



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Report

Public

Date of Meeting: 22 March 2012

Title: Draft Equalities

Report of: Policy and Communications Manager

Report reference: PPP 05/12

Summary:

This report outlines the draft equality objectives, suggested actions and future monitoring by the panel.

Recommendations:

The Panel is requested to:

1. Note the evidence published so far
2. Comment on the draft equality objectives
3. Comment on the proposed future reporting to the Panel

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1. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Publishing more information links compliant with the General Duty (GD) to the wider transparency agenda.

The draft objectives will provide the basis for action planning for equality for next 3 years. We intend to review the actions annually, reporting the progress to the Executive and the Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel.

2. IMPLICATIONS

Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	Yes	
Disability	Yes	
Race	Yes	
Gender/ Transgender	Yes	
Sexual Orientation	Yes	
Religion or belief	Yes	
Human Rights	No	
Social exclusion	No	
Health inequalities	No	
Rurality	No	

The draft objectives relate to the general and specific duties and have an impact on all of the protected characteristics.

3. Meeting the new duty in 2012

The Public Sector Equality Duty consists of a general equality duty, which is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act (2010) and specific duties that are introduced as secondary legislation.

The GD – in the exercise of all functions, the Council must have ‘due regard’ to:

1. Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Specific Duties (SD) – in the exercise of the GD, the Council must have ‘due regard’ to:

1. Publishing sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the GD across all functions.
2. Preparing and publishing Equality Objectives
3. Publication of actions to meet the Equality Duty

We have published the Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) of our services on our website. This evidence of our compliance with the general duty includes a current workforce profile and links to related evidence on the Cumbria Observatory and Multi-cultural Service websites.

4. Evidence base

To help prepare the equality objectives a Carlisle Equality and Diversity Profile has been prepared by the Cumbria Observatory. The evidence base for draft equality objectives and actions has included the action plan drawn from the Peer Assessment Report (October 2010).

We continue to support a consortium of equality groups (AWAZ, Outreach, Cumbria Disability Network) who in turn provide advice direct from their networks. These groups have been invited to suggest objectives based on the evidence published and the experiences of their groups.

Cumbria County Council has recently commissioned work on the experiences of migrants. A report is expected within the month to provide further evidence for action planning.

4. Draft Objectives

The objectives are set for a 3 year period 2012-2015 and will be reviewed annually. They have been coded against the general and specific duties and the themes within the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). Our assessment against this framework is currently ‘achieving’ and remains valid until 2013/14.

- Improve the quality and volume of our customer information

- Improve access and inclusion for all our services and across our partnerships
- Diffuse community tensions and promote tolerance and understanding

5. Draft actions and links to the duty

Draft objective	Duty	Actions
Improve the quality and volume of our customer information	GD 1 & 2 SD 1	Implement an integrated customer satisfaction and perception survey.
		Publish the findings of the survey alongside our Service Standards.
Improve access and inclusion for all our services and across our partnerships	GD 1 & 2	Develop our workforce for the future to better reflect the diversity of Carlisle
		Analyse the incidence of PCNs and Blue Badge Holders
		Agree countywide best practice guidance on burials
		Develop an access score alongside the 'Scores on the Doors' and 'Best Bar None' schemes
Diffuse community tensions and promote tolerance and understanding	GD 3	Continue to challenge the myths associated with access to services and protected characteristics
		Promote Carlisle as a tolerant and accepting Border City
		Support workers in the Night-time Economy in reporting hate incidents

Actions will be developed further with service managers in week commencing 26th March. The actions will be embedded in service plans and owned by the service managers.

6. Monitoring

A monitoring report, replacing the annual equality report, will be available to the Panel in time for the June meeting each year. The review of actions and objectives will be linked to the review of the Corporate Plan and Community Plan.