

Draft – Gender Self Assessment: March 2010

- **Red (serious weaknesses):** not likely to lead to any action to achieve improved outcomes in race/disability/gender equality, does not appear to be compliant with equality legal duties.
- **Amber (weaknesses):** not fully compliant with equality legal duties.
- **Green (compliant):** **minor weaknesses only.**

Meeting the General Duties	
Public authorities need to ensure that they meet each of the different aspects of the duties and that they do so in all of their functions.	RAG
Does scheme and action plan cover all the authority's functions including procurement and partnerships?	
<p>The council is committed to promoting equality and cohesion. It is integral to everything the council does. As an organisation and in partnership with others, the council aims to address the needs and aspirations of all those who live and work in the borough. It has a comprehensive equality strategy and action plan (running from 2010–13). It is refreshed every year and contains cross-cutting priorities alongside policy statements (commitments) for each of the equality groups, including gender, but goes further to incorporate social inclusion and cohesion.</p> <p>Leadership Council members and senior officers take a lead on promoting equality and cohesion. The Cabinet Member for safety and cohesion plays a leading role and has made public statements promoting equality and the need to provide services free from prejudice and discrimination. Members and senior officers play a lead role in promoting a range of equality and cohesion activities specifically designed to raise awareness, promote equality and good relations between different communities. Recent activity includes promoting black history month, LGBT history month, the big lunch, inter-faith celebrations of all the main faiths, commemorating holocaust memorial day, international women's day, disability awareness, carers week, refugee week, show racism the red card, and older people.</p> <p>The Council Management Team plays a leading role in promoting equality throughout the organisation. The deputy chief executive – and executive director of adult services and housing – is the chair of the corporate equality and cohesion board reporting to the management team. The board comprises of directors from each service and the chair person from each of the staff networks. The other deputy chief executive – executive director for resources and customer services is responsible for improving customer satisfaction and at the same time champion for one the council's six values – difference. In 2009 all senior managers were invited to a management forum focused on diversity.</p> <p>Equality Strategy and Policy Statement All the council's functions are incorporated into the equality strategy and covered by the policy statement. The accompanying action plan is based on the priorities found in the Equality Framework as well as a programme of equality impact assessments that the council intends to carry out. The action plan forms part of the business cycle linked to its corporate priorities which are determined through consultation. All equality groups are incorporated into the council's service planning framework.</p>	

The council's general policy statement is to:

- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Promote positive attitudes towards, and good relations, between different groups.
- Encourage participation in, and access to, community and civic life.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.

In addition the council is committed to

- Ensuring equality of opportunity in employment matters and the removal of barriers which prevent women or men from realising their career potential.
- Introducing employment practices which encourage the return of women/men to work and which reflect their skills and abilities.
- Ensuring all staff and partners adhere to the code of practice of sexual and racial harassment.
- Embedding equality in an extensive scrutiny process, covering areas such as the Family Justice Centre.

Equality in Employment

In 2008 the council was re-accredited with Investors in People (IiP) status at a significantly higher level than its previous assessment in 2005, recognising the improvement and investment made in its workforce. The council's workforce strategy (currently being updated) sets out a range of programmes available to all employees which include the Council Values, Personal Development Competency Scheme, Management Conference, Leadership Academy, Management Development Programme (ILM) and Inspire – a mandatory induction course for new staff that includes a distinct equality and diversity module.

Council initiatives designed to promote an inclusive 'one team' approach include improving internal communication using the intranet and the revamp of the staff magazine, alongside an annual council awards ceremony recognising staff delivering outstanding service to the council and the borough's residents and includes an award for diversity.

The council has a detailed range of staff/organisational policies covering all public duties. They include (although not exhaustive):

- Achieving Access for All
- Employee handbook
- Bullying and Harassment
- Code of Conduct for Council Staff
- Corporate Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Dignity at Work
- Grievance Procedure
- Health and Safety Procedure
- Job Evaluation Procedure
- Restructuring and reorganisation
- Staff consultation framework
- Worksmart – encouraging flexible working
- Whistle-Blowing Procedure

Partnership Working

The council's formal involvement and consultation mechanism is through its Beacon Award winning Local Strategic Partnership, which comprises of eight themed partnerships. These include partnership boards for health, safety and community cohesion (addressing cohesion, social inclusion and equality). All partnership boards incorporate representatives from the local community network - which have representation from all equality groups.

The community cohesion partnership has one sub-group - the social inclusion partnership group - which works collaboratively with partners to ensure individuals or areas don't suffer the negative effects of deprivation including unemployment, poor skills, low income, and poor housing. Croydon's award-winning Beacon work to support people and local businesses experiencing the impact of the recession can be found on <http://www.croydoncrunch.com>. Through the Croydon Economic Development Company, LEGL funded projects are allocated targets for key target groups and performance against these is measured on a quarterly basis. During quarter one to three 2009/10 the programme exceeded its targets for clients from BME communities, young people, people aged over 50, lone parents, women, and those clients on long term benefits.

