

Area examined	Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions	By Whom	By When
1.1 Leadership and corporate commitment					
	There is a strong commitment to equalities and diversity amongst political leadership at Bromsgrove. A high level of commitment is shown by the Portfolio holder; "Equalities are in everything that we do". Members are involved in diversity at several levels and the Member Champion attends the Equality Champions Group	Elected Members need to be more visible in their commitment to all six strands of equality within the communities of Bromsgrove	<p>Portfolio holder and Member Diversity Champion to attend meetings of the E and D Forum and DUG</p> <p>Portfolio holder to meet with the Chairman of the E and D Forum regularly to ensure that issues are being addressed in a timely fashion</p> <p>Member Development Steering Group to consider E and D training as a standing agenda item</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer to continue meeting with the HOS and Equality Officer regularly into the Shared Service environment.</p> <p>Equality and Diversity continues to feature as one of the Councils values</p> <p>DMT performance template to be updated to include a standing E and D item for DMT discussion which will then be reported to each respective portfolio holder and the Chief Executive</p> <p>Elected members attend staff and partners events in recognition of Black History Month in October every year</p> <p>Representatives of Elected Members attend the annual Diwali event to meet the Bromsgrove Indian Community and represent the Council</p> <p>Elected Members will attend Gender Equality Awareness which will include Trans issues</p>	<p>Group Leaders</p> <p>Member Development Steering Group</p> <p>CF</p> <p>HP</p> <p>CF and FS</p> <p>CF</p> <p>FS</p> <p>FS</p> <p>FS/ HP</p>	<p>June 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p> <p>Continuation</p> <p>Continuation</p> <p>Sept 09</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>November/ December 2009</p>

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	<p>All political groups have demonstrated a commitment to equality and diversity. This is reflected in the fact that all Members have attended Equalities and Diversity training. Parts of the training were delivered by external agencies including SCOPE</p>	<p>The Council's Scrutiny Committee should be encouraged to be more proactive in looking at equality and diversity issues and monitoring equality and diversity data.</p>	<p>The Council has recently recruited a Scrutiny Officer who has targets and objectives to ensure that the Scrutiny programme is supported to manage their business within the E and D duties.</p> <p>The Equality and Diversity Forum sub group that has historically managed the scrutiny of impact assessments through the completion of a form will now undertake practical scrutiny exercises testing the validity of service areas from the user's perspective.</p> <p>The process for monitoring data will be introduced by the end of the financial year and the performance results built into the council's performance management framework.</p>	<p>CF MC E and D forum/ FS HB DP</p>	<p>May 2009 December 2009 March 2010</p>
	<p>Equality and diversity issues are included in all Cabinet reports.</p>	<p>There is a lot of progress on disability; however Elected Members need to be more visible in their commitment to all six strands of equality within the communities of Bromsgrove</p>	<p>This will be managed through the Member Development Steering Group and a more detailed training and development programme</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder will attend all meetings of the Equality and Diversity Forum</p> <p>Cabinet members will attend the Equality and Diversity conference and representatives will support all Equality and Diversity community events</p>	<p>FS CF HP Group Leaders Member Development Steering Group Cabinet</p>	<p>June 2009 June 2009 June 2009</p>
	<p>The Chief Executive is a strong driving force for the equalities and diversity agenda at Bromsgrove. There is a good</p>				

	structure in place to support the equalities and diversity agenda in the Council led by Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services who acts as the lead officer for diversity.				
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1.1 Leadership and corporate commitment					
	<p>The Council has funded a full time Equalities Officer since 2006. She has monthly meetings with the Chief Executive on equality issues and progress. The post holder is held in high regard by the Members, staff and the Equality and Diversity Forum.</p>				
	<p>There is a well developed Equality Champions Group with representatives from across the authority. The Council is building the capacity of the Champions Group through focussed training and is hoping to offer members of the group the opportunity to undertake a 12 week National Vocational Qualification on equality.</p>	<p>Although there is agreement that the Champions Group has worked to date, there is acknowledgement that it needs to evolve and be empowered to drive the equality and diversity agenda. We heard, "The Champions Group needs to change; we need to ask the question is the group fit for purpose?" Consideration should be given to raise the profile of the Group through reviewing the current membership, terms of reference and direction.</p> <p>Consider improving the strategic nature of the Champions Group by including senior managers and the Portfolio holder in its membership.</p> <p>The Champions Group should look to develop consistency in equality impact assessments. We were informed that the Equality Officer is leading on the development of a single equality impact assessment schedule for the</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop objective roles for Equalities Champions to support them in the delivery of their role. 2. Provide additional support to HOS through the Business Planning Process to ensure that service business plans adequately reflect service specific Equality and Diversity objectives that reflect the Council Plan. 3. Develop and roll out an Impact Assessment Steering Group to oversee the quality and consistency of Impact Assessments and to provide advice and support where needed. The group will operate on the same basis and at the same level as the existing risk management steering group. 	<p>CF FS PS</p>	<p>October 2009</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p>

