



## Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee

### Briefing Paper

Report of: Lucy Bennett  
Date: Thursday, 8th July 2010  
Open

## Equality and Diversity Update July 2010

### 1. Summary

1.1 The report provides an update on Equality and Diversity work currently taking place following the end of the Being Different Together project.

### 2. Background

2.1 The Council is working in partnership with the 5 other districts and the County Council to deliver a unified Equality and Diversity plan for Worcestershire in the form of the 'Being Different Together project'.

2.2 The Council is represented on the project as follows:  
Project Steering Group – John Campion, Leader of the Council.  
Project Management Group – Lucy Bennett, Equality and Diversity Officer.

2.3 The project has now come to an end (as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010) however work continues in relation to county wide employee training and an equality and diversity qualification which is being undertaken by equality and diversity officers from each council in the county.

2.4 Following recent government announcements and a reduction in community cohesion funding which supports our Equality and Diversity Officer post, there will be limited progression in some areas of Equality and Diversity up until October. Priority will be given to the 'No Barriers' awards, employee & member training and the World Food Event in August.

### 3. Key Issues

3.1 Work being progressed for delivery of the Council's current Equality Action Plan includes:

#### 3.2 Wyre Forest Food Event

The second Wyre Forest Food Event is due to take place on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August. This year's event is being held earlier in the year and will correspond with Kidderminster Arts Festival and the school holidays. It will also be held outdoors in the centre of the town to attract further

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visitors. The event will again be free and will feature both local producers and those offering something a little different from various parts of the world. We will be using advertising on buses to spread the word and will also be using the local media and local businesses to market the event.

### **3.3 Equality and Diversity Training**

Training for employees is ongoing and the Hub, Refuse and Recycling, the garage and Civil Enforcement Officers have completed their training. Initially operational employees will complete their training first and this will be conducted at their place of work and will be delivered around shift patterns to ensure all employees can attend.

We are currently awaiting dates for the training to commence throughout the County for Officer level and above. Training for new members was included within the induction programme and was completed on 1<sup>st</sup> July.

### **3.4 Community Engagement**

The third Wyre Forest Community Engagement Forum took place on June 16th and agenda items included, transport links in the district, Rewyre, comments and complaints to the council, the NHS Worcestershire cancer strategy consultation and sharing of information on future events. One of the aims of the forum is to reduce duplication in consultation. During the previous update mention was given to merging the forum with the Community Conversations which are being planned by Wyre Forest Matters.

It was decided at the last Wyre Forest Matters Board Meeting that the Community Conversations would be kept separate from the forum as they focused on the Place Survey and would involve specific respondents to that survey, however it may be useful in future for Wyre Forest Matters to communicate via the Community Engagement Forum and this is something that the partnership were willing to explore.

The next Wyre Forest Community Engagement Forum will take place on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2010 we are looking to hold the meeting at an alternative venue and are in touch with Stourport High School, further details on the time and venue will follow.

## **4. Options**

**4.1 To continue to work on previously identified projects as a priority and to, as far as possible, ensure continuation of other projects through alternative means.**

**4.2 To note the progress which has been made.**

**5. Consultation**

Not applicable.

**6. Related Decisions**

Not applicable.

**7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies**

Not applicable.

**8. Implications**

8.1 The Equality and Diversity Officer, Lucy Bennett has now taken up a new role as Wyre Forest Matters Partnership Manager. However Lucy will continue to cover Equality and Diversity issues for one day per week. The Council is currently advertising the vacancy on a 2 day per week basis to reflect the reduction in reward monies which have been allocated this year and applications close on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2010.

8.2 There is a risk that current work being done will fall behind due to the limited amount of time available.

**9. Equality Impact Needs Assessment**

9.1 Not applicable.

**10. Wards affected**

10.1 All

**11. Appendices**

None

**12. Background Papers**

None

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