Procurement

The council has a procurement policy called 'Integrating Equality and Diversity into Procurement' and Section 3 of the pre-qualification questionnaire for procurement of goods and services includes detailed questions relating to the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) and the Equal Pay Act 1970 (EPA). Gender equality is included in procurement contracts in relation to equal opportunities and unlawful discrimination in employment and the supply of good and services.

Procurement staff training includes equalities and the completion of equality impact assessment is part of the process. Short-listing guidance for procurement includes equalities information.

Has the authority paid due regard to all aspects of each of duties not only in its scheme but also in its action plan? (i.e. have they taken into account each of the general duties - in their info and analysis and in the action they are taking?)

The council has paid due regard to all aspects of the duties not only in its equality strategy but also the overarching action plan which is also linked to service planning across the organisation, the corporate plan and the community strategy.

The equality strategy outlines Croydon's commitment to gender, along with other equalities strands including social inclusion and cohesion. The legislative duties are detailed in full within the strategy. An annual programme of equality impact assessments has been detailed in the strategy and carried out holistically taking the needs of all equality groups, social inclusion and cohesion into account.

The strategy also outlines Croydon's commitment to trans men and women by:-

- ensuring trans customers and staff are treated in accordance with the gender in which they present;
- providing appropriate support to service users and staff who intend to, are going through or have gone through gender re-assignment;

- ensuring trans people have equal and appropriate access to employment, goods and services;
- ensuring that all staff can develop knowledge and competencies to treat trans people with dignity and respect.

A range of data and information is utilised in the development of strategies and plans. Although not exhaustive and where available – the data and information used includes: index of multiple deprivation, crime assessment, complaints, health profiles, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, equality impact assessments, Place Survey, Croydon’s Talkabout survey, MOSAIC, national indicators and targets, service user profiles and workforce information along with the views expressed through consultation. Actions found in the supporting plans can be found in organisational service plans and partnership plans.

Listed below, although not exhaustive, are examples of where the council meets the duties through the delivery of a range of initiatives:

ELIMINATE UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Family Justice Centre

The council actively working towards eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment through Europe’s first Family Justice Centre (FJC). The FJC helps 7,000 victims of abuse a year and since the service started there have been no deaths in the borough relating to domestic violence. In 2009/10 the borough has a 77.6% arrest rate and a 49.2% detection rate for domestic violence perpetrators. In 2008/09 the offence arrest rate was 67.3% and 40.1% detection rate, and in 2007/08 the offence arrest rate 61.7 and 43.0% detection rate. The FJC are in the process of employing a data analyst, which will lead to further data being broken down into gender categories from 2010/11.

The centre addresses the full range of social, welfare, economic, safety, accommodation, criminal and civil justice needs of individuals living with or escaping from abuse. Importantly, it is a safe place where victims of domestic violence, family violence, elder abuse, children and extended families can receive all the help they need to rebuild their lives. It also plays a role in supporting the success of the courts in Croydon by bringing more perpetrators to account for their actions. It is a safe haven for anyone suffering domestic/family violence or abuse.

The FJC helps the community through:

- reducing the number of domestic/family violence murders and serious incidents;
- reducing incidents of child and elder abuse;
- ending homelessness caused by domestic violence;
- increasing the options available to victims;
- providing culturally sensitive services;
- holding abusers accountable by co-ordinated monitoring.

Bullying and Harassment Training

In 2009 the council’s management team implemented a learning programme aimed at addressing issues of bullying and harassment highlighted within the staff survey. The purpose of the programme is to improve understanding of what bullying and harassment is, its impact in the workplace and how to create a working environment that promotes dignity at work, including a focus on gender and trans

gender bullying or harassment.

PROMOTE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

The council has taken a number of steps to promote equality of opportunity between men and women, especially in relation to pay, flexible working and benefits.

Single Status

The Single Status project is a result of a government initiative to ensure that all council staff receive equal pay for jobs of equal value. The council was required by law to undertake an assessment of pay and grading in order to ensure that all jobs are fairly paid and that we meet our obligations under the Equal Pay Act.

In September 2006 Croydon council was one of the first London boroughs to undertake Single Status to harmonisation pay. The council began weekly negotiation meetings with the trade unions in order to achieve a signed collective agreement on all aspects of Single Status implementation and terms & conditions. Agreement on the joint job evaluation of all jobs was quickly reached and in March 2007 agreement was reached with the unions over back pay that would give all staff whose job was evaluated at a higher grade under Single Status a lump sum payment based on a matrix that took into account grade and length of time a post holder had been doing a job. A collective agreement, after balloting of union members had taken place, was signed in November 2007.

