

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Agenda Item 73
Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Equalities & Inclusion update		
Date of Meeting:	20 January 2009		
Report of:	Director of Strategy & Governance		
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Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Equalities & Inclusion Policy sets out policy and priorities for the next three years 2008-2011 and actions arising are set out in the Equality Scheme Action Plan. The Equality Scheme Action Plan will be reviewed annually to ensure progress is made and to build in new actions as appropriate.
- 1.2 The Equalities & Inclusion Policy and Equality Scheme Action Plan were agreed by Council on 9th October 2008.
- 1.3 At Overview & Scrutiny Commission on 15th July 2008 a six-monthly update was requested.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That members note the achievements to date

3. EQUALITIES & INCLUSION UPDATE

3.1 Communication of Equalities & Inclusion Policy

- The adoption of the new policy and the council's commitment to Equalities & Inclusion will be communicated to staff via the new council-wide system "Team Talk" in January
- A summary document is being produced for use in staff training and induction
- A communication campaign is being prepared including asking all staff to make "equalities pledges" and the promotion of best practice

3.2 Equalities Standard: Approach and Progress

- Equalities Steering Group leading and driving the process including undertaking Directorate Self-Assessment process
- Development of rolling 3-year timetable of Equality Impact Assessments, New Equality Impact Assessment toolkit and workshops
- Internal Audit review of Self-Assessment and evidence
- Date set for Assessment to be undertaken by peer assessors on 30th and 31st March 2009
- Our portfolio of evidence to be ready for their deadline of 15th February 2009.

3.3 City Inclusion Partnership

The first meeting of the City Inclusion Partnership (CIP) was held on 30 September 2008 with representation from the council, other public sector statutory partners and the Stronger Communities Partnership.

A draft work programme and new terms of reference for the CIP has been produced based on the priorities for all the partners for the next CIP meeting on the 12th January 2009. A verbal update will be provided to OSC.

The CIP will continue to meet quarterly as a “shadow partnership” of the LSP and aims for formal adoption in September 2009.

4. EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

4.1 Leadership/Management

These areas will be tested by the Equalities Standard assessment. To support managers the new business planning guidance promotes the importance of the inclusion of equalities objectives. The new Equalities Impact Assessment toolkit stresses the importance of translating actions from Elias into service plans.

4.2 Community Development & Accountability

The Equalities & Inclusion budget has supported events to promote community cohesion to mark the following:

- Black History month in October, including Brighton & Hove People’s Day
- International Day of Disabled People on 3rd December
- Holocaust Memorial Day- January 2009
- LGBT History Month - February
- International Women’s Day - March

The council has jointly funded, with the PCT, a new Involvement Officer post based at the Brighton & Hove Federation of Disabled People. Two job sharers have been appointed and are building the consultation capacity of the Federation.

4.3 Service Delivery and Customer Care

All Directorates have received training in Equality Impact Assessment and are working to the 3-year rolling timetable. The new Procurement Strategy has been agreed and training is being rolled out to contract managers including the inclusion of equalities throughout the contract process. This area will be tested by the Equalities Standard Assessment

4.4 Employment and Training

HR policies are included in the Equality Impact Assessment timetable. The HR Equalities group are developing a joint action plan between HR and the minority staff forums to address:

- Management culture
- Dignity and respect at work
- Understanding turnover

These groups will link in with the cross-organisational working group on Dignity and respect at work and with other work that is underway in these areas.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 None directly in relation to this report as all costs to be met by existing budgets

Legal Implications:

5.2 Our statutory responsibilities in relation to equalities are directly addressed by the Equalities & Inclusion Policy and the Equality Scheme Action Plan.

Equalities Implications:

5.3 The equalities implications are directly addressed by the Equalities & Inclusion Policy and the Equalities Scheme Action Plan.

Sustainability Implications:

5.4 None directly in relation to this report

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Partnership Community Safety Team are key contributors to equalities & inclusion work in the city and this is reflected in the Equalities & Inclusion Policy and the Equalities Scheme Action Plan

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The implications for risk are directly addressed by the Equalities & Inclusion Policy and the Equalities Scheme Action Plan.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The Equality Scheme Action Plan has been developed with input from all council Directorates.