

Equalities and Diversity Action Plan – 2008 – 2011

Introduction

Waverley Borough Council is fundamentally and absolutely committed to improving the well-being of all of our residents, and to becoming a 'top 100' employer.

We believe that there is much that we can do to further the goal of equality of opportunity for all, in our roles as:

- An employer
- A service provider
- A community leader

We believe that pursuing equality does not mean treating everybody as if they were exactly the same. We value the diversity of our communities, and we believe that it is absolutely right for us to tailor our services and adapt them to meet the particular needs of those who suffer disadvantage on the grounds of age, gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

One of Waverley's top strategic priorities is 'Improving Lives'. This Action Plan sets out the steps that we will take to ensure that we tackle disadvantage and discrimination in our communities, and that we play a positive and proactive role in valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity.

Our Actions as an Employer

We will:

	Who	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain our Investors in People Accreditation, as a mark that we value the retention, training and development of all our staff. 	Alex Overington	Dec 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an Equal Pay audit, and ensure that we implement an action plan within 12 months to address any findings. 	Alex Overington	Dec 2008 – Audit Dec 2009 – Action Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a rigorous approach to equalities in recruitment, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring we only specify levels of competency and qualifications that are necessary for the post ○ Advertising vacant posts widely in the local community, using a variety of communication media ○ Maintaining our ‘Two Ticks’ accreditation ○ Training our recruiters in Fair Recruitment ○ Monitoring our recruitment processes to guard against discrimination on grounds of race, gender or disability or religion, or belief or sexual orientation ○ Surveying all job applicants to ensure that our application processes are viewed as fair and that the recruitment process is regarded as a positive experience by all prospective employees 	Alex Overington	Annual Review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the composition of our workforce by age, race and disability, religion, or belief or sexual orientation and take positive steps to attract under-represented groups to seek employment with Waverley. 	Alex Overington	Annual monitoring report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a positive and pro-active approach to flexible working, including part-time work, job-sharing, home-working and flexible retirement. 	Alex Overington	Annual policy review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a positive and pro-active approach to workforce planning, with the aims of attracting and retaining talent, and ensuring all staff have access to opportunities to develop their careers (or to move into professional areas from administrative roles) at Waverley. 	Alex Overington	Workforce plan in place by April 2009

- Talent spotting development programme in place by April 2009

Our Actions as a Service Provider

We will:

	Who	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an Annual Equalities Impact Assessment of our services to ensure that our service provision is meeting the needs of all potentially disadvantaged groups in our communities. 	All Service Heads	Annually, as part of service planning process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the highest possible standards of customer care, that is tailored to the needs of potentially disadvantaged groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All written communication will use plain English, and will conform to RNIB accessibility standards ○ Our website will conform to accessibility criteria (specify) ○ We will always give a named contact person to our customers ○ Our front-line staff will be trained in diversity awareness, and disability awareness ○ Our complaints processes will be easily accessible, and we will monitor complaints by age, disability and race 	All Service Heads	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a zero tolerance approach to discrimination in service provision. Complaints of discrimination or disadvantage will be handled personally by the Chief Executive 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require all our contractors to have up-to-date Equalities Policies and a regular equalities training programme for their staff. 	All Service Heads	Monitored annually

Our Actions as a Community Leader

We will:

	Who	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and develop the Waverley disability forum, and work with the forum to deliver its action plan. 	Chief Executive	As specified in disability forum action plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our Local Strategic Partnership includes representation of potentially disadvantaged groups (older people, youth, ethnic minorities, disabled people). 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work through our LSP to target community development activities in areas of deprivation in our Borough. 	Chief Executive	Annual monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a positive approach to working with faith communities, by establishing faith networks and working with faith communities through our LSP. 	Chief Executive	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target financial support to community organisations that work to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged people in our communities. 	Paul Wenham	Annual monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require all recipients of council grant funding to have up-to-date equality policies, to demonstrate anti-discriminatory practices and have training in place 	Paul Wenham	Annual monitoring