

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 15 APRIL 2010

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE / DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REACHING 'EXCELLENT' LEVEL OF THE EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an overview of the approach the Council will need to take in order to achieve 'excellent' level of the new Equality Framework for Local Government.

2. Background

2.1 The Council was awarded level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government during November 2009.

2.2 In order for Councils to be able to respond to new thinking on equality outcomes, the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) has developed a new Equality Framework for Local Government. This has now replaced the original Equality Standard.

2.3 Instead of reaching Levels 1 to 5, Councils will now work towards three levels:

- Developing
- Achieving
- Excellent

2.4 Any Council already at level 1 or 2 of the original Standard will automatically migrate to 'Developing' status, and any Council already at level 3 will migrate to 'Achieving' status, etc.

2.5 Wirral Council has automatically migrated to 'Achieving' status of the new Framework, and will need to be assessed for 'Excellent' status by November 2011 or risk having 'Achieving' status removed. Therefore, a corporate delivery framework for reaching 'Excellent' status has been developed by the Corporate Equality and Cohesion Team (**please see Appendix A**).

2.6 Detailed milestones are currently being identified by all departments and will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Corporate Equality and Inclusion Group.

3. Key Activities Required to Reach Excellent Status

3.1 There are five performance areas included within the new Equality Framework, with a number of clear objectives to be met. For example:

3.2 Performance Area 1: Knowing our communities and equality mapping

Objectives: Inequalities that exist across Wirral are clearly defined
LSP members share all community data
Council Members and Officers champion equality issues
Equality issues are embedded within Wirral's strategic documents

3.3 Performance Area 2: Place-shaping, leadership and partnership

Objectives: The Council is an exemplar of equality leadership
The Council is improving community cohesion
LSP members pool resources to meet equality outcomes
Equality objectives are performance managed corporately

3.4 Performance Area 3: Community engagement

Objectives: Local services give a voice to vulnerable/at risk people
Wirral's communities are involved and consulted effectively
Forums are in place to challenge/scrutinise equality objectives
Hate crimes are dealt with effectively

3.5 Performance Area 4: Responsive services and customer care

Objectives: A procurement equality evaluation tool is being implemented
Wirral's communities are involved in service planning
Customer satisfaction levels are increasing year on year
Customers believe they are being treated with dignity and respect

3.6 Performance Area 5: A modern and diverse workforce

Objectives: The Council has an inclusive working culture based upon respect
The potential of all staff is being maximised
Employees believe they are being treated with dignity and respect
Staff forums are involved in workforce planning

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There is an allocation within the department's budget to cover the costs of this initiative.

5. Staffing implications

5.1 There are no additional staffing implications arising from this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessments

6.1 The new Equalities Framework for Local Government has been equality impact assessed by the IDeA.

7. Community Safety implications

7.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

8. Local Agenda 21

8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9. Planning implications

9.1 There are no planning implications arising from this report.

10. Anti-poverty implications

10.1 There are no anti-poverty implications arising from this report

11. Social inclusion implications

11.1 There are no negative implications that will potentially exclude individuals or groups from accessing services arising from this report.

12. Local Member Support implications

12.1 There are no issues mentioned in the report that are particularly relevant to a ward or small number of wards. However, equality and cohesion are borough wide issues to be addressed by all members.

13. Recommendations

13.1 Cabinet agrees to the approach outlined in working towards excellent status of the Equality Framework for Local Government

J. WILKIE

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE / DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

This report was prepared by Jacqui Cross, Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager who can be contacted on 0151 691 8064.

APPENDIX A

ACHIEVING 'EXCELLENT' STATUS OF THE EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Corporate Delivery Framework April 2010 – November 2011

Performance Areas	Equality Outcomes	'Excellent' Objectives
<p>1 Knowing our communities and equality mapping</p>	<p>1.1. Council and LSP members know the composition of Wirral's communities and their changing needs</p> <p>1.2. Council and LSP members understand the differences between and within Wirral's communities</p> <p>1.3. Council and LSP members know where the gaps are for different community groups in health, education, community safety, access to work or training, etc.</p> <p>1.4. Council has gained a reputation among LSP members and the voluntary / community sector for championing equality issues</p> <p>1.5. Equality groups are integrally involved in community engagement programmes</p> <p>1.6. Equality issues are embedded in the Sustainable Communities Strategy, Local Development Plan, strategic plans and the Local Area Agreement</p>	<p>1.1.1 Local and national data is being used and shared among LSP partners to understand the make up of our communities. The data can be disaggregated and analysed at corporate and service levels. Equality objectives have been set following such analysis</p> <p>1.1.2 Councillors and Officers champion equality issues</p> <p>1.1.3 Council scrutinises and challenges its own performance on equality, as well as LSP performance</p> <p>1.1.4 Council and LSP have effective and innovative engagement programmes</p> <p>1.1.5 Sustainable Communities Strategy, Local Development Plan, strategic plans and the Local Area Agreement include the story or vision of equality</p> <p>1.1.6 Sustainable Communities Strategy, Local Development Plan, strategic plans and the Local Area Agreement are informed by the needs of different communities and clearly identify gaps</p> <p>1.1.7 Wirral residents' are</p>

