

Single Equality Scheme Consultation (Appendix B)

Summary of Consultation Responses

	Respondent	Response	Comment
	General comments about the draft Single Equality Scheme 2012-15		
	Councillor	The 'What do we know about people in Cambridge' section needs to include additional information about the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.	Incorporated.
	Diversity Forum	The 'What do we know about people in Cambridge' section needs to include additional information about the LGBT population, the young disabled population and older people.	Incorporated.
	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	Develop a communication strategy to inform service users with disabilities about services, service development, policies and disability access.	<p>The City Council is committed to ensuring that all residents, visitors and people working in Cambridge are able to access information about our services. In 2011 the authority produced Corporate Branding Guidelines that set minimum standards in terms of accessibility. Our website includes a range of features to ensure that people with disabilities can use it.</p> <p>The City Council will continue to consult and work with local disability organisations and community groups to ensure that disabled people are kept informed, for example the authority has worked with Disability Cambridgeshire and the Cambridge User Led Organisation to produce a new 'Guide to services for older and disabled people 2012-14'.</p>
	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	Monitor and respond to complaints from disabled people or carers regarding service delivery or communication issues.	<p>The City Council regularly monitors and analyses complaints that it receives. The authority looks to identify trends, including issues that are raised by people from different protected characteristics.</p> <p>Services also respond to the findings of consultation and engagement undertaken with the people that use their services, including people from, or groups representing, the different protected characteristics. For example, following consultation with the transgender community in Cambridge, changes were made to the redevelopment of Parkside Pools to include gender neutral areas.</p>
	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	The author has conducted some useful research to obtain as accurate figures as possible using alternative resources. Page eight outlines the fact that there is considerable concern that the needs of people with learning disabilities from ethnic minority groups are inadequately considered. With large numbers of Traveller communities and South Asian populations in Cambridge a specific objective to address these concerns would have been encouraging.	The Single Equality Scheme includes the following action: 'Work with partners to develop a better understanding of mental health and learning disability issues and identify any gaps in our services.' The City Council will incorporate looking at the specific needs of the Traveller community and the South Asian population in this work.
	South Cambridgeshire District Council	Overall, the SES is easy to read and understand. It is clear where the Council wants to be in the next three years and actions appear realistic in this time frame.	Welcomed.
	Cambridge Fire and Rescue Service	Very clear and engaging! Direction to your Code of Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement would be useful.	Incorporated.
	Diversity Forum	The Single Equality Scheme 2012-15 should include more on what the council will do regarding the protected characteristic of gender.	The City Council is committed to challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all the protected characteristics. The Single Equality Scheme 2012-15 includes a range of actions that will benefit all the protected characteristics. Conducting Equality Impact Assessments will ensure we continue to identify and address potential issues regarding gender equality.

