

Herefordshire Council Comprehensive Equality Policy (CEP) Action Plan 2007-2010

Introduction

The Comprehensive Equality Policy (CEP) is the umbrella document that sets out the Council's commitment to achieving excellence and meeting its responsibilities to promote and implement equality when it is:

- Providing services
- Purchasing services
- Employing staff or
- Working in partnership with other organisations

The CEP provides the focus to ensure that the Council meets the criteria needed to reach Level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by 2010.

This Action Plan is the document that sets out how we are going to achieve this. It is the action plan that brings all the strands of the diversity agenda together. It should be noted that the Race Equality Scheme (RES), the Gender Equality Scheme (GES) and the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) are sub-sections of the CEP and therefore their action plans sit as appendices to this Plan.

It should also be noted that both the RES and the DES are driven by single focus steering groups where performance and progress is monitored. These steering groups make reports to the Diversity Group, which has overall responsibility for progress on mainstreaming diversity issues through the Council, and achievement of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

This document sets out specific actions to achieve corporate objectives based on service need. It is a tool that will be used to monitor progress and report on levels of achievement. It will focus on ensuring that the Council has mechanisms, processes and procedures in place to achieve Level 5 of the Equality Standard.

The Equality Standard is split into four main areas, and this action plan has been designed to reflect this:

1. Leadership and Corporate Commitment
2. Consultation, Community Development and Scrutiny
3. Service Delivery and Customer Care
4. Employment and Training

Key

BV: Best Value
BVPI: Best Value Performance Indicators
CDT: Corporate Diversity Team
CEP: Comprehensive Equality Policy
DES: Disability Equality Scheme
EIA: Equality Impact Assessment
HCS: Herefordshire Community Strategy
HEP: Herefordshire Equality Partnership
HR: Human Resources
ICPR: Integrated Corporate Performance Report
GES: Gender Equality Scheme
GOWM: Government Office West Midlands
LAA: Local Area Agreement
LGBT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
RES: Race Equality Scheme
DCEO: Deputy Chief Executive Office
C&YP: Children & Young people
A&CS: Adult and Community Services
HR: human resources
JMT: Joint management team

Commitments shown in red are performance indicators that are reported externally.

Commitments	Lead Officer	Evidence	Target/Date	Cross-ref to other documents for specific action	Progress by September 2009
1. Leadership & Corporate Commitment					
1.1. BV 2b: The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government reached	Carol Trachonitis	Internal audit and external verification by IDEA	Level 3 March 2008 Level 4 March 2009 Level 5 March 2010	ICPR	Declared at level 3 March 08 – External assessment verified Feb 2009. April 2009 declared level 4 working towards excellence for the New framework.
1.2. BV 174: The number of racial incidents reported to the Local Authority and subsequently reported, per 100,000 population	Carol Trachonitis/ Neville Meredith	ICPR/BVPI		ICPR	Reported quarterly
1.3. BV 175: The percentage of racial incidents reported to the local authority that resulted in further action	Carol Trachonitis/ Neville Meredith	ICPR/BVPI	100%	ICPR	All incidents reported result in further action
1.4. Ensure that all equality schemes are reviewed and implemented (RES, GES, DES)	CDT and diversity groups	New schemes published. Actions implemented.	RES – March 2008 DES – Dec 2009 GES – March 2010	RES, DES, GES	RES 08/11. New RES adopted 1 May 2008. DES 2006/09 reviewed yearly. New DES on track for publication Nov 09. GES 2007/10.

Commitments	Lead Officer	Evidence	Target/Date	Cross-ref to other documents for specific action	Progress by September 2009
1.5. Monitor and assess use of EIA action plans in directorate service planning	Performance Managers	Action plans in all service plans. Evidence of changes to service delivery documented	Service planning cycle service plans 2008/09	Performance planning framework Service and Directorate Plans. Central list/database of EIAs	218 Equality Impact assessments completed by Council Services over the last 5 years. New guidelines and toolkit being developed to support NHS Herefordshire. EIA's incorporated into service planning cycle and performance improvement in service delivery has been evidenced.
2. Consultation, Community Development & Scrutiny					
2.1. HCS 63: Percentage of adult residents who feel that Herefordshire is a place where people from different back-grounds get on well together	HEP	Customer satisfaction survey	March 08	Community Strategy LAA	Targets agreed for the LAA. Local associations have been established and supported (x4). Work with the HEP has included some community cohesion events. The council has supported a number of awareness raising events and a yearly calendar is available.
2.2. HCS 87: The percentage of people who feel that people in their area treat them with respect and consideration	HEP	Customer satisfaction survey	March 08	Community Strategy LAA	Targets agreed for the LAA. Working with the HEP to raise awareness.

