

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Agenda Item 75
Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Monitoring outcomes of the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel on Staff Disabilities		
Date of Meeting:	5 April 2011		
Report of:	Strategic Director Resources		
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Following the Diversity Peer Challenge Review in March 2009, a Scrutiny Panel on Staff Disabilities was set up to investigate the assessment's findings in relation to the employment and training of disabled employees.
- 1.2 In their report, Members recognised and welcomed the progress the council had made in many areas to make the organisation more inclusive for those with disabilities. However, they also made a number of recommendations which they considered would improve matters further.
- 1.3 A formal response to the findings and recommendations of the Staff Scrutiny Panel was submitted to Cabinet on 23 September 2010. The Panel's recommendations did not identify any brand new areas of work. Rather, they highlighted areas for further development and improvement within existing areas of work.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the work that has been undertaken following the Disability Scrutiny Panel's recommendations. A summary is set out in Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That Members note the action taken against these recommendations.
- (2) That the Commission determines whether a further tracking report relating to this scrutiny review is required.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 As a public body, the council is required under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality for those with protected characteristics such as those with a disability.
- 3.2 The council is committed to mainstreaming equalities in both employment and service delivery and it has been working hard over recent years to achieve this.
- 3.3 Progress has been measured against the Equality Standard for Local Government and, in March 2009, it was confirmed that the council had met the requisite criteria for Level 3 (of 5) of the Equality Standard.
- 3.4 The assessors were impressed by the quality of work that had, and was taking place, across the council in relation to equalities issues and their report highlighted a number of areas in which the council was considered to be particularly strong.
- 3.5 However, the purpose of the review was also to highlight areas in which it was considered we could do more to promote equality.
- 3.6 A Staff Disability Scrutiny Review was therefore commissioned by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission in September 2009 to investigate the areas relating to employment where the Diversity Peer Challenge review considered more work could be done to promote disability equality.
- 3.7 The Scrutiny Panel's report recognised and celebrated the fact that there had been a significant amount of good work in relation to employment and disabilities but also made a number of recommendations. These did not identify brand new areas of work but rather highlighted a number of areas for further development and improvement with existing areas of work.
- 3.8 In January 2011, the council was assessed as "excellent" under the new three level Equality Standard for Local Government.
- 3.9 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the work that has been undertaken since the Panel reported.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation has not been necessary due to the nature of this report

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Anne Silley

Date: 24 March 2011

5.2 Legal Implications:

The council has a statutory obligation to promote disability equality and to ensure that its disabled employees are not disadvantaged within the workplace. This report will help to ensure that the council complies with its legal requirements.

Lawyer Consulted: Oliver Dixon

Date: 24 March 2011

5.3 Equalities Implications:

These are covered within the report.

5.4 Sustainability Implications:

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

None.

5.6 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

None.

5.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications

None.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Update on the work undertaken in connection with the recommendations made by the Staff Disabilities Scrutiny Panel

Documents In Members' Rooms

None.

Background Documents

None.

