

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Adult Social Services & Housing Department

Equality and Diversity Plan

June 2006
Updated February 2007

Introduction

This Equality and Diversity Plan (the Plan) sets out the work that the Directorate intends to undertake during the year 2006/07 to incorporate the legal and good practice expectations relating to equality and diversity and to deliver:

1. High quality services for current and prospective service users and their carers,
2. Robust systems throughout the recruitment, professional development and support to ensure that staff are equipped to do their job,
3. Clearly developed and agreed equality and diversity expectations with organisations in the public and voluntary sector and with providers of services delivered through contracts or service level agreements.

The Plan is informed by work previously undertaken in a number of areas and includes outcomes from:

1. The Directorate outcomes emerging from the Equality Audit and Assessment 2005/06,
2. Analysis of the Staff Survey (2005) and associated staff seminars,
3. EINA and other audit outcomes and work previously identified.

This plan is influenced by the work carried out with staff to analyse the Staff Survey (2005) outcomes. This identified the benefits of setting out change processes through a series of clear, tangible ambitions and targets (SMART targets) rather than placing a reliance on broader thematic approaches which were considered to be a less effective means of achieving real improvements.

The Plan is designed to be organic in structure. This is to allow work to be included as it is identified i.e. at the publication of Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA) outcomes. Thus, the Plan was reviewed in February 2007. Completed work was removed from the Plan and new additions made – the latter largely reflect the outcomes of EINA's completed since the inception of the Plan. The Plan is also designed to be reviewed and audited on a regular basis. This will be achieved through two fora:

1. The Directorate Equalities Board which meets on a quarterly basis,
2. Periodic meetings, hosted by the Director, for black and minority staff and staff with a disability.

The Plan is set out using the four areas defined in the Equality Standard, namely:

- Leadership and Corporate Commitment
- Consultation, community development and scrutiny
- Service Delivery and Customer Care
- Employment and Training.

Finally, to ensure that this document is not over lengthy groups/structures have been referred to by their initials: DEB - Directorate Equalities Board, BME – Black and Minority Ethnic, HR – Human Resources, SEG – Strategic Executive Group, WDU - Workforce Development Unit.

Delivering the Plan

At its meeting on the 9th August 2006 the DEB agreed the plan. The same meeting also explored the most effective way of delivering the plan. There was some reluctance to set up an implementation group to deliver the plan as this was felt to be a duplication of work/structures that already exist within the divisions. Subsequent discussion has agreed the following proposal:

1. Each division will maintain a structure to deliver Equality and Diversity related work including work identified within this plan,
2. Some actions set out in the plan are specific to groups or individuals. These will remain the responsibility of the group/individual,
3. Some actions can be characterised as projects. These have been allocated a named division/Assistant Director to take the lead in implementing the action. The named division/AD can call on support from other divisions to ensure the successful completion of the project,
4. A named individual will carry a co-ordinating role to track progress, offer support/advice, disseminate outcomes to divisions/web library and amend/update the plan to take account of work completed/new areas of work to develop. At present the named individual is Andrew Hannon.

Projects

Six projects have been identified at this point in the life of the plan. These are set out below along with the division taking lead responsibility to deliver the project:

1. Improve the quality and range of information available to staff, users and carers. Lead division – Strategy and Resources/Craig Brewin,
2. Improve overall standards for the recruitment, induction and retention of staff with a disability including awareness of “reasonable adjustments”. Lead division – Adults/Jim Rogan,
3. Improve the experience of BME staff by addressing the origins of the high incidence (26% in 2005/06) of perceived discrimination on the grounds of colour/ethnicity and putting in place actions to reduce this incidence. Lead division – Housing/Brian Castle/Rod Birtles,
4. A programme of work should ensure that all contracts and partnerships spell out equality and diversity expectations, ensure that these standards are monitored and issues addressed and that all staff who undertake contract monitoring and review work are equipped to meet these expectations. Lead division – Strategy and Resources/Craig Brewin,
5. The training programme should be reviewed in consultation with users to ensure that it meets the particular needs of BME staff and staff with a disability. Lead division – Strategy and Resources/Craig Brewin,
6. A staff profile for Adult Social Service and Housing should be developed. Lead division – Adults/Jim Rogan.