Job evaluations, or matching of job holders to generic job descriptions, took place for 4522 staff in schools and 3675 other council staff. For these 8197 staff the following outcomes:

Staff on same grade	4412	54%
Staff with increased grade	2687	33%
Staff with decreased grade	370	4%
New positions	728	9%

The council is committed to promoting equality for employees and has:

- Increased annual leave;
- Removed the corporate flexitime scheme and introduced more flexible working arrangements suited to meet service and individual needs;
- Reduced the working week to 36 hours;
- Moved to monthly pay.

As part of workforce remodelling, the following was implemented for teaching assistants, learning support assistants and lunchtime supervisors:

- Assimilation of support staff onto NJC terms and conditions of employment and pay scales;
- Ending of London Excess pay;
- Ending of term-time only retainers;
- Backdating the change to 01 September 2004

Flexible Working at Croydon - WorkSmart

The council has created many key initiatives to promote a diverse workforce. Through Worksmart, the council is committed to improving the work-life balance of all employees, which can lead to improved service delivery and/or productivity. The council decided that Worksmart should be extended to all employees, regardless of whether they are parents of young children, carers or not. This is because as an employer, the council recognises that everyone has differing needs at different times throughout their lives. Our workforce profile shows that 41% of women work full-time and 25% work part-time compared with 29% of men working full-time and 4% of men working part-time. In 2010/11 a review of the council's worksmart scheme will be undertaken.

Options - Benefits Scheme

In September 2008, the council launched 'Options', a fully-inclusive benefits package, consisting of core council-offered benefits, lifestyle discounts and special offers, affordable health care, discounted fees at a local nursery, and a number of salary sacrifice schemes. The 'Options' programme is available for all staff to access (including school staff) with the exception of schools that do not buy in to the council's payroll service.

Examples of scheme items from which staff can benefit are:

- Council benefits: annual leave, pension, flexible working, sick pay, staff recognition scheme, staff networks, season ticket loans, 50% off council leisure centres, occupational health services, and trade union representation.
- Lifestyle benefits: Staff can access a full range of benefits to enable them to enjoy a full and healthy work life balance.
- Salary sacrifice: Staff can gain tax relief through purchasing childcare vouchers through salary sacrifice schemes. Staff can benefit from salary sacrifice benefits as soon as they commence employment with the council, without a need to complete their six-month probation period.
- Bespoke benefits: Croydon council offers its staff a range of innovative bespoke benefits. Examples include affordable healthcare through Benenden

Take-up of these benefits throughout the Council is good for example;

- 145 members of staff purchase childcare vouchers via salary sacrifice.
- 28 employees benefit from the discounted fees at the Just Learning day nursery, with a total of 35 children of council employees attending the nursery.
- The Benenden Healthcare Society reported a 'fantastic uptake' with 255 new memberships being taken out during the launch campaign. There are now 291 members.

Carers leave

The scheme, run by the council, is open to all employees, male and female, working full or part-time who satisfy the following conditions:

- have caring responsibilities for pre-school children including step-children, adopted children, long-term fostering commitments or other dependants including parents;
- have successfully completed their probationary/initial service period in the council's employment;

- where both parents or partners work for the council only one application can be considered, unless partners decide to share the career break between them;
- are not subject to current warnings under the discipline or capability procedures.

Under the scheme, eligible staff may take a career break of up to five years, with the facility at any time to the end of this period to return to the same or a similar position as they held before entering the scheme. The employee may return any time before the five years have come to an end by arrangement and agreement with the department concerned.

Tackling Worklessness

The Croydon Economic Development Company (CEDC) is working in partnership with the council to improve skills, and tackle worklessness across the borough. This is linked to the LAA indicator, L7, which is broken down by equality groups e.g. members of the BME community, women and lone parents. The programme is available to all residents and by targeting women and parents entering employment and training. CEDC endeavours to provide support based on individual needs e.g. reimbursing childcare costs. In previous years, to attract key client groups, special events and promotional drives have been run during International Women's Week/Enterprise Week. During 2009/10, women involved in the programme exceeded the target of 50% and reached 54%, and for lone parents, they exceeded the target of 10% to 38%.

Teenage Pregnancy

The council and NHS Croydon have prioritised reducing teenage pregnancy in the borough by choosing Local Area Agreement target NI 112; under 18 conception rate per 1,00, 15 – 17 year olds. This is monitored quarterly and has an extensive delivery plan, which is reviewed annually.

The demands of caring for a baby at a time when young people themselves are making the difficult transition from adolescence to adulthood are great. This can have a significant impact on the life chances of both the young parent and the child. Whilst most teenage pregnancies are unplanned a significant proportion are not. The council aims to help young women to avoid becoming pregnant whilst teenagers and ensure that those that become young parents can access the services they need to achieve their full potential.

