

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

24 APRIL 2012

Report of the Strategic Director of Policy & Community Safety

**PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY - EQUALITY OBJECTIVES
(Public Health)**

Purpose of Report

To request Cabinet approval to adopt a set of equality objectives for the Council and to set out the next steps for measuring progress.

Background

The Equality Act 2010 has introduced new duties on public bodies including local authorities. These consist of general and specific duties and replace former duties for race, gender and disability.

Under the specific duties, the Council must:

1. Publish information annually demonstrating how the Authority complies with its general equality duties in relation to the nine protected equality groups of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation, from 31 January 2012.
2. Adopt and publish measurable equality objectives by 6 April 2012. These must be reviewed every four years.

On 13 December 2011 Cabinet agreed to consultation taking place on eight proposed equality objectives for the Authority. The consultation was carried out over an eight week period between early January 2012 and early March 2012.

Information and Analysis

Around 70 individuals and organisations provided responses to the consultation with a significant majority expressing their support for the proposed objectives. Support for the different objectives varied, ranging from 87% for improving access to services to 62% for improving employment opportunities for young people (See appendix A).

A range of comments were also received from individuals and Groups in relation to the proposed objectives. These tended to focus on how progress against the proposed objectives would be monitored. A number of respondents also wanted to see a more detailed explanation of intended actions.

Over 64% of respondents were female, 22% were disabled, 30% were from black and minority ethnic communities, 18% were lesbian, gay or bisexual, and 9% were from minority religions, whilst 65% were Christians and 21% indicated they had no religion. About a quarter of those who took part represented groups or organisations.

The majority of comments received were generally supportive but respondents wanted the Council to show its commitment by taking appropriate action. Following careful consideration of the responses received to the consultation it is not proposed to substantially alter any of the eight proposed objectives, as these align well to the Council's stated priorities and focus on services and activities central to the Council's business and responsibilities. A small number of wording changes have been made in light of the feedback received so that the objectives are clearer and easier to understand. Only a small number of people opposed taking action to tackle areas of inequality.

The final objectives for adoption by the Council are as follows:

1. Council services are accessible and welcoming to all communities and are capable of responding to the different needs and aspirations of our customers
2. Partnership working is helping to reduce health and other inequalities, reduce deprivation and support rural areas
3. More young people are working for the Council and being helped to gain employment
4. The Council is improving the life chances of vulnerable young people through its corporate parenting and education work
5. Vulnerable people are being protected from the harmful impact of crime and anti-social behaviour
6. Equality is integrated into the work of departments across the authority and the Council is able to show how it embraces its public sector equality duties
7. The diversity of Derbyshire is celebrated and the county is a cohesive place where people from all communities get on well together
8. The Council's workforce feels valued and respected, and is reflective of the diverse communities it serves

Next steps

The approved objectives will be published and integrated into appropriate plans. Proposed measures for helping to assess progress in delivering the

Council's equality objectives will be finalised in due course. Performance will be monitored every six months and reported to Cabinet on an annual basis.

It is proposed to review the proposed objectives in 2014 when the Council is due to revise the existing Derbyshire Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council Plan.

Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: financial, legal, prevention of crime and disorder, human rights, environmental health, human resources, property and transport considerations.

Equal Opportunities Considerations

The proposed objectives for equality are based on an assessment of issues facing Derbyshire and the Council and as such will act as a focus for the Authority's work to advance equality over the next four years.

1. Key Decision

No.

2. Call-in

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in this report? - No.

3. Background Papers

- Derbyshire County Council Cabinet Paper *Proposed Draft Equality Objectives* - 13 December 2011
- Full results of the consultation - held in Chief Executives Office
- Equality Impact Analysis - held in Chief Executive's Office / available at: http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/equalities/equality_impact_assessme nt/chief_exec/default.asp

4. OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet agree the eight equality objectives as set out above.
2. A report outlining progress against the objectives be brought to Cabinet in due course.

David Lowe
Strategic Director of Policy & Community Safety

Appendix A

Percentage agreeing or disagreeing with each proposed equality objective

Objective	Strongly agreed/ agreed	Neither	Strongly disagreed/ disagreed
EQ1. Council services are accessible and welcoming to all communities and are capable of responding to the different needs and aspirations our customers have	87.5%	9.4%	3.2%
EQ2. Partnership working has helped reduce health inequalities and deprivation, including rural based deprivation and isolation	72.9%	19.4%	8.1%
EQ3. More young people are working for the Council and being helped to gain employment	62.3%	29%	8.2%
EQ4. Improved opportunities for vulnerable young people through our corporate parenting and education roles	81%%	17.2%	1.7%
EQ5. Vulnerable people are being protected from the harmful impact of crime and anti-social behaviour	80.4%	14.3%%	5.4%
EQ6. Equality has been integrated into the work of departments across the authority and the Council demonstrates its compliance with the Equality Duty	80.7%	17.5%	1.8%
EQ7. The diversity of Derbyshire is celebrated and the county is an increasingly cohesive place where people from all communities get on well together	71.4%	14.3%	14.3%
EQ8. The Council's workforce feels valued, respected and is reflective of the diversity communities it serves	70.9%	16.4%	12.8%