

# **STRATEGIC EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT**

## **DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE**

**Equalities and Human Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**27<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

## EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### **Migrating from Equality Standard to Equality Framework**

Demonstrate where evidence has migrated from level 3 of the Equality Standard to the equivalent known as the 'Achieving' level of the Equality Framework for local government

The Directorate's Diversity and Equality Steering Group (DESG) is leading and co-ordinating this work across all service areas of the Directorate. Initial indications are that there is a depth and breadth of evidence across the Directorate's services of meeting the criteria for an "Achieving" authority. Findings will be considered by DESG over the next few months, and conclusions and recommendations for specific equality actions to be incorporated in service plans will be presented to the Directorate's SMT in the Autumn.

**Knowing Your Communities and Equality Mapping** - The outcome of this work would provide the basis of identifying local priorities and key outcomes in communities. The mapping would identify where there are equality gaps.

The Development Directorate provides a wide range of economic, labour market and demographic information that is made publicly available from [www.Birminghameconomy.org.uk](http://www.Birminghameconomy.org.uk). A monthly Unemployment Briefing and a quarterly Worklessness Briefing is sent to all Councillors. Our own service monitoring and work with partners also provides critical intelligence that helps us understand changing communities' needs and respond to those needs. The following are examples of how this information is used to map local needs, identify equality gaps and determine service priorities and equality outcomes:

- Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans (NESP's & CESP's)
- Evidence for statutory planning documents, eg. the Bordesley Park Area Action Plan
- Information on health inequalities and population trends shared through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment with PCTs.

**Place shaping, Leadership, Partnership and organisational commitment** – In particular demonstrate evidence of working with partners in setting and reviewing equality objectives

The Directorate plays a key role in determining the future of the city through the statutory planning process and other strategic initiatives, such as the **Core Strategy**, the **Big City Plan**, **Area Action Plans** (such as Longbridge and Aston, Newtown and Lozells), and **Supplementary Planning Documents** (such as the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework). The Directorate works effectively with partners to stimulate investment and support community cohesion by:

- Creating new investment and employment opportunities in all parts of the city through the **Area Investment Prospectuses** and linking employment opportunities resulting from inward investment to people from priority areas
- Improving more than 20 local centres that serve and strengthen local communities through the city's **Local Centres Strategy**
- Directly addressed equality and cohesion issues at a local level with Jobcentre Plus and the Skills Funding Agency through the **Birmingham & Solihull Employment Strategy Group**, including developing a joint proposal with Be Birmingham to Advantage

West Midlands to actively engage long-term workless residents from communities with demonstrably disproportionate high long-term worklessness rates, and preparing the **Constituency Employment & Skills Plans** with Jobcentre Plus, LSC, Connexions and the Chamber of Commerce.

- Creating the Integrated **Employment Board for Disabled People**, jointly chaired by Waheed Nazir, Director for Regeneration, and Sheila Rochester, Assistant Director Adults and Communities, to implement the recommendations of the **"Out to Work" Scrutiny Review** to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities. The Board is tasked with improving employment opportunities for disabled people through thriving social enterprises, and achieving better representation of disabled people within the city council's workforce. The Board complements the **EMT Workstream on Extending Commissioning**.
- Leading the **Growth and Regeneration CMT Employment and Skills** sub group to implement the city council's **Employment and Action Skills Plan**, including the **Procurement Policy Framework on Jobs and Skills** agreed by Cabinet on 12th July 2010 to secure more job opportunities for our priority residents through targeted recruitment and training clauses in council contracts, working with Housing Management to target job opportunities in the **Highways PFI** to workless residents in council owned properties, and linking the **Building Schools for the Future** programme to the **Building Jobs for Birmingham** initiative to ensure continuity of employment and training for priority residents employed in construction.
- The **Employment Access Team** working with employers and Job Centre Plus to capture job and training opportunities.
- Leading the **Birmingham Construction Partnership** to allocate over £67 million of work to local businesses through its supply chain, and create an estimated 120 local sustainable jobs.

#### **Responsive services and customer care** - Demonstrate evidence of community engagement and satisfaction

The Directorate is involved in inclusive community engagement structures that are working effectively. The Council's Statement of Community Involvement sets out how we engage on statutory plans and planning applications and was prepared following extensive community involvement:

- The **Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework** has now been formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document following an extensive consultation with the local community.
- Consultation on the **Aston, Newtown and Lozells Area Action Plan** resulted in 1,125 responses that gave overall support for the focus of the AAP Preferred Options Document on housing, economic regeneration and job creation.
- The non-statutory consultation on the **Moseley Supplementary Planning Document** was led by the Moseley Community Development Trust. It included an assessment of equality impacts of the new planning policy document and involves community and stakeholder groups to ensure local residents' views are taken into account.

