



Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Peter Jones (Head of Chief Executive's Office)

Date: Thursday, 8th January 2009

Open

Equality and Diversity

1. Summary

The purpose of this paper is to:

- 1.1 Provide a general update on 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, including new legislation, a revised Equalities Framework 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 a higher profile of E&D matters within the forthcoming Comprehensive Area Assessment.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The SES has now been adopted and work has now commenced on implementing the action plan. An update will be provided at the meeting. 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.
- 3.2 The new Equality Framework for Local Government will start in April 2009, with final guidance expected in January 2009. Details are expected shortly and an overview will be provided at the meeting.
- 3.3 The Single Equality Bill has been announced in the Queen's Speech and is expected to unify the different elements of

Agenda Item No. 8

legislation on equalities. It will require us to review our SES and other related policies to ensure compliance.

3.4 Other key issues, on which information will be provided, include:

- 'Being Different Together' county-wide partnership
- Community Cohesion Grant (a new Area Based Grant from 2008/09 to support relevant projects)
- Preparation for partner events in 2009, e.g. Community Fair (WCC), Disability Day (DAWF & NW Dial), Diversity Day (King Charles I High School), Showcase of Services for Older People (District/PCT)
- No Barriers Awards 2009
- Closer collaboration with the Wyre Forest Matters (LSP), e.g. membership of Emerging Communities Task Group, information sharing on National Indicators

4. Appendix

4.1 SES Action Plan

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