Commitments	Lead Officer	Evidence	Target/Date	Cross-ref to other documents for specific action	Progress by September 2009
2.3. Develop a consultation group specifically to support the diversity agenda (Herefordshire 100)	Martin Heuter	Groups set up and consulted on	October 2007	Consultation Strategy	The Herefordshire 100 has been established and is in its second phase. Reports from the community consultation are available to all staff on the website
3. Service Delivery & Customer Care					
3.1. BV 2b: The quality of the authority's Race Equality Scheme and improvement	Neville Meredith	Review and re-written	April 2008	RES, ICPR	The scheme has been reviewed and re-written and improvement has been maintained.
3.2. Ensure that equality policy and objectives are incorporated in "partnership" and procurement arrangements	Dean Hogan	Equality clauses written into contracts	April 2008	Corporate Procurement Strategy	This is still an area of work that needs to be improved. The corporate strategy now includes diversity information but currently we do not have any diversity clauses that are mandatory for all contracts. This will be reassessed when the new director for integrated commissioning takes up post

Commitments	Lead Officer	Evidence	Target/Date	Cross-ref to other documents for specific action	Progress by September 2009
3.3. Ensure planned programme of service area impact assessments are carried out	Carol Trachonitis	EIAs carried out and action plans developed	Rolling programme 2007/09	Service plans/local databases	218 Equality Impact assessments have been completed over the duration of the rolling programme. Currently need to review how EIA's are rolled out across the new management arrangements.
3.4. Ensure that planned agreed service area equality targets and objectives are incorporated into service plans	Carol Trachonitis/ Performance Managers	Directorate and Service plan action plans	2008/09	Performance management framework. Directorate and Service Plans	Service plans signed off by improvement managers and policy & performance and diversity proofing completed for 08/09 plans. Individual service targets set by Service managers
3.5. Ensure that each service area has approved and established monitoring and information systems in place	Connects/ Performance Managers	Central/local database and associated reporting system?	C&YP March 08 A&CS March 08 HR March 08	EIA guidance document	Central database not yet in place due to the suspension of the Connects programme.
4. Employment & Training					
4.1. % top paid 5% of wage earners that are female	Richard Beavan-Pearson	BVPI/IPR	2007/10	Pay & Workforce Dev Strategy, ICPR	Reported via ICPR
4.2. % top paid 5% of wage earners with a disability	Richard Beavan-Pearson	BVPI/IPR	2007/10	Pay & Workforce Dev Strategy, ICPR	Reported via ICPR

Commitments	Lead Officer	Evidence	Target/Date	Cross-ref to other documents for specific action	Progress by September 2009
4.3. % employees with a disability	Richard Beavan-Pearson	BVPI/IPR	2007/10	Pay & Workforce Dev Strategy, ICPR	Reported via ICPR
4.4. % employees from ethnic minority community	Richard Beavan-Pearson	BVPI/IPR	2007/10	Pay & Workforce Dev Strategy, ICPR	Reported via ICPR
4.5. Review personnel information systems for monitoring including supporting the Council's statutory ethnic monitoring duties	Richard Beavan-Pearson	Accurate data produced	March 08	Pay & Workforce Dev Strategy	New software system to be purchased to address this issue through the Connects work stream
4.6. Develop a programme of equality training to support the CEP and service area objectives. Ensure that the training programme is consistent with the Council's equality schemes	Liz Wallace / Carol Trachonitis	Equality training incorporated into induction process/ management competencies.	Dec 07	Pay & Workforce Dev Strategy, DES, RES, GES	Disability training sessions; 6 delivered April-July 08. Joint central induction developed Oct 08. Diversity session; Member training included at induction and through the member development programme. Bespoke sessions for JMT & governors. EIA training for managers and staff

