

EQUALITIES PANEL MEETING

Monday 21st April 2008

4-6pm, Browns Field Community Centre, Kings Hedges, Cambridge

To:

Chair – Toni Ainley

Public Members – Graham Lewis, Nicky Wrigley, Gerri Bird, Ila Chandavarka

Staff Members – Bridget Keady, Nacer Dali, Christine Leonard, Jackie Hanson

Elected Members – Cllrs Slatter, Lynn, Shah and Downham

Facilitators – Sigrid Fisher, Marian Mair, Trevor Woollams

A G E N D A

1. Attendance and apologies for absence
2. Membership

Toni Ainley
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3. Minutes of Meeting held on 12 November 2007 & Matters Arising

Sigrid Fisher
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4. Discussion with Sean Risdale from Equality and Human Rights Commission – “The Equality and Human Rights Commission, how will it have an impact in the East of England?”

Sean Risdale

5. Issues arising from BME Citizen’s Survey

Trevor Woollams
To be tabled

6. Human Resources update and feedback from staff survey

Marian Mair
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7. Equality & Diversity at Cambridge City Council – update and forward planning

Sigrid Fisher
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8. Future Panel informal meetings and training needs

Sigrid Fisher

9. Next meeting – November 2008

Equalities Panel 21.04.08

Item 2: Membership

1. Notification of end of term of office for Public Member Ila Chandavarka, and new Public Member vacancy.
2. Forward notification that at November 2008 Panel meeting, Public Member Nicky Wrigley and Staff Member Nacer Dali will have the option of renewing their terms of office for one more 3-year period.
3. Update on attendance (chart attached) at formal and informal meetings, with regard to the terms of reference agreed at the last Panel meeting: following two formal meetings (one year's membership) being missed, the Chair will contact those absent to clarify their capacity to continue in their Panel membership role.

NB Public Members receive £25 per year expenses for attending formal meetings. Additional expenses for attending informal meetings can be requested.

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PRESENT

Chair: Toni Ainley - Director of City Services and Equalities Champion

Councillors: Downham, Shah, Slatter

Staff Members: Nacer Dali, Jackie Hanson, Bridget Keady, Christine Leonard

Public Members: Graham Lewis, Nicky Wrigley

Presenting papers: Sigrid Fisher, Strategy Officer (Equalities) & Jackie Foglietta, Head of Human Resources (HoHR)

In attendance: Antoinette Jackson, Director of Customer & Democratic Services (DCDS), Theresa Lawson

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

AJ welcomed all.

Introductions took place due to new members joining this Panel. Toni Ainley has replaced Graham Watts and is the new Chair, and Jackie Hanson and Christine Leonard are the new Staff Management Representatives.

Apologies were received from Ila Chandavarka.

2 MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2006 were agreed as a correct record.

The Panel noted the report on matters arising from SF.

Item 2 - Non attendance to be picked up later in the meeting.

Item 4 - The Equalities web pages hosting a variety of information are live and being used. A new HIV Policy is being developed by the Council's HR Department. SF commented that Dhiverse are recruiting for a new Chief Executive.

Item 6 - Information on the Equality and Diversity Policy was sent out to all staff with payslips in January 2007 so all are aware and up to date.

Item 7 - The new Disability Policy will be launched on 3 December. BK has been approached by a member of staff in Community Services who has questioned the maximum number of 10 days sick leave. It was agreed that JF would pick this up separately outside of this forum. SF commented that this issue would also be discussed further at the next Disabled Staff Group

JF
SF

meeting.

Item 8 - SF reported that the Council's Traveller Officer Group had not met for a while however Cllr Slatter reported that the site search was continuing.

Item 9 - Sean Risdale from the new Equalities and Human Rights Commission, based at Go East, will attend the next meeting of this group in April 2008 to talk about race and equality issues.

3 EQUALITIES PANEL MEMBERS' TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WAYS OF WORKING

Sigrid Fisher introduced a report asking for views on how the panel operated.

