



Audit and Governance Committee

6 December 2010

Report of the Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Fairness and Inclusion Update

Summary

1. The purpose of the report is to update the Committee about fairness and inclusion matters in the council.
2. It focuses on actions arising from the corporate Fairness and Inclusion Strategy (FIS) and Single Equality Scheme (SES) 2009-12.
3. The report is for information.

Background

4. After a two-year period of consultation and development, FIS and SES were approved by the Executive in December 2009. As asked by the Executive, an Easy Read version was produced and circulated within and outside the council. This can be found in Appendix 1.
5. The FIS and SES have 6 areas of action which are:
 - Know the community
 - Leadership, partnership and commitment
 - Engage with people from the equality strands
 - Provide responsive services
 - Have a modern, diverse workforce
 - Take action in each directorate

Besides promoting fair and inclusive practice, these actions help the council to manage any risks associated with fairness and inclusion. Below are examples of action in each of these areas:

6. Know the community

- a) A corporate customer and staff equality profiling questionnaire that was developed with help from and approved by the Equality Advisory Group (ex Social Inclusion Working Group)
- b) Using the questionnaire to collect and analyse responses to a number of key surveys in terms of gender, disability, age, race, sexual orientation and religion and belief. The surveys included the Place Survey, the Budget Consultation 2010, the Status survey and the Staff Survey. The results have been used to shape strategic plans like the One City Plan and the Workforce Plan.
- c) Holding focus groups for Black & Minority Ethnic people and young people, to boost Place Survey and other survey samples from these groups
- d) Using quantitative and qualitative data, putting in place the first ever city wide customer profile for older people and children in poverty.

7. Leadership, partnership and commitment

- a) The development of One City Plan with LSP partners.
- b) Working with our partners to develop common approaches to equality and diversity policy and practice.
- c) Promoting equality and diversity in procurement, commissioning and grants
- d) Common standards for inclusive access to services across the council
- e) Promoting participation in civic and public life to people from the equality strands, starting with young people.

8. Engage with people from the equality strands

- a) Reviewing the Social Inclusion Working Group and renaming it the Equality Advisory Group (EAG), so as to clarify and sharpen EAG members' roles and responsibilities and EAG ways of working. The Group continues to advise the Executive on equality and diversity practice in the council. In the longer

term, it is hoped that closer links with Inclusive York will make it possible for the Group to support and advise key council partners as well as the Executive.

- b) Setting up and fostering the development of the Staff Equality Reference Group (SERG). SERG has produced a number of advisory reports (called “products”) that HR colleagues have used to complete relevant Equality Impact Assessments.

9. Provide responsive services

- a) A rolling programme of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) incorporating the annual budget and More for York blueprints.
- b) Reviewing customer service procedures (such as the York Contact Centre) to make sure that they are accessible to people from vulnerable and marginalised groups
- c) Reviewing the council internet site to make it more accessible
- d) A rolling programme of equality and diversity training for staff and an equality and human rights pre-Council seminar

10. Have a modern and diverse workforce

There are specific diversity objectives in the Workforce Plan 2010-12

11. Take action in each Directorate

Each directorate has produced a Single Equality Scheme. The schemes include action that each Directorate takes to contribute to FIS objectives.

Consultation

- 12. The corporate Equality Leadership Group (ELG) and the Directorate Equality Leads (DEL) network have been involved in writing this report.
- 13. The ELG is chaired by the Director for Communities and Neighbourhoods who is mandated by CMT to lead fairness and inclusion issues in the council. The ELG meets regularly to track progress with the FIS and SES.

14. The DEL is a group of senior officers who lead on and support fairness and inclusion activity in each directorate.

Corporate Priorities

15. The strategy contributes to all themes of the Corporate Strategy 2009-12, particularly the Inclusive City and Effective Organisation themes.

Implications

16. Financial – None arising from this report
17. Human Resources (HR) – None arising from this report
18. Equalities - The FIS and SES help councillors and officers to promote fairness and inclusion in everything we do
19. Legal – None arising from this report
20. Crime and Disorder – None arising from this report
21. Information Technology (IT) – None arising from this report
22. Property - None arising from this report
23. Other - None arising from this report

Risk Management

24. The strategy and single scheme as well as the actions identified in the body of the report help the council to manage the risk of not meeting council fairness and inclusion objectives as well as the requirements of equalities legislation.
25. The risks are recorded in the corporate risk register and reviewed regularly by ELG.

Recommendations

26. None. This report is for information

Annexes

Annex 1 – Corporate Fairness and Inclusion Strategy and Single Corporate Equality Scheme 2009/12 - Easy Read version

Contact Details

**Author: Evie Chandler
Corporate Equality and
Inclusion Manager
Tel: 551704**

**Chief Officer Responsible for the
report:
Sally Burns
Director of Communities and
Neighbourhoods**

**Report
Approved**

Date

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report