		surveyed annually and a representative sample participate
2 Place-shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment	<p>2.1 Council is an exemplar of political and managerial leadership on equality issues</p> <p>2.2 Council is an exemplar of good practice for other councils and agencies</p> <p>2.3 Councillors and Officers understand the relevance of equality and cohesion to Wirral's communities</p> <p>2.4 Good performance is being recognised</p> <p>2.5 Council and LSP allocate and pool appropriate resources for achieving equality outcomes</p> <p>2.6 Improvements and outcomes can be demonstrated</p> <p>2.7 Strategic plans include actions identified via equality impact assessments</p> <p>2.8 Commissioned and procured services are delivering the Council's equality related objectives</p> <p>2.9 Council benchmarks itself against comparable others</p> <p>2.10 Improved participation rates of under-represented groups in civic and public life</p> <p>2.11 Council and LSP are addressing persistent inequalities and narrowing the gaps</p>	<p>2.1.1 Councillors and Officers ensure equality issues are integral to the Council's performance and strategic aims</p> <p>2.1.2 Corporate Equality Group membership to include 2nd tier officers responsible for services or performance</p> <p>2.1.3 Corporate Equality Group reports directly to COMT</p> <p>2.1.4 Departmental Equality Groups report directly to DMT's</p> <p>2.1.5 An LSP vision for equality is established</p> <p>2.1.6 A Borough wide Equality Scheme is established</p> <p>2.1.7 Council's single equality scheme is monitored by Councillors and Chief Officers</p> <p>2.1.8 Council and LSP equality priorities are set and owned by all, and monitored quarterly</p> <p>2.1.9 Community cohesion priorities are monitored by Councillors, Chief Officers and LSP members</p> <p>2.1.10 An equality impact assessment programme is in place, and completed assessments are published</p> <p>2.1.11 Council contractors are evaluated for good equality practices</p> <p>2.1.12 Council is sharing good practice across the public sector</p> <p>2.1.13 Equality is mainstreamed into the Council's PIMS to</p>

		ensure equality objectives do not sit apart from the core business
3 Community Engagement and satisfaction	<p>3.1 Communities of place and communities of interest are involved in decision making processes, service planning and workforce planning</p> <p>3.2 Local services give a voice to people who are vulnerable or are at risk of disadvantage / inequality</p> <p>3.3 Local services identify the potential of people who are vulnerable or are at risk of disadvantage / inequality</p> <p>3.4 Local services support people who are vulnerable or are at risk of disadvantage / inequality to achieve the levels of choice, autonomy and improved outcomes that other citizens enjoy</p> <p>3.5 All of Wirral's communities are involved, consulted and fed back to.</p> <p>3.6 All of Wirral's communities are satisfied that the Council and LSP have taken their views into account</p>	<p>3.1.1 Effective and efficient community engagement structures are in place</p> <p>3.1.2 Effective forums are in place to challenge, scrutinise and evaluate equality priorities</p> <p>3.1.3 Equality priorities are reviewed in light of changing / conflicting community needs and interests</p> <p>3.1.4 Participation rates among under-represented communities of place and interest improve</p> <p>3.1.5 Hate crimes across Wirral and across all communities are being dealt with effectively</p>
4 Responsive services and customer care	<p>4.1 Service provision remains a central function for the Council, whether provided directly, procured or commissioned</p> <p>4.2 Services need to be personalised to meet the needs of people with different backgrounds</p> <p>4.3 Services need to ensure fair access for all</p> <p>4.4 Council and LSP have a good knowledge and understanding of human rights</p> <p>4.5 Service level outcomes, objectives and goals meet the needs of target groups and those most vulnerable</p>	<p>4.1.1 A procurement equality evaluation tool has been implemented</p> <p>4.1.2 All communities are involved in service planning and delivery</p> <p>4.1.3 Council has excellent contract management in place to ensure contractors / providers are delivering on equality objectives</p> <p>4.1.4 Satisfaction levels among all communities with procured services improve</p> <p>4.1.5 Perceptions among all communities of</p>

	<p>4.6 More people believe that they have been treated fairly and believe their human rights have been respected</p>	<p>procured services improve</p> <p>4.1.6 DMT's monitor equality and cohesion objectives</p> <p>4.1.7 Services have been designed to ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect</p>
<p>5 A modern and diverse workforce</p>	<p>5.1 Council understands that to deliver responsive, personalised services depends on the composition, skills, understanding and commitment of the workforce</p> <p>5.2 Council has an inclusive working culture based on respect</p> <p>5.3 Equality legislation is being complied with in all employment procedures</p> <p>5.4 The potential of all staff is being maximised</p> <p>5.5 Plans for addressing under-representation at senior levels are being implemented</p> <p>5.6 Effective action is being taken to address equal pay</p> <p>5.7 There is a high satisfaction rate among all staff groups</p> <p>5.8 Council improves flexible working arrangements and access to training and development</p> <p>5.9 More staff say they are being treated with dignity and respect</p>	<p>5.9.1 Equality objectives have been built into workforce strategies for the whole workforce</p> <p>5.9.2 The local labour market is regularly reviewed</p> <p>5.9.3 Equality impact assessments are completed and published for all major employment policies</p> <p>5.9.4 Employment data is monitored, analysed and published regularly</p> <p>5.9.5 Training is completed by Members and Officers to deliver equality outcomes</p> <p>5.9.6 Harassment and bullying incidents are monitored, analysed and dealt with effectively</p> <p>5.9.7 More staff say they are treated with dignity and respect</p> <p>5.9.8 A positive action scheme is ensuring less under-representation at senior levels</p> <p>5.9.9 Training and development programmes are in place, via KIE, in order for all staff to address equality issues</p> <p>5.9.10 Staff equality forums share experiences and evaluate the Council's progress on equality objectives</p> <p>5.9.11 An annual staff survey</p>

		is completed 5.9.12 Staff equality forums have planned for mainstreaming themselves within the Council's core infrastructure
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