

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Joyce Slater: Service Manager Human Resources and Organisational Development
Elaine Claridge: Equalities Project Officer

REPORT NO.: HR & OD 101

DATE: Cabinet 6th April 2009

TITLE:	Corporate Equality Scheme 2009 - 2012
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	Corporate Equality Scheme 2009 - 2012
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	September 2008

KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Key Decision	
COUNCIL AIMS/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Councilor Paul Carpenter Portfolio Holder Corporate Governance & Housing	
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	All corporate priorities are reflected in the Corporate Equality Scheme (2009 -2012)	
INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:	Carried out and appended to the report:	Full impact assessment required:
Equality and Diversity	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder	No	
Risk	No	
Climate Change	No	
Health and Safety	No	
Data Quality	No	
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:	This report is publicly available via the Local Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Moving the Council's Diversity and Equalities agenda forward – Report to Cabinet October 6 th , 2008	

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the council's new Corporate Equality Scheme for the period 2009 -2012. The Scheme is designed to meet the Council's statutory obligations under Equalities legislation and set out how the Council will build equalities and diversity into mainstream policies, strategies and work programmes. The report follows on the Report to Cabinet October 6th, 2008 'Moving the Council's Diversity and Equalities agenda forward' and has been subject to consultation with internal and external stakeholders who have helped to shape the final draft version that is presented to day for Cabinet approval.

2. RECOMMENDATION

1. That Cabinet approve the attached Corporate Equality Scheme (2009 – 2012)
2. Note the requirements for an annual report showing progress by the Council against its statutory equality duties.
3. Give delegated authority to the Service Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Corporate Governance and Housing to approve further minor amendments resulting from legislation and consultation.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- The Corporate Equalities Scheme (2009 – 2012) is attached and structured as follows;
- Part one sets out a summary profile of the South Kesteven district, an overview of the Council vision statement and

corporate priorities followed by commitments the Council will make towards Equalities and Diversity and how the Council will manage its commitments including key roles and responsibilities for key members and senior officers. Page 19 shows the structure of Equalities and Diversity management arrangements. The Council's Equality and Diversity strategy is set out in pages 14 - 18.

- Part two sets out a summary of the Council's statutory duties and how the Council will respond. It also confirms the Council's commitment to publish an annual report showing progress in meeting its statutory duties.
- Part three sets out the Council's response to other equalities legislation
- Part four (Appendices) sets out details of who has been consulted on the draft Corporate Equalities Scheme and how to make contact about the scheme
- The Scheme was put before the Engagement PDG on 26 February 2006. Members of the group supported the work which has been carried out and agreed with the recommendations in the report.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND ASSESSED

- Cabinet agreed at their meeting of October 6th 2008 to compile all the Council's statutory equalities duties in one single document rather than three separate ones (Race, Disability and Gender). Further research since that date has confirmed that this is consistent with the approach adopted by most other local authorities.
- Consultation comments led to changes in the following;

- Bringing the Community profile forward from Part Four to Part one but editing the content. This provides a useful context for the Council's strategy on equalities and diversity
- The strategy set out in pages 14 – 18 was the result of a workshop with the Council's Management team. Further work is needed to embed this with Council staff and with Cabinet and elected members
- The use of colour in the Strategy set out in pages 14-18 was amended to aid those with a visual impairment
- Footnotes were added to page 33 to define the meaning of the words, Hetrosexism and Homophobia.
- Other consultation comments to be added
- Further clarification of legal duties and responsibilities faced by the Council

5. COMMENTS OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

I have no specific financial comments to make in respect of this report.

6. COMMENTS OF MONITORING OFFICER

Cabinet must satisfy itself a full consultation has been carried out in accordance with the Constitution. The relevant Policy Development Groups should have been consulted and the recommendations from those groups should be reported to Cabinet.

It is a legal requirement that the Council has and complies with such a policy

7. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

In addition to the consultation with representative groups and agencies as outlined in the Scheme, there has been widespread consultation with managers across the Council whose comments have informed the final draft document as attached.

8. CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Subject to Cabinet approval, further work is needed to engage Council staff, elected members and key stakeholders in the Council's Equality and Diversity strategy and its Corporate Equality Scheme. An action plan is being developed and will inform the work of the Council's Equalities and Development Implementation Team. The Equality Project Officer will prepare the annual report showing progress against the action plan for approval and publication

9. CONTACT OFFICER

Joyce Slater: Service Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development: 01476 406133

Elaine Claridge: Equalities Project Officer: 01476 406299

Equality Impact Assessments Template

Section: Corporate		Officers undertaking assessment: Elaine Claridge : Equalities Project Officer Joyce Slater: Service Manager, Human Resources & Organisational Development
Name of policy, procedure etc: Corporate Equality Scheme	Date of Assessment: February 13th 2009	Is this a new or existing policy? New
Policy Aims		
Briefly outline the policy/procedure/service by putting it into context and describe its aims, objectives and purpose		
<p>We recognise diversity as a key strength to the South Kesteven district in the realisation of our vision and corporate priorities but we also acknowledge diversity as a source of challenge in managing the complexity of needs and related issues that can arise.</p> <p>We are therefore committed to understanding, identifying and responding to the equalities and diversity issues that are raised by the vision and corporate priorities and ensure robust management and decision making arrangements are in place to demonstrate our commitment in practice.</p> <p>South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) has a number of statutory duties and responsibilities to which it must comply. This includes requirements to publish and review statutory schemes that demonstrate how the Council will comply with specific legislation. Specific actions that the Council will take, along with timescales and persons responsible, are set out in an Action Plan that will be monitored and reviewed by the Equalities & Diversity Implementation Team and reported on annually.</p> <p>It has been decided to incorporate all six “strands” of equality into one single document in anticipation of the new Single Equalities Bill 2009 and in response to recommendations from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission that public bodies adopt this method. It is therefore recognised “good practice” to produce a single equalities scheme and in doing so SKDC are in line with the other Lincolnshire local authorities.</p>		

Who is intended to benefit from the policy?

