

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Equalities Management Group
Conference Room, Level 4, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend,
Wednesday 3 September 2008

Meeting commenced at 1.00p.m.

Present:

D MacGregor (Chair)	- Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Development & Partnerships)
B Davies	- Customer Services Manager (Resources Directorate)
J Brooks	- Professional Support Officer (Wellbeing Directorate)
G Ennis	- Head of Central Administration (Communities Directorate)
L Hutton	- Employee Resourcing Manager (Resources Directorate)
L Jones	- Children & Young People's Framework Manager (Children's Directorate)
J McKirdle	- Group Manager, Housing (Regeneration & Development Directorate)
L Smith	- Policy and Performance Management Officer (Corporate Development & Partnerships)
L Lynham	- Business Support Officer (Corporate Development & Partnerships)
A Baumgardt	- Equalities Independent Specialist

1. Apologies

None. It was noted that Les Jones would be attending as representative for the Children's Directorate in place of Richard Landy.

2. Minutes of previous meeting (02 July 2008)

The minutes were agreed. The group were advised that the new Cabinet Equalities Committee which met on 21st July 2008 had received a training presentation from the Policy and Performance Management Officer. Corporate Equality Management Group (CEMG) were also advised that minutes of their meetings would continue to be submitted to the committee for information. It was agreed that the group's minutes be produced in a similar format to committee minutes in the future to maintain consistency. For this purpose the minutes for the meeting on 2nd July 2008 and the current meeting would be produced in the new format and circulated for approval prior to submission to the Cabinet Equalities Committee.

3. Matters Arising

An up-date was given on the actions set out under Item 4a) of the previous meeting of CEMG.

It was noted that the Wellbeing Directorate's shortlist of projects for the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) pilot had been submitted.

CEMG representatives confirmed that they had compiled some case studies as requested at the previous meeting and it was agreed that these should be forwarded to the Policy and Performance Management Officer for collation.

4. Minutes of last Cabinet Equalities Committee

The Cabinet Equalities Committee's resolutions were reported to CEMG (see italics below) and the following actions were agreed:

- a) *That the minutes of the CEMG continue to be presented to the Committee (see para. (2) above).*
- b) *That quarterly reports on 'Equalities in Bridgend County Borough Council Workforce' continue be presented to the Cabinet Equalities Committee.*
The Policy and Performance Management Officer and Employee Resourcing Manager will progress this. These officers will be responsible for responding to the Committee's request for information on steps the Authority can take to encourage employees to self-declare, especially disabled employees.
- c) *That CEMG report back to the Cabinet Equalities Committee on progress with the equalities training needs assessment for staff and members.*
This work will be progressed by the Organisational Development Officer and the Policy and Performance Management Officer.
- d) *That a report on the Equality Improvement Framework and the development of a single Corporate Equality Scheme be submitted at the next Cabinet Equalities Committee.*
To be actioned by the Policy and Performance Management Officer.
- e) *That a report on the revised Welsh Language Scheme be submitted at the next Cabinet Equalities Committee.*
It was noted that the Revised Welsh Language Scheme would be submitted for approval by Full Council on 10th September 2008.
- f) *That a report setting out a draft work programme for the Cabinet Equalities Committee be presented to the next meeting for discussion.*
It was agreed that the draft would reflect the Committee's request for further information on the council's Disability Facilities Scheme and that an overview report on the scheme be developed by the Communities Directorate.

5. Facilitated Workshop – Responding to the Equalities Review on Bridgend County Borough Council

The workshop began with an outline of the key findings of the review and the objectives of the workshop:

- Improving compliance with equality legislation across the authority;

- Improve understanding about the move from anti-discrimination to positive promotion;
- Improving communication of our key messages on equality;
- Developing training to give people both the knowledge and skills they need;
- Improving equality disaggregated data collection within services.

Arising from the discussion the below was agreed:

- a) That the function of CEMG was to create a more 'joined-up' approach to equalities issues across Directorates by raising awareness of the equality duties and by sharing good practice. Directorate representatives to CEMG should become equality advocates and that the relevant knowledge and skills needed for this role should be identified and addressed. The group could help raise awareness on the Council's commitments to promote the rights of Children and Young People and Older People under its age equality mandate. It was agreed that the terms of reference for the CEMG be revised accordingly.
- b) That the Council's core values summarised in 'FACE' provided a mechanism to promote equalities alongside the new Customer Service Charter, focusing on 'Fair' and the Authority's commitment to make our services accessible to the whole community.
- c) That CEMG representatives gather common terminology used in Directorates and key strategies that support the equality agenda and that these are used in the development of the new Corporate Equality Scheme. It was suggested that using phrasing and language used by officers working in Directorates would help build ownership and buy-in to the new scheme.
- d) That providing appropriate and relevant equalities training for employees was essential and that tailored-training for vulnerable service areas needed to be given priority. It was agreed that CEMG representatives would identify frontline service areas at risk under the equality legislation for the initial round of training (e.g. customer service staff, leisure services and human resources). The Authority also needed to take steps to ensure that it meets its duty to train staff on the race equality duty. These actions will feed into activities set out in paragraph 4.c. above.
- e) That CEMG representatives work with the Policy and Performance Management Officer to identify data held within Directorates that is disaggregated by equality strands and that will inform the development of the new Corporate Equality Scheme.

- f) That the new Corporate Equality Scheme should pull together the Authority's existing equality policies and schemes with action plans focusing on achieving equality outcomes and the risk areas of training, data collection, workforce monitoring and equality impact assessments. The Assistant Chief Executive and the Policy and Performance Management Officer look at the 2 models that have emerged in local authorities nationally and develop a proposal using the report on the new Corporate Health and Safety Policy as an example. It was recognised that publication of the Corporate Equality Scheme, even in draft form, would help mitigate the risks of non-compliance.

6. Any other Business

None.

Next meeting scheduled for 10th October 2008.

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