

**REPORT TO THE PERSONNEL, LICENSING
AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

Report No. 14

Date of Meeting	3 rd September 2007
Title of Report	Annual Equality Monitoring Report – 2006/07
Link to Corporate Priorities	This report links to all of the Council's corporate aims and to the corporate priority on Equalities and Social Inclusion.
Public Report	Yes

Summary of Report

To provide members of the Committee with an up-date on the progress made in relation to the actions contained in the Council's Corporate Equality & Diversity Policy and where possible other related Equality Schemes.

Officer Recommendations

That the Personnel, Licensing and Administration Committee note the report and approve Option 1 of this report; and

- **Agree that the next Annual Equality Monitoring Report is submitted to the Personnel, Licensing and Administration Committee after April 2008 and incorporates an up-date on the progress made against the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy, Gender & Disability Equality Scheme Action Plans.**
- **That the Internal Equality & Diversity Group, in consultation with the Lead Member, revises the Equality & Diversity Action Plan accordingly and include any new actions that have arisen as a result of the equality & diversity work carried out within the Council.**

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of the Committee with an up-date on the equality work that has been carried out in relation to the Council's Corporate Equality & Diversity Policy Action Plan 2006-2009 together with an up-date on other related Equality Schemes.

2. Options and Options Appraisal

- 2.1 Option 1: To note the report and agree that the next Annual Equality Monitoring Report is submitted to the Personnel, Licensing & Administration Committee after April 2008 including progress made against the Action Plans contained in the Council's Corporate Equality & Diversity Policy, Disability & Gender Equality Scheme. In addition, that the Internal Equality & Diversity Group, in consultation with the Lead Member, revises the Equality & Diversity Action Plan accordingly and include any new actions that have arisen as a result of the equality & diversity work carried out within the Council.
- 2.2 Option 2: To note the report and request that individual Annual Reports against the Council's Corporate Equality & Diversity Policy, Disability and Gender Equality Scheme Actions Plans are submitted on the anniversary of when each Policy or Scheme was adopted and approved by Committee. That the Internal Equality & Diversity Group revise the E&D Action plan but that it is submitted to the Personnel Licensing & Administration Committee for final approval.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 The Council has a number of Equality related policies and action plans, these are:-

3.2 Equality & Diversity Policy 2006-2009

- 3.2.1 This policy was adopted by Full Council at its meeting on 21 February 2006. The Council's Race Equality Scheme has been incorporated into the E&D policy. It sets out how the Council will mainstream equality and make it central to the way the Council determines future policies and delivers services to our communities.
- 3.2.2 The Council's statement on Equality & Diversity is:- "Regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, financial hardship, culture and religion, ability and disability or other differences, the Council is committed to equality for all people throughout North Wiltshire. The Council recognises and values diversity and believes that equality and diversity is central to the delivery of excellent inclusive services to its communities."

3.3 Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009

- 3.3.1 This Scheme was adopted by the Personnel, Licensing & Administration Committee at its meeting on the 6th November 2006. The Scheme sets out how the Council will ensure that it promotes disability equality in its service provision and delivery and in its responsibility as an employer. It also sets out how the Council will ensure that it eliminates unlawful discrimination and harassment of disabled people.

3.4 Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010

- 3.4.1 This Scheme was adopted by the Personnel, Licensing & Administration Committee at its meeting on the 21 May 2007. It sets out how the Council will ensure that it promotes equality of opportunity between men and women and eliminates unlawful sex discrimination and harassment.

4. Progress

4.1 Equality & Diversity Policy Action Plan

4.1.1 A vast amount of work has been carried out against this action plan with a significant number of targets being met and on-going progress being made. The Action Plan is attached as Appendix 1, and includes details of the work that has been carried out against each action.

4.1.2 It is evident that a significant number of actions have now been met. It is therefore suggested that the Internal Equality & Diversity Group, in consultation with the Lead Member, revise the action plan accordingly. The action plan will include any new actions that have arisen as a result of the equality and diversity work that has been carried out across the Council in relation to all E&D policies and schemes.

4.2 Disability Equality Scheme

4.2.2 The Disability Equality Scheme was adopted and approved in November 2006.

4.2.3 Even though the Scheme has been in place for less than one year, there have already been some key achievements in promoting disability equality within the Council:-

- The Council's involvement in organising a county-wide Disability Awareness Event held on the 4th December 2006. Other authorities involved were Wiltshire County Council, Kennet and West Wiltshire District Councils. The event helped raise disability awareness and gave the Council an opportunity to launch its Disability Equality Scheme. An earlier consultation exercise was also carried out on the Council's website to encourage people with disabilities to become involved in the development of the Disability Equality Scheme
- A presentation was delivered to the Council's Corporate Management Team and Team Leaders by Shaw Trust on working in partnership to provide work placement/employment opportunities for disadvantaged people in the labour market due to disability, ill health or social circumstances. Two work placement opportunities are currently taking place within Cleansing & Amenities and Customer Services.
- 46 employees have now received Disability Awareness Training with further training courses due to take place later in July.
- Research is taking place into the possibility of the Council providing a 'minicom' service that will enable customers with hearing difficulties to communicate with the Council on a one-to-one basis. The Council has type talk facility in place but this requires a third person to relay messages.
- Increased use of 'Access to Work' by employees. The Access to Work programme is available through Job Centre Plus. It provides support to both disabled people and the Council to help overcome work-related obstacles resulting from a disability.
- The Council has recently been re-awarded the Employment Service's two tick symbol 'positive about disabled people' which demonstrates to disabled job seekers and disabled employees that the Council has agreed to a number of commitments designed to ensure that people with a disability have every opportunity to access employment and develop their careers within the Council.
- Continual improvements on accessibility to the Council's Website eg. Browsealoud. Software installed, translation service. Accessibility and usability audits recently carried out on the Council's website.

4.3 Gender Equality Scheme

- 4.3.1 As this Scheme has only recently been adopted (April 2007), it is suggested that the Internal Equality & Diversity Group will report to the Local Joint Consultative Committee on progress made against the Gender Equality Scheme action plan in the Council's Annual Equality Monitoring Report April 2008.

5. **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There is a budget of £5,000 for Equality & Diversity. The Disability Awareness Training in the current financial year has cost £1,488. Further disability awareness training taking place in July 2007 will cost a further £1,748. A number of 'Respect for People' Workbooks have recently been purchased for new Members and employees at a cost of £725. In addition the E&D budget contributed £850 towards 'Browsealoud' software.

6. **Legal Implications**

- 6.1 This report goes towards meeting the Council's legal obligations to report annually on progress made in relation to the duty to promote race, disability and gender equality.

7. **Community & Environmental Implications**

- 7.1 The Community & Environmental implications are contained within various actions in the Action Plan for example, the adoption of the Access Policy, the audits carried out on accessibility of Council offices and information the Council provides (alternative formats).

8. **Human Resources Implications**

- 8.1 All Human Resources implications are contained within the body of the report.

9. **Equality & Diversity Implications**

- 9.1 The production of this report goes towards meeting the Council's obligations to report annually on the progress made against the Council's Equality Action Plans.

Appendices:	• 1 – Equality Policy Three Year Action Plan (2006 – 2008)
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	Equality & Diversity Policy Disability Equality Scheme Gender Equality Scheme

Previous Decisions Connected with this Report

Report	Committee & Date	Minute Reference
Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2006-07	Local Joint Consultative Committee – 25 July 2007	LJCC15