

COMPREHENSIVE EQUALITY POLICY

PROGRAMME AREA: CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

CABINET

12TH JANUARY 2006

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

To receive a progress report on the implementation of the Comprehensive Equality Policy.

Key Decision

This not a key decision.

Recommendations

- That
- (a) **the progress in implementing the Comprehensive Equality Policy be noted;**
 - (b) **the Action Plan be endorsed and Cabinet acknowledges its significance in achieving Level 2 of the Local Authority Equality Standard.**
 - (c) **the recommendations for change identified through the EIA process be endorsed, and drives the implementation in front line activity.**

Reasons

The changing and diverse nature of the community of Herefordshire should be recognised and acknowledged, along with the challenges this brings. This has been corroborated through the process of Equality Impact Assessment.

The Comprehensive Equality Policy (CEP) is the overriding 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
- Working in partnership with other organisations

The CEP provides the focus to ensure that the Council meets the criteria needed to reach Level 2 of the Equality Standard by 2007.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Carol Trachonitis 01432 260616.

Considerations

1. In 2002 Herefordshire Council adopted the Equality Standard framework for Local Government. The Standard is designed to enable local authorities to mainstream equalities in service delivery and employment, ensuring that discriminatory barriers preventing equal access to services are identified and removed.

There are 5 levels to this standard:

- ❖ Level 1: commitment to a Comprehensive Equality Policy
- ❖ Level 2: assessment and consultation
- ❖ Level 3: setting equality objectives and targets
- ❖ Level 4: information system and monitoring against targets
- ❖ Level 5: achieving and reviewing outcomes

The CEP forms the basis of our commitment to equality in service provision, employment and community leadership.

2. The CEP Action Plan shows the progress to date and the Council's commitment to implementing the CEP. It provides a clear focus in order to ensure that the detailed requirements of the Equality Standard are fully met.

Risk Management

Withdrawal of resources would mean that we would be unable to implement the Action Plan. This may result in the Council not obtaining Level 2 of the Equality Standard.

Alternative Options

None.

Consultees

Diversity Group, Race Equality Steering Group, Disability Working Group, Race Equality Staff Group, Disability Staff Group, Social Inclusion and Anti Poverty Ambition Group.

Appendix

Comprehensive Equality Action Plan.

Background Papers

None identified.