	Councillor	The objectives and the actions in the plan need to be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, resourced and timely). How will we measure performance against our objectives?	The City Council will monitor implementation of the scheme and the Equalities Panel will provide some external scrutiny of our performance. The authority will continue to produce and publish an annual equalities review, which assesses the organisations performance and meets its statutory duty to publish information as required by the Equality Act 2010. The City Council will continue to use a variety of other ways of measuring our performance, including surveys, focus groups and engaging with community groups.
Objective 1: To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services.			
	Councillor	Should the document include an action regarding the accessibility of Cambridge City Council buildings?	The City Council is developing a new Accomodation Strategy which will incorporate further work to ensure that the authorities buildings are accessible.
	Diversity Forum	The council should investigate if there are opportunities to work in partnership with the voluntary sector to host information points or local advice hubs in the council's buildings.	The City Council does work with the voluntary sector to ensure that people that live in, work in or are visiting Cambridge have access to a wide range of information. For example Customer Services works closely with Cambridge Citizen's Advice Bureau. The City Council would be happy to discuss opportunities for further joint work with voluntary sector providers on this matter.
	Diversity Forum	The council should investigate if the Customer Service Centre could open later to better cater for certain groups, including people that work, people with social phobias and people that take strong medication.	Customer Services aims to meet the needs of all its users and is committed to providing a range of methods to contact the City Council. The City Council's Customer Charter states that the Customer Service Centre will be 'Open at times that reflect customer need and at a cost that is suitable and acceptable to our customers'. When Customer Services has previously reviewed the opening hours it has concluded that demand is not sufficient to enable the centre to open later, however Customer Services will continue to regularly review opening hours.
	Diversity Forum	The council should lobby its partners to ensure that there is good public transport links into the city so that residents can access public services.	The City Council is committed to working with the County Council, which is the Highways Authority, and other partners to ensure that Cambridge has an excellent public transport network. The overall objectives of the City Council are: - to minimise the need for people to use transport, particularly cars - to minimise the adverse effects of transport on people and the environment - to provide accessibility, particularly to jobs and essential services, for everyone especially those without access to a car - to provide a safe transport system, particularly for vulnerable groups such as cyclists and pedestrians - to provide an efficient transport system in terms of energy consumption, pollution and space requirements. More information can be found: http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/content/transport-and-streets/transport-planning.en
	Diversity Forum	The council should investigate how it could work better with partners and the voluntary sector to develop a coordinated approach to home visits, to ensure that the needs of vulnerable residents are identified and responded to, and that they are aware of the benefits they are entitled to.	An action has been added to the Single Equality Scheme for the Revenues and Benefits Service to: 'Investigate how the service area could work better with partners and the voluntary sector to develop a coordinated approach to home visits, to ensure that the needs of vulnerable residents are identified and responded to, and that they are aware of the benefits they are entitled to.' This action is also incorporated into the Revenues and Benefits Service operational plan for 2012/13.

	Diversity Forum	<p>A range of comments were made about Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Good to see that EqIAs will still be used by the council. · Due to the economic difficulties and cuts in public spending, rigorous testing of budgets cuts and their impact on specific groups is key. · Use of the new EqIA template needs to be embedded into the Single Equality Scheme. · EqIAs need to be made available. Who analyses them? How are the assessments shared and disseminated? · Can the Equalities Panel assess a sample of EqIAs? · Need to educate staff on the benefits of EqIAs. How can it be embedded so that staff feel inspired to complete the assessment as part of the process? · How do members of the public feed into the EqIA process? · The council needs to ensure that gender reassignment is consistently considered when EqIAs are completed. · Where there are sex segregation issues, EqIAs must consider the implications on the transgender community. 	<p>The City Council is committed to improving the consistency and effectiveness of our approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) to ensure that we consider the potential impact of service or policy changes on all our residents.</p> <p>In the next year we will refine the template that we use, re-write our guidance and run training for officers.</p> <p>The Equalities Panel does assess a sample of EqIAs, and completed EqIAs are available on our website here: www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality.</p>
Objective 2: To develop an improved level of understanding of Cambridge's communities and their needs through research, data gathering and equality mapping.			
	Diversity Forum	Need a combination of data and 'authentic' and 'anecdotal' evidence.	Agreed.
	Diversity Forum	This is a shared responsibility. The council needs to work with partners to improve understanding.	Agreed.
Objective 3: To improve community engagement in the development and delivery of services.			
	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	As Cambridge has the highest proportion of 16-24 and 25-39 year olds in Cambridgeshire ensure that you have adequate representation from these age groups on advisory networks for consultation purposes.	The City Council has a Code of Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement. To support officers undertaking consultations the authority has developed a toolkit, which includes information about targeting our engagement. It guides offices to ensure that consultations explain why we are asking for peoples views and what people are able to influence. The guidance also highlights the importance of providing feedback to people that respond to consultations.
	Diversity Forum	The council should create a shared address book for officers of voluntary groups in Cambridge on the Groupwise email system. This could be used for consultations and specific projects.	We also have consultation database of local voluntary and community groups for officers to use. We will be reviewing this over the next year to ensure that the contacts are up-to-date and to identify any gaps.
	Diversity Forum	Local networks play an important role. It would be useful to share which parts of the council are working with different groups, and who are the key contacts within different local groups.	
	Diversity Forum	The council should use infrastructure organisations like Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum, C CVS, Age UK etc to disseminate information.	
	Diversity Forum	People want to be asked/consulted to help inform the decision – not asked to comment after a decision has been taken.	
	Diversity Forum	The council needs to make consultations relevant and be clear at what point people can feed into a process. The council should ask people who are affected, not those who aren't.	
	Diversity Forum	Providing people who respond to consultations with feedback/follow up is important.	
	Diversity Forum	You get much more from face to face communication, so the council should get out and talk to local groups.	
	Diversity Forum	Can we access community groups via the area committees?	The Area Committees have an important role to play in consultation. Over the past year the City Council's North Area Committee has trialled a range of new ways to engage with the local people and community groups.