Item 1 - Panel's Terms of Reference: The Terms of Reference were agreed along with the Principles and Objectives set out in the paper.

Item 2 - Role and Conduct of Panel Members: It was agreed that where panel members may have a conflict of interest in terms of their conduct outside this role members should say and notify TA who will note it down and if a problem was foreseen, that member would not speak at the meeting and that if a negative issue arose TA would deal with it.

While Panel members may come from a particular equalities perspective, they are not representatives for single issues or specific groups, and therefore there is a need to ensure that Panel Members are able to understand and respond to all of the 6 equality strands and human rights, and to be pro-active and helpful in order to find out information on a specific strand as required, rather than having an in-depth knowledge of all areas.

Item 3 - Training and Information: Training for members of the group is generally available and the offer of accessing a 'buddy' is also an option for new Panel Members. SF forwards information on training to members of the group however at the moment no training records are kept. There may be a need to introduce training records and skills sheets. BK asked whether the Equalities Advocate training could be utilised by Panel Members. These are in-house courses so more dates could be made available.

Item 4 - Profile: The Panel agreed to raise the profile of the Panel and its membership both internally and externally by publicising the e-mail address and information about Panel Members.

Item 5 - Attendance at meetings: SF had produced attendance figures for members over the last 3 years where it can be seen that, for whatever reasons, some representatives have been unable to attend. The group loses SF

momentum and representation if members don't attend on a regular basis. BK asked that attendance at informal meetings be monitored, as those are important too. TA was happy to take on this recommendation.

Item 6 - Comprehensive Equalities Plan: The Council adopts a CEP annually, which is monitored throughout the year by the Joint Equalities Group. It was proposed that the panel would look at this plan and consider any priority areas of work. This was agreed to be followed up at future meetings.

Item 7 - Involvement: Currently Panel Members are invited to attend formal and informal meetings. It is possible for Panel Members to get involved in work outside of these occasions, to contribute to the development, progress and delivery of specific projects. It was suggested that panel members should e-mail the group once an event has been attended in order to give a summary of what went on so all are aware of each others' involvements in outside events. All agreed in principle to committing to involvement.

ALL

Item 8 - Openness of meetings and public speaking: There is an acknowledged low level of public participation at these meetings and the Panel agreed the protocol for other meetings needs to be looked at. to bring a proposed Protocol for the group. Any changes would be included in the Terms of Reference.

AJ/
SF

SF to tidy the draft Terms of Reference and e-mail to the group.

SF

4 EQUALITIES UPDATE AND PLAN 2007-08

A paper from SF was circulated with the agenda. BK had found this paper useful as it gave the group a comprehensive run through of what's happening on the equalities front.

3 - Disability: Cllr Downham had attended some Disability Equalities training and commented that she thought there was better training available for staff and members now.

Training and Information: SF reported on projects for next year, which includes the Race Equality Scheme (Apr '08), a Diversity Forum (a workshop style approach with members of this panel having an involvement), the usual 4 Diversity Days, and Equality Impact Assessments that will need to have a strong equalities root if they are to be effective.

Cllr Slatter will be attending the 'Way To Be Awards' on 21 November and would be pleased if there was interest from the group too.

ALL

5 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

A paper from JF was circulated with the agenda. JF reported on the workforce profile. There is a long way to go in some areas however there had been improvements against the BME targets. Work has been commissioned with community groups representing minorities in Cambridge to see what is stopping them from applying for jobs within the Council. This may lead to a special 'recruitment fair' aimed at BME and other minority groups.

The Council now has 3 employees that have joined the Council from the Papworth Trust.

HR are working with staff groups who are willing to be support buddies to staff who are victims of harassment as part of the revised Dignity At Work scheme.

The staff survey has seen a 55% response rate which is fairly good in comparison with the average 38%. The results of the survey will be out by Christmas. It was agreed that the results would be looked at further at the next meeting where any issues could be raised.

