

Equality Scheme Statutory Review Update

Introduction

During 2008 the Board and Corporate Management Team took the decision to replace the three statutory equality schemes for race, gender and disability with a Single Equality Scheme. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's Single Equality Scheme encompasses our statutory obligations for race, gender and disability and also extends to cover age, religion and belief, sexual orientation and disadvantage that results from social and economic exclusion.

The decision to implement a Single Equality Scheme has had a direct impact on the statutory annual reviews of the race, disability and gender schemes as well as the requirement to carry out the statutory 3 year review of the race equality scheme. The race, disability and gender schemes were reviewed as an integral part of the development of the Single Equality Scheme. This document outlines the findings of the reviews of the Race and Disability equality schemes and outlines how Strathclyde Fire and Rescue intends to continue to meet its statutory obligations.

In recognition of there no longer being separate schemes for race, disability and gender, individual annual reviews will be replaced by a single annual performance report of progress against the Single Equality Scheme each April to align with internal reporting mechanisms. A full review of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's performance in relation race and disability will be included as part of the Single Equality Scheme annual report. However, this document provides an overview of our performance in respect of the General and Specific Duties for Race and Disability in line with the statutory requirements to report in November and December respectively.

The Decision

The decision was taken to adopt a Single Equality Scheme in recognition of:

- Our responsibilities under equality and diversity extending beyond legislative requirements;
- A streamlining of existing and planned UK legislation relating to all equality strands;
- Current equality impact assessments already covering the 6 six equality strands;
- That equality issues do not stand in isolation from one another and that multiple discrimination can occur;
- Effective delivery of the equalities and diversity agenda is best achieved under a single, streamlined approach;
- Effective mainstreaming of equalities is best achieved through embedding equalities into the normal day-to-day activities of the service, including the action planning and performance reporting mechanisms;
- Maintaining a 'hierarchy' of equality may not be the best method for tackling discrimination.

The Time Frame

10 April 2008	Adoption of revised Mainstreaming Strategy Model Adoption of revised Equality and Diversity Policy Decision to develop a Single Equality Scheme
April – May 2008	Consultation and involvement exercises
April – June 2008	Development of Single Equality Scheme document
June – September 2008	Development of Single Equality Scheme Action Plan
4 October 2008	Board endorses Single Equality Scheme
1 April 2009	First annual report on Single Equality Scheme

The Reviews of Existing Schemes

In developing the Single Equality Scheme, reviews were carried out on each of the existing equality schemes and the findings of these reviews influenced the content of the Single Equality Scheme. This is especially evident in the development of the Action Plan that accompanies the scheme.

Disability

The Disability Equality Duty requires public sector organisations to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons and
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.

Appendix A outlines those steps that Strathclyde Fire and Rescue took to fulfil the general and specific duties.

The review of the Disability Equality Scheme was carried out during the period April – June 2008 as part of the development of the Single Equality Scheme, however, where relevant activities took place following this period they are also noted below. This review covers those activities that took place in SFR in the reporting year 2008, activities completed during 2007 are not reported as part of this review.

Race

The Race Equality Duty requires public sector organisations to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between persons of different racial groups

Appendix B outlines those steps that Strathclyde Fire and Rescue took to fulfil the general and specific duties.

The review of the Race Equality Scheme was carried out during the period April – June 2008 as part of the development of the Single Equality Scheme, however, where relevant activities took place following this period they are also noted below. This review covers those activities that took place in SFR in the reporting year 2008, activities completed during 2007 are not reported as part of this review. The requirement to produce a revised Race Equality Scheme has been achieved through the introduction of a Single Equality Scheme in October 2008.

Conclusion

The Single Equality Scheme is available on Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's website website's home page and the Diversity Team.

You can get further information on the reviews of the Race and Disability equality schemes from the Diversity Team.

For documents in alternative formats please contact the Diversity Team for assistance.

