

Progress on the Corporate Equality Action Plan

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260225 or Natalie Hill, Equality and Diversity Officer, on 01743 260236.

1 Purpose of Report

This purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the actions identified within the Corporate Equality Action Plan which are being monitored through the Directorate Business Plans.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the progress on the actions in the Corporate Equality Action Plan.

3 Background

The Corporate Equality Action Plan is a combination of actions that have arisen from the Gender, Disability and Race Equality Schemes, the Equality Standard for Local Government, the National Equality and Diversity Strategy and outcomes of completed Equality Impact Assessments. These actions were agreed by Policy Group (Executive Officers) and were reviewed at the start of the reporting period by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group to ascertain which actions that had been completed, were still in progress or had not yet started, thus updating the Corporate Equality Action Plan (CEAP). It was necessary to re-evaluate the completion dates for some actions and these were amended in light of workloads within the directorates.

4 Progress to date

This report is the third update and shows the progress made from October 2008 to February 2009 in achieving those actions. The colour coding allows a quick glance on progress with detail in the text. A number of actions were achieved prior to April 2008; others are completed and ongoing and for ease of reporting these have now been removed from the update except for those items recently completed during the period of reporting. Due to capacity, a number of actions will be included within next year's business plans for completion.

At the last Audit and Performance Management Committee, Members were informed that a number of additional actions had been identified following an analysis of the Equality Standard for Local Government and the National Equality and Diversity Strategy and these were agreed by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group. These actions have now been added to the CEAP and progress will be reported alongside the existing actions in the plan. A number of actions have also been added as a result of outcomes from the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process.

5 Financial Implications

All financial implications have been considered as part of the Business Planning process. Any new actions arising as a result of the EQIA process will be considered at the time and either absorbed in to current workloads or included within next year's Business Plans.

6 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7 Equality Impact Assessment

This report is purely an update on historical information and so the recommendations within the report have no impact on people.

8 Appendix

Corporate Equality Action Plan – Progress October 2008 – February 2009

9 Background Papers

Audit and Performance Management Committee
27 November 2008, Report 12 - Quarterly Progress on the Corporate Equality Action Plan
11 September 2008, Report 17 - Quarterly Progress on the Corporate Equality Action Plan

Corporate Equality Action Plan
 Disability, Gender and Race Equality Schemes
 Equality Standard for Local Government

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial		Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*

Corporate Equality Action Plan

Action Number	Race	Disability	Gender	ES	National E&D Strategy	Action	Departments involved	Responsible Officer	Target completion date	Completed Date completed	Evidence	Progress Quarter 1 as reported in the Directorate Business Plans	Progress Quarter 2 as reported in the Directorate Business Plans	Progress Quarter 3 as reported in the Directorate Business Plans
10	Y	Y	N			Produce an external communications policy for press and media.	PID	Programme Office	Dec-08	A+O	Included in action number 44	Being researched currently. Will be incorporated into Comms and Consultation Strategy. Completion date extended to Dec 08	As before	Elements of the Consultation and Communication Strategy have been released in Brigade Order format. Further sections will be reviewed and released as part of the 2009/10 Improvement Priority process.
24	Y	N	N			Review the RES and make alterations for the 2008-11 scheme.	HR	EDO	May-09			Not yet due	End date amended to November 08	End date amended to May 2009 - consider developing one equality scheme for all strands
25	Y	N	N			Document where translation service are available and put into Brigade Order	HR	EDO	Apr-09			Not yet due	Not yet due	Amended date
34	Y	Y	N			Review Equality & Diversity training to consider developing training aimed at different levels, undertake a training needs analysis	HR	DM & EDO	Sep-09	P		Not yet due	Training needs analysis for Members developed	Senior management training on E&D has been arranged in the region to be implemented during 2009 - amended date
45	Y	Y	?			Ensure that consultation protocol is being used in all areas	PID	Performance Improvement Officer	Dec-08	A&O		Work on this is underway.	Work on this is underway.	Completion of the Comms and Cons Strategy has been extended as an element of the 2009/10 Improvement Priorities - Improving Communication. This will be completed in this workstream
46	Y	Y	?			Ensure consultation feedback is used to review policy for policies and planning	PID	Performance Improvement Officer/ all mangers	Jan-09	A&O	IRMP	Feedback on Annual Report used as part of Strategic Planning Process (October Workshop)	Feedback also being sought on Corporate Plan which will be available for use at the October Workshop	Ongoing consultation throughout the strategic planning process has shaped the 2009/10 Corporate Plan
49*	Y	Y	Y			Ensure that all customer surveys include Equality & Diversity questions and monitoring information and that these results are published.	HR, PID	Performance (lead) /HRM & EDO	Mar-09	HR A&O	Full impact assessment on Consultation and Communication Strategy	All surveys undertaken from now onwards will include an E+D questionnaire. E.g Annual Report, ATI and IRMP. Stress survey meeting has been held and has included monitoring data.	Full impact assessment on the Consultation and Communication Strategy is complete which have provided actions to address this item	Stress survey monitoring amended to cover all 6 strands