6 BELONGING IN CAMBRIDGE: TOWARDS OUR RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

Theresa Lawson attended this meeting to feedback from 'Our World In A Day', which was held as part of the Council's Black History Month and was a successful day. As part of this, BME staff were asked to put together their real life experiences of living and working in Cambridge. TL tabled two experiences for the group to read. The stories from staff were very powerful and, with the approval of the staff concerned, it was suggested these could be used as part of the Diversity Training the Council provides.

JH mentioned a training session a colleague had facilitated which had a strong message to all. She would try to find out more about it. JH

The group agreed that the national press sensationalise certain stories and figures. ND works with nominations and was keen to publish information on the intranet about claims made by various groups within the community relating to housing benefits as it is not as the media portrays. It was agreed that the legalities of the Data Protection Act should be checked out to see if this would be possible. ND

7 FUTURE TOPICS - INFORMAL AND FORMAL MEETINGS

Agency Staff: TA raised the question of employing agency staff, for whom English isn't their first language as City Services have had difficulties with induction training when explaining about Health and Safety, which becomes very difficult. SF and Nova Roberts, Head of Customer Services are looking into a package for new migrants, which come in 12 different languages. AJ commented that work is going on Countywide around employment rights of migrant workers and what can be done jointly.

The contract for temporary staff is being looked at now and JF reported that JF an area would be added relating to migrant workers.

Items for Next Meeting: SF to be notified of any items for the next meeting. SF

Membership Renewal: Bridget Keady's Membership on the Group was renewed.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 21 April 2008.

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EQUALITIES PANEL 21st April 2008

Matters arising from Minutes of 12th November 2007

2.

- HIV Policy: initial research has been undertaken working with Diverse and Environmental Services, and an updated draft policy is due in Spring 2008. Nicola White, Policy Officer in HR, is leading on this piece of work.
- Diverse: Jackie Fernandez has been appointed as the new Chief Executive, starting April 2008
- The Council's new Health & Wellbeing Framework includes a section on Disability, which incorporates our policies on disability related leave as well as sickness related to a disability, (i.e. some or all of the absence may be disregarded for the purposes of sickness monitoring). The Framework also includes guidance on our commitment to make "reasonable adjustments" for disabled staff where possible.

3.

- Membership and attendance – see item 2 on the agenda.
- Profile: the Council's Equalities web pages, including the page on the Panel, have the email address 'equalities@cambridge.gov.uk'. Panel membership listing is updated regularly.
- Comprehensive Equalities Plan – see item 7 on the agenda.
- *TORs and protocol AJ??*

4.

- Way To Be Awards: Cllr Slatter and Mark Taylor, Access Officer, have suggested that the Way To Be Awards are incorporated into planning for December's International Day for Disabled People in 2008. It is hoped this will successfully engage the local disabled community, and Cllr Slatter has been making initial enquiries in this regard.

7.

- Agency staff: as part of the tendering exercise for a new corporate agency worker contract, HR have developed a Specification that includes a number of performance criteria, one of which is assurance over agency workers' eligibility to work in the UK.

NB: Is there anything else specific in relation to the employment of migrant workers that the Equalities Panel would like to add?

Public Questions to the Equalities Panel

Questions may be asked, and statements may be made about any aspects of the Council's equalities work.

Advance notification

If the question or statement concerns a matter that is on the agenda for the meeting in question, then the speaker or questioner should register their intention to speak with the Committee Manager before the start of the meeting. If it concerns a matter that is not on the agenda, then notice of the question or of the subject matter must be given to the Committee Manager by 10.00 am on the working day preceding the meeting.

Are there time limits?

Yes. Three minutes per speaker or questioner, with a further two minutes for a supplementary question or response. There is an overall time limit for public questioning and statements of 30 minutes, to include the time taken by responses to questions and statements. Each limit is extendable at the Chair's discretion.

