

EMT REPORT

From: Customer Services Officer

Agenda Item No: 8

Ref:

Meeting Date: 1 December 2011

FOR INFORMATION

ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Summary and Conclusions

This is the annual summary of progress on Equality and Diversity (E & D) matters. This report provides an assessment of how SLH has progressed against the E & D Action Plan contained within the Single Equality Scheme (SES) and highlights the opportunities for improvement that have been identified as a result of Equality Assessments (formerly Equality Impact Assessments) and on-going self-assessment against the Social Housing Equality Framework. The areas for improvement detailed will be added to the E & D Action Plan.

SLH has made good progress against the four key Equality and Diversity Objectives detailed within the SES which has resulted in positive outcomes in service delivery for tenants.

Financial Implications

Currently none identified in this financial year.

Tenants` Involvement

Charles Howarth, Chairman of Tenants` Committee and Board member has been nominated as Board Champion for E & D. Charles played an active role in assisting SLH to gain the `Achieving ` Level of the Equality Framework for Local Government. Tenant representatives are involved in the development of and approval of SLH Strategy and Policies via membership of Service Improvement Groups (SIGs), Tenant`s Committee and the Board and its Sub-Committees.

All members of Tenants Committee have received E & D training.

This report will be presented to the Tenant`s Committee.

Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
Non compliance with E & D legislation	<p>SLH services will not be equally accessible by members of our community.</p> <p>Short Notice Inspection - No improvements on E & D related issues since last inspection</p>	Provide ongoing training to all staff, Tenants` Committee Members and Board Directors

Links to Strategic Plans

Recommendations

To note progress made on equalities issues.

Report

1.0 Introduction

Welcome to South Lakes Housing's Annual Equality and Diversity Report. The purpose of this report is to give an over view of progress against South Lakes Housing's Equality and Diversity Action Plan as detailed in our Single Equality Scheme, to highlight our achievements this year with regard to equality and diversity and to identify the opportunities for improvement in the coming year.

2.0 Single Equality Scheme Objectives

SLH identified four main objectives within its Single Equality Scheme:

Service Provision

Objective 1:

To ensure best practice in equality is rooted in all aspects of SLH's functions and is supported by a strong evidence base.

Objective 2:

To ensure that the work of SLH is informed by effective and inclusive consultation, engagement and communication with users.

SLH as an Organisation

Objective 3:

To ensure that the promotion of equality and human rights and elimination of discrimination and harassment are embedded in all SLH's practices and through leadership and organisational commitment.

Objective 4:

To ensure the development of an effective and diverse workforce that is representative of the communities served by SLH.

The four objectives cover all of the protected characteristics. They also address the aspirations contained in the Company's Business Plan:

- *South Lakes Housing is determined to promote equality and diversity to improve community wellbeing in the South Lakeland District.*
- *We recognise that people who provide and use our services come from diverse backgrounds, with different experiences and needs.*
- *We want our services to be accessible and useful to everyone and will take positive action to ensure equality and fair treatment so that individual needs are met.*
- *As an employer we commit to working towards achieving a workforce that is reflective of our local population. We also want our staff and job applicants to feel valued and to believe that they are given equal chances, no matter what their background or circumstances.*

3.0 What we have achieved

Objective 1 - To ensure best practice in equality is rooted in all aspects of SLH's functions and is supported by a strong evidence base.

- ✓ SLH was awarded the 'Achieving' Level of the Equality Framework for Local Government
- ✓ The Board has approved the adoption of a Single Equality Scheme to reflect the requirements of the equality Act 2010.
- ✓ The CBL Application form has been amended to capture all equality strands
- ✓ Biennial visits include E & D monitoring information
- ✓ E & D monitoring of Anti-Social Behaviour cases to identify potential 'Hate Crime' i in such incidents.
- ✓ Publicising SLH's role as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre
- ✓ E & D monitoring of Repairs Satisfaction Slips to identify any trends and take appropriate action
- ✓ E & D monitoring used to flag vulnerable tenants on Housing Management System so that services can be tailored to their needs. Information is also shared with our contractors
- ✓ Contractors Welcome Pack produced detailing SLH's policy of Equality and Diversity
- ✓ Equality Analysis conducted on Policies and Strategies
- ✓ Equality Champion at Board Level
- ✓ Equality Performance System in place using the Effect Toolkit for Social Housing Equality Framework (SHEF)
- ✓ E & D training provided for Board Members

