

EQUALITIES PANEL

22 November 2010

4.30 - 5.45 pm

Present:

Chair – Liz Bisset

Councillors – Sarah Brown, Gail Marchant-Daisley and Raj Shah

Public Members – Graham Lewis, Nicky Wrigley,
Staff Members – Jackie Hanson (Operations and Resources Manager),
Bridget Keady (Strategy Officer) and Christine Leonard (Policy and Projects
Support Manger)

Officers – Guy Belcher (Nature Conservation Projects Officer), Vicki Davidson
(Organisational Development Manager), Joanna Gilbert-Wooldridge (Senior
Planning Officer) James Goddard (Committee Manager), Anette Grindsted
(HR Diversity Officer), Alison Kemp (Performance Manager), Helen Reed
(Housing Strategy Manager), Deborah Simpson (Head of Human Resources)
and Trevor Woollams (Head of Strategy & Partnerships)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**10/9/EP Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

Introductions took place and the Chair welcomed all those present.

Apologies were received from Norah Al-Ani and Lucy Walker.

10/10/EP Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Shah	All	Personal – Member of Indian Culture and Community Association. Non- Executive director of CINTRA.

10/11/EP Minutes of 14 June 2010 Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 14 June 2010 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

10/12/EP Revised Terms of Reference

The Equalities Panel reviewed terms of reference to discuss, reaffirm and sign off.

The Panel unanimously agreed to accept the terms of reference presented.

10/13/EP Equalities Impact Assessments - Housing/Planning**10/14/EP Older People's Housing Strategy**

The Housing Strategy Manager gave a presentation to the Equalities Panel on the Older People's Housing Strategy:

- This is a five year strategy that began in 2009.
- The Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out on the strategy action plan, rather than the strategy itself.
- Some actions to address issues were being implemented prior to also being highlighted by the EQIA.
- Examples of equalities issues identified:
 - Introduction of technology – need to ascertain if target groups are able to use, and do use ICT.
 - Need to discuss target audience needs with them.
 - Reaching hard to reach groups.
- When developing a strategy, it is important to ascertain target audience needs and develop the strategy accordingly, rather than vice versa.

Councillor Brown asked how hard to reach groups could be engaged to ascertain their needs. The Housing Strategy Manager said this had been undertaken through consultation.

The Director for Customer and Community Services asked how resource implications for EQIAs had been addressed. The Housing Strategy Manager said there were significant resource implications if trying to meet all groups'

needs. It is more practicable to identify priorities and focus resources accordingly. By working with Council colleagues, holistic work can be undertaken to address hard to reach groups.

Councillor Shah asked how issues such as intolerance were addressed through EQIAs. The Housing Strategy Manager said the Council website set out policies on how to address equalities issues.

The Housing Strategy Manager and Performance Manager will review EQIA results to ascertain if themes reoccur in different stages of the process. Thus results will be monitored at each stage of the process to observe if issues identified are carried over from one stage to another.

10/15/EP Mill Lane Development

The Senior Planning Officer gave a presentation to the Equalities Panel on the Mill Lane Development EQIA:

- The Old Press/Mill Lane SPD was developed jointly by Cambridge City Council and the University of Cambridge to inform future development on the site.
- This policy supports the further development or redevelopment of the site with an element of mixed use if this allows:
 - Improved facilities.
 - A reduction in parking spaces.
 - Improvement to the public realm and amenity space.
 - Better use of land.
- The Stage 1 EQIA (December 2008) established that there was:
 - Need for a safer environment.
 - Need for improved physical access.
 - Need to ensure effective consultation
- Two stakeholder workshops were held in January and July 2008.
- Public consultation held for six weeks (February – April 2009) with public notices in local newspaper and widespread local and regional media coverage.
- 257 representations made via the Council's web-based consultation system, email and by letter.
- Draft SPD presented at Design and Conservation Panel, March 2009.
- Draft SPD taken to three committees during drafting and for adoption with responses to representations agreed by Councillors.
- Consultation and the Stage 2 EQIA (January 2010) informed further amendments to the SPD to ensure:

- The mix of development includes community facilities.
- Improved access arrangements and facilities particularly for disabled people – key issue for places of worship.
- Any negative impacts of new development upon existing occupiers are minimized.
- Opportunities for small-scale creative industries.
- Element of affordable housing within site.
- Next steps:
 - Masterplanning by the University of Cambridge.
 - Draft Masterplan subject to consultation with stakeholders prior to submission.
 - Tied legally to the 1st significant planning application for redevelopment.

Councillors were encouraged to ask if EQIAs have been undertaken when reports/proposals are presented to committees, to identify synergies between strategies at City and County level. The Performance Manger said that new council report templates would specific if EQIAs had been undertaken. The templates will be introduced in future.