Theme 1: Leadership and Corporate Commitment					
Ref.	Action	By When	By Whom	What will be different	Outcome/Evidence
1.2	The Director will host six monthly meetings for BME staff and staff with a disability	December and June each year	Part of project 3 – Housing lead/BC/RB	This will facilitate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A forum to feedback on progress, • Scope for staff to comment on the impact of change, • A greater focus on partnership working. 	Some slippage due to capacity issues in Housing. Meetings to be scheduled early 2007.
1.2	The DEB will consider the way forward in regard to providing some form of mediation in situations where dispute arises between BME staff/ staff with a disability and their manager.	November 2006	Part of project 3 – Housing lead/BC/RB	Consideration of internal/external mediation where existing management arrangements are not perceived to be meeting the needs of the individual by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing current dispute resolution practice, • Providing arrangements that are trusted, • Considering the implications for existing management arrangements. 	Some slippage due to capacity issues in Housing. Work to commence in early 2007
1.3	The Directorate will work to ensure that the needs and aspirations of staff and users who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender.	From March 2007	A Hannon	This work will address two areas of current concern: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A recent Stonewall survey suggested that there were perceived to be elements of institutional homophobia within the council, 2. There are developments that can be made to improve communication with staff and users whose needs include those associated with their sexuality. <p>Work will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addressing the current absence of reference to sexuality in equalities training 	

				<p>e.g. Richmix makes no reference to sexuality,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Awareness raising to ensure staff are aware of and feel confident in addressing sexuality related issues in the care planning process, 3. Look at ways to engage all staff in the development of good practice in meeting the sexuality related needs of staff, 4. In consultation with the current HR initiative work to establish an effective rapport with staff who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender to promote staff confidence and establish directorate boundaries about good practice, 5. It is likely that this work will be benefited by input from a voluntary sector partner. 	
1.4	Review and reissue Directorate Equality and Diversity Policy	November 2006	Strategy and Resources /CB Andrew Hannon	<p>This will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the policy is up to date and includes reference to new/forthcoming requirements and outcomes of recent work, • Ensure a wider circulation/engagement with staff, • Ensure that expectations e.g. that Equality and Diversity is a standing item on all team/management meeting agendas, • Include relevant elements of the SEG and CEAG work plans. 	Draft completed, scheduled for discussion within the DEB

Theme 2: Consultation, Community Development and Scrutiny					
Ref.	Action	By When	By Whom	What will be different	Outcome/Evidence
2.1	In 2005/06 26% of BME SS/H staff reported feeling discriminated against because of their colour/ethnicity – we need to be clearer about the origin of this i.e. from colleagues/users	March 2007	Part of Project 3 – Housing lead/ BC/RB	Explore this further to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the source, Develop reporting and response arrangements, Review use of current racial incident reporting format and amend as necessary, Ensure all managers are aware of their responsibilities, Incorporate issues of discrimination/harassment relating to staff with a disability into this development 	Slippage due to capacity issues in Housing. R Birtles and A Hannon to take forward in the interim in consultation with the BWSG and the Staff with a disability staff group.
2.2	Individual EINA work should by undertaken within divisions. An EINA log should be developed and should be scrutinised by the DEB	November 2006 November 2006	All divisions S&R	Anticipated improvements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divisional ownership of work, A comprehensive log, Improved awareness of the process, Improved clarity about why the process is of value, Scope to identify emerging trends/adherence to policy. 	Access to Assessment EINA 2 completed. Meals Service EINA 1 completed. EINA schedule for 2007/08 presented to DEB in March for approval. An EINA log has been developed – to be put on the Internet as part of Project 1.

