



1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek Council support and adoption of the Leicestershire District Councils Equality and Diversity Partnership – Single Equality Scheme 2011 – 2014.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the Partnership Single Equality Scheme.

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

3.1 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has been working to embed equality and diversity since 2005. A number of different schemes have been in place as required in line with equality legislation and were the Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme. All these schemes were combined into a Single Equality Scheme in 2009.

3.2 With the introduction in October 2010 of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty coming into force on the 5th April 2011, the previous Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy and Plan 2007-2010 that the council worked to needed to be reviewed and refreshed to bring them into line with the new legislative requirements.

3.3 The draft scheme addresses all the current nine dimensions of equality:

- Age
- Disability,
- Gender/Sex,
- Gender reassignment,
- Marriage and Civil Partnership,
- Maternity and Pregnancy,
- Race/Ethnicity,
- Religion/belief/non belief,
- Sexual orientation

3.4 Although there is no longer a specific requirement within the current equality legislation to have a separate and distinct equality and diversity scheme/policy in place, there is a requirement for a local authority to prepare and publish its equality objectives and commitments by 6th April 2012 and at least every four years thereafter. This Policy is an opportunity to do that.

3.5 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is a lead member of the Leicestershire District Councils Equality and Diversity Partnership (“Partnership”) and as such many of the equality objectives for delivery are being delivered jointly through partnership working.

3.6 It therefore seemed logical and efficient to produce a Partnership Single Equality Scheme. (see Appendix A). There are objectives detailed in the

action plan which relate purely to Hinckley and Bosworth, whilst others which apply to all partners.

- 3.7 The draft scheme was also considered by all Partners and their staff prior to undergoing an external consultation exercise between 1st July and 30th August 2011. As part of the consultation process, the draft scheme was distributed to relevant Partners and made available to view and download from the Councils web-pages at www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk, plus was available to download via all Partners web-site.
- 3.8 A total of fifty two Partners, locally and regionally were invited to comment and contribute to the development of the draft scheme. Meetings were also held to explain the contents and rationale of the scheme with local groups as requested.
- 3.9 Comments from this consultation exercise were received from Leicester City Council, Valuing Peoples Team at Leicestershire County Council, Regional Equality and Diversity Partnership, Age Concern and Trade Sexual Health. These have been considered and subsequently been incorporated within the document attached at Appendix B. Those comments have been taken into account on the draft Single Equalities Policy.
- 3.10 The draft Policy went to the Scrutiny Commission and the comments made at that meeting have been incorporated into and responded to in the attached Appendix B. A further comment was received concerning the Gender Reassignment protected characteristic and further amendments have been made to the Policy as a result of those comments.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AB

All associated costs for the Partnership have been met using existing resources.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS LH

Detailed in the report.

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The council's current equality scheme need updating and bringing into line with the requirements of the public sector equality duty and the new protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. It contributes to all 5 Strategic Aims.

7. CONSULTATION

Accommodation for the Homeless, Hinckley and Bosworth

Adult Basic Education Scheme, Hinckley

Hinckley Connexions Leicester Shire

Dementia Carers Support Group

Earl Shilton Business Forum

Earl Shilton Community House

Hinckley & District Mencap Society

Hinckley and Bosworth Disability Action Group

Hinckley and Bosworth Pensioners Action Group

Hinckley Shopmobility

Home-Start Hinckley and District

Islamic Foundation

The Carers' Project

West Leicestershire Mind

Plus thirty eight Leicestershire based organisations

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Failing to comply with the legislation, may lead to adverse consequences from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.	Adopt the Single Equality Policy and comply with the General Equality duties.]	LH

9. **KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is a significant body of new equality legislation which is constantly changing that the Council is required to adhere to. The scheme and the associated action plan as it relates to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council will ensure that the council is complying with these requirements.

The commitments and objectives outlined with in the scheme when delivered by services are designed to have a positive impact on local communities.

10. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- None

Background papers:

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