Diversity Team
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue
Headquarters
Bothwell Road
Hamilton
ML3 0EA

Tel: 01698 338 395
Email: Diversity@strathclydefire.org

Elaine Gerrard
HR Manager (Diversity)
Human Resources Directorate
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue

APPENDIX A

REVIEW OF DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Implementing the Disability Equality Scheme	We said we would produce a leaflet summarising the Disability Equality Scheme	We did not issue a leaflet on the Disability Equality Scheme in recognition of the decision made early in 2008 to replace the Scheme with a Single Equality Scheme	A leaflet has been prepared for publication summarising the Single Equality Scheme
Ensure that all SFR policies and practices comply with the General Duty	Provide Equality Impact Assessment Training	SFR continues to provide a rolling programme of Equality Impact Assessment Training	Increase awareness of the calendar of training sessions
	Recommend that all policies are impact assessed prior to submission to the Corporate Management Team	The Corporate Management Team require all draft policies and practices submitted for their consideration have been impact assessed	Further develop the EIA process to include a quality assurance framework.
	Ensure that disability equality is considered within Service Delivery and a format for providing evidence of achievement	Achieved through the introduction of the Single Equality Scheme performance review mechanism (quarterly review of progress through Corporate Performance Team)	Continue to monitor progress and assess the impact on disability

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Ensure that all SFR policies and practices comply with the General Duty cont	Implement a Single Equality Scheme that takes account of Disability Equality	Achieved	Continue to monitor progress and assess the impact on disability
	Develop a framework for reporting performance annually	Achieved through introduction of Single Equality Scheme	First annual report of Single Equality Scheme for April 2009
Monitoring	Employment monitoring by disability	Achieved in part. Disability monitoring is carried out on all elements of the employment function. Developed suite of performance indicators for benchmarking performance across all Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's	Continue to assess the validity of data gathered. Continue to assess the impact of our employment practices on individuals with a disability using statistical information. Continue to develop an electronic integrated HR & Payroll system that will allow for more accurate data collection and analyses.
	Work towards the establishment of monitoring service delivery for impact on disability	Established Corporate Performance Team	Through the Single Equality Scheme and CPT frameworks, continue to develop performance indicator and monitoring measures to assess impact on disability and influence future performance.

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Employment	Ensure our employment practices are accessible to individuals with a disability	<p>We retained the Disability Symbol Double Tick Award.</p> <p>We have invested in the development of an online recruitment portal that is fully accessible.</p> <p>We continue to provide in-house occupational health services and provide for external assistance where appropriate.</p>	Continue to impact assess new policies and practices and review existing policies to assess impact on individuals with a disability.
	Engage our employees	<p>We established an Employee Forum on Disability to facilitate engagement with our employees.</p> <p>The Forum also assists the Service in raising awareness of disability across the workforce. An example of this was the Disability Awareness Day held in September 2008.</p> <p>Members of our Forum on Disability contributed significantly to the development of the Single Equality Scheme and our broader workforce was consulted in its development.</p>	Continue to use a variety of methods for engaging with our employees and include questions relating to disability issues within the employee attitude survey.

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Employment cont.	Introduce revised Bullying & Harassment Policy	Draft policy to be submitted to Employee and Equality Forum 15 th December 2008.	Support introduction of policy through provision of guidance to managers and employees. Assess bullying and harassment in relation to disability.
	Conduct second employee attitude survey	Employees were consulted as part of the Single Equality Scheme and a further employee survey is planned by 2011	Continue to engage with our employees and seek their views in a variety of ways including employee surveys, forums, internal communications and through representative bodies.
	Continue to benchmark our performance against other public authorities.	On behalf of all Scottish Fire & Rescue Authorities, Strathclyde Fire & Rescue developed a suite of performance indicators that incorporates disability. Results will be reported annually to the CFOA(Scotland) Equality & Diversity group. The first review will take place in summer 2009.	Continue to benchmark our performance against other public authorities.
	Continue to work in partnership with external agencies.	We continue to work with Job Centre Plus and Capability Scotland. We have developed closer working relationships with organisations such as Dyslexia Scotwest and Diabetes UK.	Maintain existing contacts and develop new contacts and working relationships with external agencies with the purpose of assisting people into or returning to employment as well as our existing workforce.

