

COMMITTEE: **DISABILITY ADVISORY AND ACCESS FORUM**

DATE: **3RD DECEMBER 2008**

SUBJECT: **DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT.**

REPORT BY: **PAUL CURRY**

CONTACT OFFICER: **01582 546146**

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL		COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	✓	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL		CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING		OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: All

PURPOSE

1. To inform DAAF of progress against the actions in the Corporate Disability Equality Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. **The Disability Advisory and Access Forum is recommended to note and comment on, where they feel it appropriate, the reported progress against the actions in the Corporate Disability Equality Action Plan (DEAP).**

BACKGROUND

3. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA05) placed a series of Duties on the Council. These were:
4. A General Duty to:
 - Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
 - Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination
 - Eliminate unlawful harassment
 - Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life, and,
 - Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons. For example in the provision of Reasonable Adjustments as required by the 1995 Act.

Specific duties

5. Produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), in which the Council must set out:
 - How disabled people have been involved in drawing up the Scheme

- How the Council will assess the impact of its policies and activities on disabled people
 - The steps the Council will take to improve outcomes for disabled people
 - How the Council will gather and use evidence regarding the impact of its policies
 - Update the Disability Equality Scheme every three years
6. The actions included in the DEAP were based on consultation with Disabled People, groups of, and for, Disabled People, Council employees and was agreed by the Council's Senior Management Team and elected Members. It also incorporated the various guidance documents produced by the Disability Rights Commission.
7. Luton chose to publish a Corporate Equality Scheme instead of a Disability Equality Scheme, but within that included a Disability Equality Action Plan (DEAP) covering the period December 2006 to October 2007
8. The Forum agreed a revised DEAP covering the period up to December 2009 at the 7th February 2008 meeting.

REPORT

9. Departments are required to report to the Forum progress against the actions in the DEAP. A template was produced to assist Departments in this and to be a simple way to show the Forum what progress there has been against the actions. The template is attached as Appendix 1.
10. The template has been amended, following request from the Forum, to show the detailed actions under the broad

headings rather than in simple date order as was previously how the template was presented to the Forum.

11. An additional column covering expected outcomes has been added to assist the Forum.
12. Departments had to plan based on an identified high level action and an expected outcome. It is the achievement of the expected outcome that is necessary to be able to confirm that the action has been met. An overview by Department follows.

Chief Executives

13. The Chief Executives Department has only one action in the current DEAP, taking over responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the DRC Guidance on Gathering and Analysing Evidence to Inform Action for monitoring service delivery. A progress report will be taken to the December meeting of the Forum, however, the completion date for this action will slip.

Children and Learning

14. Children and Learning Department are on target to meet their expected outcomes.

Corporate and Customer Services

15. Work is progressing across all actions. It has been identified that some outcomes will not now be met until February/March 2009.

Environment and Regeneration

16. Environment and Regeneration are on target to meet all but one of their expected outcomes. The Department is to bring an action plan on how they will meet the outstanding action to the December DAAF meeting.

Housing and Community Living

17. The Department has stated that the final Commissioning Strategy Report has been delayed and will be brought to the Forum in February 2009. It is expected that the Commissioning Strategy will address a number of the actions set out in the attached Action Plan.
18. The Department has begun a Special Needs Housing Survey and a report will be brought to the Forum in early 2009.
19. The DAAF referred the Disability Equality Action Plan update report presented to them in June 2008 to The Executive as the Forum had concerns about the progress made on some of the actions in the action plan.
20. The Executive asked the Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee to look at the action plan and progress against the actions.
21. A report was taken to Scrutiny Committee in October 2008 and Scrutiny Committee has asked to be kept up to date on progress with another report to be taken to them in April 2009 (by which time most of the actions in the action plan should be completed in full).

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

22. The Disability Equality Scheme and the Disability Equality Action Plan are key documents to enable us to work towards both the legal requirements of the DDA05 and better outcomes for disabled people.

APPENDIX

Updated Disability Equality Action Plan reporting template. (Pages 15/7-15/45)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and associated Guidance documents are available from the Equalities Unit or from the Equality and Human Rights Commission website at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/forbusinessesandorganisation/publicauthorities/disabilityequalityd/pages/default.aspx>