Are there rules about the nature of questions and statements?

Questions and statements should not

- contain offensive or defamatory expressions;
- relate to the conduct of individual Council employees or to human resources matters (e.g. disciplinary proceedings or grievances);
- divulge confidential or exempt information.

When in the meeting are questions or statements made?

Ordinarily, questions and statements will be dealt with at the beginning of the meeting. However, where a statement or a question relates to a matter on the agenda it may be appropriate for it to be put immediately preceding the consideration of the item by the Panel.

To: Equalities Panel

Date: 21st April 2008

Report by: Interim Organisational Development Manager

<p style="text-align: center;">Diversity in Employment – Progress Report</p>

1. Purpose

To update the Panel on the progress in relation to Human Resources work undertaken to date in 2008, since the last Panel meeting in November 2007.

2. Improving the diversity of the workforce

On the whole the performance is improving. We have more women, BME and disabled staff in the top 5% of earners than ever before, and the proportion of BME and disabled employees in the whole workforce, is also higher than last year. Our longer term (by 2009/10) targets are over achieved for disabled employees in top 5%, almost achieved for women in top 5% and BME employee in general workforce. The official percentage of disabled staff in the workforce is under target at 2.5%. However, the Staff Survey 2007 suggests there are 5% disabled staff.

More details of 2007/2008 performance against our targets and commentary can be found at Appendix 1.

How we measure performance

The new replacement set of Audit Commission indicators for local government focus almost exclusively on output measures for *services*, and relates to workforce diversity. However, CCC has decided to continue reporting the 'old' BVPI diversity indicators as our own Medium Term Objective Performance Indicators (MTOPIs) from October 08.

Recruitment

We have advertised as an employer in the following publications/ websites recently:

Pink Paper, Disabled & Supportive Carer, and Arberry Pink

Jobfresh - (coming out 2008) Government backed Careers Advice/ Jobseekers publication which will be distributed to various locations in our local area, including Jobcentre Plus, various career partnerships &

training providers, Equal Opportunity Programmes, Local Councils, Local Colleges/ Universities, Career Fairs, Libraries etc.

We have attended the Cambridge Evening News Jobsfair in January, the International Women's Day Fair last month and had a profile on Anglia Ruskin University's on-line Jobs Fair during March 08.

In the light of CAS restructuring, we have had 2 successful redeployments since the new redeployment started in February and one other possible redeployment at offer stage.

HR Community Outreach Project

HR commissioned an innovative project employing community development techniques to promote the Council as an employer to community groups in Cambridge and consult about how we are perceived as an employer. To accompany the project we produced a new leaflet showing role models of diverse staff within the Council and highlighting the range of job opportunities offered. This leaflet was deemed to have had a positive impact. The project was completed at the end of March and actions arising from the project are being identified to ensure lessons are learned for the future in terms of how we continue to raise the profile of the council as an employer with the Cambridge community.

Dignity at Work

The Dignity at Work Policy and the Grievance Policy have been re-written and are going through the last stages of consultation prior to launching. The new Dignity at Work Policy offers a more informal way of dealing with harassment and bullying issues for staff who may not wish to go through the formal Grievance procedure. The Policy also introduces new Confidential Advisors who will be trained in supporting and advising staff who are experiencing harassment issues. After a complaint has been investigated and dealt with a questionnaire will be issued to the complainant to monitor satisfaction outcomes and help us keep the policy under review.

Domestic Abuse Policy

A new Domestic Abuse Policy has been produced to highlight the issue and give guidelines on what support is available for Council employees. The new policy is addressed at victims of domestic abuse as well as colleagues and managers who have a member of staff who is experiencing domestic abuse. It highlights what the council can do to help people suffering from abuse and also lists external sources of help and advice.

International Women's Day

HR Recruitment Team and the HR Diversity Advisor represented Cambridge City Council at this year's International Women's Day event at the Guildhall. Along with information relating to diversity and working for City Council, leaflets about the new Domestic Abuse Guidelines were also handed out.