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51	Y	Y	N			Review the supplier management policy to ensure that it incorporates Equal Opportunities Policies and the CRE's 'Race Equality and Public Procurement Document'.	Res	HOR	Jan-09	P	Partially complete	CRE guidance out of date and new guidance not yet available. HoR attended West Midlands forum presentation regarding this issue and considering actions.	This action is will be closed down when a status report has been received and a new action will replace this regarding regional supplier management.	The supplier management policy is now being dealt with through the regional management board
53*	N	Y	N			Investigate the feasibility of introducing a service such as minicom or talk type.	HR, PID	EDO/Performance - comms	Sep-09			Not yet started	Not yet due	Not yet due. Date extended to September 2009
55	N	Y	N			Review the DES and make alterations for the 2009-11 scheme.	HR	HRM/EDO/Policy Group	May-09			Not yet due	End date amended to January 09	End date amended to May 2009 - consider developing one equality scheme for all strands
61	N	Y				Where appropriate use local people for talks and training regarding disability.	HR	EDO/DM	Nov-08	A&O		Not yet due	Early stages of discussion. End date amended to November 08	Person visited a watch to talk to them about hearing impairments. Transgender awareness undertaken by local person
62	N	Y	N			Produce literature informing staff about what happens if you have or get a disability	HR	HRM	Oct-08	Y		Not yet due	Article to go on Pink in October 2008	Completed
63	N	Y	N			Electronic application form should be made available.	HR, PID	Web Officer & EDO	Jan-09	P	PDF version available	PDF version available from website. GE to investigate costs of on line application form.	investigation ongoing	This action will be addressed with in the 2009/10 Directorate Business Plans
64	N	Y				Review the information sent out in application packs	HR	HRM	Jan-09	A&O		Not yet due	End date amended to January 09	Wholtime application pack reviewed Feb 09.
66	N	Y	N			Review where referral forms are distributed	CS	Head of Fire Prevention	Mar-09			Not yet due	Not yet due	This is being reviewed as part of a larger project with Birmingham Uni to look at outcomes of CFS
74	N	N	Y			Look at reasons wh people refuse to have smoke detectors fitted	CS	Head of Prevention	Sep-09			Not yet due	Not yet due	This is being reviewed as part of a larger project with Birmingham Uni to look at outcomes of CFS
77	N	N	Y			Incident facilities need to be reviewed and a policy written on this	CS	Head of Operations	Dec-08	P		Welfare Order in place. Toilet facilities being revised.	Various options investigated. Decision to be taken.	New information from Staffordshire being looked at
78	N	N	Y			Policy to be introduced and communicated to all staff on the use of lockers and changing areas	CS	Head of District Performance	Dec-08			Not yet due	Signage to be devised instead of Brigade Order	signage being designed
79*	N	N	Y			Investigate the introduction of Corporate Wear	All	All	2009			Not yet due	Not yet due	Discussion to be held at next Steering Group

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80	N	N	Y	N		Review the GES and make alteration for the 2010-13 scheme	HR	HRM/EDO/Policy Group	Dec-09			Not yet due	Not yet due	Not yet due
82	N	N	Y			Review the flexi-time scheme which is in operation for non-uniformed staff	HR	HRM	Oct-09			Not yet due	End date amended to March 09	End date amended to October 2009
84	N	N	Y			IT training to be communicated to all staff, especially those in operational posts, information to be placed in the internal newsletter	HR	DM	Jun-09	P	Training needs analysis has been undertaken, research regarding provider completed and delivery is now being undertaken in small chunks.	analysis of results being undertaken	The results received have now been analysed and discussions are planned in October with a training/funding provider to seek way forward	Training provider identified to be delivered June 09.
85	N	N	Y			Information to be placed on the internal newsletter to give them information on ; sexual orientation and transsexuals	HR	EDO	Apr-09	P		Not yet due	Not yet due	Advert place on the pink regarding the LGBT regional support network amended date to April 2009
86	N	N	Y			Specific training to be developed on training men and women on interactive skills, respect, this should be implemented where it is required	HR	DM	Oct-08	A&O	Dignity at Work has been completed	Not yet due	Communication and E&D skills are an integral part of our current development programmes. If additional training is required this will be identified through the IPDR process or other routes as identified. We are currently delivering a specific E&D skills programme to those managers who may not have had the opportunity to attend the newly designed programmes.	The 'catch up' programme is now complete and all people skills management programmes now include the E+D element as standard. Interview skills focussed on equality is being done in March 09
89	N	N	Y			Talk to job centre plus/careers advisors to ensure that they are promoting firefighter roles to both genders	HR	HRM	May-09			Not yet due	Not yet due	Not yet due
91	N	N	Y			Investigate the feasibility of creating/participating in a LGBT group	HR	EDO	May-09	P	Currently investigating participation in the SCC LGBT	Investigation taking place for practical issues	Investigation taking place. End date amended to December 08	EDO met with the LGBT FBU representative for the region to discuss options - amended date to May 09
92	N	N	Y	Y		Review the maternity policy	HR	HRM	Dec-08	Y	Ready for consultation	with unions for consultation	End date amended to December 08. Consultation process is taking longer than anticipated	Consultation process now completed. Awaiting confirmation from the HR committee in Feb 09 of which option/s they wish to take forward
93	N	N	Y			Ensure that there is adequate provision for maternity uniforms	Res	Equipment contracts manager	2007-2010	A&O		ongoing discussion with suppliers	Images at Work	Clothing available on request

