



Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Equality & Diversity Officer
Date: Thursday 10th September 2009
Open

Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG)

1. Summary

1.1 To update Members on the statutory Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG).

2. Background

2.1 The EFLG replaces the Equality Standard for Local Government and came into effect on April 2009.

2.2 Wyre Forest District Council will be assessed on its compliance with the EFLG in March 2010 and is currently working in partnership with all other councils in Worcestershire through the Being Different Together Project Group in order to fulfil the requirements of the EFLG, which incorporates all aspects of Equality and Diversity.

2.3 The Being Different Together (BDT) Group which comprises of representatives from all Councils in Worcestershire was formed in 2008 to formulate a single Equality Strategy for the whole of Worcestershire. It has now progressed to support Councils in attaining the "Achieving" level of the EFLG. The EFLG has three levels: developing, achieving and excellent. Wyre Forest District Council will be aiming for "Achieving" level which is level 2, in March 2010 following the assessment process.

2.4 By law the Council has a duty to comply with Equality legislation which encompasses Discrimination and Human Rights the EFLG covers these areas and those which are due to come under legislation in the future.

2.5 The BDT project has attracted £232,000 of funding from the West Midlands Regional Efficiency and Improvement Partnership which is being allocated to various aspects of the project including a Mapping Report which sets out the demographics of Wyre Forest Communities which is currently being approved prior to publication. The report was compiled by Waterhouse Consulting.

2.6 The latest portion of the Being Different Together funding to be allocated to Wyre Forest District Council will be used to further Community Engagement work and amounts to £8000.

- 2.7 Training will be the next focus of the Being Different Together work programme and as previously mentioned, consultants are currently being appointed in order to design Equality and Diversity training specific to Worcestershire Councils entitled "The Changing Face of Worcestershire". This training will be rolled out to all Councils and employees prior to assessment.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The main challenge the Council faces is preparing itself fully for the assessment in March 2010. Over recent months, there has been some slippage due to the Equality and Diversity Officer post being vacant. However, a robust action plan with clear targets and milestones has been developed to help manage the programme of work that needs to be delivered by the above date.

4. Options

- 4.1 To note the work that is being delivered to meet the statutory Equality Framework and to receive further progress reports on a quarterly basis.

5. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 5.1 Equality & Diversity Policy
- 5.2 Community Cohesion Strategy
- 5.3 Single Equality Scheme

6. Wards affected

All.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Equality Framework for Local Government available on the IDeA web site at www.idea.gov.uk

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