International Day of Disabled People

An event was held to mark the day, and was supported and attended by HR members. Citizens, council employees and members of external organisations were able to view or collect information about the recently launched staff Disability Policy. The Policy was provided in a number of formats including braille, audio and disk. The Papworth Trust were invited to attend and deliver a presentation about the Partnership Agreement between themselves and CCC. Representatives of the Papworth Trust were also available to answer questions or give more information. Two CCC disabled employees gave interesting and inspiring presentations about their positive experiences in working for the organisation.

Staff Survey 2007

The findings of the Staff Survey 2007 showed CCC performing consistently above local authority norms. Results were especially strong for:

- Overall employee satisfaction;
- Pride in the organisation;
- Perceptions of a culture accepting of difference;
- Satisfaction with overall terms and conditions.

However, there was dissatisfaction in some areas. The two areas prioritised for action were the relatively poor levels of satisfaction among staff who feel themselves to have been the subject of discrimination and the views of BME staff about their opportunities for learning and development.

In comparison to all staff, BME staff had lower levels of satisfaction with training, felt that they had not had the training and development they require to do their job effectively, and had training and development refused in the past year. (We know these views are replicated in other local authorities.)

Fewer BME staff agreed that the council provides equality of opportunity regardless of ethnic background, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, sex/gender. More BME staff indicated that they have personally witnessed or experienced racial harassment, discrimination or bullying and were dissatisfied with the outcome after raising the issue with the council.

In response to these findings, HR has undertaken a number of actions, including our work to revise our Dignity at Work policy and guidance to managers on allocating training funding fairly. We have also provided specific learning activities for BME staff, including a highly successful and well-attended workshop entitled 'Making the Most of My Abilities', which took place on the 18th March. In response to a suggestion from the BME Staff Group, we are organising a Discovery Week, to help staff find out more about job opportunities in other departments.

Competencies

The Council's new competency framework for all staff introduced in April 2008 includes a competency entitled 'Respecting Diversity and Equality'. This will be used to strengthen recruitment, performance management and staff development in respect of diversity issues.

Appendix 1

Corporate Performance Inductors of Diversity, 2007/2008					
		2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2007/08 Target	
BV11a	Percentage of top 5% of LA earners that are women.	33.87%	35.48%	36.00% (2009/10) tbc	Performance has improved since last year and we are well above the top quartile boundaries for district authorities . There are 2 additional women in the top 5% group compared to last year, meaning the 2009/10 target has almost been achieved already. Benchmarking against suitable comparators, Cambridge City Council compares well. The top quartile for all district authorities is 31.25%. In addition, last year we selected a "bespoke" comparator authority group based on population size, economic activity (total & student). The range of this group is between 15% and 27.3%. This area will continue to be addressed through the people strategy, workforce and succession planning.
BV11b	Percentage of top 5% of LA earners who are from an ethnic minority.	2.00%	3.00%	4.30% (2009/10)	3% outturn (increased from 2% in 2006/7) against a target of 4.3% by 2009/10 shows that we are making significant progress towards the target. The increase means that CCC is has almost reached the "all district" top quartile threshold of 3.37%. The range for our bespoke group of comparators is between 0% and 3.9% This area will be continue to be addressed through the people strategy, workforce and succession planning
BV11c	Percentage of top 5% of earners with a disability.	0.00%	3.00%	2.00% (2009/10)	An increase of 2 disabled employees in the top 5% means we have now exceeded our 2009/10 target. However the benchmarking data indicates we are still quite a way below the "All district" top quartile of 5.9%. Our bespoke comparator group has a range of between 0% and 2.5%, to which we compare well. This area will continue to be addressed through the people strategy, workforce and succession planning.