Opportunities for Improvement

- Continue to improve the links between equalities information and the design, delivery and monitoring of services
- Continue to raise staff confidence and understanding when asking E & D monitoring questions
- Review procurement and contract process to ensure equality considerations are in

place and monitored

- Introduce an audit of suppliers to monitor compliance with equality duties

Objective 2 - To ensure that the work of SLH is informed by effective and inclusive consultation, engagement and communication with users.

- ✓ Tenant Involvement Club offers a variety of ways for tenants to become involved
- ✓ Offer documents including information on the 'Offer Document' in alternative languages
- ✓ Large Print documents offered
- ✓ Information available on DVD including narrative
- ✓ Home visits
- ✓ Door knocking
- ✓ A full programme of Estate Walkabouts and Road Shows
- ✓ Family Fun days
- ✓ Working in partnership on Street Safe campaigns
- ✓ Annual Tenants' Conference
- ✓ Service Improvement Groups
- ✓ Residents' Associations
- ✓ Tenants' Committee
- ✓ Board
- ✓ Involvement of Independent Tenant Advisor

Areas for Improvement

- Relaunch dynamic interactive website in consultation with tenants to include on line repairs reporting and rent account access
- Introduction of Customer Relationship Management system
- Greater integration between company databases
- Establish who doesn't contact us and what the barriers are
- Annual E & D questionnaire to all tenants asking for updated information on equality characteristics, advocacy arrangements and preferred methods of contact

Objective 3 - To ensure that the promotion of equality and human rights and elimination of discrimination and harassment are embedded in all SLH's practices and through leadership and organisational commitment

- ✓ Appointment of a Board Champion

- ✓ Adoption of the National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance
- ✓ Review of Committee Structure
- ✓ Review of Board and Committee Terms of Reference
- ✓ Review of Board Membership Policy
- ✓ E & D Training provided for staff, Tenants' Committee and Board
- ✓ Equality Analysis carried out on Policies and Strategies
- ✓ Appointment of a Customer Services Officer to monitor comments, queries and complaints and report quarterly on Learning from Customers

Areas for Improvement

- Attain 'Excellence' level of the Social Housing Equality Framework
- Tenant scrutiny of all new and reviewed SLH Strategies and Policies
- Mandatory E & D Training for Board, Tenant's Committee and staff
- Develop the Learning from Customer Reports to identify any particular underlying trends and improve services

Objective 4 - To ensure the development of an effective and diverse workforce that is representative of the communities served by SLH.

- ✓ Staff (from across all service areas in the company) involved in Equality Analysis of Strategies and Policies
- ✓ Range of Policies and Procedures to support Life/Work Balance including:
 - Flexible Working
 - Maternity/Paternity/Carers Leave
 - Dignity at Work
 - Disciplinary and Grievance
 - Employee Recognition Scheme
 - Training
 - Mentoring Scheme
- ✓ A range of apprenticeships offered across the business
- ✓ Work experience offered to local school children
- ✓ Work Placements offered to local disabled young adults
- ✓ Work placements offered to the long term unemployed
- ✓ Retention of the 'two ticks' symbol

Areas for Improvement

- Develop dedicated Intranet web page on Equality, Diversity and Human Rights
- Continued training to raise awareness on relevant issues and ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010
- Attain 'Excellence' level of the Social Housing Equality Framework
- Review Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Revise guidance for staff undertaking equality analysis
- Provide Recruitment and Selection training to managers

4.0 Conclusion

This report demonstrates that SLH has made good progress against the four key Equality and Diversity Objectives which has resulted in positive outcomes in service delivery for tenants. SLH recognises that the E & D Action Plan is a 'living' document and the areas for improvement detailed above will be added to the document.