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Involvement	Continue to involve and engage with external agencies and community groups.	Participation in Community Planning Partnership arrangements.	Continue to work with external agencies and community groups.

APPENDIX B

REVIEW OF RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Development and Delivery of Race Equality Scheme	Adopt a Single Equality Scheme that incorporates race equality.	Achieved.	Continue to review the ability of the Service to meet its obligations for race equality within the framework of the Single Equality Scheme.
	We said we would produce a leaflet summarising the Race Equality Scheme	We did not issue a leaflet on the Race Equality Scheme in recognition of the decision made early in 2008 to replace the Scheme with a Single Equality Scheme	A leaflet has been prepared for publication summarising the Single Equality Scheme
Assessing the functions and policies, and proposed policies for relevance to the performance of the general duty.	Recommend that all policies are impact assessed prior to submission to the Corporate Management Team	The Corporate Management Team require all draft policies and practices submitted for their consideration have been impact assessed	Further develop the EIA process to include a quality assurance framework.
	Adopt a new method for reporting annually on race equality issues	Achieved through introduction of Single Equality Scheme	First annual report of Single Equality Scheme for April 2009

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Assessing and Consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies on promoting race equality	Continue to establish links with community groups and other external agencies with a view to developing a Partnership Register. Develop a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of partnership working.	A Partnership Register was developed during 2008. A Stakeholder Map which also includes those bodies that we may wish to engage with but do not have formal partnership arrangements with will be published internally in December 2008. A model for evaluating the impact of partnership working has been developed and training of key individuals is taking place in December 2008.	Continue to develop existing working relationships with external agencies and seek new contacts for inclusion in the Stakeholder Map.
Monitoring	Recommend that all policies are impact assessed prior to submission to the Corporate Management Team	The Corporate Management Team require all draft policies and practices submitted for their consideration have been impact assessed	Further develop the EIA process to include a quality assurance framework.
	Undertake a review of the Complaints Procedure.	The Complaints Procedure continues to be the subject of close scrutiny.	Continue to review both the complaints received by the Service and the effectiveness of the Complaints Procedure.
	Continue to ensure that Procurement practices are free from discrimination	The Procurement processes were improved during 2008. A 24 hour access electronic process was introduced with additional guidance for potential contractors.	Continue to ensure that our procurement practices are free from discrimination and fully meet our requirements under best value provisions.

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Monitoring cont.	Undertake positive action activities.	A positive action campaign was implemented during 2008 including: advertising in minority ethnic media; information days for BME applicants; attendance at recruitment fairs specifically targeting BME communities; leaflet and poster campaign targeting venues frequented by minority ethnic people and engagement with key stakeholder to assist in promoting the fire service as a career.	Continue to undertake a range of positive action measures to attract under represented groups into the Service. During 2009 a revised positive strategy will be adopted which will incorporate a rolling programme of positive action initiatives throughout the year.
Publishing	Publish an equality scheme that meets the General and Specific duties of the Race Equality Duty.	Achieved through introduction of Single Equality Scheme	First annual report of Single Equality Scheme for April 2009
Public Access	Introduce corporate Communications Strategy to direct communication style and mechanisms.	Achieved	Continue to assess the effectiveness of our communications through a variety of methods including: evaluating partnership working; engagement through Community Planning Partnerships and direct feedback from key stakeholder groups.

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Public Access cont	Continue to work with Community Planning Partnerships and other stakeholder agencies to allow involvement and influence of service development	Continued to work closely Community Planning Partnerships. Stakeholders invited to influence Single Equality Scheme and its action plan through consultation exercise.	Continue to seek new and more effective ways of involving community groups and stakeholder organisations.
	Establish a co-ordinated approach to activity and the provision of evidence to illustrate the important work carried out by the Service in relation to race equality.	Achieved through the introduction of the Single Equality Scheme action plan and the review mechanism of the Corporate Performance Team.	Monitor and evaluate our performance against the Single Equality Scheme action plan. Review mechanisms set up to review performance to ensure that they are robust and effective tools.
	Ensure that work carried out in relation to the General Duty extend to all areas of our Service.	Established through the adoption of a revised Equality and Diversity Policy which outlines the strategy for mainstreaming race equality work to cover values, service delivery and employment.	Using the Corporate Performance Team review of the Single Equality Scheme action plan assess the extent to which race equality is mainstreamed throughout the Service.

