



Delivering our Equality Plan

2012/13

Appendix D

Contents

This document sets out our Policy Statement on Equality and Diversity, an explanation of the current context, an action plan outlining how we will achieve the aims of our policy, in the context of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This year will be a consolidation year, building upon the practices we have put in place as a result of the regulations outlined in the Equality Act 2010 being brought in. This provides us with the opportunity to reassess the ways in which we will achieve the aims outlined in our Action Plan, measure our progress and be sure that our approach to Equality and Diversity is proactive and focussed. We will undertake this specific work during 2012, through our Equality Champions Group and the Equality and Diversity Forum.

INTRODUCTION	Page 3
POLICY STATEMENT	4
EQUALITY ACHIEVEMENTS	5
OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES	7
MEASURING AND ENCOURAGING PROGRESS	9
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR DELIVERY	13

Appendix D

Introduction

The Sutton Equality Plan provides a strategic view of the Council's work on equality and diversity, how we will meet our legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010 and what we want to achieve over the forthcoming period to realise our vision of building a community in which all can take part and take pride. Our commitment to reduce inequality and promote diversity underpins everything that we do and is the responsibility of all of our staff.

During periods of significant change it is even more important that we are clear about our responsibilities with regard to ensuring fairness. The purpose of this plan is to set out how we will achieve this. The environment in which all local authorities are working will continue to change. Legislative changes, such as those in the Open Public Services White Paper and Localism Act, will provide opportunities for new responses to how we continue to engage our residents so they are even more empowered and the needs of people with protected characteristics are fully considered.

To help us achieve this, we will work hard to cut bureaucracy and red tape and be an 'Open Council'. This means being open and transparent about our data, our decision-making, equality and diversity information, our spending and our performance. All these things together will help create a place where people feel engaged and empowered to help build a better quality of life and foster good relations across the borough. We have already taken steps toward providing open data through our Equalities Open Data webpage.

We have a well established set of Council-wide values and we believe these will continue to provide a key foundation for delivering equality outcomes over the coming period. They are:

- Working in **PARTNERSHIP** with the people who live or work in the borough
- Making our services open and accessible so that everyone is listened to and treated with **RESPECT**
- Seeking **INNOVATIVE** approaches in order to provide better services
- Promoting **DIVERSITY** and ensuring that we recognise and celebrate difference within the context of fairness and equality
- **EMPOWERING** everyone so that we can all 'take part and take pride' as active citizens and employees.

The Equality Act 2010, which replaces all previous legislation, places a general duty on the Council to have due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advancing the equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Act also requires the Council to meet specific duties around setting equality objectives and publishing information to show how it is meeting the general equality duty.

We want to build a community in which all can take part and all can take pride. This is the Council's vision and describes what we want to achieve through our work on equality and diversity. As a community leader, a service provider, a major employer and a purchaser of goods and services, our policy is to prevent discrimination and advance equality, through the following objectives:

1. Embedding and mainstreaming equalities, so that it's everyone's job
2. Improving how we communicate equality information and outcomes to give the work more external and internal profile, and so that residents can hold us to account
3. Improving the quality and relevance of Equality Impact Assessments
4. Building a workforce that is representative of our local communities
5. Involving equality and diversity groups in decision making

This policy explains how we will meet our legal duties and how we will ensure that equality and diversity is promoted among our residents and our staff.

Appendix D

Our Equality Achievements in 2011/12

Reducing inequality is at the heart of the Council's work and much has been undertaken to ensure equality is integrated into the Council's business; starting from the top with the Sutton in Partnership strategy which focuses on safer, greener and fairer outcomes for Sutton's residents. This focus is reflected at all levels of the Council's business planning and performance framework.

In the past year there have been a number of achievements against our key objectives:

Embedding and mainstreaming equalities, so that it's everyone's job

- The Domestic Violence One Stop Shop, established in July 2011, has seen 117 clients receiving multi-agency services from advocates, Police, lawyers and the CAB.
- Improved outcomes, in terms of housing support, for people experiencing domestic violence in key areas such as managing money, being healthy, staying safe and making positive contributions.
- The gap between achievement levels of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and those without has fluctuated over the past three years at Key Stage 2, with an overall decrease since 2009 of 5%. The gap between attainment at Key Stage 4 for those pupils with SEN and those pupils without has decreased since 2009 by just over 2%.
- The achievement of pupils eligible for Free School Meals has seen steady improvement at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 2, the gap has narrowed by over 12% since 2007/08 demonstrating improved performance for those pupils on Free School Meals. The achievement gap at Key Stage 4 is wider and increasing, however, the actual achievement over time of those eligible for FSM is improving steadily and is well above the London and national average.
- Between 1998 and 2010 there has been significant progress in reducing under-18 conceptions. The rate of conceptions per 1,000 girls aged 15-17 years has seen a 36.6% reduction since 1998, the third highest reduction in Outer London during the period 1998-2010. Progress was particularly marked between the years 2008-2010, dropping from a peak of 145 conceptions in 2008 to 88 in 2010.