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		2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2007/08 Target	
BV16 a&b	a) Percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition compared with b) the percentage of economically active disabled people in the authority area.	1.8% 10.7% in local area	1.96% 10.7% in local area	2.5% rising to 2.75% by 2009/10	In 2007/08 we have seen an increase of 2 (0.2%) disabled employees amongst the workforce. This is an improvement on last year where the figures declined over the year. Although the figures are starting to improve, we have a challenge ahead of us. The all district top quartile is 5.25% and the bottom quartile is 2.39%. The range for our bespoke group of benchmarking authorities is 1.5% to 3.4%. Cambridge City is performing at the lower end of these benchmarking ranges. During 2007/8, HR has placed significant emphasis in this area - The City Council has begun working with the Papworth Trust's Engaging Employers Programme in order to improve performance in this area. Papworth will work together with Council managers to identify potential job opportunities. The City Council has also retained it's "Positive about Disability" Two Tick award for many years.
BV17 a&b	a) Percentage of local authority employees from ethnic minority communities compared with b) the percentage of the economically active ethnic minority community population in the authority area.	6.7% 11.3% in local area	7.01% 10.7% in local area	7.5% by 2009/10 tbc	We have seen a consistent rising trend in this indicator since 2003/04. There has been a rise of 4 BME employees this year, and we have almost achieved the longer term target set for this area. We are well above the top quartile threshold of 5.25% for all districts. The dedicated HR diversity post and increased emphasis in this area together with a new approach to recruitment are likely to have contributed to the increases in recent years. The Diversity Action plan also identifies further actions to improve this area.

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EQUALITIES PANEL MEETING

21st April 2008

Equality & Diversity at Cambridge City Council – forward planning

The main substantive areas of work over the next few months within Equalities @ Strategy & Partnerships will be:

Joint Staff Group & CMT Forum, 23rd April

The first joint forum with all staff groups being invited to take part in face to face discussions with the Council's Corporate Management Team. There will be feedback from issues arising out of the staff survey, and staff experiences of working at Cambridge City Council will be relayed for open discussion about addressing workplace culture.

Diversity Guidelines – the updates

New guidelines will to be produced, using a template designed to follow the same format of the old jellybean book. These will then be available to download from the internet/intranet. Folders to hold the inserts have been printed and will be distributed widely, available to all staff old and new.

Diversity Forum

A full community consultation event is being planned for May/June, which will incorporate all three Equality Schemes and the Stonewall ranking. The aim of the event is to encourage comment and engagement on our progress in these areas, and also to specifically support the development of our new Race Equality Scheme.

Comprehensive Equalities Plan / Annual Equalities Review / Single Equality Scheme

This combined area of work will bring together all current Schemes and plans, with sights on developing the Council's own Single Equality Scheme in line with anticipated legislative change. The Review is due to go to Strategy Scrutiny Committee in Autumn 2008.

Link Officers & Advocates / EqIAs

There continue to be difficulties in the capacity for Link Officers to deliver in their role, affecting both the progress of EqIAs across the Council, and the production of up to date departmental equalities information needed for various purposes. The Council's Performance Analyst is currently drafting a structure of responsibilities between Link Officers/Advocates and Heads of Services. Internal Audit will be auditing our EqIAs later this year. There may be need to refresh EqIA guidelines for internal use.

Training

It has been impossible to find time to design e-learning modules as part of the L&DP, although these are much needed for both generic and also Customer Service specific equality & diversity awareness.

Diversity events

'Wash ups' and/or forward planning are already underway for International Women's Day, LGBT History Month and Black History Month. It is anticipated that the Way To Be Awards will become part of International Day for Disabled People celebrations.

Support has been offered to Pink Festival, to ensure it becomes part of the annual calendar of events within Cambridge. Pink has just had a successful funding bid with EHRC that will mean it can take place in 2008.

The next Guide to Services for Older and Disabled People is due within this financial year, and it may be worth bringing that work early if at all possible, to release at IDDP.

Sigrid Fisher
Strategy Officer (Equalities)