The Directorate engages with community interests to provide a service that is responsive to different communities' needs, as these examples show:

- **Planning Management** actively seeks the views of local people on planning applications and residents can address Planning Committee on any particular application, before a decision is made.
- **Birmingham Construction Partnership** (see above) won Business in the Community's "Power in Partnerships Award".
- **Civic Catering** achieved the "Customer Service Excellence Award" in May 2010."

#### **Diverse workforce – Workforce profiling**

The Directorate aims to ensure that its workforce reflects the communities of Birmingham. The most recent workforce data provided by **HR Ops** and **Workforce Intelligence Planning** has been used in compiling this report.

The Development Directorate had a workforce of 1,390 employees at 31st March 2010, compared with a total of 2,146 employees in 2008/09 and 1,850 employees in 2007/08. 460 employees in the Highways Division of the Development Directorate transferred to the Environment & Culture Directorate during 2009/10. Excluding the effect of the transfer of Highways staff, the Directorate employed 298 fewer staff at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 than a year previously.

Women made up 43% of the Directorate's workforce at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, compared with 76% for the city council as a whole. The Directorate's female workforce has increased from 39.7% of the total in February 2009 and 32.8% in June 2007. Highest percentage increases have been in Grades 2 to 3 and JNC posts.

7% of the Directorate's current workforce has declared a disability, an increase from 6.2% in 2008/09 and 6.1% in 2007/08. A comparison with the city council as a whole is not valid as fewer than half the city council's staff have declared whether or not they have a disability.

27% of the Directorate's workforce belongs to Black & Minority Ethnic groups, compared with 26% for the city council as a whole. The proportion of the Directorate's workforce belonging to Black & Minority Ethnic groups has increased from 24% in February 2009 and 20% in June 2007.

Specific initiatives to increase the diversity of the Directorate's workforce are Advancing Women in the Workplace, Employee Networks, Urban Design's Student Placement Scheme, and the Aston Pride Graduate and Development Programme.

## 2. Directorate Progress on Equality Monitoring

### (a) Equality Impact Needs Assessment

#### Demonstrate Equality Impact Needs Assessment process is being applied

The Directorate has adopted a revised process that clearly locates assessing equality impacts in the consultation and service planning processes, defines managers' responsibility for implementing recommendations and actions arising from equality impact assessments, and complements corporate guidance from a Directorate perspective. Members of the Directorate's Equality & Diversity Steering Group (DESG) now provide peer challenge and promote learning from sharing experience of assessing equality impacts. The following equality impact assessments (amongst others) have influenced policy and service delivery:

- The **Working Neighbourhood Fund strategic approach to tackle worklessness** assessment concluded that further work is required to fully understand the impact of a mainly spatially targeted approach on particular client groups and to re-assess the effectiveness of engagement with the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. The key partners in the Employment Strategy Group are now considering what further steps need to be taken.
- The **Planning Framework for the Housing-led regeneration of The 3 Estates, Kings Norton** (Pool Farm, Primrose and Hawkesley) was completed concurrently with the Planning Framework, which fully addresses equality issues and was approved by Cabinet in March 2010.
- Following the assessment of the equality impacts of the Issues and Options consultation for the **Aston, Newtown & Lozells Area Action Plan**, questions on sexual orientation were added to the monitoring of the Preferred Option consultation questionnaire.
- An assessment of the draft revised **Places for Worship Supplementary Planning Document** will ensure that the policy developed will be supportive, informative and above all reduce community tensions resulting from planning applications for places of worship.

### (b) Demonstrate meeting requirements under the Equality Duties (Race, Gender, Disability - including Hate Crime – minimising corporate risk)

The Directorate meets the requirement of the equality duties and has promoted the General Duties, mainly through training for staff, implementing actions relating to the Corporate Equality Scheme, assessing the equality impact of policy and service changes, and provision of relevant information to staff through "In Brief", the Directorate's monthly on-line newsletter. Specific examples of service initiatives designed to overcome barriers for service users are:

- the **"Duty Planner"** at Planning Management reception

- a new **planning applicant diversity monitoring form**
- An easy-read booklet for **Disability Employment Solutions'** disabled clients to increase awareness of bullying, harassment and hate crime, and support clients to take appropriate action.
- **Documentary films made by and for disabled adults** with Forward 4 Work, dealing with issues such as disabled adults and sexual consent, health issues, improving access to sport, independent travel and equitable access to work. A film about a learning disabled young man who becomes a stand-up comedian is shortlisted in a number of national and international competitions for best short film.

**(c) Demonstrate how requirements of the Corporate Equality Schemes are being implemented (Disability; Gender; Race; Religion & Belief; and Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People)**

The Directorate has reviewed its 2009/10 CES targets in the preparation of its 2010-2011 service plan. All CES targets have been met, or embedded in the service plan with refreshed equality objectives.