List of Background Papers

Equality Framework for Social Housing, SLH Self-Assessment (October 2011)

SLH Equality and Diversity Monitoring Statistics.

Please ask for Lisa Maguire who is dealing with this matter.

Appendix 1

Current Equality Statistics across SLH:-

	Tenants Committee 2009	2011	Board Membership 2009	2011	Staff 2009	2011	Tenants 2009	2011
Males	33%	36%	75%	75%	47%	47%	37.5%	37.5%
Females	67%	64%	25%	25%	53%	53%	62.5%	62.5%
This characteristic we have 100% data.								
White British	92%	100%	92%		99.16%	99.1%	88.8%	93.68%
Irish	-	-	8%		-	-	0.36%	0.34%
Other	8%	-	-		-	-	0.02%	0.02%
Afro	-	-	-		-	-	0.05%	0.05%
Asian	-	-	-		-	-	0.02%	0.02%
MWBC	-	-	-		-	-	0.02%	0.07%
MWBA	-	-	-		-	-	-	0.02%
MWAS	-	-	-		-	-	-	0.05%
Other A	-	-	-		-	-	0.02%	0.05%
Other B	-	-	-		-	-	0.02%	0.05%
Other M	-	-	-		-	-	0.05%	0.07%
Other W	-	-	-		0.84%	-	0.49%	0.6%
OtherR	-	-	-		-	-	-	0.07%
Not Known	-	-	-		-	-	0.02%	0.47%
Not Recorded	-		-		-	0.9%	10.1%	4.3%
181 Tenants have ethnicity information missing (2011).								
C of E	50%	22%	58%		-	-	-	13
Christian	-	-	25%		-	61.5%	-	6
Buddhist	8.3%	-	-		-	-	-	0.1
Catholic	8.3%	7%	-		-	-	-	1.9
Free Range	8.3%	7%	-		-	-	-	-
Undeclared & other	25%	64%	17%		-	38.5%	-	14
Number of tenants still to be asked 2459 = 65%								
Mobility Issues	17%	14%	17%		-	-	6.1%	23.7%
Hearing Impairments	17%	7%	-		-	-	3.6%	12.6%
Visual Impairments	-	-	-		-	-	1.4%	6%
Mental Health	-	-	-		-	-	-	10.5%
SLRN	-	-	-		-	-	-	4.5%
ASda	-	-	-		-	-	-	0.7%
Unseen	33%	22%	17%		-	-	10.3%	41.8%
None	33%	-	66%		-	-	-	0.7%
Undeclared	-	57%			-	-	-	
SLH currently hold data at 1002 tenants (2011) – some fall into multiple categories. 2781 tenants no disability information held. In relation to staff – 5.7% have declared disabilities we need to change the data collection form to mirror the other areas to be able to compare.								
81 and above	-	7%	-		-	-	12.5%	13%
71-80	42%	43%	42%		-	-	14.1%	14%
61-70	33%	14.5%	8%		9%	11.4%	16.1%	16%
51-60	-	21.5%	42%		31%	33.6%	13.9%	15%
41-50	17%	7%	8%		32%	27%	17.8%	18.6%

31-40	8%	-	-		10%	12.3%	14.7%	15%
21-30	-	-	-		13%	12.3%	8%	8%
16-20	-	-	-		5%	3.3%	0.3%	0.4%
No record	-	7%	-		-	-	2.3%	
Hetrosexual	67%	43%	75%		-	79%	-	30.4%
Bisexual	-	-	-		-	0.8%	-	0.2%
Gay	-	-	-		-	0.8	-	0.07%
Lesbian	-	-	-		-	0.8	-	0.07%
Undeclared / Not wishing to report	33%	57%	25%		-	18%	-	4.8%
2440 tenants still need to be asked this question = 64.4%								