

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

# Update on the Progress of the Disability Equality Scheme

### 1 Purpose of Report

To make the Human Resources (HR) Committee aware of the progress of this scheme and the proposed arrangements for adoption of the completed scheme.

### 2 Recommendations

That the Human Resources Committee consider the proposal for the progression and adoption of the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) on 4 December 2006, pending approval under the urgency procedures, and subsequent referral for final approval to the next Fire Authority meeting on 20 December 2006.

### 3 Background

It is a legal requirement for this authority to produce a Disability Equality Scheme, which must be in place by the 4 December 2006. Due to the timings of the HR Committee and the ongoing consultation process it is not possible to bring the draft scheme to the Committee before this date.

### 4 Progress to Date

The DES is different to other schemes that we produce, as it is created with the help of people, who have disabilities, or disabled groups, rather than consulting on this after we have created this document. At present we are in the process of conducting focus groups, where we will be able to get the views of disabled people, which will help to inform us when creating our scheme. We have offered consultees the opportunity to attend a formal meeting or to submit comments individually.

Invitations have been sent out to over 20 disability organisations and individuals across the County, inviting them to attend one of our focus meetings. It has also been sent out using the Equalities Forum and the Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership to distribute to their members. We have also put information on our website and communicated internally to our employees, using our internal newsletter, the 'Pink'.



When these focus groups have been completed the final draft of the DES can then be created. This will then be put out to consultation through the normal procedure.

The draft DES as developed so far will be available for members to view at the meeting.

## 5 Implementing the DES

When all the comments have been collated we will then use this information to determine what we should be changing in this organisation, and what our priorities are for action planning.

At this point some actions have already been created, and aligned to our current schemes and plans. These will be added to as the consultation process is completed.

## 6 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## 7 Legal Comment

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) has introduced a Disability Equality Duty on the Fire Authority with effect from 4 December 2006. This is satisfied by the Authority preparing and adopting a Disability Equality Scheme.

## 8 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

## 9 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balance Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Equality and Diversity	*	Retained	
Efficiency Savings		Risk and Insurance	
Environmental		Staff	*
Financial		Strategic Planning	
Fire Control/Fire Link		West Midlands Regional Management Board	

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Natalie Hill, Equality and Diversity Officer, on 01742 260236.