Theme 3: Service Delivery and Customer Care					
Ref.	Action	By When	By Whom	What will be different	Outcome/Evidence
3.1	Work with SERCO and web design staff to ensure that computer systems used by staff and the intra/inter net are readily accessible to staff and users with a disability	December 2006	S&R/CB Jennifer Short and Gill Ford	Improvements will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring SERCO have and abide by policies relating to the DDA and accessibility by staff with a disability, Inter/intra net design staff are aware of accessibility related issues, have clear guidelines to work to and adherence to these is monitored, 	The development of RIO and the Internet site have incorporated features to support the needs of users with a visual impairment. Staff related computer issues picked up through the ICT Client side.
3.2	Improve the quality and quantity of information available to staff, service users and partners by developing the Website (intra and inter net)	December 2006	Project 1 – S&R lead/CB Andrew Hannon	Ready access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy documents including the Accessibility Guide, Audit outcomes, Work of the DEG and divisional group(s), Links to key national/local external sites, Web based information in community languages and information accessible to people with learning difficulties. 	RIO now live. New Internet site went live on 21/02/2007. New Internet site incorporates a SS/HD equality and diversity page, more ready access to service information for staff and users and ready navigation around the site.
3.3	A framework should be put in place to ensure all research, analysis and service developments have regard to equality and diversity.	November 2006	S&R/CB Gill Ford/ Bridget Bell	Improvement will lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic expectations about reports, data analysis and presentations, Clearer structure about the EINA structure, usage, value and outcomes, 	Work to be taken forward as a part of the Directorate Quality Assurance framework

3.4	Literature produced by the Directorate should ensure the promotion of positive images	February 2007	S&R/CB A Hannon and M Swabey	Improvements will lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved positive images in public and staff areas of the Directorate, Improved public information (leaflets and on-line information). 	Public Information strategy includes the promotion of positive images. WDU to focus on the presentation of positive images in reception and staff areas.
3.5	The developing commissioning framework must include equality and diversity related expectations	February 2007	All commissioning managers	Framework will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify extent of current service need/provision, Promote greater efficiency in resource allocation, Promote an outcomes orientation, Encourage the integration agenda. 	Outline commissioning framework currently being developed. We anticipate working with the Change Agent Team to effect the development of the Commissioning Strategy in consultation with the PCT.
3.6	Deliver the Directorate Plan (2006/07) and the associated divisional Service Plans	March 2007	DMT/all DMGs	Monitoring will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure equality and diversity ambitions are achieved, Promote use of the EINA framework in service development. 	2006/07 Service Plan has been reviewed on a quarterly basis with reports prepared for DMGs, DMT and O&S Committee. 2007/08 Directorate Plan now written with Service Plans being drafted.
3.7	Implement the action plans arising from the completed EINA's: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Access to assessment Meals service 	November 2007	Adults DMG/ Contracts	Implementation will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve assessment processes, Increase the monitoring of and access to the service. 	Managers briefed on both reports; (i) implemented via Adults DMG, (ii) via Adults DMG and Contracts

Theme 4: Employment and Training					
Ref.	Action	By When	By Whom	What will be different	Outcome/Evidence
4.1	Work with HR to ensure that the provision of “reasonable adjustments” for staff with a disability are, at a minimum, provided within guideline timescales	February 2007	Part of Project 2. Adults lead/JR	Outcomes will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff are aware of the relevant timescales and funding arrangements, Monitoring arrangements are in place to track compliance, HR work in partnership to ensure compliance. 	Strategy now developed in OHRD (project lead: Marc Adams). M Swabey to act as contact point in ASS/H. Project scheduled for completion in December 2007.
4.2	Ensure all managers are equipped to work effectively with staff with a disability including knowledge of the legislation, funding for reasonable adjustments and the implications of “flexible/hot desk” working	February 2007	Part of Project 2. Adults lead/JR	Initiative will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve overall awareness of legal/good practice responsibilities, Ensure line managers are aware of their specific responsibilities to include a specific piece of work as part of the induction process relating to reasonable adjustments, workspace appraisal and other, related issues 	Strategy now developed in OHRD (project lead: Marc Adams). M Swabey to act as contact point in ASS/H. Project scheduled for completion in December 2007.
4.3	Training events should recognise the particular needs of BME staff and staff with a disability	February 2007	Project 5. S&R lead/CB M Swabey	Developments will deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to staff with a disability by having regard to start/finish times and individual working hours arrangements, Improvements for BME staff access to management and networking events/training 	Strategies to improve access to staff with disabilities discussed with Disabled Staff Group rep. Application form being reformatted with section for reasonable adjustment enhanced. Hyperlink being placed in application form which will direct