The provision of multi-agency health education, advice and services in places and in ways that are young people friendly is a priority. The council also ensures that there are a range of educational, training and employment opportunities for young people who are or may be considering teenage parenthood.

The main themes of the services offered fall into the following areas:

- Provision of local guidance, training, advice and support to enable all schools, colleges and non-school youth services to develop and improve delivery of sex and relationship education in line with national guidance and requirements;
- Support and advice on emotional well-being;
- A range of contraception and sexual health services for young people which meet best practice standards, and which are widely known about by local young people;
- Targeted services and prevention programmes with at risk groups of young

- people and in areas with high under 18 conception rates;
- Services that provide a comprehensive package of support to teenage parents and pregnant teenagers;
 - Provision of local communication campaigns and media resources to ensure young people are aware of the issues of sex and relationship education (SRE) and the provision of local services.

School Exclusion

By the end of 2009, permanent exclusions were down for the fourth consecutive year. Boys are four times more likely to be excluded than girls for both permanent and fixed term exclusions – this is in line with national trends.

Exclusions within Croydon schools are monitored by the Behaviour Task Force, which report into the School Improvement Board. The council has also prioritised reducing exclusions by choosing LAA target 114; rate of permanent exclusions from schools.

The partners’ strategy engages with vulnerable young people to reduce exclusions and raise attainment. The impact of the strategy so far, has been:-

- Good quality support for asylum seekers and young carers;
- Good systems in place to identify, challenge and support schools;
- Good quality support for young children with behavioural difficulties in the early years;
- Good mentoring and other support programmes for individual/groups of young people.

ACTION

In 2010 the council will be developing a new workforce strategy and action plan which will include new initiatives such as an aspiring managers’ programme as part of the management development offering to encourage under-represented groups to access management opportunities.

To examine the findings from the staff survey in relation to equality groups including gender to ensure any issues are highlighted in the development of the new workforce strategy.

To conduct a pay audit in 2010/11.

Taking action

The duties are about achieving change so this is the most important part of effectively meeting the duties.

Does the scheme set out clear actions that the authority will take to meet all aspects of the duty/duties?

The equality strategy and action plan sets out how the council meets all aspects of the duty. The action plan covers three years and is monitored annually. A revised strategy and action plan is produced annually to ensure it is both current and continues to meet local residents’ needs.

Examples of key actions include:

- Monitoring complaints;
- Managing a programme of equality impact assessments;
- Raising awareness through bite-size training sessions and other learning

<p>opportunities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an empowerment strategy for the partnership which will encourage greater involvement in community and civic life; • Re-commissioning services provided by the voluntary and community sector to encourage greater involvement of those vulnerable to exclusion; • Implement birth-to-three plan offering support to families at risk/vulnerable. 	
What time period does the action plan cover?	
The council's equality strategy covers a three year period and is supported by an annual action plan and programme of equality impact assessments. It is aligned to the corporate plan and community strategy and refreshed every year to account for new developments and changing needs.	
If appropriate, has the public authority developed an objective relating to its role in addressing the wider pay gap?	
The equality strategy sets out the Council's commitment to operating fair employment practice by making reasonable adjustments to job requirements, work policies, reviewing guidance, pay, terms and conditions to ensure they are fair and address any gaps. In 2009 Croydon Council was one of the first local authorities to implement Single Status to equalise pay. In 2010/11 the council will conduct further employee audits to identify gaps and resulting actions.	
Has the authority's overall plan prioritised action to address the most significant race/disability/gender inequalities in their remit? (i.e. have they paid due regard?)	
<p>The council's equality strategy includes a high level annual action plan which contains a range of activities specifically focused on addressing inequality. An example of actions designed to tackle inequality include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing an Empowerment Strategy; • Ensuring where complaints relate to discriminate or harassment, train departments to correctly manage such complaints; • Enabling victims of domestic violence and hate crime on housing estates through a multi-agency approach; • Improving the reporting, investigation and support to domestic violence incidents through the promotion and development of the Family Justice Centre; • Provide opportunities to raise awareness through training; • Develop positive action programme to support under-represented staff groups; • Support development of effective corporate staff networks. <p>Actions are incorporated into service plans and specific strategy action plans developed by departments. The council has adopted an integrated approach whereby it monitors the development of strategies and plans to ensure equality is incorporated into its development. All new and revised strategies and plans are required to undertake an equality impact assessment using the council's toolkit.</p>	
Are there major issues in its remit which it has not addressed/ addressed inadequately?	
All issues arising from consultation, complaints or analysis of quantitative and qualitative data have been addressed and incorporated into the planning framework of the council. The council is not complacent and has put in place a number systems designed to drive a process of continually improvements. For example, the council has implemented a new complaints system – Tagish – to improve the way it	

monitors complaints and to ensure that it is addressing equalities issues around service delivery. The council's complaints pack contains a detailed equality monitoring form which is readily identifiable.

