

EQUALITIES COMMITTEE - 12 JANUARY 2009

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EQUALITIES COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, ON MONDAY, 12 JANUARY 2009 AT 10:00AM

Present: -

Councillor D Sage - Chairperson

Councillors

H J David
A E Davies

Councillors

M E J Nott
L C Morgan

Invitees

Councillor N Clarke
Councillor C A Green
Councillor M Gregory
Councillor P Hacking
Councillor R M James
Councillor R D Jenkins
Councillor M Thomas
Councillor M Wilkins

Officers

D MacGregor - Assistant Chief Executive Corporate Development and Partnerships
D Llewellyn - Group Manager Development
L Smith - Policy and Performance Management Officer (Equalities)
L Hutton - Transformation & Development Manager
N Lloyd - Principal Planning Officer
M A Galvin - Senior Cabinet and Committee Officer

15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:-

Councillor P A Evans - Prior commitments
Councillor J C Spanswick - Other Council commitments
Councillor D A D Brett - Hospital appointment

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS EQUALITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
- 6 OCTOBER 2008

In relation to Minute 11 - entitled 'Equality Review and Proposed Structure of the Corporate Equality Scheme', the Committee were advised that the Authority had, since the date of the last meeting, received a copy of the Welsh Assembly Government's consultation document for a Single Equality Scheme which the Policy and Performance Management Officer (Equalities) was preparing a response on behalf of the Authority. Furthermore, the contents of this document will be used to

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assist in developing the Authority's draft Corporate Equality Scheme. Discussions would also be taken up with key Officers in each of the Authority's Directorates to confirm the contents of the action plans and to take key issues forward, e.g. how we include promoting human rights, raising the equalities profile and community cohesion, etc.

Members were advised that the Welsh Assembly Government draft Single Equality Scheme document was available on its website.

The Chairperson advised that in relation to Minute 13 - entitled 'Forward Work Programme', Naomi Allen, WLGA, Social Justice and Equalities, had been invited to address the Committee at its meeting on 6 April 2009.

Finally in relation to Minute 12 - entitled 'Development and Implementation of the Revised Welsh Language Scheme 2008 - 2011', the Assistant Chief Executive Corporate Development and Partnerships advised that the entering into a partnership agreement with a neighbouring authority for joint bilingual translation services was currently on hold, due to a lack of resources for the funding of a post for this role in the forthcoming financial year. He added that the council will continue to use existing translation service providers and work was progressing on the development of the Authority's Welsh language website.

Members indicated that they were keen to engage in partnership working within this area, to meet the future growing needs of producing documents and literature bilingually.

18 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATE EQUALITIES MANAGEMENT GROUP - 17 OCTOBER 2008 AND 15 DECEMBER 2008

In relation to bullet point 4 of Note 6 of the Corporate Equalities Management Group notes for the meeting held on 15 December 2008, the Chairperson advised that the 'Equality for Disabled People - Have your say' event held on 25th November had been well organised and attended and had proved to be a very worthwhile event.

The event involved discussion groups and verbal and written submissions from the partners which included the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University NHS Trust, Bridgend Local Health Board and Bridgend College. The information derived from the event would inform the development of the Authority's new Corporate Equality Scheme.

19 EQUAL PAY AND JOB EVALUATION

The Transformation and Development Manager presented a report on the above topics, so as to provide the Equalities Committee with a position statement (via a Presentation) on progress to date in relation to the Authorities Job Evaluation Project and current Equal Pay issues.

The Presentation covered the following areas:

Job Evaluation and Equal Pay

Job Evaluation is

A 'Method of determining the relative worth of a job to an organisation' (ACAS 2003)

Job evaluation considers every aspect of a job

- What is done
- How it is done
- Where it is done, and
- What skills are needed

Job evaluation focuses on the job and not the person doing it

Why Evaluate Jobs?