		<p>Council and she will involve the Champions as needed to confirm the content.</p> <p>The Champions Group needs to play a more proactive role in challenging and scrutinising equality impact assessments and share good practice.</p>			
	<p>Monthly departmental performance reports include equalities and diversity. These are seen by the Chief Executive, the Portfolio holder and Leader. Equality is also a standing item on agendas throughout all tiers.</p>	<p>There is a need to ensure that the Council continues its progress and momentum, particularly with the move to the Equality Framework.</p>	<p>The process for managing the DMT monthly report is to be reviewed by the assistant Chief Executive to ensure that there is a consistent and inclusive approach to this across the Council</p> <p>HOS with responsibility for Equality and Diversity to develop an action plan to achieve Excellent through the Equalities Framework</p> <p>Equalities Champions to participate in a facilitated workshop to determine “what Excellent Looks Like” using funding from the IDEA</p>	<p>HB</p> <p>CF FS</p> <p>FS CF PS</p>	<p>Sept 2009</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>January – March 2010</p>
	<p>There is strong evidence of the ‘golden thread’ running throughout the organisation.</p>				
	<p>Equality Schemes have been developed and consulted upon. The Inclusive Equality Scheme includes all 6 strands of equality and is in line with legal duties.</p>				

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2.1 Community engagement and accountability					
	<p>The Council engages effectively with its communities on equality and diversity related service issues via the Equality and Diversity Forum, the Disabled Users Group and “annual” conferences.</p>	<p>The Equality and Diversity Forum needs to continue its efforts to positively encourage young people to get involved.</p>	<p>Contact to be made with community organisations who represent the needs and interest of younger people i.e. TRUNK and Bromsgrove Youth Homelessness Forum and partnerships with the High Schools to encourage and expand the awareness of Black History</p> <p>The Senior Corporate Policy & Performance Officer to further develop links with local high schools & youth groups, and to support young people’s representatives in attending the forum/DUG/conference</p> <p>Senior Corporate Policy & Performance Officer to develop ‘young advisors’ budget bid- a proposal where young people will be trained and supported to act as paid consultants for the Council and it’s partners</p>	<p>CF FS PS Forum</p> <p>RD</p>	<p>September 2009 onwards</p> <p>September 2009 (proposed implementation of scheme from April 2010)</p>
	<p>The Equality Forum members feel involved in shaping the Council’s equalities and diversity agenda. The Forum takes its role of critical friend very seriously and can input and influence policies. The Forum has active involvement in participatory budgeting and auditing equality impact assessments.</p>	<p>The Council needs to look more closely at the needs of new migrant communities.</p>	<p>Target polish community through advertisements for the Conference event</p> <p>Develop partnership work with BDHT</p> <p>Develop link with County Liaison Officer</p>	<p>CF FS</p>	<p>Sept 09</p> <p>Dec 09</p> <p>Oct 09</p>

	The Forum considers that there is excellent two way communication with the council, and they get feedback when they raise issues, “we feel we are fully engaged, listened to and the Council takes active measures”.	Further work needs to be done to develop more positive publicity for LGBT issues within the community.	Develop partnership with BDHT to support and promote LGBT History Month in Feb 2010. Establish ‘Finding a Voice’ support group. Develop objectives at the Conference in September		Feb 2010 Feb 2010 Dec 09
	The involvement of the Forum in the budget process is cited as a good example.		The Budget Jury will be developed to include a larger number of residents, including harder to reach groups and a young people’s jury.		March 2010 onwards
	The Forum believes that the Council is taking active measures and has, “a culture of continuous improvement”.		Council consultation and engagement is being mapped and will be monitored corporately. Any relevant results will be fed into the priority/budget setting process.		September 2009 then ongoing

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	The Forum includes representation from LGBT and the Gender Trust and is seen as being helpful to raise awareness and understanding of these issues. The "Finding a Voice" initiative has been funded to set up an LGBT support group in Bromsgrove.				
	There are increasingly regular community events, "annual" consultation conferences, and workshops aiming to engage and gain a better understanding of the needs of the wider community including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Together Bromsgrove, the residents magazine • "Chat with the Chief" • Parish Forums 	There is limited collection of monitoring information about who is or is not using services. Target setting needs to be based on better quantitative data. This will inform service planning and monitoring of progress against targets.	Equality data monitoring Monitor attendance at all celebratory events for staff and community including satisfaction and equality monitoring	HB DB CF RD	March 2010 In place
	The Customer Service Centre, Reporting Centres and partnership working were cited as good examples.				