Aligned with this new system is Croydon's Adult Social Care and Croydon's NHS produce regular reports of the complaints about services provided jointly by the local authority and health sector (where reported to LA). These reports also include received in relation to social care which include actions and recommended learning from complaints.

ACTION

In light of experience (the new complaints system has been in place around a year) arrangements are in hand to review the system to provide more detailed categorisation of complaints to include all equalities groups, including gender. In the interregnum data and information will continue to be reviewed by services to ensure they are meeting our residents' requirements.

Monitoring, Gathering and Using Evidence

Public authorities will only be able to pay 'due regard' if they have gathered **and used** sufficient evidence.

Are the analysis and action plan/objectives underpinned by a good evidence base?

The council has a vast evidence base which feeds the action plans and objectives. MOSAIC is used across the council to gain socio-economic data on the residents of the borough, so services can be tailored to their needs. The council uses the Place survey to determine views about the borough and satisfaction with services. Results are used as evidence to support strategy development and service design. The council also conducts a citizens' panel which is statistically representative of the population, including gender representation. On average three surveys are conducted every year.

In 2009 the council produced community profiles (one for the borough and then one for each ward) with information on the make-up of the population of the borough, including the gender profile. These profiles are used widely throughout the council, for example in conducting equality impact assessments and in the project undertaken in 2009 to develop a long term vision for the borough. Due to their publication on the Croydon Observatory, they are also heavily by the council's partners and Ward Councillors.

The council has incorporated the priorities found in the Equality Framework for Local Government and undertaken a gap analysis for the authority providing an evidence base for predicting future actions. Public duties are incorporated within the framework and actions arising from the gap analysis form the basis of the equality strategy action plan.

Through CHRIS, the council's e-recruitment system, the council has a large evidence base on their workforce, including the gender profile, enabling the authority to understand its workforce and the needs they have. This data is used to inform council and departmental workforce plans.

All strategies and plans are based on these evidence sets, and evidence collected

by departments themselves, such as the Economic Development Strategy, strategic crime assessment and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

If data gaps are identified, are adequate arrangements being made to address these?

ACTION

In 2010/11 the council will be undertaking an employee audit, including gender, to ensure data is reflective of the workforce. This information will support future council and departmental workforce strategies and plans.

During 2010/11 the council will establish clear guidance for staff outlining the requirements for collecting, monitoring and analysing data by aggregated equality groups to ensure consistency across departments and inform service/strategy development. This will include a comprehensive review of the data used by departments.

During 2010/11 the council will conduct a mini staff survey and will analyse the results, comparing them with those from the main survey conducted in 2008.

Monitoring

Are details included of how the authority will analyse and use data to review the effectiveness of its action plans and development of future schemes?

Performance management systems

Rigorous performance management is integral to the council's approach to equality and cohesion. There a range of structures and systems in place to ensure data analysis and the effectiveness of plans is robustly managed at all levels of the organisation. Equality impact assessments are monitored quarterly through the performance dashboard which is reported to the council management team and corporate equality and cohesion board. The authority also gathers data through the corporate Performance Plus system, which is now in place and through complaints monitoring.

The council has a corporate equality and cohesion board which is chaired by the deputy chief executive and executive director for adult services and housing. It is attended by Directors from each department along-side lead officers, the staff groups chairs and the learning and development consultant leading on diversity. The corporate equality and cohesion board is responsible for ensuring equalities, including gender equality, is integrated into the development of strategies and plans, to ensure the equality strategy and action plan are developed and implemented across the organisation and to influence the development of the other strategies and plans.

The corporate equality and cohesion unit ensures where possible data, such as the results from the place survey, is disaggregated to support service improvements including undertaking equality impact assessments.

Local Area Agreement targets

The council's resources and customer services department leads on managing

performance and monitors all the National Indicators, and equalities and cohesion is embedded into the corporate performance framework and service planning. A new system called Performance Plus has been developed which will incorporate disaggregation of equality data relating to performance indicators. The National Indicator set includes those which relate specifically to gender and are incorporated into relevant strategies and plans. These are performance managed by departmental management teams and reported – where appropriate – in the performance framework, known as Croydon Counts. National indicators relating to gender include:

- NI 26 Specialist support to victims of a serious sexual offence
- NI 32 Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- NI 34 Domestic violence – murder
- NI 53 Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth
- NI 112 Under 19 conception rate

In addition NI 1 indicates the percentage of people who believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area. From the 2008 Place Survey results this has increased from 75% to 77% (80% women and 74% men). Performance against corporate targets, including NI 1 is measured every two years through the Place Survey. The citizens' panel are asked this question annually. These responses are analysed to identify any statistical differences in relation to equality groups, including gender.

