



Corporate Services

Briefing Paper

Report of: Peter Jones
Date: Thursday, 2nd October 2008
Open

Equality and Diversity

1. Summary

The purpose of this paper is to:

- 1.1 Agree recommendations to Cabinet and Full Council on the Council's Single Equality Scheme, and
- 1.2 Provide a general update on other Equality & Diversity (E&D) activities.

2. Background

- 2.1 In May 2008, the Council endorsed a draft Single Equality Scheme (SES) for consultation with internal and external stakeholders. This had been produced to reflect changes taking place nationally with E&D, including proposed new legislation, a new Equalities Framework expected later this year to replace the Equality Standard for Local Government, the merging of a number of equalities commissions to form the Commission on Equalities and Human Rights and greater concentration on E&D matters within audit and inspection processes.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Consultation feedback has been received from a variety of sources and has been incorporated into an updated SES which is contained in the **Appendix** to this paper.
- 3.2 The SES contains an Action Plan to make it clear how we will begin implementing the scheme as soon as it has been adopted by Full Council. A report will be prepared for Council on 26 November 2008. It will be necessary to continually monitor and review the Action Plan to ensure that it addresses priority issues first and matches our capacity to deliver.

3.3 Other E&D activities which can expanded upon at the Committee meeting include the following:

- Community Cohesion Grant (a new Area Based Grant from 2008/09 to support relevant projects)
- Community Fair (15 October 2008)
- No Barriers Awards 2009
- Membership of regional and county-wide groups (West Midlands Local Authority Equalities Network and Worcestershire Equalities Group)
- Closer liaison with representative groups, e.g. Disability Action Wyre Forest, Showcase of Services for Older People, Wyre Forest matters Migrant Communities Task Group, Being Different Together, etc.

4. Options

4.1 Members are requested to consider the updated SES and agree a recommendation to Cabinet on 23 October and Full Council on 26 November 2008.

5. Consultation

5.1 Internal and external consultees include:

- Members
- Employees
- External representative groups
- Public (general)
- Partners
- Parishes
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Unions

6. Appendix

6.1 WFDC Single Equality Scheme

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