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Training	Collect feedback from Diversity Training in order to design and implement further training interventions	Feedback from training was evaluated and work has commenced on the following areas: Development of a toolkit for positive action use at station level; Equality Impact Assessment training to be compulsory at station commander level and above; sourcing of e-learning toolkit to provide refresher training	Continue to provide Diversity Awareness Training to all new starts. Continue to provide rolling programme of Equality Impact Assessment Training. Introduce new learning and development initiatives such as e-learning modules
Employment	Work towards introduction of electronic integrated HR & Payroll System	Project group established and work progressed.	Complete by 2011
	Introduce revised Bullying & Harassment Policy	Draft policy to be submitted to Employee and Equality Forum 15 th December 2008.	Support introduction of policy through provision of guidance to managers and employees. Assess bullying and harassment in relation to race.
	Conduct second employee attitude survey	Employees were consulted as part of the Single Equality Scheme and a further employee survey is planned by 2011	Continue to engage with our employees and seek their views in a variety of ways including employee surveys, forums, internal communications and through representative bodies.

Relevant Action Plan Section	What we said we would do during 2008	What we did during 2008	What we will do next
Employment cont.	Continue to benchmark our performance against other public authorities.	On behalf of all Scottish Fire & Rescue Authorities, Strathclyde Fire & Rescue developed a suite of performance indicators that incorporates race. Results will be reported annually to the CFOA(Scotland) Equality & Diversity group. The first review will take place in summer 2009.	Continue to benchmark our performance against other public authorities.
	Continue to work in partnership with external agencies.	We continue to work with external agencies and have taken steps to improve lines with for example, ethnic Minority Improvement Centre and Glasgow Anti-Racist Alliance.	Maintain existing contacts and develop new contacts and working relationships with external agencies with the purpose of encouraging under represented groups to join the Service as well as our existing workforce.
	Work to commence on establishing a network for BME employees	Initial planning commenced during 2008 including a strategic revenue bid to help establish and maintain the network	Establish a network for our minority ethnic employees

APPENDIX C

EMPLOYMENT MONITORING

Please note that due to a) the rounding of figures b) that not all individuals complete all elements of the monitoring forms and c) different methods used for gathering data the figures provided do not always add up to 100%.

Workforce Profile at 1 July 2008

CATEGORY		MALE	FEMALE
TOTAL	3572	3097 (86.7%)	475 (13.3%)
Wholetime	2118	2086 (98.5%)	32 (1.5%)
Volunteer	260	221 (85%)	39 (15%)
Retained	607	577 (95%)	30 (5%)
Control	69	5 (7.2%)	64 (92.8%)
Support	518	208 (40.2%)	310 (59.8%)

CATEGORY	DECLARED DISABLED	NOT DISABLED	BME	WHITE
TOTAL	10 (0.3%)	3562 (99.7%)	14 (0.4%)	3558 (99.6%)
Wholetime	3 (0.14%)	2115 (99.86%)	9 (0.4%)	2109 (99.6%)
Volunteer	0 (0%)	260 (100%)	1 (0.38%)	259 (99.62%)
Retained	2 (0.33%)	605 (99.67%)	1 (0.16%)	606 (99.84%)
Control	1 (1.45%)	68 (98.55%)	0 (0%)	69 (100%)
Support	4 (0.77%)	514 (99.23%)	3 (0.58%)	515 (99.42%)

Employment Practices as at February 2008

Employment Practice	Number of cases involving	
	BME	Individuals with a disability
Grievance	0	0
Discipline	0	0
Bullying & Harassment	0	0
Training requests received and granted	3	6
Training requests received and declined	0	0
Flexible Working requests received in total	0	0