Appendix D

Improving how we communicate equality information and outcomes to give the work more external and internal profile, and so that residents can hold us to account

- Stop Hate a 24/7 third party telephone, text and email reporting system has been running for two years now in the Borough. We have seen a tenfold increase in reported incidents during this period. We have provided training and established reporting through 12 local voluntary sector organisations as well as a web presence and Facebook page.

Improving the quality and relevance of Equality Impact Assessments

- Delivery against our legislative requirements, by publishing our equality data on the Internet and by defining our equality objectives.

Involving equality and diversity groups in decision making

- Promoted a number of community events throughout the year such as Holocaust Memorial Day, Interfaith Week, International Day against Homophobia and supported local community groups to deliver their own events e.g. Black History Month.

Appendix D

Equality Deliverables in 2012/13

There are some very specific things we will achieve over the next year to demonstrate progress against our objectives. The Council has identified the following objectives for 2012/13 as part of its annual business planning process. Progress against these objectives will be monitored through our corporate performance management framework.

In addition, we are determined that the Council's key area of improvement work in relation to safeguarding and looked after children will have at its heart, commitments to reduce the risk of inequality of outcomes for children and young people.

Adult Social Services, Housing and Health Directorate

1. Personalise services through taking forward the Transforming Lives programme – ensuring that personal budgets are available for all those eligible for local authority funded social care and that citizens are supported in line with our equality duties
2. Improve practice, processes and systems with partners to ensure that vulnerable adults are safeguarded in Sutton and people feel protected.
3. Maintain and improve performance where possible, given financial constraints, including improving on equalities standards.

Chief Executive's Directorate

1. Ensure that transformation of customer services through digital channels does not discriminate against any of our residents.
2. Enable residents to have the opportunity to have their voices heard on key decisions.
3. Develop a revised Council-wide approach to equalities to ensure adherence to the Equality Act (both the general and specific duties).
4. Support the delivery of a co-ordinated approach to families who need the most help in Sutton.
5. Review employee terms and conditions – deliver savings for 2012/13 through negotiating reduction in terms and conditions of employment, ensuring equality and compliance with the Equal Pay Act.
6. Reduce the risk and incidence of domestic violence.

Appendix D

Children, Young People and Learning Services Directorate

1. Raise attainment and close the gap between vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and their peers.
2. Children, young people and their parents are able to express their views, make informed choices and exercise control over the decisions that affect them especially those from vulnerable, hard to reach and minority groups.

Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate

1. Develop opportunities afforded by the Localism Act 2011 to devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and to give local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.
2. Refurbish, enhance and modernise Westcroft Leisure Centre.
3. Deliver growth through a socially inclusive economy which ensures employment agencies and funding opportunity meet the needs of local residents.

Resources Directorate

1. Improve the average time taken to process new financial assessment claims and maximise income generation.
2. Prepare Revenues and Benefits service for the implementation of the Welfare Reform Bill, Universal Credit and Localising Support for Council Tax in England by April 2013.

Appendix D

Measuring and Encouraging Progress

In addition, to specific Directorate activity there are a number of organisational changes that need to be put in place to drive our progress against equality and diversity. These will put in place strong foundations that contribute to achieving our overarching objectives.

What will we do?	How will we measure it?
We will embed and mainstream equality and diversity, so that it is everyone's job, through:	
Leading the Council's corporate policy and strategic development, ensuring strong relationships with partners and engaging local communities	<p>Monitor the equality objectives in the Council's business plan through the quarterly performance and finance reports.</p> <p>Embed equalities further into our business planning practices.</p>
Fully considering the equality impacts of the Smarter Council paper and our programme of transformational reviews through the Smarter Council programme and ensure a well-managed approach to implementation	<p>Completion of all Impact Assessments, including the development of a Strategic IIA to understand the cumulative impacts and support the provision of services.</p> <p>Learning from impact assessments to be shared.</p>
Ensuring we use our commissioning power to achieve equality objectives through organisations delivering services to and on behalf of the council	<p>Completion of equality training for commissioners</p> <p>Appropriate equality impact considered throughout the commissioning cycle.</p>
Training and communication to staff and Members to ensuring the perception and understanding of	Implement the equality and diversity training offer including bite sized