1997 Single Status Agreement)
) Statutory Provisions
2005 National Pay Agreement)

Local pay reviews

Equal pay

Bridgend's status:-

- 2003 - Pilot study on job evaluation
- 2005 - commenced current project using the Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) Scheme (A favoured scheme for this exercise)

Pay and Grading Models

- Competency based pay
- Leadership competencies
- National Management Framework
- NVQ competencies
- Job families
- Equality tested

Pay Modelling, Equality Impact Assessment and Equal Pay Audits

Pay Modelling

- Can be done in parallel to evaluations (of jobs)
- Dependant on sufficient data capture

Equality Impact Assessment

- Model tested for robustness (locally)
- Final Pay and Grading structure (nationally)

Equal Pay Audits

- Conducted at least every 3 years

Trent and Residual Issues

- Data cleansing ongoing
- Implementing new pay and grading structure
- Generic job titles/references
- Revised job descriptions

- Restructures/New posts
- Equal Pay

Equal Pay - the national scene

- Information sharing groups and support networks
- Labour market survey
- Review of terms and conditions (part 3 Green Book)
- White Book defence
- Capitalisation
- Pay Protection

Case Law

- Bainbridge/Surtees
..... Pay protection
- Allen
..... Discrimination
..... Collective agreement favouring males
- NHS - "Agenda for Change" challenge
..... Discrimination

Equal Pay - neighbouring authorities

Authorities who have settled so far:-

- Blaenau Gwent
- Cardiff
- Gwynedd
- Merthyr
- Neath/Port Talbot
- RCT
- Swansea
- Torfaen

Wide ranging settlements due to varying local circumstances

Equal Pay - Bridgend CBC overview

Bridgend's current status:-

- +1,300 or so equal pay claims
- Collective Grievance Procedure
- Stage 1 and 2 Grievance Hearings
- Impacts on Job Evaluation Project

Upcoming Events

- White Book Defence
..... 4 selected - Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Conwy and Swansea

- Timing and Settlements?
 - Pay and Grading Structure
 - Pay Protection
 - Equal Pay

Following conclusion of the Presentation, the Chairperson thanked the Transformation and Development Manager for her concise yet informative submission.

RESOLVED: That the Committee notes both the contents of the report and the accompanying Presentation.

20 BRIDGEND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP)

The Corporate Director Communities submitted a report, to update the Equalities Committee on how the Development Planning Process and, in particular the Local Development Plan (LDP), addresses equality issues.

The Group Manager Development presented the Report. In Section 3 of the report, he outlined some background information, explaining that the LDP followed a statutory process which included addressing certain equality issues, i.e. not protecting the private interest of one person, but to consider the merit of land use only and how land is to be designated within the LDP.

The LDP was required by statute up to the period of 2021. Pre-deposit proposals had now been completed, and the Plan was being run by a Delivery Agreement, which set out the process, community involvement scheme and timetable for plan preparation, agreed by the Welsh Assembly Government and approved by the Council.

The Agreement includes setting out a clear commitment to maintain the interests of equality in relation to the process of the LDP i.e. having regard to legislation on Welsh Language, Race Relations, Disability Discrimination and the Community Involvement Scheme.

Section 4 of the report advised that the Council were currently at key stage 3 of the plan preparation process - the Pre-Deposit LDP Participation and Consultation.

The report then gave details of the consultation arrangements on the Pre-Deposit Proposals, which would be engaged to a wide audience and ascertain public opinion on these proposals.

The consultation period would be for a minimum six week period, before the end of March 2009.

He advised that some of these processes were statutory, however, others had been implemented by the Planning Authority, i.e. drop-in sessions in supermarkets, holding of road-shows and exhibitions and electronic and web based consultations.

Members thanked the Group Manager Development for presenting the report. They then made the following points:-

- How will the views of members of the public with access needs be taken on board, e.g. visually impaired and hard of hearing people etc?

- Could the Authority provide 'one on one' consultation if required?
- Could 'Talking Books' audio tapes and C.D.'s be provided for persons who are visually impaired and have difficulty reading?
- Have accessibility issues for disabled people to venues that will be used been considered?
- Could the Council extend its engagement with organisations connected with the older people e.g. SHOUT, the Never too Old Action Team, etc?

The Group Manager Development welcomed the above comments and advised the Committee that Planning Officers would address each of these points in a positive manner.

It was also debated and agreed upon, that when responses to the consultation process were collated, any that were deemed to be of an equalities nature, would be shared with a future meeting of the Committee.

