

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum

1 Purpose of Report

To inform the Human Resources Committee of the progress to date on this group, as requested by the Fire Authority.

2 Recommendations

That the Committee note the content of the report.

3 Background

In February 2006 the Fire Authority authorised funding to this group of £5,000 for 2006/07, subject to a service level agreement (SLA) being provided.

4 Progress on payment

This particular group do not produce Service Level Agreements, however, they have given us detailed information on the group's activities. It was decided that a SLA agreement was, therefore, not necessary as we had this information and they are a member of the Local Strategic Partnership, of which this organisation is also a member.

We have received an invoice and released payment for this group of £5,000.

5 Progress on the Group

The group itself has made a lot of progress, information on this is attached. The Equality and Diversity Officer also attends this group and can monitor the progress to date through attending these meetings. Progress to date includes:

- Setting up an Equality Awards process and panel
- Work on Hate Crime Incident reporting
- Recruiting an Equalities Officer



- Funding for festivals and events
- Improving communications throughout the groups.

We do receive minutes of the Equalities Forum meetings and these are also used as a communication tool. For example, a presentation was given to this group regarding our IRMP consultation. It is also used for communication by all of the group members.

We also receive regular notes from these meetings.

6 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8 Appendix

Work Programme for Diversity and Equality dated 4 September 2006

9 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority 8 February 2006, Report 18 - Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum

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 01743 260236.





PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

DATE OF MEETING: 4 September 06

ITEM

7

Item name: Work Programme for Diversity and Equality

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Recommendations

1. That the PSB receives the Equalities Forum Work Programme Report and notes progress
2. That the PSB approves the Equality and Diversity Work Programme (2006-2007) for submission to the Equalities Forum (14 September) and agreement by the Management Group (25 September).
3. That the PSB agrees to fund equality and diversity work on an ongoing basis, noting that the carry forward sum and contributions from the police and Fire services are sufficient to fund the Forum's work programme for 2006/07

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Public Service Board (25 May 2005) agreed to fund Equality and Diversity from an allocation from Second Homes Council Tax. In addition, West Mercia Constabulary and the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service agreed to contribute £5000 each. A work programme was prepared and is shown below. The PSB determined that a report after one year of operation would be required to determine whether to provide funding on an ongoing basis.

Work Programme 2005/06	Budget
1. Hate Crime incident reporting and evidence database	15,000
2. Opportunity fund & small grants programme	15,000
3. Operating budget for the Equality Forum & Equality Officer	10,000
4. cross partner training & awareness programme	10,000
5. Funding for Equality festivals and events	10,000
6. Improving Communications	5,000
Total	65,000

- 1.2. "Promoting equal opportunities for everyone" was identified as a priority in the Shropshire Partnership Community Strategy (2006-2010) and in the Equality & Diversity LSP Action Plan. Community Cohesion is the "overarching theme" of the Shropshire LAA and LAA 17 includes a number of actions to develop Shropshire as a

welcoming and inclusive place to live and work and to achieve greater levels of community cohesion.

- 1.3. The Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum meets four times a year and six successful and well attended meetings have been held since the inaugural meeting on the 31 March 2005. Membership of the Forum includes champions from partner organisations, members of Shropshire's BME and other Diversity & Equality communities and now members of the former Voluntary & Community sector equalities group. Membership has grown from 35 to over 100. The Forum and its communities have instigated a wide range of successful activity, events and initiatives in 2005-2006 and plans for 2006-2007 which are summarised in Appendix 1
- 1.4. A Questionnaire was sent to the full membership of the Equalities Forum on the 10th May. The questionnaire sought the views on the effectiveness and operation of the Forum and its current work plan. Also to identify and prioritise issues for its work plan for 2006 – 2007. There was a good response rate and findings were reported to and discussed by the Forum on the 19 June 2006.
- 1.5. Capacity has been strengthened by the appointment of Kal Parkash, Equality Officer (SCC) who works closely with the Shropshire Partnership team. The work plan priorities for 2005 -2006 have thus been:

1.	To establish and develop the Shropshire Partnership Equality Forum and membership.
2.	To undertake research on good practice and plan the implementation of the Hate Crime protocol and cross partner reporting initiative (LAA target)
3.	To establish the Diversity & Equality small awards programme and establish the Appraisal Group (drawn from members of the Forum). The Awards Programme has funded a number of events and festivals and other key initiatives.
4.	To work with Shropshire's BME and D&E communities, Districts and the region to initiate a number of on-going initiatives including : joint work on Equality Standards, Action to combat homophobia in schools, Rock Against Racism Saturday event (supported by Partners -29 April 06), work to establish improved facilities and provision for Asian/Muslim prayer and community facilities, work on Black History Month and work with the Regional Assembly and GOWM on new legislative plans for Equality

2. Proposed Work Plan & Budget (2006-2007)

- 2.1. The proposed work plan and budget have been developed from consultation with the Equalities Forum and what remains from the 2005-2006 Work plan :

1.	Launch and implement the Hate Crime report programme	£15,000
2.	Opportunity fund and small grants programme	£15,000
3.	Operation of the Equalities Forum and further engagement / development with BME and D&E communities	£10,000
4.	Supporting events/festivals and activities to grow cohesion	£10,000
5.	Implement a cross partner awareness training programme	£10,000
6.	Improving communication (including web, newsletters, etc)	£5,000
	Total	£65,000

- 2.2. Details of arrangements for the Diversity and Equality Awards are set out below. Together with detailed Appendices of achievements to date and proposed actions.