Commitments	Lead Officer	Evidence	Target/Date	Cross-ref to other documents for specific action	Progress by September 2009
5. Tension Monitoring					
5.1. Monthly returns to GOWM through the HEP	CDT	Monthly return	25 th of each month		Returns completed from April 08. All returns completed on time. Currently investigating how we can get a broader community base to feed into this process
5.2. Support any interventions as deemed necessary	CDT/HEP	Minutes of HEP meeting			No interventions deemed necessary as of October 09
6. Community/Social Cohesion					
6.1. Develop, promote and host events to encourage social cohesion across all strands of diversity	CDT	Support given to a number of events eg. LGBT History Month, International Day of Disabled Persons, Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day	Minimum of 3 events each year	DES, RES, GES	Facilitated LGBT history month programme of events Feb 09. Holocaust Memorial Day supported Jan 09. Safe sound and sorted event April 09, Launch of the No Prejudice in Herefordshire campaign. Wyeside Music festival Black History Month event in place (Oct 09).
6.2. Develop an Equalities Forum	Neville Meredith	Event hosted	March 2008		A forum took place in November 2008

Herefordshire’s Proposal to Comply with the Equality Bill

The Corporate Diversity Team proposes that the Comprehensive Equality Policy (CEP) is revised to set out Herefordshire’s public services¹ commitment to the general and specific duties in regards to equality legislation. We propose to develop a Single Equality Policy (SEP) that will set out the ethos and culture of the organisations and state how we define and tackle specific issues including social cohesion, integration, anti-radicalisation, and tension monitoring.

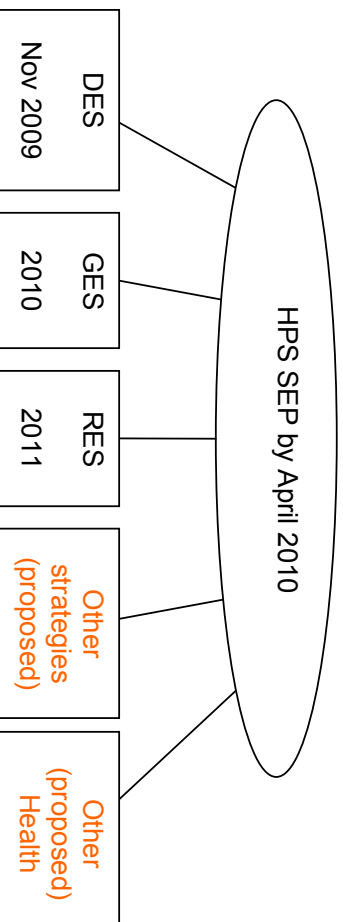
The SEP will give clear definitions of equality terminology and make these issues relevant to local need. It will outline responsibility, accountability and governance for this agenda. It will also set out the time frames.

Underpinning the SEP will be specific, single-focus action plans. These action plans will outline what each organisation will undertake to deliver what local people want from their public services. The action plans will be reviewed annually, and re-written every three years. Currently these action plans include Race, Disability and Gender but will be expanded to include other strands and key work areas, for example the Prevent programme, anti-poverty, and socio-economic disadvantage.

Timeline (each of these documents will span Herefordshire’s public services):

- Disability Equality Scheme November 2009
- SEP re-written and endorsed by Council, PCT
Board and HHT March 2010
- Single-focus action plans to be introduced as required
- Gender Equality Scheme May 2010
- Race Equality Scheme April 2011

This timeline will ensure our compliance with the Equality Bill, which becomes law in 2011.



The diagram above shows the following schemes sitting beneath an overarching HPS Single Equality Policy by April 2010:

- Disability Equality Scheme, November 2009 (exists)
- Gender Equality Scheme, 2010 (exists)
- Race Equality Scheme, 2011 (exists)
- Other strategies can be incorporated. (proposed)

¹ Herefordshire Public Services (HPS) includes Herefordshire Council, NHS Herefordshire, Hereford Hospitals Trust