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95	N	N	Y			Contractors to improve cleanliness of toilet and shower facilities	Res	HOR	Ongoing	A&O		In progress	Not yet due	Existing contract terminated and new contractor appointed.	New contractors reviewed and show a marked improvement in standards of cleanliness
113				Y		Recruitment brigade order to be written.	HR	HRM	May-09	P		Draft order	Currently going through full EQIA	Work still in progress. End date amended to December 08	Order written, in process of going to unions. Review of full EQIA required. Changed date
118				Y		Investigate ORS additional scrutiny panel for minority groups	PID	PIO	Jan-09			Tie in with budget consultation	This has been investigated through the TREDG and Shropshire Equalities Forum.	Ongoing communication with both groups	Investigation undertaken and will be delivered as part of the Consultation and Communication Strategy
119				Y		Review consultation budget in line with consultation strategy	PID	Prog Man	Apr-09				Not yet due	Not yet due	Not yet due
124				Y		Succession plan	HR	HRM	Mar-10				Not yet due	End date amended to March 09	this is included in 2009/10 Improvement Priorities
127	N	N	N	Y		Review timescales for achievement of level 4	STG	STG	Jul-09	P		Depends upon outcome of external assessment and improvement areas. Information taken to policy group regarding required resources. Meeting with external consultant arranged for the 12/01/09.	to be reviewed at the Strategic Planning Workshops in October 08	Awaiting the finalised new Equality Standard framework before final decision is made. End date amended to December 08	Currently auditing SFRS against Level 4 - confirmation of date will be given after audit is complete. Amended date to 2009.
128	N	N	Y	Y		We will plan to undertake an equal pay review in accordance with the EOC's (now the E&HRC) code of practice on equal pay.	HR	HRM	Mar-09				Not yet due	End date amended to March 09	The need for this is currently being reviewed.
129	N	N	N	Y	Y	Develop the CEAP to include 6 strands of Diversity	STG	STG	Oct-09				n/a	n/a	The National E&D Strategy Actions have now been incorporated into the plan - other strands to be considered with the single equality scheme - date inserted
130	N	N	N	Y	Y	Incorporate the Core Values into the Equality and Diversity induction training	HR	EDO	Feb-09	Y	10/12/08	E&D induction training presentation now includes the core values	n/a	n/a	Completed
131	N	N	N	Y	Y	Review of HR and E&D Resources to be undertaken	HR	HRM/EDO	Ongoing	A&O	01/12/08	Last review December 2008 re cross over of staff.	n/a	n/a	Completed
132	N	N	N	Y	Y	Actions to be implemented as identified from the full EQIA of the procurement process	Res	HOR	Full Assessment completed by the end 2009, dates confirmed after this				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
133	N	N	N	Y	Y	Monthly union meetings to include Equality & Diversity as a standing item on the agenda	HR	ACO /EDO	Dec-08	Y	01/12/08		n/a	n/a	Completed

