

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## CABINET

9 APRIL 2009

### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

#### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN PROCUREMENT

##### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council acknowledges that embedding equality and diversity across the whole organisation includes ensuring those who provide services on its behalf also promote equality of opportunity.
- 1.2. The IDeA will be visiting the Council in May 2009 to conduct a peer challenge for the Council to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG).
- 1.3 This report seeks Cabinet approval of processes to be adopted for the letting and monitoring of contracts to comply with the Council's Equalities and Diversity objectives.

##### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Corporate Procurement Strategy 2008 -11 was approved by Cabinet on 4 September 2008. There are ten procurement objectives within the Strategy that are designed to ensure that procurement supports and contributes to the realisation of Council aims and key objectives.
- 2.2 Procurement objective (vi) states:  
  
'Demonstrating improvement in the **equality of opportunity** and the promotion of good relationships between people within a diverse community in all procurement activity'.
- 2.3 In support of the above objective three key challenges have been identified within the Strategy:
  - a. Equality Standard for Local Government:-  
The Procurement Strategy will contribute towards achieving Levels 3/4/5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.
  - b. 'A Framework for a Fairer Future':-  
The Equality Bill will require that all Council procurement activity takes account of new duties.

- c. Monitoring of Equality in Procurement: - There will be a new monitoring policy for Equalities in Procurement.

- 2.4 In April 2008 a Task Group was setup to address the gaps in Equality and Diversity within the procurement activity of the Council, with a view to supporting the Council in achieving Level 3 of the ESLG.
- 2.5 The Group first met in May 2008 and identified areas of improvement required to achieve the standard. The Group has agreed that, with the exception of the monitoring of contracts, processes and procedures are available to achieve the standard, including the following:

Corporate Procurement Strategy  
Evaluation Models / Guidance  
Code of Practice for Equalities in Procurement  
Code of Practice for Equalities in Procurement Checklist  
Pre Qualification Questionnaire  
Terms & Conditions of Contract

- 2.6 All of the above need to be embedded within departmental procedures. Once this has been done, and processes have been agreed and implemented, the Council will be in concert with level 3/4 ESLG, within procurement.
- 2.7 Documentation and processes have been developed and agreed by the departmental task group members and documents are outlined in Appendix 1.

### 3. **PROCUREMENT AND EQUALITY PROCESS**

- 3.1 A summary of the procurement and equality process for contractors includes:
- Equality Impact Assessments conducted on all relevant contracts.
  - All contracts will be required to adhere to standard terms and conditions, which contain a specific clause on equality.
  - Contractors will be advised, at the pre-tender stage, whether the contract is deemed to be relevant to equality and what contractors need to complete as a result.
  - Each contract will be given a low, medium or high relevance to equality.
  - If equality is deemed of low relevance, contractors will be required to complete Section A of the Equalities Questionnaire.
  - If equality is deemed to be of high or medium relevance, contractors will be asked to complete Section A and B of the Equalities Questionnaire.
  - All contracts with a value of £1 million or over will be considered of high relevance to equality and will be required to complete Section A and B of the Equalities Questionnaire.
  - The successful contractor will be required to submit and complete particular tasks at each contract review session depending on the assessed relevance of the contract to equality.

- 3.2 Each contractor will be provided with a pack to assist with meeting the requirements for equality and diversity. This pack will consist of:
- A copy of “Integrating Equality into Procurement - Guidance for Contractors”
  - A copy of “Valuing Diversity – What does it mean to you?” which details the position on diversity.
  - A list of Frequently Asked Questions
  - A list of useful websites

#### 4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### 5. **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

#### 6. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### 7. **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### 8. **COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

#### 9. **LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no specific implications for any Member of Ward.

#### 10.0 **LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

#### 11. **PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

#### 12. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 Corporate Procurement Strategy 2008 – 2011 – September 2008.

13. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 13.1 That Cabinet approve the adoption of the letting and monitoring processes for Equalities and Diversity, outlined within this report, in all Council procurement activity.

IAN COLEMAN  
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/77/09