Those who will benefit from the Equality Scheme are as follows:-

- All residents and visitors to South Kesteven
- All SKDC staff
- All SKDC contractors and suppliers
- All SKDC partners

Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?

It is the responsibility of Members and all SKDC staff to implement the Equality Scheme.

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive are responsible for the Scheme.

Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?

- All residents and visitors to the South Kesteven District
- All SKDC staff
- All SKDC contractors and suppliers
- All SKDC partners
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Are there any other organisations or partners involved in the delivery of the service? Who is the lead or accountable body?

Other partners e.g. Police, NHS, Adult Services etc will be involved from time to time in the delivery of the Equalities Scheme.

South Kesteven District Council will be the lead body.

Does the policy contribute to the achievement of the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy? Can any aspects of the policy contribute to inequality? Please explain your answer.

This document is the Corporate Equality Scheme and therefore the Council's policy on Equality and Diversity.

The document is designed to address any inequality in service delivery should it arise.

Evidence

What are the existing sources of evidence and mechanisms for gathering data?

Evidence is gathered from a variety of sources:-

- Feedback from consultation
- Surveys
- Performance Indicators

What monitoring data is available on the number of people who use the service or are affected by the policy? Who holds this information?

Monitoring data is available for all employees is held in Human Resources and Organisational Development

Monitoring data for the Council's Tenants is held on the Tenancy Services Data Base

Other relevant customer data is held in respective service areas.

If no monitoring has been undertaken, will this be done in the future? If so, specify what arrangements you intend to make. If you do not intend to do any monitoring, please provide your reason for this decision.

It is recognised that monitoring systems need to be revised and made more comprehensive in order to fully understand the demographic makeup of our customers. This revision will take place during 2009.

What are the key performance indicators and targets attributed to the policy?

There are extensive PIs which will be used to monitor progress against the Equality Scheme. Please see pages 14 – 18 of the Scheme entitled "Diversity & Equality Strategy" for more detail.

What consultation has been carried out with stakeholders and service users previously about the policy?

Consultation on the Scheme has been extensive covering many groups and representatives from the six strands of equality identified by government legislation.

Partners and Peers (from other Councils) have also been consulted.

For a list of those invited to comment on the Scheme please see Appendix 1 Page 37 in the Equality Scheme.

Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy or function? Please explain your answer.

The Corporate Equality Scheme draws attention to the fact that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities and says how we will deliver on our commitments.

Is there any informal feedback from managers, staff or voluntary organisations?

Feedback from managers, staff and voluntary organisations has been captured and incorporated into the scheme

Is there a complaints system? If yes, are complaints monitored by race, gender , and disability as a minimum?

There is a corporate complaints system which is currently under review. An updated system which will build in equalities monitoring is due to be launched in April 2009

What further evidence is needed to understand the impact upon equality?

The Corporate Equality Scheme has been derived from evidence obtained from the consultees. Progress on delivery of the scheme will be monitored and reported on annually.

Impact

Does the data show different impact upon different groups? What existing evidence is there for this?

Race	This Scheme is designed to eliminate the impact of any inequality and to make sure that South Kesteven District Council is complying with the statutory duties and additional legal requirements in anticipation of the forthcoming Single Equalities Bill 2009.
Gender	
Age	
Religion	
Disability	
Sexual Orientation	

Do these differences amount to an adverse impact?

No. Because the Scheme is designed to identify and address any adverse impact in SKDC service delivery

Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on any other groups of people e.g. those with dependants/caring responsibilities, those with an offending past, those with learning difficulties, transgender or transsexual people.

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Please explain your answer.

There is no existing evidence to suggest otherwise. Other groups of people such as carers, transgender or transsexual people and those with learning difficulties have been carefully considered when drawing up the Equalities Scheme and relevant organisations have been consulted with.

Are there any factors that might account for differential impacts or non-achievement of the policies outcomes, such as barriers that prevent people from fully accessing the service? For example, communication difficulties, physical access, information not being accessible, use of language, childcare responsibilities?

Factors which might contribute to non-achievement of the Scheme are as follows:-

- **Leadership:** It is vital to the success of this Scheme that the Equalities agenda has the full commitment and support of members and senior management.
- **Training and development:** Appropriate Member and Staff training is a crucial element in the delivery of the scheme. Such training will need to be delivered on several different levels according to need.
- **Culture Change:** Equalities has to be “embedded” in the culture of the organization. There has to be a comprehensive understanding that equalities is everyone’s job and can not be divorced from the concept of excellent customer service.

Future Actions

Should the policy or function proceed to a Full Impact Assessment? (Please explain your reasoning)

No: Consultation has been extensive and any feedback has been considered and incorporated as appropriate.

<p>Date Full Impact Assessment should commence</p> <p>N/A</p>	
Signed: Joyce Slater	Date: 13 February 2009