

APPENDIX D

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 8 JULY 2008

Title:

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

**[Portfolio Holder for Equality and Diversity: Cllr D Le Gal]
[Wards Affected: N/A]**

Summary and purpose:

Waverley is committed to achieve Level 2 of the National Equalities Standard for Local Government during this financial year. A crucial element of this target is the requirement to have a strategic equalities strategy. This report presents a new, overarching strategy for Waverley for recommendation by the Executive to Council.

Environmental implications:

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Social / community implications:

The proposed Equalities and Diversity Strategy seeks to recognise and value the diversity of people that make up our Borough, and to ensure equality of opportunity for all in accessing and benefiting from Waverley services.

E-Government implications:

There are no associated e-government implications.

Resource and legal implications:

This strategy does not require any additional financial resources. Rather, it seeks to guide the way in which Waverley structures and operates its services, to ensure that individuals do not suffer discrimination. There is a raft of legislation covering Waverley's duties both as an employer and as a service provider to prevent discrimination.

Background

1. Waverley Borough Council is currently assessed as having achieved only Level 1 of the National Equalities Standard for local government, and has received criticism in the past from the Audit Commission for lack of progress in this area.

2. The strategic equalities and diversity strategy set out in Annexe 1 is a crucial element in Waverley's efforts to achieve Level 2 of the Standard. This strategy sets out the most important areas for action across the three dimensions of our role:
 - As an employer
 - As a service provider
 - As a community leader.
3. Sitting under this strategy, each service area is required annually to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment, and to identify actions to address any discrimination or inequalities that service users might suffer.
4. An important aspect of the Council's work to improve its performance in tackling equalities issues has been the establishment of a Waverley disability forum, made up of disabled people and their carers from across the community. This forum, supported by Waverley, has developed its own action plan to combat problems that disabled people experience in accessing public services.

Conclusion

5. This is an important strategy for Waverley that will set the tone for improving equality of opportunity for all in our Borough.

Recommendation

The Executive is recommended to commend this strategy to the Council for adoption.

Background Papers (CEX)

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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