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements in management confidence in working within an equality and diversity context 	<p>participants to that part of the WDU website which expands on what reasonable adjustments we are able to make.</p> <p>Web site under complete overhaul but awaiting time from Public Information Officer to assist because with the IT training officer's departure there is nobody in the team able to edit our web pages.</p> <p>Discussion to take place with Occupational Health to ensure that staff who need reasonable adjustment for employment are spoken to at the beginning of their employment so that they don't have to give this information twice. Statistics are now being monitored by number of people attending courses, days per person and types of discretionary spend for courses and qualifications.</p> <p>HEALTH WARNING - These stats are across Adults/Housing and Children. For 2007/8 we propose to differentiate between the groups and using the comparator of BME staff by grade in Adults we will be able to discover if Manager grades are being treated in the same way as</p>
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					<p>non-BME staff. The problem will be that by reducing the number of staff in the pool e.g. separating Adults/Housing etc it will have an impact on how meaningful the statistics become. (See grid at end of plan update) The Qualification Strategy is being produced at the moment and will be consulted on shortly. We propose to monitor the take up of qualification courses by BME staff from 2007/8 onwards, following discussion with Suganya Meetings have taken place between March Adams, Suganya Ranganathan, Sally Norris, Sophie Furness and Maura Swabey. Rich mix modules 2, 3 and 4 were discussed and we are confident that increased staff confidence will be achieved as a result of this training, particularly as we are consulting with the equality leads across the Council.</p>
4.4	All staff should receive effective supervision and appraisal within corporate policy guidelines	March 2007	DMT/all DMGs	<p>There is scope to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve monitoring of supervision and appraisal practice, • Undertake “satisfaction” audits on an annual basis 	All managers aware of their responsibilities.

4.5	There is scope to improve staff awareness of the existing policy framework	December 2006	Part of project 1. S&R lead/CB G Ford	Improvements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include clear links to policies (Flexible Working, Whistleblowing etc) on the intranet, • Do not over rely on the intranet – use a variety of media e.g. Out of The Rut etc, 	A policy has now been agreed whereby all staff (including those in day etc centres) will have access to computers.
4.6	Develop a staff profile	February 2007	Project 6. Adults lead/JR	The initiative will provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workforce composition profile, • Recruitment and selection information. 	Initial scoping being undertaken by B Vallis.

Training Statistics

ALL RECORDS - 1 & 2 DAY COURSES		PEOPLE	TRAINING DAYS	% ATTENDING	DAYS PER PERSON
BME		206	520.9	20.78%	2.53
WHITE		665	1474.9	58.83%	2.22
NOT GIVEN		264	511.2	20.39%	1.94
TOTAL		1135	2507	1	2.21

STAFF ONLY - 1 & 2 DAY COURSES		PEOPLE	TRAINING DAYS	% ATTENDING	DAYS PER PERSON
BME		120	407.3	22.83%	3.39
WHITE		398	1131	63.39%	2.84
NOT GIVEN		113	245.9	13.78%	2.18
TOTAL		631	1784.2	1	2.83

OTHER AGENCY ONLY - 1 & 2 DAY COURSES			PEOPLE	TRAINING DAYS	% ATTENDING	DAYS PER PERSON
BME			86	113.6	15.71%	1.32
WHITE			267	343.9	47.57%	1.29
NOT GIVEN			151	265.5	36.72%	1.76
TOTAL			504	723	100.00%	1.43

STAFF ATTENDING EXTERNAL - 1 & 2 DAY COURSES			PEOPLE	TRAINING DAYS	% ATTENDING	DAYS PER PERSON
BME			26	48.5	20.59%	
WHITE			100	153.6	65.20%	
NOT GIVEN			16	33.5	14.22%	
TOTAL			142	235.6		1