An example is the target "Promote the adoption of the corporate monitoring guidance on ethnicity". "Share and Compare" was approved in October 2009 by the Corporate Management Team as the City Council's mandatory guidance on profiling information, including ethnicity, for consultations and research initiated by the Council. The guidance has been disseminated through the Directorate's Consultation and Equalities Groups, and all staff informed by articles in the Directorate's on-line newsletter In Brief, and information on the "Inline" intranet.

**(d) Demonstrate by evidence contribution to the requirements of the Stonewall Workplace Equality submission**

The Directorate has led the Gay Village Development Group involved in planning the £500k Gay Village Environmental Improvement Scheme - part of the Big City Plan programme. Plans for the Gay Village improvements were drawn up with the Birmingham LGBT Community Trust. The Trust and representatives from gay businesses in the area are represented on the Development Group, which is chaired by a member of the local gay community. Since the completion of the works in May 2010, there has been very positive feedback from businesses and users of the area. This has been demonstrated through feedback from the Steering Group members, and also in a feature article in July 2010's "Midland Zone" magazine: "Gay Village Regeneration is Making a Real Difference" which reports and quotes businesses' and customers' favourable reactions to the improvements. Birmingham LGBT Community Trust represents the wider gay and lesbian community and reports very positive comments. The regeneration impact is very real through investment from local businesses with several cafe's and bars opening new pavement cafe areas; a further cafe bar reopening soon following major refurbishment, applications for further new licences premises, and a general improvements to several other shop fronts.

### 3. **Community cohesion – providing evidence of implementing the Corporate Community Cohesion Action Plan 2009/10**

The Directorate contributes to Community Cohesion and equality of opportunity in the following ways:

- Our spatial approach to **worklessness** at a Super Output Area level means we are targeting employment based support to areas with the highest levels of unemployment, including outer city areas that have often been ignored by previous funding regimes. Nearly 6,000 unemployed residents on WNF-funded programmes have received one to one support and a client tailored action plan, and over 2,000 of these have received targeted pre-employment support. 38% of these clients are female, 35% are White British, 21% Pakistani, 12% Black Caribbean, 10% Black African and 6% from a mixed background. Approximately 8% of clients engaged to date have a disability.
- **Grow, attract and retain investment** by delivering strategic local planning and development in local areas that offer major regeneration and employment opportunities outside the City Centre:
  - The Council's **Local Centres Programme** is improving more than 20 centres that serve and strengthen local communities
  - The **Area Investment Prospectuses** link employment opportunities to people from priority Super Output Areas through recruitment and training campaigns delivered by the Employment Access Team, eg. Library of Birmingham, New Street Gateway, Midland Arts Centre, Warwickshire County Cricket Club, Tesco (Fox and Goose) and Morrison's (Handsworth).
- **Determine Planning Applications** to ensure safe environments are designed as part of a planning application, helping to prevent crime and disorder, for example consulting with police on ATM machine installation. Consult with statutory consultees and applying policies helps manage the infrastructure of our centres, transport systems and leisure facilities in line with City Council action plans to help manage infrastructure. Help to remove structural disadvantage through affordable homes.
- **Conservation** - help people to be proud of the City through Conservation of its Historic Environment and tree preservation.
- **Statutory public participation on Planning Applications and public speaking at Planning Committee** - Helps encourage active citizenship and promote democratic engagement.
- **Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans** provide a community profile, draw out the equality gaps around employment and skills, and identify actions to address these gaps in neighbourhoods with the highest levels of worklessness.
- **Aston Pride NDC** has demonstrated an effective approach to Community Cohesion in collaboration with Birmingham City Council Equalities & Diversity Division, the Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo), Birmingham City University, and recently the Barrow Cadbury Trust to embed good practice techniques and lessons learnt from outreach and regeneration programmes.

## Strategic Director's Comments

The Development Directorate's core aims relate to enabling growth for Birmingham not as an end in its own right but as a means to achieving economic success, self sufficiency for individuals and communities and improving the quality of life for all Birmingham's residents. The activities described in this report represent some of the practical examples of how we are achieving these aims.

The preparation of this second annual report on the Directorate's equalities and community cohesion activities and achievement has been different from the first in 2009. Because of the move out of the Directorate of the embedded Equalities Team, many more staff have been directly involved in the preparation of this report. This had been a positive experience, and we welcome the challenges that this has presented. Equalities and community cohesion considerations are increasingly integral elements of our work.

We, along with other services, are now constantly reassessing our priorities. The contribution of our policies and services to equality of opportunity and community cohesion is fundamental to our aim to support all Birmingham people achieve economic success, be healthy and safe, make a valuable contribution to their communities and enjoy a high quality of life.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Stephen Hughes**  
**Strategic Director of Development**

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> June 2010