

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Equality and Diversity Sub-Group

Monday, 29 January 2007

**Present:** Councillors Terry Brown and Mrs Iris Smith

## 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Councillor Terry Brown was appointed as Chair of the Equality and Diversity Sub-Group.

## 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Kenneth Ball and Christopher Snow.

## 3. DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Member declared any interests in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

## 4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Director of Policy and Performance submitted a briefing note providing information and documentation for Members of the Sub-Group looking into Equality and Diversity as an aspect of Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

Members received notification that the Council was aware of the existing gaps and areas of under performance which may impact upon the Council's performance in any future CPA assessment. User focus and diversity are core elements of the Corporate Assessment which will determine the Council's CPA rating and judgements will be made throughout our corporate assessment about how effectively we are addressing these issues in a local context.

The Audit Committee referred to the way in which the Council address equality and diversity and it was important that the Council understood what the particular issues are facing Chorley and how we tackle these.

The Sub-Group considered as a starting point how we meet the needs of both our urban and rural communities and how we make progress in delivering the equality and diversity agenda within the limited capacity available to the Council. The Sub-Group also considered the need for a Register of all details of Community Groups in Chorley and the need to improve the communication within Groups.

Contact has been made with the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council who had achieved Level Three of the Equality Standard. Chorley was currently at Level One with the aim to achieve Level Three by March 2009. A site visit was planned and any visit will give some useful insights into how to progress the Council with mixed urban and rural areas.

Members received the following key supporting documentation:

- Equality Scheme – Published in December 2005 to meet the statutory requirements under the Race Relations Act 1976
- Equality Standard Framework summary

- CPA Framework for District Council
- Staffordshire Moorland District Council website address

In order for the Sub-Group to progress its findings the next meeting scheduled for 6 February 2007 would consider the following issues:

- Preparation for the Staffordshire Moorlands visit on 22 February 2007
- Agree the aims and expected outcomes of the visit
- Agree a series of questions and discussion points for the visit
- To discuss with the Assistant Head of Customer Services the services of the Council's One-Stop Shop and Contact Centre at the Union Street Offices and what provisions are available for meeting the needs of customers with differential needs
- To discuss with the Council's Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Officer the possibility of developing the system to provide demographic and deprivation information and to provide an accurate picture of the communities in the Chorley area.

Chair