Equality Framework

The priorities found in the Equality Framework for Local Government have been incorporated into the council's equality strategy, which is refreshed annually and reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny. Key to the framework is the analysis and use of data.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The council and NHS Croydon jointly produce the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which identifies population need across a number of priority areas and assess current service provision in relation to need and evidence of effectiveness. This is then used to inform future service planning for meeting unmet need and addressing inequalities. The JSNA development process ensures the council gains considerable insight into residents and enables consideration to be given to how best to improve and tailor council services. The JSNA focuses on certain areas, such as tackling teenage pregnancy throughout the borough, assisting the LAA priority for the partnership.

Community profiles

Information on the changing nature of the community is identified through a variety of sources (community consultation, government statistic, community intelligence, Mosaic, crime assessment, census and population projections, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the index of multiple deprivation) and published through the Croydon Observatory website, which includes comprehensive community profiles at borough and ward level and Mosaic maps. Information is then used to inform the development of the long term Vision, the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Corporate Plan and other partnership and council strategies as well as equality impact assessments.

Workforce profiles

Workforce profiles have been produced during 2009, and reported to the council Management Team. Improvements have lead to an increase in BME staff reaching management level jobs. Further workplace audits are to be carried including disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, in 2010.

A significant proportion of the data and information relating to staff is collated using the council’s e-recruitment system - CHRIS, and HR metrics, which are reported monthly to Executive Directors, on matters such as grievances, sickness and absence.

ACTION

Review systems and processes for collecting and monitoring equality data related to service-users and wider population.

Consultation and Involvement

A public authority can only know that it has effectively paid 'due regard' if it has taken account of the views of stakeholders - and **involved** disabled people.

Is there evidence that the authority has consulted and involved all relevant stakeholders (including Trade Unions, both service users and staff) in the preparation of the scheme or strategy?

Croydon’s Long-term Vision

Croydon council undertook a year long consultation exercise for the council’s Vision document. During this consultation over 18,000 local people were asked to ‘Imagine Croydon’ in 2040, of which 49% were women and 51% of men.

A full day visioning workshop also took place which included representatives from all of the key public, private and community organisations in Croydon to encourage wide ranging debate on the major challenges and opportunities facing the borough, which could impact on Croydon’s future.

Employment policies and restructures

During the council wide restructure, stakeholders were consulted and involved, including trade unions, who were met with on a regular basis and were involved in meeting with staff and managers. Throughout the Single Status process, the council involved and consulted with the trade unions to ensure that employee issues were included and also that the process was a fair.

The council also consults with trade unions on all of the council’s employee schemes, such as Work-smart and the benefits plan, ‘Options’.

Equality Strategy

The equality strategy was developed from community data and consultation results, from the Place Survey and Croydon’s Talkabout surveys, which are disseminated by gender, race, disability, age and other groupings, such as Mosaic. One of the main channels of consultation for the strategy was through Talk2Croydon, which is run in partnership with the Croydon Voluntary Action, which allows for officers, people within the partnership and residents to comment on the strategy and help to mould the action plan. The strategy has also been to the staff groups and corporate boards within the council.

Is there a clear link between the involvement and/or consultation with people and the action plan/objectives?	
The action plan is developed from departmental service plans, which are produced in consultation with staff and the community. The community are involved in helping to set action plans through many different channels, such as Talk2Croydon, Talkabout and the Community Cohesion Partnership conference. Each service plan is produced within a set framework and including actions that target vulnerable groups such as victims of domestic violence, tackling discrimination and promoting community cohesion. Additional actions arise from self assessments against national equality frameworks, legal requirements to meet legal public duties, from impact assessments and from local area agreement delivery plans.	

<u>Impact Assessment</u>	
Impact assessments are an essential tool for ensuring that public authorities are meeting the duties in individual policies; service delivery and their employment practices.	
Has the authority have adequate steps in place to ensure they carry out impact assessments?	
<p>The council has a three year equality impact assessment programme and the annual programme is integrated within the corporate plan, equality strategy, service plans and those initiatives contained in the delivery plans for the Local Area Agreement. The published programme is monitored and reported quarterly through the performance framework for the council and reported to the corporate equality and cohesion board and council management team.</p> <p>The corporate equality and cohesion board is responsible for ensuring equality impact assessments take place using the council's toolkit. All strategies and plans identify when an equality impact assessment will take place or the results arising from it. All reports presented to the corporate procurement board include equality impacts, which are discussed by the board.</p> <p>All cabinet reports have to specify the considerations arising out of the equality impact assessments or state the equality impacts arising from the initiative. The council's scrutiny function receives reports on a range of gender initiatives which have included a scrutiny review of the Family Justice Centre (FJC) in March 2010 and also a Members' visit to the FJC in August 2009. The equality strategy is presented to scrutiny and cabinet on an annual basis.</p> <p>In 2009/10 the council undertook a review of the whole equality impact assessment process to ensure it adapts to changing best practice. In addition the equality impact process is being integrated into the project and programmes system.</p>	
Are adequate steps set out and/or is there an adequate tool to help staff conduct effective assessments and consult/ involve those who may be affected by the proposed policies (or current policies that have not yet been impact assessed)? (Required for RED and Recommended for DED & GED)	

Community members and staff groups are encouraged to participate in consultation in the development of strategy, policy and service. Measures are put in place to involve and consult with all staff using partnership groups, community presentations, and council working groups. External/ internal and e-communications are also used to facilitate this process.