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3.1 Service delivery and customer care					
	<p>The Council has set targets and objectives in relation to race, disability and gender and resources have been allocated to achieve these.</p>	<p>The Council needs to address the issue of setting targets for age, religion/belief and sexual orientation as there has been little visible progress.</p>	<p>This will be addressed as part of the Consultation Conference in September when the community groups will be asked to feedback on their thoughts on the targets and objectives for the authority moving forward.</p> <p>Subject to approval and endorsement by the Council these will then be published in the review of the Inclusive Equalities Scheme in December 2009</p>	<p>CF FS Community</p>	<p>Dec 09</p>
	<p>The Council is actively addressing disability issues in the town centre, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regeneration and redevelopment of the train station. • Developing a map of the town centre to identify the location of dropped kerbs for wheelchair users • Developing a contour map for people with vision impairments. • Developing a community bus service for those who have difficulty using standard bus services, 				

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3.1 Service delivery and customer care					
	<p>Procurement training for staff has ensured that equality and diversity issues are addressed. A seminar was held for all suppliers which included equalities and diversity requirements. The Council is aiming to embed equality and diversity and sustainability into the procurement chain.</p>	<p>The Council should revisit the tendering threshold to attract a wider range of suppliers. It should provide more opportunities to promote the Council's message to attract a bigger pool of companies.</p> <p>Ongoing contract monitoring should be undertaken to ensure compliance with equality clauses.</p>	<p>Review of procurement criteria</p> <p>Procurement clinics</p> <p>Review of contract monitoring</p>	<p>AH JP</p>	<p>Dec 2010</p>
	<p>Equality Champions provide advice and support within departments.</p>				
	<p>Equality impact assessments are embedded throughout the Council and informing service planning and delivery. Each service department has its own three year rolling plan of impact assessments and a council wide plan is under development.</p>				
	<p>There are examples of positive action, for example the Hate Crime reporting centres in place throughout Bromsgrove.</p>				
	<p>There is effective partnership working with the community, the voluntary sector', BDHT and other local authorities.</p>				
	<p>Customer Service Centre, Home Choice Plus Initiative, shop mobility service and the Changing Places' facility were further cited as good examples.</p>				

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4.1 Employment and Training					
	<p>There is an established programme of equality and diversity training which has been delivered to Members, managers and all staff. The training has evolved to become targeted and specific to the need of services. Training has been delivered to staff and Forum members on completing equality impact assessments. Feedback on training has been positive.</p>				
	<p>Equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff and has been well received. Specific training has also been received on the equality impact assessment process. Equality is built into the induction training programme. A skills audit has been undertaken as part of developing the Workforce Development Plan and the training needs of staff are addressed through the PDR process.</p>				
	<p>There are examples of positive initiatives, such as SCOPE placements and advertising of jobs through the West Midlands Recruitment Portal and Ethnic Britain.</p>				

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	Equality and diversity targets are included in service plans, PDRs and the Modern Manager Framework. Staff are aware of the importance of PDR's for service and personal development.				
	The Council has qualified to use the Two Ticks disability symbol.				
	Staff feel that there has been a real shift in culture over the past five years. They are aware of what Bromsgrove are trying to achieve in relation to equality and what progress has been made. There was strong evidence of the 'golden thread' running through to front-line staff.				
	Staff feel that there is good communication, with particular reference to e-Connect and they are regularly asked for their input, an example of this is the staff engagement exercise around setting the priorities for 2009/10.				
	Staff are aware of the Equality Officer, the equality Champions and where they can go to for support and advice.				
	Particular praise was given to the flexible working arrangements at Bromsgrove, for example flexi, parental leave, supported return to work following sickness absence and support for studying.				

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	The Council has been pro-active in addressing employment issues for people with learning difficulties.	More work needs to be done on workforce monitoring at all stages of employment and this data needs to be used to inform targets and actions. In particular, work needs to start on sexual orientation and religion/belief.	The introduction of a data monitoring system to determine who currently uses of services and the breakdown in minority grouping The development of a process to manage the performance of the data recorded and to challenge assumptions Establish link with West Midlands Recruitment Portal which includes Equality Monitoring of Applications received through this system	HB DB CF CEO FS JP	March 2010 Established and operational
		The Council should consider working towards inclusion in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.	Establish process for achieving this indicator in partnership with the Finding a Voice community group	FS JP	March 2010
		Closer relationships should be established with Trade Unions on furthering the equality agenda.	Equality Officer to attend trade union meeting on request. Trade Union reps to be invited to attend Equality Training Sessions	FS JP	March 2010
		There has been progress on the equality and diversity agenda, particularly in the last two years, but more could be done to celebrate success.	Bi monthly community engagement meeting to include officers from across the authority to capture success stories	All Officers	March 2009
		The Council needs to take action to address the issues raised in the staff survey.	Report to CMT on staff survey and issues raised therein together with proposals for remedial action Small working group to determine the most effective methods of improvement HOS to introduce drop in sessions	JP HP JP HB All	Sept 09 Jan 10 Oct 09

			for all staff to create opportunities for questions and concerns and suggestions to be raised	HOS	
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