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134	N	N	N	Y	Y	Report to go to CFA in September for approval before going to CLG on improvements to service delivery and employment practice	STG	STG/EDO	Annually in August for September CFA/CLG				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
135	N	N	N	Y	Y	Publish information regarding EQIA's on internet	HR	EDO	Feb-09	Y	06/01/09	The E&D webpage now includes an Equality Impact Assessment Page which includes SFRS 3 year plan	n/a	n/a	Completed
136	N	N	N	Y	Y	Review the monitoring process of IPDRS	HR	DM/HRM	Oct-09				n/a	n/a	Date amended to October 2009
137	N	N	N	Y	Y	Review how RDS E&D objectives are recorded	HR/CS	DM/Jon W	Mar-09		02/03/09		n/a	n/a	Each station/watch will have an E&D target which they will define themselves and include in their station/watch action plans for 09/10. A section will then be included in the IPDR which asks how the individual has contributed to the process.
138	N	N	N	Y	Y	IRMP team to investigate how to demonstrate compliance with employment and equalities legislation and specifically the public duties for gender, race and disability and review progress in the IRMP			tbc				n/a	n/a	Each year EQIAs are carried out on the IRMP process which are then reviewed and any improvements are implemented
139	N	N	N	Y	Y	Review Brigade order on Harassment & Bullying	HR	EDO	Apr-09				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
140	N	N	N	Y	Y	Review the mediation process	HR	EDO	Apr-09	Y	05/02/09	Report going to HR Committee February 2009 with recommendations	n/a	n/a	Completed, recommendations going to HR Committee Feb 09
141	N	N	N	Y	Y	Consider management training on dealing with issues such as bullying & harassment, discrimination and unacceptable behaviours.	HR	DM/EDO	Ongoing			Dignity at work training	n/a	n/a	All people skills management and induction programmes now include the E+D element as standard. Interview skills focussed on equality is being done in March 09
142	N	N	N	Y	Y	Undertake peer review every 3 years either through regional working / peer assessment of ESLG	STG	STG	tbc				n/a	n/a	Training delivered in Nov 08 for E&D Peer Reviewers in the region. More training planned for 09. Peer reviews to take place when required for 'Excellent' status.

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143	N	N	N	Y	Y	Train equality auditors	HR	EDO	May-09	P		2 people trained so far, next training taking place in February 2009	n/a	n/a	2 trained in November 08, 3 to be trained in Feb - this has been postponed due to bad weather - to be rearranged - date amended
144	N	N	N	Y	Y	Work with Shropshire's Consultation group to ensure quality of service to all sections of the community	HR/Perf	EDO/Perf	Dec-09				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
145	N	N	N	Y	Y	Local participation on LAA to identify and take account of needs of all communities	CS	CS/DCFO	Sep-09				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
146	N	N	N	Y	Y	EQIA to be completed on all aspects of the IRMP and ensure that consultation has taken place	Perf	Perf/RM	Apr-09				n/a	n/a	Each year EQIAs are carried out on the IRMP process which are then reviewed and any improvements are implemented
147	N	N	N	Y	Y	Through access to PB Views, communicate and raise awareness and understanding to staff of local community issues and actions to address issues	Perf	Perf	Sep-09				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
148	N	N	N	Y	Y	Exit information process to be reviewed and then analysed for patterns	HR	HR	Apr-09				n/a	n/a	work project is currently in progress
149	N	N	N	Y	Y	Consider Disability brigade order	HR	EDO	Apr-10				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
150	N	N	N	Y	Y	Disciplinary and grievance refresher training to be considered	HR	DM/HRM	01/04/2009 (following intro of new regs)				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
151	N	N	N	Y	Y	Executives visits to staff to include raising awareness of Equality & Diversity issues, actions to address these and progress made	Execs	Execs	Between Jan and Aug 2009 during station and watch visits				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
152	N	N	N	Y	Y	Collect and submit evidence to CLG qualitative and quantitative evidence of service delivery improvements and employment practice for the E&D Report	STG	STG	Annually in August for September CLG report				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
153	N	N	N	Y	Y	Analysis to be undertaken on the effectiveness for dealing with bullying, harassment, unfair discrimination and unacceptable behaviours	HR	HRM/EDO	Jun-10				n/a	n/a	Not yet due
154	N	N	N	Y	Y	Consider whether to undertake the cultural audit or other staff survey	HR/Execs	tbc	As required	Y	08/01/09	Discussion with representative bodies on 07/01/09, this to be taken to steering group on 08/01/09 for further discussion and date confirmation	n/a	n/a	It has been agreed that a cultural audit will take place approximately every 5 years with other audits such as the stress audit being taken place in between as required.
155	N	N	N	Y	Y	Consider resources for dealing with the investigation of disciplinary and grievances, and whether a dedicated officer is required on a rolling programme	STG	STG	Dec-08				n/a	n/a	completed
156	N	N	N	Y	Y	Analysis to be undertaken on current employment diversity data.	HR	EDO	Aug-09	P			n/a	n/a	Resourcing report currently being developed to report on this information.

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157	N	N	N	Y	Y	Consider scanning HR documentation	HR	HRM	First wave to be completed by Aug 2009			n/a	n/a	Date amended. Not yet due
158	N	N	N	Y	Y	Ensure work is ongoing to allow employees to disclose their personal information	STG	STG/EDO	Sep-09	P	Meeting arranged with the FBU G&L Rep	n/a	n/a	EDO met with the LGBT FBU representative and supporting employees
159	N	N	N	Y	Y	Promote the achievement of level 3	STG	STG	Mar-09	P		n/a	n/a	Press release currently being developed to promote all SFRS work with regard to E&D - added in date