The equality impact assessment toolkit outlines the steps and groups which should be involved in conducting assessments. The council offers a range of training to staff to ensure they can carry out the functions and tasks related to equality. Croydon's accredited management development programme and induction course for all new staff include mandatory modules focussing on equality and carrying out impact assessments. The toolkit is available on the intranet, training is offered by HR, and advice provided by a central team or by officers within each department.

During April/May 2010 an updated equality impact toolkit and template (both initial and full assessment) will be communicated to the council. Within the new template are sections for officers to complete specifically on gender, to highlight the positive or negative impacts on the user and/or community. If negative the template allows the officer to draw up an action plan to address the problems and improve the strategy, policy, service, function or activity for Croydon.

Does the authority include information on how it will consult/ involve relevant groups in its impact assessment process?

The council's equality impact assessment toolkit contains information on how it will consult and involve different groups. The council utilises a full range of consultation and involvement mechanisms in the development of strategies and plans. These include the Local Strategic Partnership, Corporate Boards, staff groups, community networks and groups.

ACTION

To published a revised equality impact assessment toolkit including guidance by identifying best practice and undertaking review of the current procedure. Devise a training programme to support the implementation of new arrangements including a possible management programme or forum session.

Employment

There are specific steps that authorities need to take to ensure they are paying 'due regard' in their employment practices.

Have they included their arrangements for gathering staff info? Are these arrangements adequate and reflected in the action plan?

Workforce Profile

The profile of our workforce reflects the community that we serve. During 2009 the council produced workforce profiles that indicate:

- The proportion of black and minority ethnic staff has doubled from 18.08% in 2004 to 36.89% in April 2009.
- The proportion of disabled staff (those who have declared) has more than doubled from 1.49% in 2005 to 9.13% in April 2009.
- The proportion of women in the top 5% of earners has increased from 46% in 2004 to 55.08% in 2008.
- The proportion of black and minority ethnic staff in the top 5% of earners increased from 13.00% in 2004 to 23.3% in 2008.

- The proportion of disabled staff in the top 5% of earners increased from 6% in 2005 to 7.07% in 2008.

In 2008/09 approximately two thirds of the workforce, were women. At an Executive and Managerial level total 15% were women compared with 25% for men. The council has 41% of women working full-time and 25% working part-time. The council has 29% of men working full-time and 4% working part-time.

In 2009 the council published workforce profiles which include an overarching document for the council and one for each department. These provide a range of information on grades, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion and race.

Staff Survey

Most staff recognise that the council actively value diversity, as shown by the results from our most recent staff survey. In 2009 the council carried out a staff opinion survey, which found that:

- 69% agree that treatment is equal irrespective of gender
- 64% agree that treatment is equal irrespective of ethnicity
- 64% agree that treatment is equal irrespective of disability
- 62% agree that treatment is equal regardless of age
- 61% agree that treatment is equal regardless of sexual orientation
- 65% agree that treatment is equal regardless of religion or belief

People Management Performance Information

The council's performance processes include the production of quarterly data presented to the council's management team and relates to a range of people management performance information.

The council s currently in the process of developing the systems for producing robust workforce information to support the delivery of:

- Council wide people management priorities
- The integration of all people management priorities in one place, including equalities priorities and commitments
- Clear roles and responsibilities to enable the governance of the monitoring of people management priorities
- A range of agreed people management performance indicators that provide an overall indication of organisational health

The council's workforce strategy is developed using a range of data around the key headings; Workforce Planning, People Management and Workforce Development, and relates to the priority outlined in the equality strategy - to be an exemplary employer of a modern and diverse workforce. The action plan includes a range of activities to support this priority undertaken each year, undertaking a staff survey and developing actions arising from the findings.

Have they included details and analysis of employment data and what actions, especially where adverse impact is identified, are they are taking as a result?

In 2009/10 workforce action plans for each department have been developed as a consequence of the workforce audit. A new workforce audit will be undertaken during April 2010 to take into account the restructuring and new actions will be incorporated into a new approach to people management performance reporting.