10/16/EP Local Nature Reserves and the Nature Strategy

The Nature Conservation Projects Officer gave a presentation to the Equalities Panel on the Local Nature Reserves and Nature Strategy EQIA: -

- Key outcomes of Stage 1
 - Sites and opportunities for engagement may not be promoted appropriately to all audiences.
 - Current site users and event participants may not reflect the full community.
 - Some local nature reserves (LNRs) may be inaccessible or restrictive due to access.
 - Some sites may have anti social issues or safety concerns that currently exclude some users.
- Key outcomes of Stage 2:
 - Improve access and entrance points on all LNRs as part of a phased programme.
 - Update LNR Leaflet and website to include large print and review under the new translation service contract.

- Attended Disability Panel to present Nature Conservation Strategy and LNR information (Oct 2010). Positive feedback with panel keen to comment on all future LNR plans.
- An LNR site visit with disability panel to assess Disability Discrimination Act and other related aspects planned for Spring 2011.

Panel members suggested issues affecting LNRs:

- Black, minority and ethnic groups did not always associate natural spaces with areas for recreation.
- LNRs could be more widely publicised as recreation areas.
- Physical access can sometimes be difficult. Visitors maybe discouraged if they perceive access/egress issues.

The Nature Conservation Projects Officer said that a phased programme was in place to address issues.

The Operations and Resources Manager would welcome shared learning in future across all EQIAs.

10/17/EP Equality Act 2010 - Briefing Note on Provisions in Force From 1 October 2010

The Panel received a report from the Performance Manager regarding Equality Act 2010 - briefing note on provisions in force from 1 October 2010. This set out the main provisions in place and how the Council were addressing these.

Councillors and Officers will be made aware of their responsibilities through the intranet, briefing notes, City Briefing, City Scene, Heads of Service, staff groups, plus job holder and line manager discussions.

The Act sets out requirements for conduct. Best practice on how to fulfil these is being developed.

The Panel unanimously recommended new Councillors are given mandatory equalities training in their induction, as per Officers. Committee Manager to advise Democratic Services Manager who is reviewing the Councillor induction process currently.

Action Point: Committee Manager to advise Democratic Services Manager the Panel unanimously recommended new Councillors are given mandatory equalities training.

10/18/EP Diversity Peer Review

The Panel received a verbal report from the HR Diversity Officer regarding the Diversity Peer Review.

The Council achieved level 3, which will be carried over from 2009 - 2011. A Diversity Peer Review assessment is planned to be undertaken in February 2011 to ascertain how the Council approaches equalities issues. Assessors will talk to Equality Panel members and front line staff to review how they engage customers.

10/19/EP Up-dated Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Policy and Value Statement October 2010

The Panel reviewed a copy of the updated Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Policy and Value Statement. This was updated due to the new Equalities Act and Peer Review.

The purpose of the document is to provide a framework for staff and customers by setting out expectations of good practice. The Panel were informed the policy documented what the Council had already been undertaking due to its aim of being a best practice employer.

The document has already been presented to Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

The Operations and Resources Manager suggested that the 'promoting diversity program' section could also include a reference to Disabled History Month.

10/20/EP Annual Equalities Review 2010 and Equalities Action Plan 2010-2011

The Panel reviewed a copy of the Annual Equalities Review 2010 and Equalities Action Plan 2010-2011. This plan sets out the strategic actions that the City Council will be undertaking over the coming year to advance its equalities agenda. It focussed on specific issues of common themes identified in EQIAs. The plan was approved at Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

Reports on progress will be sought through the Joint Equalities Group. The Equalities Panel asked to be regularly updated on Council equalities issues. The Strategy Officer signposted Customer and Community Services communication activity.

Action Point: Operations & Resources Manager to add Equalities Panel members to Equalities Bulletin mail list.

10/21/EP Cambridgeshire Inequalities Charter

The Cambridgeshire Inequalities Charter sets out 'Signposts for Success' that reflect the needs of different partner organisations.

A decision on adopting the document will be taken in future.

The Panel agreed to review the document at the next meeting.

10/22/EP Date of Next Meeting

Dates for 2011/2012 were approved as follows:
20 June 2011 and 21 November 2011.

Indicative 2012/2013 meeting dates for information:
18 June 2012 and 19 November 2012.

10/23/EP HR Workforce Report

The Panel received a report from the HR Diversity Officer regarding the half yearly update on diversity work and equality monitoring in employment as set out in the confidential 'HR Workforce Report'. This concerned:

- Workforce profile - employee numbers and targets.
- Recruitment and monitoring.
- Training.
- Disciplinary, capability, grievance and redundancy.
- Starters.
- Leavers.
- Pay profile.

The Panel agreed to review the annual report document at the next meeting.

Action Point: Panel members to read Workforce Report document circulated in meeting, and comment at next meeting.

Action Point: HR Diversity Officer to report back to Equalities Panel concerning annual Workforce Report.

The meeting ended at 5.45 pm

CHAIR