3. Arrangements for the Diversity & Equality Awards

- 3.1 Shropshire County Council is the accountable body for the awards and the awards arrangements and administration has been supported by the Programme Support Team based on good practice from external funding programmes.
- 3.2 Applications are considered by regular meetings of an appraisal group (chaired by Bob Forster, Vice Chair of the LSP) with an agreed group of members of the Equality Forum and officers.
- 3.3 Grants can only be paid into a bank account of the applicant (or a sponsoring body)
- 3.4 Monitoring requirements include that all grants acknowledge the Shropshire Partnership in publicity. That a progress report is submitted quarterly with a final report at conclusion of the grant. Copies of all financial information to be submitted with the final report and one copy of any publicity/publication produced to be forwarded to the LSP.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 The past year has seen the establishment of the forum, and we are now starting to deliver the work programme. The only expenditure incurred has been the Equality Awards (£8,300 committed, £2,500 under consideration) and the under spend has been carried forward into 2006/07. The 2006/07 work programme has been costed on a realistic basis. (See para. 2.1 above).
With the funding from second homes council tax carried forward and assuming a continuing financial contribution from West Mercia Constabulary and the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, there is sufficient to fund the Equalities Forum work programme for 2006/07.
This means that there is £65,000 available for allocation from 2006/07 second homes council tax and this will be the subject of a separate report.
- 4.2 The PSB is asked to approve the budget and work programme for 2006/07 and agree to fund equality and diversity work on an ongoing basis.

(The Equalities Forum Work Programme Report is attached at Appendix 1)

APPENDIX 1

Work Programme Report – Equalities Forum

Work Programme	Who	What	Detailed plan	Outcome	When
Equality Forum	103+ Members	Quarterly meetings	Themed meetings	Networking Action Cohesion Fun	Next Meeting 14 September
Holocaust Memorial	Dr Eve Clevenger	Special Event	Evening/ Shirehall	Links with local Jewish community	27 January 2005
Inaugural meeting	35 Members	Establish Forum	Equality work of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • PCT • Community Council 	Agreed themes of future meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking • Work reports • Speakers 	31 March 2005
June Forum	Members	Discuss Work Plan Input into SPCS	Equality work of LBTG/Fruitbowl	Established inputs from community	14 June 2005
September Forum	Members WMRA Equality Panel Speakers	WMRA Equality Panel survey of regional equality work	Cllr Mike Owen Kal Parkash, CB,DB Rico Paris (TG) Gypsy & Travellers Team (SCC) Community Council Aston BME research	WMRA awareness of Forum, work plan & local issues WMRA Report	30 September 2005
WM Criminal Justice	CJ Agencies Network	Shirehall Chamber	Mock Trial	To highlight BME/D&E issues in criminal justice	11 October 2005

December Forum	Members	Christmas meeting	Equality work of Visible Minorities Hate Crime Report D&E Awards	Decisions on D&E Awards & Appraisal Panel	16 December 2006
March Forum	Aftab Rahman (GOWM)	Community Cohesion & Tensions in W Mids.	Hate Crime D&E Awards	Aftab Rahman to visit Shropshire	30 March 2006
June Forum	Disability Equality Scheme	Linda Gladman (SCC) Tina Jones (Telford)	Hate Crime D&E Awards Asian/Muslim Prayer facilities	Discussion of Disability issues	

Hate Crime

Hate Crime	Who	What	Detailed Plans	Outcome	Date
Task Group Established	Chair: Cllr Mike Owens, Cllr Jean Jones, Cllr Jo Jones (SCC, SABC, WMP, LSP, WMRA, NSDC)	Research, Good Practice, Way forward	Desktop research from 7 councils etc. Visits to Devon, Norfolk, Tower Hamlets	Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work through LSP • Protocol • Schools 	Final Report November 2005
Hate Crime Protocol	Multi Agency Kal Parkash	Sets out Principles Duty on each agency	Reporting Hate Crime Victim paramount	Establishes reporting procedure / flow chart	May 2006
Hate Crime Report Form	Based on Police "True Vision" form	To cover all aspects of reporting Hate crime & hate incidents	Developed with CAB & Victim Support	To be used at each reporting point & analysed for Police investigation or partner action	August 2006

