



## **Draft Equality and Diversity Plan 2005 - 2008**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 To comment on the attached draft Equality and Diversity Plan.
- 1.2 To nominate members from this Committee to attend a meeting I to discuss the Equality and Diversity Plan in detail.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Council, as a public authority, has a general duty under the Race Relations Amendment Act to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote equal opportunities and promote good race relations between people from different racial groups. This means we must make race equality a central part of the way we work by putting it at the centre of our policy-making, service delivery, regulation and enforcement and our employment practice. In addition, we have specific duties in policy-making, service delivery and employment. Under these specific duties we have to produce a Race Equality Scheme every three years.
- 2.2 The Race Equality Scheme does not have to be a stand-alone document. It can be part of a wider general equality strategy, as long as the race equality sections are distinct and specific and this is the approach we have taken. We have not split the Plan into specific sections of race, disability, gender, age, sexuality or religion because we are tackling all of these issues in the various actions in the Plan. This is because of our commitment to achieving the five levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government, which looks at equality from a wider approach.
- 2.3 Our Equality and Diversity Steering Group and Equality Standard Task Group, both chaired by Chief Officers, have been working on the Plan for the last six months or so, with departmental equality groups. So, each department has signed up to doing the actions identified in the Plan, subject to the outcome of the consultation we are doing. Each department assessed their policies, procedures, functions and services for relevance to race equality and prioritised them for doing detailed equality impact assessments over the next three years. The equality impact assessments will cover race, gender, disability, age, sexuality and religion. Other actions in the Plan include proposed work to find out the gaps in services and employment opportunities so that detailed equality objectives and targets can be set in line with Level 3 of the Equality Standard. This will involve consulting widely and involving community and voluntary organisations from equality groups.

- 2.4 We published our first Race Equality Scheme in May 2002 and this Committee was involved in agreeing the contents. We would now value your involvement and expertise in our new draft Equality and Diversity Plan, which we have attached.
- 2.5 As it is such a large document, we thought the best way forward would be for us to arrange a separate meeting, with interested members of this Committee. We can then discuss the document in more detail and highlight any changes suggested. We will include comments from the agencies we consult with in the final document and bring it back to this Committee.

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**Background papers:** Individual departmental action plans

**List of appendices:** Guidance 1, 2 and 3 on the Equality Standard for Local Government  
CRE Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality  
Appendix 1 – Implications  
Attachment – draft Equality and Diversity Plan 2005 -2008

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. The costs of publicising the Plan, including translations will be met from the Personnel budget, where there is a particular pot allocated for the Equality Standard for Local Government.

**Legal**

- 2.1 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 puts a legal obligation on all public authorities to promote racial equality and good race relations between different racial groups. One of the implications of this legislation is that we need to produce a Race Equality Scheme, which can be included as part of a wider equality strategy.
- 2.2 When the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 becomes live in late 2006, we will have a legal obligation as a public authority to promote equality for disabled people and to eliminate harassment and discrimination against disabled people. The new legislation will also require us to produce a Disability Equality Scheme, but again, this can be included in a wider equality strategy.

**Personnel**

3. The Equality and Diversity Steering Group, Equality Standard Task Group and departmental equality groups have been working on producing the Equality and Diversity Plan.

**Equalities impact**

4. This Plan has a major impact on equalities and we hope over the next three years people will see a real positive difference in the way we make decisions on policies, the way we deliver our services and in people's experiences of working for us and applying for jobs with us. Sometimes, the policies we write and the way we carry out our functions can, quite unintentionally, disadvantage certain groups of people. By carrying out formal equality impact assessments, we will be better able to scrutinise our functions to identify any areas where we need to make changes to the way we do things.

## **Corporate objectives and priorities**

5. The work in the Equality and Diversity Plan links directly to:
- a stimulating and high quality learning environment
  - a diverse, attractive and healthy environment
  - raising educational achievement
  - improving customer service
  - being open, transparent and honest in everything we do
  - valuing our employees in delivering services
  - developing effective partnerships with all stakeholders, especially Derby's residents
  - adopting new ways of working wherever these will help us do things better and provide value for money, customer focused services.