

Social Services, Poverty and Prevention and Equalities



In your opinion whose responsibility is it to implement and embed equalities in the organisation?

- In Social Service and Poverty and Prevention, we recognise that Equalities is everyone's responsibility but note the particular relevance to our area of work with the most vulnerable members of society
- Our Directorate has contributed to the whole Council approach to embedding and implementing the Equality Objectives and reports through the Annual Equality Review Report
- We have identified Equalities Champions in the Directorate who work closely with access to services and the strategic delivery unit



How do you ensure a consistent approach to the completion and the quality of Equality Impact Assessments within your directorate?

- We have established a dedicated transformation resource within the directorate and trained members of that team to be equality champions. This helps to ensure that equality impact assessments are considered at the earliest stage of project development
- We continue to work closely with access to services, the strategic delivery unit and legal services to strengthen the quality of our impact



Do you have staff who are specifically trained on the procedures and the practice of EIAs? Who in your directorate monitors these for quality?

- Our equalities champions have received training from the Access to Services team and continue to work closely with that team, the strategic delivery unit and legal services for advice and guidance on specific assessments



How do you ensure equalities are embedded in everything that is done within your directorate? What does this involve?

- Given the type of services delivered within the Directorate, including that we are working with the most vulnerable members of society the bulk of the training and development received by our workforce has a relevance to how the Council meets its equalities responsibilities.



Who are the key influencers with regards to equality in your directorate? For example Cabinet Member, Equality Champions (councillor and/or staff)

- Cabinet Members
- Director of Social Services
- Heads of Service
- Senior Management Teams
- Commissioning Officers
- Equality Champions
- Social work and social care staff



**What training plan do you have relating to equalities matters?
How are staff training needs assessed in relation to these training needs?**

- We have received specific Equalities Champions training
- We access training on the Act and the nine protected characteristics via Oracle
- An Equalities e-learning module is completed as part of staff induction
- This forms a part of a much wider program of training and staff development for our social work and social care workforce



What is your directorate doing to identify and remove any barriers to accessing services?

- We are in the process of establishing an integrated commissioning hub across social services, education and poverty and prevention with an explicitly stated intention to put coproduction at the heart of future commissioning and service development



What changes will you need to make in your directorate to address the requirements/duties under the Equalities Act (public sector duty) and Future Generations Act, social service and wellbeing act etc. in order to fulfil those your directorates equality duties?

- There are comprehensive and wide ranging transformation plans in place across the Directorate



How do you work with equality organisations, services users and other key partners to deliver your services in line with equalities legislation for example through co-production?

- We work with a range of service user and citizen forums both locally and regionally
- As an example, our recently developed procurement framework for supported living arrangements for people with a learning disability was co produced with individuals with a learning disability supported by a third sector partner. This approach receive a commendation at a national awards ceremony for innovative commissioning and procurement practice.



What further changes would you suggest?

- Genuine coproduction is extremely time and resource intensive. In a context of shrinking resources the Council will need to be discerning about where and when adopting a more co-productive approach will have most benefit for citizens