Reporting Sites	Involving all councils & key partners	Improved access & support for reporting Hate Crime	SCC Customer First District & Borough Police, CAB, Victim Support, RSL's etc.	Exact location of sites established and published & customer staff training	September 2006
Training	Customer service staff at all reporting sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pilot at SCC - Customise - Cascade to Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understanding hate issues - police video - using report form - Support victim 	Customer staff trained & equipped to complete reports & support Victims	September 2006
Publicity & Information	Hate Crime Task Group & Partners SCC communications	To maximise awareness of Hate Crime and the need to report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster • Flier • Displays • Info Pack 	Hate Crime initiative launched across Shropshire (press, radio, TV etc.)	September 2006
Reporting & Monitoring	LAA Target (17) Crimes & harassment	To maximise numbers reporting Hate Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kal Parkash • Gill Jones • Ed Bailey 	Fulfil LAA requirement & reduce Hate Crime	Report to Safer Shropshire Board 17 October 2006

Diversity & Equality Awards

Small Grants	Who	What	Grant	Match	Date
	Shrewsbury Action Against Racism	Poster, leaflet, exhibition, 29 April event	£450	£600 (total £1050)	29 April Rock Against Racism Saturday event & partner stalls
	Gender Advisory Bureau (charity)	Leaflet for doctors, social workers & clients re Gender Recognition Act	£1000	£550 (total £1550)	Launched at Shirehall event on 30 March 2006 (Rico Parris)

	Impact Alcohol Advisory Service (charity)	Leaflet for Asian community 3 Vol. outreach staff Talks & Road shows	£1000	£0.00 (total £1000)	Road show in Quarry, Shrewsbury 1 July
	Disabled Holiday Information (Oswestry)	Providing leaflets & road shows to wheelchair users / other disabled on accessible tourist sites & activities	£ 320	£0.00 (total £320)	Two tourist booklets and two town centre road shows held
	Equality Forum Display Boards	To provide a facility to all BME & D&E groups	£559	£.0.00 (total £559)	Held for Forum by the LSP
	Shropshire Asian Society	To organise two cultural events a year to link with Diwali, Eid, Holi etc.	£1000	££2450 (Total £3450)	Monitoring report awaited
	Women Rough Sleepers / Task Group consortium	To undertake academic research into rough sleeping needs and D&E issues re rough sleeping	£1000 in principle	Matching grants are being sought. £1000 received from Joint Commissioner (MH)	Approaches to 4 universities made
	Homophobia in Schools	Work with schools to tackle homophobia and to develop on-going action	£500	Total £5000 Evaluation report received	Shrewsbury Festival event (6 July) with 2 films, Talk by Liz Nicholson (CD CYP) and quiz/discussion

	South Shropshire Access Project	Purchase of infra red hearing system for use in community buildings	£998	Total £998	System to be used in conjunction with South Shropshire Vol. Action.
	North East Rural Youth Project	Purchase of games to aid cross culture integration of Gypsy community re site/local area	£431	Total £431	Joint youth service, Gypsy learning and traveller community project
Small grant awards under consideration and Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Music • Double H Dance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trans gender • Westhampton festival 	Total committed £8,258.64	To be decided £2,492.64	Budget Remaining (awards) £4,311.72

Additional Work with Equality Communities and on Equality issues.

Work Programme	Who	What	Detailed Plans	Outcome	Date
PCT Race For Health & Peer Review	John Short (DMH) Dr Isabel Gillis (DPH)	Shropshire only non urban area in NHS programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race for Health Group • Action Plan in place 	LSP participated in Chinese Community Report Migrant Workers	Bi monthly meetings Peer Review event 21/22 March
Asian/ Moslem Prayer & Community Facilities	Cllr Mike Owen, Cllr Jean Jones, Steve Cunningham (SABC) Bangladeshi Welfare Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for improved Friday prayer facilities • Longer term community facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of SCC Lantern (PFI) building from April 2005 for prayers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with SABC etc. to access Underdale Rd site for community facilities 	Meetings 1 August 2006 22 August

Joint Work on Equality Standards	District/Borough councils, SCC, LSP	Reviewed common positions & issues re Equality Standards & Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member & corporate input • embedding 	Further work to commence when KP available	Initial meeting 19 June (notes circulated)
Press & Publicity	Bishop of Shrewsbury SCC, Districts, LSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press • Local Radio • Local TV • Network 	Action plan to Paul Masterman (SCC Coms) & Matt James (SCC Marketing)	To actively respond to racist news and promote cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to Star 9 Jan • Beacon Radio (Hate Crime)
Regional Spatial Strategy	Spatial Strategy D&E Group (DB)	Convened by WMRA	To contribute to Spatial Strategy	Reflect BME/D&E WM community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 September • 28 September
Gypsy, & Traveller communities	Western Market Housing Strategy Group/ Catherine Hinton	To assess housing and social needs	ODPM Draft Guidance Cambridge research	To assess housing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 August
Black History Month	SAAR, SCC, LSP, WMCJA etc	Develop programme of activities & links	- Kick Racism out of Football etc	Celebrate Black History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 06
Dignity & Difference	SCC, LSP Equalities Forum	Major event to widen Holocaust Memorial	Being developed	Celebrate D&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early 2007