	Diversity Forum	Some organisations feel the council is remote and difficult to engage with. This is particularly true if the group is less confident or there is a language barrier. Even confident groups still need a network, to know where to go and how to be involved.	The City Council is committed to undertaking meaningful consultation. We have developed a Code of Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement to ensure that our approach to consultation is structured, proportionate and appropriate. Our Community Development Service works with a wide range of groups, including those who represent harder to reach communities, to ensure that we understand the views of Cambridge's diverse population.
Objective 4: To ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together.			
	Cambridge Fire and Rescue Service	Does the Council have a role to play in third party Hate Crime reporting such as Open Out and is there potential to work with Police and other partners on this?	The City Council works with Open Out to address Hate Crime, and in the past has supported it financially with grants.
	Diversity Forum	How do we raise awareness of the public? For example for Disability History Month. The council should promote the community cohesion work that it already undertakes.	The City Council uses a variety of means to promote the community cohesion work that it undertakes, including through the local media, Cambridge Matters, the authority's website and through community groups that it works with. The range of diversity days supported by the City Council, for example LGBT History Month and International Women's Day, demonstrate a clear and public commitment to strengthening community cohesion. The City Council will continue to look for new and innovative ways of promoting this work.
Objective 5: To ensure that the City Council's employment policies and practices are non-discriminatory and compliant with equalities legislation as a minimum standard.			
	Diversity Forum	Could the council publicise the reasonable adjustments process more?	The City Council is committed to supporting people with disabilities to work for the authority, including by making reasonable adjustments. The authority works closely with the Papworth Trust to support people with disabilities within the workplace.
Objective 6: To work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council.			
	Cambridge Fire and Rescue Service	Are your aspirations to be more representative realistic in present economic climate?	The City Council is actively recruiting and has realistic targets in place for BAME and disability, which are reviewed as and when required.
	Diversity Forum	Does the council work with any organisations that support people who have experienced mental ill health to return to work, for example the Richmond Fellowship?	The City Council recognises that mental ill health is one of the largest causes of staff absence. The authority works closely with the Papworth Trust to support staff returning to work.
	Diversity Forum	Has the council considered applying for the 'Investors in Diversity' accreditation?	The City Council has been awarded a number of accreditations that reflect our approach to equalities and diversity. For example in 2011, the authority was awarded the 'Achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government. At the moment the City Council has no plans to apply for the Investor in Diversity accreditation.
	Diversity Forum	Does the council advertise positions in a wide range of places, including specialist diversity magazines and websites, for example Stonewall?	This depends on the role that is being advertised, but the City Council has advertised in specialist diversity magazines or websites. It will continue to do so when appropriate.
	Diversity Forum	One of the challenges that young people in particular face is that many jobs ask for experience and too few adverts state that training will be provided. This discourages people from applying in the first place.	The City Council recognises that young people face many challenges when applying for jobs and is in the process of reviewing the recruitment process to appeal to all groups of people.
	Diversity Forum	Could the council sponsor individuals to gain work experience in the voluntary sector? For example, Disability Cambridgeshire run a project called 'Opportunities for Volunteers'.	The City Council recognises the value to individuals of gaining work experience, however it is not in a position to sponsor individuals at the moment. The authority does offer work experience placements, and often works in partnership with the County Council and directly with schools to do so. The authority also supports people who want to undertake voluntary work for Cambridge City Council.
	Diversity Forum	Does the council have people at a senior level that work part-time? Does the council actively support senior officers to work part-time?	The City Council does have people at a senior level that work part-time or as a job share. The authority has policies in place to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to request a change to their working arrangements.