

Equality Objectives and Action Plan

Under the Equality Act (2010), Richmond is required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

As part of meeting this *general duty*, the Council also has to work towards a number of equality objectives.

These are specifically to:

- Prepare and publish one or more objectives they think they should achieve to do any of the things mentioned in the aims of the *general equality duty*, by 6 April 2012, and at least every four years thereafter
- Ensure that those objectives are specific and measurable.
- Publish those objectives in such a manner that they are accessible to the public.

Given the nature of the service, Democratic Services does not regularly conduct EINAs as they do not tend to be relevant for the areas of work or projects, in light of the *general duty* there needed to be an action plan for Democratic Services so that if called upon the service would be able to show a paper trail of it having *due regard* to the *general duty*.

The following are the Equality Objectives for the Service.

Democratic Services Equality Objectives:

- 1. Increase awareness of equality and diversity matters amongst members.**
- 2. Develop and prepare information to promote becoming a council to all members of the community.**
- 3. Implement a way to monitor Mayoral attendance at civic events.**
- 4. Further develop the service's understanding of 'hard to reach groups' in the borough in order to investigate effective tailored services for such groups**

These objectives have corresponding actions and milestones in the Action Plan below:

ACTION PLAN					
Democratic Services Objective No.	Action	Time scale	By Whom	Difference / EA 2012	Outcome/ Evidence
CIVIC, MAYORAL AND MEMBERS					
1	Refresh information on MEMBER TRAINING WEBSITE on Rio including a section on Equality and Diversity	In line / as part of the New Member training programme – Ongoing from 2012	Member Services	Details of training opportunities and useful resources will be more accessible to Members <i>The general duty EA 2010</i>	Better information for Members. Number of website hits.
1	Provide regular Member refresher training throughout their 4 year term – in a number of formats	In line / as part of the New Member training programme Ongoing from 2012	Member Services	<i>The general duty EA2010</i>	Better information for Members / attendance rates.
1	Annual update Member EA Monitoring form	Ongoing from 2012	Member Services	Up to date information on the diversity of the members which can also be used in relation to their training needs.	Monitoring spreadsheet with most up to date anonymised data.
3 + 4	More events to be held at various cost levels in various locations so traditionally hard to reach groups and those with protected characteristics also have the opportunity to attend. Various event formats so to make it more	2013	Democratic Services Civic and Mayoral Services	Importance of role of Mayor in promoting equality and diversity within the borough promoted Important symbol of understanding and valuing diversity within the borough <i>Having due regard to the need to foster good relations</i>	Feedback from events Via NACO standards

	accessible and easier for those from minority groups who are traditionally hard to access to engage in.			<p><i>between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</i></p> <p><i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic</i> <p><i>Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low</i></p>	
2 + 4	Circulate invitations in different formats to hard to reach groups and groups with protected characteristics to make meetings and events more accessible for them to attend.	From next Mayoral Appointment which begins end of May 2012	Civic and Mayoral Services	<p>Importance of role of Mayor in promoting equality and diversity within the borough</p> <p>Important symbol of understanding and valuing diversity within the borough</p> <p><i>Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, in particular the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.</i></p> <p><i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to</i></p>	<p>Feedback from events</p> <p>Number of events attended by traditionally hard to reach groups and protected characteristics increases.</p>

1	Ensure that Equalities considered as part of scrutiny Task Groups via the use of specifically designed scoping document and section / paragraph in final report.	Ongoing	Scrutiny Team and Assistant Head of Democratic Services	Embed equality and diversity issues into the scrutiny process <i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</i>	Evidence within reports, and scoping document.
1, 2 + 4	Carrying out on-going, regular monitoring against equalities targets through holding themed (community cohesion) meetings and questioning responsible officers and members on their achievement	Ongoing embedded by 2014	Scrutiny Team and Assistant Head of Democratic Services	Embed equality and diversity issues into the scrutiny process <i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</i>	Themes community cohesion meetings; minutes from meeting.
1	Add small opening / sentence about the importance of equality to Scrutiny Guide (presentations) and Members' Scrutiny Guide. This	April 2012	Scrutiny Team	Embed equality and diversity issues into the scrutiny process and members see it consistently. <i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</i>	The Scrutiny from Guides and Representations those with protected
2 1 + 2	Setting and monitoring of council and departmental equality objectives include a provision of change through the reviews and Scrutiny process. consistency	As soon as practicable from next Committee Cycle (2012)	Governance Scrutiny Secretary & Governance Teams	Embed equality and diversity issues into the scrutiny process and how it views the council as a whole. <i>Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activities which contribute to the public good</i>	Minutes from OSCs Increased attendance at meetings
DEPARTMENTAL					
2 (+ 4)	Monitor the use of translators at level 1 and enhance existing equality and diversity monitoring so this may inform service provision and training needs for staff and councillors. Areas identified for monitoring include: ➤ Prof members have been on the Rich Mix / Members	Ongoing 2013/2014 with the various aspects commencing as soon as reasonably practicable (e.g. Parent	Governance Members Services / Democratic Services	Better information on how Democratic Services may enhance service provision, identify training needs, and give an indication of how representative councillors are of the borough they serve.	and the type of translator required.
1, 2 + 4			SCRUTINY	This information should enable the members and the council to ensure it has due regard to the public sector general duty	

	<p>Equality Training (list of those who have and list of those who have not including rationale for not attending) made compulsory.</p> <p>➤ Areas of engagement with public to ensure the it is held in a suitable venue e.g. Community Events</p> <p>➤ Diversity profile of members and co-optees how it compares with the borough profile and against national information.</p>	governor protected characteristics monitoring has already started and would begin for Members after the next election cycle – post May 2014)		<p><i>Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, in particular the need to tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.</i></p> <p><i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic</i> <p><i>Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low</i></p>	Circulate feedback leaflets for public events held with EA monitoring questions and review of accessibility at the event
2	Make the Service available and contactable by various means – email, telephone, letter and face-to-face to accommodate the needs of the customer.	As soon as possible / by early 2013	Democratic Services	<p><i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</i></p> <p><i>Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low</i></p>	Increased customer satisfaction and inclusion of those who may not engage with the Service.
2 + 4	Investigate opportunities to monitor EA information relating to: <p>➤ Complaints against councillors</p> <p>➤ Public participation / attending</p>	By early 2015	Democratic Services	<i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</i>	Research document

	meetings			<i>Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low</i>	
4	Develop the service's understanding of 'hard to reach groups' in the borough in order to investigate effective tailored services for such groups	By 2013	Head and Assistant Head Democratic Services	<p>A clearer picture gain of how to progress these matters further.</p> <p><i>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it</i></p> <p><i>Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low</i></p>	Service Plan
1, 2 + 4	Ensure that Equalities is embedded throughout the service.	Ongoing	Head and Assistant Head Democratic Services	<i>The general duty</i>	Corporate and Service Plans.

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