

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE
24 JUNE 2010

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY & PARTNERSHIPS

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME 2010 - 2013

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report introduces the company's 3-yr Single Equality Scheme 2010 – 2013.
- 1.2 The Single Equality Scheme (the Scheme) builds on our commitment to establish an organisation that embraces equality and diversity and community cohesion in all aspect of our work and as detailed in our previous Equality and Diversity Strategy.
- 1.3 Our new Scheme also details our commitment to deliver our strategic objectives and in particular, 'A major push on Equality and Diversity'. The Scheme also includes a detailed action plan to deliver equal outcomes for all customers, employees and stakeholders, including contractors and suppliers over the next three years.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Business Development Committee:

- 2.1 notes that the Scheme attached to this report may be subject to change when the statutory guidance for social housing based on the new Equality Act 2010 is published. We have been informed that the new guidance will be available no later than December 2010.
- 2.2 notes the customer equality impact assessment workshop will be held on 16 June 2010. Additional actions to deliver the scheme may be tabled at the Business and Development Committee on 24 June 2010.
- 2.2 considers and approves the Scheme.

3 REPORT

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 All public sector organisations have a statutory obligation to publish a Single Equality Scheme. As an ALMO, we are not listed as a statutory organisation, however as a partner organisation of Nottingham City Council we are required to comply with the spirit of equalities legislation and statutory guidance and this Scheme is development to comply with

their request and for business reasons, ethically and morally it is the right thing to do.

3.1.2 The primary outcomes of the Scheme are to:

- Eliminate discrimination or unfair treatment;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good race relations;
- and eliminate harassment

3.1.3 Our commitment to achieve equality and diversity applies to all customers, employees, partners and stakeholders on the basis of age, gender including transgender, disability, race, sexual orientation and religion and belief.

The Scheme was drafted before the Equalities Act 2010 was published in April 2010. Members are asked to note that the action plan includes a specific task to update the Scheme when the implications of the Act are fully considered.

3.1.4 In addition to our commitment to achieve equality for the seven equality strands referred to above, we are also committed to achieving equality for all by removing direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of:

- Marital status, family circumstances, or caring responsibilities;
- Income, employment status or housing circumstances;
- Membership or non-membership of trade unions, or involvement or non-involvement in trade union activity;
- Any other ground that cannot be shown to be justified
- Customers who may experience disadvantage as a result of their social or economic status.

3.1.5 In addition to promoting good relations among our customers we are also committed to developing cohesive communities on our estates and in our neighbourhoods. In this regard, our commitment to community cohesion is also stated in the scheme and our actions are highlighted in the action plan. Members are also to note that this section of the Scheme may be subject to change on the basis that we are in the middle of reviewing our Involvement Strategy which may have implications on our strategic approach to community cohesion.

3.2 Developing the Scheme

3.2.1 Our approach to delivering the Scheme was to ensure that tenants, leaseholders, employees, partners and key stakeholders were involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment. To ensure that everyone was involved, early contact was made with the Ethnic Minority Employee Forum, the Black and Minority Ethnic Forum, the Disabled Employees

and Carers Forum and Homes 4 Us. Their feedback has already been incorporated into the draft Scheme.

- 3.2.2 The success of the Scheme is based on our ability to understand the needs of customers and employees and we used our customer profiling data, information on the housing waiting list and information from customer satisfaction surveys to develop the action points. The Scheme was also developed after talking to a range of stakeholders including the city council and using a range of research reports.

The action plan included with Scheme is outcome focussed and cross referenced to each equality strand, NCH strategic objectives and the Audit Commission Key Lines of Inquiry.

3.3 The Scope of the Scheme

- 3.3.1 The Scheme covers our key service areas. These include; governance, business improvement, marketing and communications, housing operations, property services, supported housing, tenant involvement, health and safety, human resources, organisation development and facilities management.

Implementing the action plan will achieve the outcomes listed below:

- Improve our Action on Equality and Diversity
- Improve our Awareness on Equality and Diversity
- Improve our Understanding on Equality and Diversity
- Improve our performance against the Audit Commission Key Lines of Inquiry.
- Achieve 3 star housing inspection status

It is also our intention to achieve Excellent status on the new Social Housing Equality Framework by the end of the Scheme.

3.4 Training and Development

The Equality and Diversity Team will be rolling out the Scheme in July, August and September and aspects of the Scheme will be included in future Equality and Diversity Training Courses where appropriate.

3.5 Performance Monitoring

The Scheme includes our key equality Indicators and targets that are measured on a quarterly basis and monitored by the Diversity and Community Cohesion Champions Group. (Please refer to Section 15, page 49). The development of the new Performance Dashboard will mean that our performance against NCH key indicators will be available to the Business and Development Committee and the Board.

The draft Scheme has already been shared with Service Directors and Heads of Department and the annual objectives and targets have

already been incorporated into the Service Improvement Plans 2010 -11

3.6 Access to the Scheme

- 3.6.1 The Scheme will be available for employees and customers on the NCH intranet and website and will be available in other formats and languages on request.

4 **OTHER OPTIONS**

- 4.1 There are no other options.

5 **FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Failure to deliver the actions highlighted in the plan may put NCH at risk of breaching statutory duties and good practice in the sector. The cost of implementing the Scheme is factored into the Equality and Diversity annual budget.

6 **IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 Implementing the Scheme will contribute primarily to NCH Strategic objective 'A major push on Equality and Diversity'

7 **VALUE FOR MONEY AND EFFICIENCY ISSUES**

- 7.1 The Scheme is subject to making efficiency savings and to deliver value for money in accordance with NCH Value for Money strategy.

8 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The initial screening under the Equality and Diversity Act has identified that there is a low risk of adverse impact on any equality strand as a result of implementing the Scheme. Therefore a full equality impact assessment is not required.
- 8.2 However, in keeping with NCH's commitment to total engagement of its customers, we are holding a consultation workshop with tenants on 16th June 2010. The feedback from the workshop will be tabled at the Business and Development Committee meeting on 24 June 2010 and will be included in the action plan that is published.

9 **BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

- 9.1 Nottingham City Council Equality Scheme
Equalities Legislation for each equality strand
Customer profiling data
Nottingham City Council BME Housing Inquiry 2008
Place Survey
VMS Survey

Census 2001 and Mid Year statistics September 2009

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