

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek approval of the draft Equality and Diversity Policy

2. Recommendations

2.1 To approve the draft Equality and Diversity Policy (attached as appendix 1) and to recommend adoption by Council on February 21, 2006.

3. Links to the Corporate Business Plan

3.1 Equality and Diversity is one of the key priorities within the 2005/08 Corporate Plan

4. General Background Information

4.1 The Lead Member in this area set up a Working Group of the Executive to develop an Equality and Diversity Policy and action plan. The group has now completed the work and submits the draft policy for approval.

4.2 The Working Group has been advised throughout the process by an external stakeholders group comprising of :

- Age Concern Wiltshire
- Community First
- Wiltshire Gay Men's Health
- Wiltshire Social Inclusion Partnership
- Wiltshire Race Equality Council
- Wiltshire & Swindon Users Network
- Wiltshire Diversity Group
- Wiltshire Churches Together

4.3 The draft policy has also been informed by feedback received from a wide cross-section of organisations (refer to appendix 4 within the attached draft policy)

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The financial implications of this report are contained within an existing revenue budget.

6. Community & Environmental Implications

6.1 Significant community benefits, such as improved access to services will be just one of the positive implications associated with adopting an Equality and Diversity Policy.

7. Equalities and Diversity Implications

7.1 The approval of the Policy and Action Plan will ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are central to future policy development and service delivery

8. Human Resources Implications

- 8.1 There are significant Human Resources implications for the whole Council in ensuring that Equality and Diversity is embedded throughout the organisation and that all employees apply the principals outlined in the policy.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 None at this stage

Documentation used in the preparation of this report:

- Minutes and reports of the Executive working group and the external stakeholders group

**REPORT OF THE PLANNING SERVICES STRATEGIC MANAGER TO THE EXECUTIVE
– FEBRUARY 2, 2006.**

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