan is set out in the following tables. In response to comments from the Select Committee, a less complex presentation has been used than for the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2007/2008.

Directorate of the Urban Environment
February 2008

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p>Priority 1 Complete one equality impact assessment, as listed in Dudley MBC's Equality Scheme (ES 1.3) (one for each Division of the Directorate)</p> <p>Lead Officer – Andy Webb Lead Officer – Dolores Nellany Lead Officer – Chris Tompkins Lead Officer – Paul Edmunds</p>	<p>Complete impact assessments in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality Standard for Sport (to achieve intermediate level) - Food Safety & Communicable Disease Services - Business Support – Economic Regeneration Strategy - Recycling 	<p>March 2009 March 2009 March 2009 March 2009</p>	<p>Full impact assessments completed within the timescales</p> <p>Integration of identified actions into Service Plans</p> <p>Achievement of Equality Scheme objectives</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p align="center">Priority 2</p> <p>Increase access to and participation in cultural activity of Culture & Leisure</p> <p align="center">Lead Officer – Paul Dodge</p>	<p align="center">Complete Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) improvements at Crystal Leisure Centre, to ensure a fully compliant facility, including signage improvements in line with Access in Dudley advice</p> <p align="center">Complete DDA improvements at Dudley Leisure Centre, to ensure that the ground floor is fully compliant, including signage improvements in line with Access in Dudley advice</p> <p align="center">Complete DDA improvements at Halesowen Leisure Centre, to ensure high level of compliance, including signage improvements in line with Access in Dudley advice</p>	<p align="center">June 2008</p>	<p align="center">Delivery of programme of works within the timescales</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 3</p> <p>As a result of the Liveability assessment, examine the options for creating guidance notes for the design and implementation works, within parks and open spaces, to ensure improved access for all</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lead Officer – Sally Orton</p>	<p>Consult with relevant bodies in creating the guidance notes</p> <p>Create the guidance notes for the design and implementation works, within parks and open spaces, to ensure improved access for all</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">March 2009</p>	<p>Guidance notes for the design and implementation works, within parks and open spaces, created</p> <p>Guidance notes for the design and implementation works, within parks and open spaces, published</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 4</p> <p>Special schools (children with moderate learning disabilities) to participate in Survive Alive (Key Stage 2 Children’s Safety Activity Scheme) – including fire safety, railway safety, coastguard training, the police, in relation to anti-social behaviour, first aid training, recognising counterfeit products, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, and gas safety</p> <p>Lead Officer – Dolores Nellany</p>	<p>Invite 2 special schools (children with moderate learning disabilities) to participate in Survive Alive (Key Stage 2 Children’s Safety Activity Scheme)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>2 special schools (children with moderate learning disabilities) invited to participate in Survive Alive (Key Stage 2 Children’s Safety Activity Scheme)</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 5</p> <p>Training for Food Safety Enforcement employees, in relation to religious food awareness, to promote religious diversity when dealing with food business operators</p> <p>Lead Officer – Dolores Nellany</p>	<p>Ensure that training is specifically focused for target audience</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Number of employees who receive the religious food awareness training – minimum of 20 employees</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 6</p> <p>Increase the participation rates for the Lone Parent Programme Centre, in Dudley (run by Future Skills Dudley) – including engaging lone parents in gaining access to computers, newspapers, the internet, and access to employment, and looking at childcare when working</p> <p>Lead Officer – Angela Takyar</p>	<p>Promotional activity for the Lone Parent Programme with participants, and also Job Centre Plus – including coffee events at Future Skills Dudley site(s), to enable access to the site and resources</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Increased participation rates from lone parents – minimum of 50 per annum</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p align="center">Priority 7</p> <p>Promote the opportunities available in Future Skills Dudley, including construction (e.g. brick-laying, painting and decorating, plastering, carpentry, and plumbing), to under-represented groups, including black and minority ethnic (BME), people with disabilities (PWD), gender, 50+, 18+ unemployed, lone parent, and disadvantaged ward participants, in line with Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) provider framework overview for 2020, and ensure that Job Centre Plus (JcP) advisors are aware of what provision is available</p> <p>Lead Officer – Susanna Haskett</p>	<p>Promotional activity with priority groups, including female and BME participants, and also JcP – including during Construction Week (every November)</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Increased participation rates from females into construction and land-based opportunities – minimum of 5%</p> <p>Other participation rates:</p> <p>Clients with a disability – minimum of 7%</p> <p>BME groups – minimum of 9% (Dudley-only Programmes) and minimum of 15% (South Black Country-wide Programmes)</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;">Priority 8</p> <p>Improve access on the Borough's Public Rights of Way (PROW) for all users</p> <p>Lead Officer – Mike Bosworth</p>	<p>Resurface hard standing areas, and make more accessible the Council's Public Rights of Way Network</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Number of Public Rights of Way resurfaced – target of 6</p> <p>National Performance Indicator for Public Rights of Way (BVPI 178) – target of 66%</p>

Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2008/ 2009

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p>Priority 9</p> <p>Reduce crime and fear of crime, within the authority car parks, and parking enforcement</p> <p>Lead Officer – Helen Jones</p>	<p>Improve the infrastructure and physical environment to reduce fear of crime on Council-owned car parks</p>	<p>March 2011</p>	<p>Maintaining and increasing the number of car parks with safer car park awards</p>