The Approach

HR Business Partners develop a departmental people plan as an appendix to and an enabler of the delivery of departmental service plans encompassing:

- Departmental service plan priorities;
- Departmental annual workforce information;
- Departmental liP assessment reports – areas for improvement;
- Departmental staff survey results;
- Departmental staff engagement activities;
- Departmental equalities action plans;
- Council wide Step Change Croydon workforce priorities;
- Council wide workforce and equalities priorities.

The workforce strategy will include a clear implementation plan of activities to deliver the approved people related priorities for the year. Departmental Management Teams will be consulted and sign off the departmental people plan as part of the service planning completion process.

A range of people management performance indicators have been established for monthly reporting with the updated progress of the people plan activity and will highlight areas of strength and areas of emerging concern. This will enable departmental management teams to take early decisions on interventions required to tackle potential hot spots. The delivery of the implementation plan will inform the work plans of the HR and will demonstrate their effectiveness.

The same people management performance indicators and people management priorities will form the basis of the quarterly report on organisational health and the direction of travel in managing people to Council Management Team. The corporate reports will show comparisons between departments and identify hot spots whilst showing overall corporate direction in key people management areas.

Do the objectives include one on addressing the causes of any gender pay gap? If not, has the p/a given adequate reasons why not?

The council has gone through a single status programme to equalise pay across the organisation, which was completed at the beginning of 2009. Gender is included in workforce profiles and incorporated in to action plans.

Following the completion of the single status exercise the council continues to review all pay elements to ensure maximum efficiency of our resources and value for money. The second stage of the review is informed by a diagnostic exercise carried out by Price Waterhouse Coopers in April 2009.

Has the action they are taking on their employment practices been informed by evidence; involvement and consultation with staff?

During 2009 staff opinion survey was conducted and additional focus groups held to identify key issues for staff. Departments have developed action plans to address issues identified with the survey results. An example of this is the targeted anti-bullying training. Staff are also involved in road shows, over-to-you lunches with senior management.

Publication

Publishing information about its equality work enables authorities to be transparent and can also instil public and staff confidence in their work.	
Has the authority published the results of its impact assessments, consultation and monitoring results?	
<p>The council's equality strategy (which is reviewed every year) contains a detailed action plan and a programme of equality impact assessments. The priorities of the strategy are the priorities of the equality framework. It is published on the council's website and widely circulated.</p> <p>Equality impact assessments are published on the intranet and summaries are available on the council's website along with contact details of the lead officers. Equality impact assessments can be made available via a Freedom of Information request.</p> <p>Consultation and involvement takes place on a vast scale and is integrated in everything the council does, at all levels. An example includes the work undertaken to develop a long-term vision involving 20,000 local people as well as the development of the community cohesion strategy where attendees were invited to shape borough-wide priorities.</p>	
Has the authority published its latest annual report on the duties and does it show that demonstrable progress has been made in fulfilling duties?	
<p>The review of the duties set out in this assessment will appear on the Council website; Talk2Croydon, circulated to the corporate equality and cohesion board and community groups.</p> <p>Feedback will be considered and as appropriate actions will be developed for inclusion into the forthcoming refresh of the council's equality strategy. Alternatively feedback will be circulated to other council departments and partnership currently developing new strategies and plans.</p>	
Does the authority commit to reviewing and republishing its scheme within three years?	
The authority reviews the equality strategy annually. The strategy is also presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny.	

Public access to information

Authorities need to consider how to make its information, including its equality schemes, as accessible to different groups as possible.	
Does the authority explain how it will make information accessible; including how it will monitor any barriers and how it will try and remove any barriers?	
<p>The council's equality strategy is on the internet and intranet. The strategy is also available in large print, audio tape, Braille and languages other than English on request. All council publications can be requested in different formats.</p> <p>The council's equality policy statement is posted throughout its buildings, circulated to community groups, suppliers and partners highlighting our commitments.</p>	

Strategies and action plans are made available to the council's staff networks for consultation to a wider group, through the corporate equality and cohesion board; they are published on the intranet, community websites and circulated to community groups.

The council's website has achieved AA standard for website accessibility and has a text only version of the website.

The Council also provides internal mechanisms for communicating with staff on a range of issues which include using staff cascades, what's new on the intranet as well as publicising in the staff magazine - the Loop.

The Council's newspaper 'Your Croydon' publishes a range of articles informing local residents of key community issues and successes.

Croydon's translation and interpretation service has detailed information on the council's website, and includes a link to encourage more community members to become translators and interpreters.

The council receives feedback from those accessing services, staff groups and community forums which is used to improve accessibility.

A representative from the Croydon Disability Forum sits on the partnership boards to monitor any barriers to documents, services and policies across the Council and the local strategic partnership.

Achieving Access for All is being updated in April/May 2010 and will be distributed to council officers and all the local strategic partnership. It will allow people to learn how to remove barriers and make all documents and events accessible for everyone.

Was the equality scheme easy to access?

The council's equality strategy is on the council's website, intranet and on request.