

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR AND EQUALITIES OFFICER TO THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
13 JULY 2007

Corporate Equalities Action Plan 2007/08

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

- a) As a major employer and public service delivery body, the Council is committed to meeting the needs of all its employees, residents and customers. To help the Council realise this commitment in a proactive, proportionate and co-ordinated way, a Corporate Equalities Action Plan (CEAP) has been drafted for 2007/8.
- b) The Plan brings together all the Council's key areas of work for the current year with regards to the promotion of equality and diversity. It will help us to meet our statutory duties and achieve our BVPI targets for 2007/08.
- c) The Plan incorporates all the actions from the Council's recently updated Race Equality Scheme.
- d) Progress against the actions will be reported on in October 2007 and April 2008. The CEAP will be revised by the end of the calendar year in order to include the action plans from the forthcoming Disability and Gender Equality Schemes (these are both due to be finalised and approved by the end of December).
- e) The revised CEAP will cover 2008/09 – 2010/11 and will be subject to approval by the Council's Executive.
- f) This report summarises the contents of the CEAP and makes a recommendation for its adoption by the Council's Executive.
- g) The contact officers for this report are Katharine Doherty (Equalities Officer, 01235 520202 katharine.doherty@whitehorsedc.gov.uk) and Tim Sadler (Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer, 01235 520202 tim.sadler@whitehorsedc.gov.uk).

2.0 Recommendations

That the Executive adopts the Corporate Equalities Action Plan 2007/08.

3.0 Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies

- a) This report relates to the objectives of the Council's vision.
- b) This report relates to the Council's corporate priorities to "improve and modernise access to services" and to "build our capacity through managerial and organisational development."
- c) This report relates to the Council's Equality in Employment policy as well as to any policy that determines the delivery of services on the basis of need.

4.0 Background and Supporting Information

- a) The Council's Corporate Equalities Action Plan is a one-year action plan which sets out the work we will undertake in order to promote equality and diversity in everything we do as a service provider and as an employer.
- b) The action plan reinforces our commitment to recognising and valuing difference and respecting our staff and service users as individuals with individual needs.

- c) Our Corporate Equalities Action Plan will help us to:
- bring together all our equality and diversity activities for the year (including actions from our Race Equality Scheme) into one single document to help us approach our work in this area in a co-ordinated way
 - meet our statutory duties to promote race, disability and gender equality, as set out in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006
 - achieve our target of reaching level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (BVPI 2a) by the end of March 2008
 - raise our score against BVPI 2b (the duty to promote race equality checklist) to 78.9% by the year end
- d) The 2007/08 action plan focuses on the work we will need to carry out in order to meet our statutory duties relating to gender, race and disability equality. It also concentrates on strengthening the Council's internal processes in order to ensure that equality of opportunity is an integral part of our service planning and delivery.
- e) Actions in the CEAP sit under the following key areas:
- Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)
 - monitoring service use with regards to ethnicity, disability and gender
 - carrying out an Equalities audit across the Council (to identify existing Council good practice and priority areas for action regarding equalities)
 - equality and diversity training
 - policy development (Disability Equality Scheme, Gender Equality Scheme and a Comprehensive Equality Policy (CEP) and action plan)
 - measuring and reporting progress
- f) The CEAP also includes a number of actions to develop Council engagement opportunities with the wider community (in particular with disabled people and people from ethnic minority groups) but this work will be prioritised in future Corporate Equality Action Plans.
- g) Everyone at Vale of White Horse District Council is responsible for ensuring that our services and employment opportunities are provided in an accessible and inclusive way. With regards to implementing the CEAP:
- The Council's Senior Management Group is responsible for ensuring that the Council has an effective framework in place in order for the actions to be delivered
 - The majority of the actions in the plan will be carried out by the Council's Equalities Officer, although Service Directors have day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that their teams deliver any actions identified in the plan which relate to them. Service directors and team managers are signed up to the areas of activity which relate directly to them and have included relevant actions in their service plans for 2007/08.
- h) The actions in the plan are set out according to their completion dates. They are specific, measurable and above all practical and realistic. Progress against the actions will be reviewed at regular intervals, with progress reports being produced in October 2007 and April 2008 to the relevant Portfolio Holder and Strategic Director.
- i) The CEAP will be revised by the end of the calendar year in order to include the actions set out in the forthcoming Disability and Gender Equality Schemes (these are both due to be finalised and approved by the end of December).
- j) The revised CEAP will cover 2008/09 – 2010/11 and will be subject to approval by the Council's Executive. It will be reviewed on a six monthly basis.

KATHARINE DOHERTY
EQUALITIES OFFICER

TIM SADLER
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

Background Papers

- k) Corporate Equalities Action Plan (CEAP) 2007/08, attached.
- l) Race Equality Scheme March 2007