

To: Equalities Panel

Date: 27 November 2006

Report by: Head of Human Resources

Diversity in Employment - Progress Report

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Panel on the progress in relation to the Human Resources Diversity Action Plan (this relates only to employment issues) and to brief the Panel on work undertaken during 2006 in relation to the new Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006. The Age Equality Briefing is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 Section 2 of this Report details the work completed since the last Equalities Panel meeting and Section 3 details the actions scheduled for the months ahead.

2. Progress to Date

- 2.1 **Diversity Recruitment Marketing** - Work is continuing on a range of marketing material based on the jellybeans used in the Diversity Guidelines. This includes posters for internal and external use and pages on the Internet and Intranet. Design and Print have produced the designs for the jellybean range, the launch of these designs will coincide with the launch of the new Recruitment Portal in January 2007 (see below).
- 2.2 **Recruitment Processes** – The designs for the countywide jobs portal (a joint project with Cambridgeshire County Council) have now been finalised. The Recruitment Portal will be launched in January 2007. The portal will provide an additional means of promoting the Council as an attractive employer to a wide and diverse audience.
- 2.3 **Recruitment initiatives** – A Positive Action Training Highway (“PATH”) scheme for the recruitment and training of BME professionals (currently being piloted in Environment & Planning) has been very successful. The scheme will be reviewed with a view to rolling it out to other departments. In addition, the Engaging Employers Project (in partnership with the Papworth Trust) is being piloted in two departments, also with a view to rolling out Council wide. Manager Briefings and workshops will take place over the next couple of months and the Council’s Disabled Staff Group has been involved in the development of the Project.

- 2.4 **Equal Pay** - The first Equal Pay Audit after completion Single Status is currently being conducted, and the Audit's Outcomes and Recommendations form a key component of the Council's Gender Equality Scheme to be published in April 2007.
- 2.5 **Dignity at Work** – The review of this policy is underway in conjunction with Tulat Raja [the Council's Anti-Harassment Officer] and the Diversity (in Employment) Working Group. Publicity of the revised policy will reinforce the Council's "zero tolerance" harassment message and will be accompanied by refresher training for managers. The new Policy is due for completion in March 2007.
- 2.6 **Positive Action** – The new Access into Supervision courses for under-represented groups was run earlier in the year, and received very positive feedback. It is scheduled to be run again as part of next year's Corporate Learning and Development Programme. This year's course was especially well attended by staff from the Council depot at Mill Road.
- 2.7 **Workforce Planning** – Work to embed the Council's Corporate Workforce Plan within the Service Planning cycle has commenced. All Heads of Service have been asked to produce a Workforce Plan for their division over the next 3 years. HR Advisers are assisting Heads of Service to complete these plans, as and when requested.
- 2.8 **Participation in community events** –There was an increased HR presence at community events this year, including LGBT History Month, Long Road Sixth Form College Careers Week, Pink Picnic, and the Cambridgeshire BME and Migrant Worker Conference. The increased presence is to both help raise the profile of the Council as an employer and also to help identify and eliminate barriers to recruitment for these groups.

3. Next Steps – Planned Action for 2007

- 3.1 **Corporate Health Performance Indicators** – as a result of our 2005/6 performances against two indicators. HR has formally requested to increase our targets. The changes requested are to increase:

BV11a - % of top 5% of earners that are women - from 34% by 2009/10 to 40% by 2009/10

BV17 - % of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities with the percentage of economically active minority ethnic community population in the authority area – from 6% by 2008/09 to 6.4% by 2007/08, 6.8 by 2008/09 and 7.2 by 2009/10.

- 3.2 **Disability Equality Scheme Training** - The Council's Equalities Link Officers, together with other staff, will receive training from SCOPE (the charity for Cerebral Palsy) on the Council's Disability Equality Scheme – which is to be launched in December this year. The training is being run

in conjunction with the County Council, and there will be two events in total.

3.3 **Disability Related Leave** – This policy and accompanying Manager and Staff Guidelines will be reviewed, updated and re-launched in conjunction with the Council’s Disabled Staff Group.

3.4 **Anti-hate Campaign** - As requested by both the LGBT and BME Staff Group’s – the Best Practice of other organisations such as Barnardo’s regarding Anti-hate campaigns for LGBT and other under-represented staff is being investigated, with a view to the Council developing its own Anti-hate campaign and publicity.

4 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Council continues to make good progress towards achieving its aim of having a culturally rich and diverse workforce. There is still much to do and we are confident that both continued joint working with the staff support groups, and the Equalities and Diversity work undertaken departmentally will make a real difference.

4.2 The Panel is asked to consider what form it would like the Council’s Diversity in Employment Report to take at future Equalities Panel meetings, and in particular, if there are any areas it would like the Report to focus on.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The panel is asked to note the contents of the report.

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Appendix 1

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Background

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 came into force on 1 October 2006. They are the UK's implementation of European legislation, the EU Equality Directive.

The Regulations apply to employment and vocational training (both training provided by employers for their own employees, and organisations providing vocational education and training to the wider community). They prohibit unjustified direct and indirect age discrimination, and all harassment and victimisation on grounds of age, of people of any age, young or old. They cover recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, promotions, transfers, dismissals and training. They do not cover the provision of goods and services.

Retirement Age

From 1 October 2006, the Council, as an employer, is unable to retire employees below our normal retirement age of 65. New procedures mean that we are now required to give employees advance notice of retirement and that employees can request to work beyond our normal retirement age of 65.

Employers who want to terminate the employee's employment *before* the normal or the default retirement age must have another fair reason for dismissal and follow the normal dismissal procedures.

Recruitment

Employers need to take care with recruitment advertisements and recruitment procedures. For example, Person Specifications and Job Adverts should avoid specifying a minimum standard of experience based upon time served as this disadvantages younger workers.

Dates of birth should be moved from application forms and added onto equal opportunity monitoring forms.

Selection procedures also need to be looked at to ensure that these are based on skills only and not on stereotypes e.g. not promoting younger people believing they do not have the skills for management.

Bullying and Harassment

The new law prohibits harassment and victimisation of an employee on the grounds of her or his age.

Work done at the City Council

The Council's Application Pack and Recruitment processes have been reviewed and updated in light of the new law. All job advertisements; job descriptions and person specifications issued since 1st October have been reviewed. All staff involved in the recruitment process has been advised of the new legislative requirements. Tribal Resourcing, our external partner for recruitment advertising, is also compliant with the new law.

In addition, all HR policies and procedures have been audited and updated so that they are now "age compliant".

The Council's new Working Past 65 policy and procedure was rolled at all Departmental Management teams over the spring and early summer. All Departmental Personnel Administrators were trained on the new law, and in particular, how it affected recruitment and selection, and terms and conditions of employment.

An article in City Briefing and on the Council's intranet publicized the new law and the Working Past 65 Policy to all staff. A Food for Thought Session on the new law was run for all staff in November. Corporate Management Team was also briefed on the new law in October.

So far, the Council's Diversity Adviser, has run five full day manager-training sessions on the new age legislation and how it affects Cambridge City Council and as an employer. Four more days are scheduled in this financial year. Once all nine sessions are complete, approximately 160 managers and supervisors will have received training on the new law.