Appendix D

What will we do?	How will we measure it?
equality and diversity is continuously challenged and championed.	training for officers.
We will improve how we communicate our equality and diversity achievements to give the work more external and internal profile, through:	
Publish an annual review of equality and diversity, including an annual refresh of our equality information to ensure that our community is fairly served (Equalities Open Data webpages)	Published review by 31 March 2013.
Regular Insight articles on equality and diversity issues	Publication of one equality related insight article every month
Develop 12 case studies focussing on learning points and service improvements from complaints; complimented by examples of decisions which were reversed, modified or mitigated as a result of equality analysis.	Ensure senior managers implement change as a result of learning from complaints.
Refresh of all equality webpages to ensure they are relevant and informative for staff and residents	All pages revised by June 2012
Develop an annual programme of equality and diversity events building upon current practice that brings together key partners and residents.	Successful 2012/13 events programme.
We will improve the quality and relevance of Equality Impact Assessments, through:	
Create an Integrated Impact Assessment process to include Health, Sustainability, Equality and ensure they are published on our Equality Open Data webpage.	Devise an Integrated Impact Assessment plus supplementary guidance and training to support the new Governance Arrangements.
Leading and delivering a corporate programme of research and intelligence, delivering better analysis and publication of equality information to inform service provision.	IIA's are better informed by accurate, up to date customer insight, research and analysis. Standardised equality monitoring for all consultations to ensure the development of an adequate

Appendix D

What will we do?	How will we measure it?
	evidence base that informs decision making.
Updating the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment annually	Sutton JSNA in place
We will continue to focus on building a staff profile that is representative of our local community, through:	
Reporting on headline figures for employment and developing interventions as required.	Reports to Equality Champions, CMT and committees as required Revised workforce targets in place.
Develop Strategic EIA for the Council for 2012 based on financial position and emerging policy context	Strategic EIA completed
Improve the involvement of our equality and diversity groups in Council decision making and demonstrate real improvements in outcomes, through:	
Identification of key equality groups who can be consulted with including the Equality and Diversity Forum.	Broad representation of groups identified
Enable residents to have the opportunity to have their voices heard on key decisions.	Equality and diversity monitoring that supports commissioning, research and consultation practices demonstrate a diversity in the views sought

How will we show that we are achieving these aims?

The key objectives and deliverables for 2012/13 are embedded within the council's business planning framework. This means that performance will be managed through our corporate performance management framework, which ensures that any underperformance is highlighted so that interventions can be made.

As well as relying on the Council's corporate performance management framework we will work with the Equality Champions Group – our challenge network for equality and diversity, chaired by the Executive Head of Policy and Customer Services, to monitor achievement of these priorities and to provide a mechanism to challenge our level of progress. During 2012, the ECG will undertake specific work to ensure that

Appendix D

the aims in this plan are underpinned by targeted and measured activity across each of the Groups within the Council. At the end of the financial year we will publish an annual review within the Performance and Financial report, showing the progress we have made.

Appendix D

Infrastructure for Delivery

Leadership for the delivery of this plan rests at many levels. Each has their own part to play in ensuring different communities voices are represented throughout the work of the Council and its partners. Key structures in place are outlined below with a focus on their role and responsibility but also their accountability for leading and delivering this agenda.

Sutton in Partnership

- To provide a Borough wide community leadership role and ensure the implementation of the six key commitments in their Equality Charter
- To contribute to the annual Sutton Equality and Diversity Review
- Support the identification of key groups for consultation

Lead Member for Equality (Cllr Adrian Davey)

- To provide political leadership on equality and diversity and to chair the Equality and Diversity Forum

Equality and Diversity Forum

- To act as the key Forum for bringing together key partners and stakeholders with an influence and interest in equalities issues.
- To act as a key consultation group for the Council and its partners in the shaping of key Council or Borough wide policy.
- To act as a critical friend to impact assessments produced on major policies and programmes.

CMT

- To provide overall governance and leadership to the equality and diversity priorities and objectives identified above.
- To scrutinise and performance manage progress against key objectives through the quarterly performance report and the annual equalities report.
- As project sponsors ensure appropriate completion of Impact Assessments.

Appendix D

Role of DMTs

- To provide leadership along with CMT on the delivery of equality and diversity priorities and objectives.
- Ownership of the impact assessment process ensuring completion and appropriate challenge of reports when shared at DMT
- Oversight and management of the Forward Plan to ensure timely completion of IIAs

Role for Equality and Diversity Champions

- Conduit for sharing, promoting and actively supporting the delivery of the key priorities and activities within their Directorates.
- Regular reporting through to DMTs on equality performance e.g. against objectives.
- Quality champion for all Impact Assessments and the “critical friend” at DMTs when reports are shared
- Equality lead in the new officer governance arrangements ensuring the timely completion of IIAs and appropriate challenge and support from an equality perspective.
- Promotion of equalities within the wider Directorate and Council e.g. annual equalities conference, annual programme of events.