Whilst the Delivery Agreement already contains a list of known organisations with equalities interests, it was agreed that Planning Officers would liaise with the Policy and Performance Management Officer (Equalities) to ensure that this list was complete and kept up to date

The Committee were advised that in relation to the LDP, a brochure entitled "Planning our Future" would be distributed to all residents of the County Borough.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the Equalities Committee notes the progress made on the Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP).
 - (2) That any responses received to the LDP Consultation process of an Equalities nature, be considered by a special meeting of the Committee, convened at a future date to be agreed upon.

21 EQUALITIES IN THE BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL WORKFORCE

The Transformation and Development Manager presented a report which provided the Equalities Committee with workforce data as at 30 September 2008, on the equality strands outlined in Paragraph 1.1 of the report, including a gender analysis of the workforce based on pay grade.

The following Appendices were attached to the report as supporting information:-

- A statistical overview of the current workforce (Appendix 1);
- An analysis of the current workforce based on gender and pay grade (Appendix 2);
- Detailed analysis of the current workforce for the WHOLE Council based on the equality strands identified at Paragraph 1.1 of the report (Appendix 3);
- Detailed analysis of the current workforce for the Council excluding schools, based on the equality strands outlined in Paragraph 1.1 of the report (Appendix 4).

The Transformation and Development Manager advised that the majority of the information had been extracted from the TRENT system and that refinements had

been made to the system to achieve more data at source which would in turn allow for increased data to be obtained.

She added that the extent of the information included in the system was dependant upon what the Council were statutorily bound to collate and that which employees disclosed.

The Chairperson was pleased to see that the Authority were employing people over the retirement age of 65 years old.

Though it was recognised that this was the first complete cycle of reports it provided an opportunity to set out what information would be used for comparable purposes. It was agreed that the information could also be compared with similar information of neighbouring local authorities, in due course.

It also observed that in Appendix 3 to the report there showed a low number of employees from ethnic minority backgrounds and that officers should give consideration to looking at ways of attracting more interest from applicants of different ethnic backgrounds to reflect changes in the local and national labour market.

It was noted that a total of 2,173 employees were recorded as 'Not Stated' in terms of indicating their ethnic background.

The Policy and Performance Management Officer (Equalities) advised that the duty on public organisations to monitor their workforce was so that they could demonstrate an understanding of their workforce and how they reflect the community they serve. For example Cardiff City Council and the Welsh Assembly Government have worked closely with race equality organisations to identify communities where job applications were not forthcoming and identify actions to promote themselves as an employer to these communities. It was agreed that in due course the Council could look at conducting a similar exercise, after looking at issues such as the local and national labour market. This information could then be brought before future meetings.

It was recognised that inward and outward migration information was difficult to ascertain and that government departments and bodies were seeking to improve this. It was generally recognised that there had been an increase in the number of people living and working in the county borough from Europe and other areas.

It was added that information regarding employment statistics of disabled persons would also be useful.

The Policy and Performance Management Officer (Equalities) confirmed that the ethnic groups listed on the Authority's recruitment forms and the methods adopted for reporting were in line with those used for the Census.

- RESOLVED:
- (1) That the Committee accepts the quarterly workforce data produced as at September 2008, and that management carries out comparative analysis of the Council's workforce for reports produced at the end of each quarter.
 - (2) That reports are submitted to the Committee that provide comparative analysis with the local labour market and other local authorities.

- (3) That reports submitted to the Committee include data presented in graphic format to aid trend analysis.

22 PROGRESS ON THE CORPORATE EQUALITY SCHEME AND RELATED TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Assistant Chief Executive - Corporate Development and Partnerships submitted a report to update the Committee on progress in respect of the Authorities commitment to publish a Corporate Equality Scheme, and to put in place an Equality training programme in response to the independent review conducted on the Authority's existing equality and diversity policies and practices.

Appendix 1 to the report included a proposed timetable for the publication of the scheme.

The report provided an outline of the training programme which has been developed to provide equality awareness training for employees, Members and School Governors.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Corporate Development and Partnerships advised that Members would be able to access two training sessions on 29 January 2009, and that the first session for School Governors would be at Bryngarw House on 5 March 2009 (evening). Information had been circulated to members and to school governors.

- RESOLVED:
- (1) That the Equalities Committee agree the proposed approach on developing the equality training programme for the Authority.
 - (2) That the Committee agrees to have a special meeting (i.e. 19 February 2009 pm) to discuss the draft Corporate Equality Scheme, prior to wider consultation on its contents.

The meeting closed at 11.50am.