

**Notes of a meeting of the Corporate Equalities Management Group held in Level 4 Conference Room, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend on 6 February 2009**

**Meeting commenced at 1pm**

**Present:**

D MacGregor (Chair)	-	Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Development & Partnerships)
G Ennis	-	Head of Central Administration (Communities Directorate)
J McKirdle	-	Group Manager, Housing (Regeneration & Development, Communities Directorate)
L Hutton	-	Transformation & Development Manager (Human Resources section)
J Gregson	-	Children's Partnership Coordinator (Children's Directorate)
L Smith	-	Policy and Performance Management Officer (Equalities) (Corporate Development & Partnerships)
R Crocombe	-	Administrative Assistant (Corporate Development & Partnerships)

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Judith Brooks and Bev Davies.

**2. Notes of last CEMG meeting (15 December 2008)**

The Group Manager, Housing confirmed that the report on housing support would be presented at the April meeting of the Cabinet Equalities Committee (CEC) by Huw Owen, Principal Officer – Housing Strategy.

It was agreed that:

- The report would give an update on the progress of the review currently being carried out on Disabled Facilities Grants and the end of year report on the Bridgend Accessible Homes.

**3. Minutes of last Cabinet Equalities Committee meeting**

The minutes were to be agreed by the Committee at its next meeting but were shared with CEMG for information.

**4. Matters arising**

- It was confirmed that the report on Access Improvements to Council Properties for Disabled People would be presented by Property Department at the next meeting of the CEC.

## **5. Draft Corporate Equality Scheme Action Plan**

It was confirmed that the draft action plan for the scheme was being developed by the Policy and Performance Management Officer in discussion with colleagues in each of the directorates.

It was noted that the Customer Services Manager had already offered feedback on the draft action plan.

The desired outcomes listed in the action plan were agreed.

It was also agreed that:

- Each directorate must check the draft action plan and ensure that it is realistic and deliverable. Directorates will need to give further consideration to how the draft action plan will be implemented to ensure that the actions are achievable. Directorate representatives must take ownership of the action plan and ensure all directors are made aware of the commitments set out in the action plan.
- The action plan format will be amended to make it clear how the word 'priority' relates to the disability, gender and race equality actions.
- The 'By who' section of the action plan will be amended to identify which directorate will be the lead on specific actions and where actions will be the responsibility of all directorates. For instance, the Resources Directorate will lead on the objective to promote awareness of the customer charter to disabled people, but all directorates have a responsibility to raise the profile of the customer charter in their services.
- The draft action plan will be amended to reflect the feedback from directorate representatives to avoid duplication and be clear where draft actions may depend on external partners and national initiatives.
- All directorate representatives to provide feedback on draft action plan to the Policy and Performance Management Officer by Tuesday 10 February so that any amendments can be made prior to the report being submitted for the special CEC meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February.
- It was suggested that the layout of the draft action plan was clear, but that it may be necessary to include a 'How' column following further discussion with Directorates in order to identify lead officers for specific actions who will work with the Policy and Performance Management Officer to ensure the authority has sufficient capacity to deliver the scheme.

## **6. Consultation programme for Corporate Equality Scheme**

It was noted that there will be a 4 week timescale for consultation following approval by the Cabinet Equalities Committee.

It was agreed that:

- An executive summary including the equality statement, general equality objectives and disability, race and gender equality priorities with a short questionnaire would be made available on-line and as a booklet. It would be circulated to stakeholders, including local community groups and town and community councils.
- The next scheduled meeting of the Bridgend Equalities Forum will be a consultation workshop to give local organisations an opportunity to give feedback on the draft Scheme.
- Staff focus groups will also be run. It was suggested that each directorate nominate staff to attend these focus groups to ensure a cross section of attendees. The focus groups would be invited to look at the draft Scheme and the customer charter and to give their thoughts on how this can be delivered. The venues for these sessions were in the process of being arranged.

It was noted that external assistance may be needed to assist with the consultation analysis.

## **7. Training programme up-date**

It was noted that the first training session was run on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, but that the second session scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> February was postponed due to lack of numbers and re-scheduled for a date in April 2009 to be agreed with the provider.

It was agreed that:

- Directorates will be offered all available dates to maximise opportunities for staff to attend and that the Policy and Performance Management Officer will continue to liaise with Organisational Development Team to check that the training is reaching those sections identified by Directorates as hotspots for the training.
- The Children's Partnership Coordinator will chase up delegates for the Children's Directorate – 17<sup>th</sup> March, 15<sup>th</sup> April and 8<sup>th</sup> June and liaise with the Policy and Performance Management Officer.
- Training nomination forms need to be completed by every employee attending the training – even if they have been nominated to attend rather than volunteered to attend. This enables Organisational Development to track who has completed training and encourage managers to discuss training needs and outcomes with their staff.
- It was suggested that a 'mopping up' training session be run later in the year.

## **8. Reports due to next Cabinet Equalities Committee**

It was noted that the draft Corporate Equality Scheme will go the special meeting of the CEC on 19<sup>th</sup> February for them to consider.

It was agreed that:

- The draft equality strategy will be amended to remove the following sentences: '*We are a place that believes in potential and a county of opportunities*' and '*We are many different people and a county of communities.*'
- The organisational structure will be amended as per the discussion and directorate representatives will be asked to verify the structure before the next CEMG meeting.
- Directorate representatives will inform the Policy and Performance Management Officer of any further amendments before the next CEMG meeting.
- The Policy and Performance Management Officer to check whether the Prime Cymru mentoring scheme referred to in the draft scheme is correct.

## **9. Current and recent consultation responses**

It was noted that the authority had made a response to WAG in response to its consultation on the WAG draft Single Equality Scheme. The group were also advised that WAG are currently consulting on an '*All Wales Community Cohesion Strategy*' which will need to be considered when finalising the content of the scheme.

It was agreed that:

- Policy and Performance Management Officer will arrange a meeting with the Community Safety Partnership Coordinator to discuss making a response to the WAG All Wales Community Cohesion Strategy consultation.

## **10. Any other business**

The Group were informed that Linda Smith and Jonathan Flower will be attending the 'Towards Equality: The Evidence in Wales' event which will discuss developing data sets on equality issues.

It was agreed that Bev Davies will attend the BSL Charter conference being run by Bristol City Council on 17 March.