

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	28 th October 2010
3.	Title:	Equality and Cohesion Update
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executives

5. Summary

Following a request by Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel this report provides an update on Equality and Diversity issues including community cohesion in schools, Connecting Communities, the Equality Framework review, and complaints monitoring.

6. Recommendations

That Members note the update on Equality and Diversity issues including community cohesion in schools, Connecting Communities, the Equality Framework review, and equality data monitoring of complaints.

7. Proposals and details

7.1 Rotherham School Linking Project

A Schools Linking Project, in partnership with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hallam and the Council was formally launched on 14 July 2010. This is the first project to be funded and supported by the national Schools Linking Network in South Yorkshire. The project links schools with different pupil populations, in respect of ethnicity, faith and socio-economic background of pupils. By working together on joint activities and visiting each other's schools, the project aims to help children and young people explore their identity, understand diversity and develop dialogue with others. Activities can be structured around individual curriculum or cross-curricula themes.

The national School Linking Network provides support to the project, which includes learning resources and lesson plans for teachers and training for the project coordinators. Linking activities take place over three terms; each term's activities commence with a CPD training session for teachers. In the first term, the pupils explore their own identity and community, exchange information with their link school and meet at a neutral venue. Rotherham United Community Sports Trust, Rotherham Titans and Crowden Outdoor Centre are providing the venues and facilitating activities for the first meetings. School Linking Network provide £37,800 funding to cover the cost of employing a part-time coordinator (based at the Diocese of Hallam); supply cover for teachers attending CPD training; and a contribution to the costs of activities. The Diocese of Hallam, Chief Executives Directorate and Children & Young Peoples Services are providing additional resource (employee time) to manage and monitor the project.

The schools currently involved, in their link pairs/clusters are:

Secondary

- Clifton St. Bernard's Dinnington
- Rawmarsh Winterhill
- St. Pius Link school still being sought

Primary

- Sitwell St. Mary's RC, Herringthorpe
- Kimberworth St. Bede's RC
- Meadowview Blackburn
- St. Gerard's RC Canklow
- St. Anne's Herringthorpe
- St. Mary's RC, Maltby St Catherine's RC (Sheffield)

Funding from School Linking Network is provided for one-year only as pump priming, on the expectation that the link will become self-sustaining for the schools involved.

7.2 Cohesion duties for schools and how local schools are performing

Schools have a duty to promote community cohesion and all schools are accountable to Ofsted under their 2009 framework. Schools will be assessed on the extent to

which the school has developed an understanding of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics of its community in a local, national and global context.

As with the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda, community cohesion needs to be an integral part of any school's planning and delivery. The best approach is through teamwork, integrated system leadership and developing a whole-school understanding of the importance and contribution this area has to improving opportunities for children, young people and families. Teamwork involves staff within the school and also governors, parents, pupils, the local authority and multi-agency teams within the area (including voluntary organisations and the children's trust).

The evaluation tool Ofsted uses is described below in the table together with the scoring rating.

<p>Outstanding (1)</p>	<p>The school acts vigorously and successfully, using information from an incisive analysis of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context at local and national levels to focus its exceptional contribution to community cohesion. It evaluates its work rigorously in order to build on its many strengths. The school's actions have a markedly beneficial impact on community cohesion within its local community and beyond. The school community is highly cohesive and the pupils have a strong understanding of what is required to maintain this state.</p>
<p>Good (2)</p>	<p>The school demonstrates that it makes a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion based on a clear analysis of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context. It evaluates its contribution to community cohesion and can identify clear impact but this may be uneven across the three strands. There are effective plans that promote engagement with a range of community groups beyond the school and the immediate community. The impact of its work is felt strongly within the school and pupils from different backgrounds get on noticeably well with each other.</p>
<p>Satisfactory (3)</p>	<p>The school has taken a set of actions based on an informed understanding of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context. It is actively promoting community cohesion within the school community and is reaching out to other communities. Its work has a generally positive impact within the school, which is a largely cohesive community, but there may be only limited evidence of its success in promoting community cohesion beyond the school. Evaluation of its work is patchy but provides some relevant information.</p>
<p>Inadequate (4)</p>	<p>The school has an inadequate understanding of the religious, ethnic or socio-economic factors which define its context. Or It does not plan or evaluate its contribution to community cohesion either within or beyond the school. Or The school's work makes little effective contribution to community cohesion so that the school itself is not a cohesive community.</p>

Applying the above evaluation tool to Rotherham schools Ofsted has assessed:

- Thirty one primary schools were inspected on the effectiveness with which the schools promote community cohesion, one scored outstanding, twelve scored 2, sixteen scored 3 and three scored 4.
- Three secondary schools were inspected, two scored 2 and one scored 3.
- Four special schools examined, two scored 2 and one scored 3.

7.3 Progress on the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) Improvement Plan

Since the award of Excellence through the Diversity Peer Challenge in November 2009 and submission of an improvement plan to the Improvement & Development Agency significant changes have occurred in the political, legal and economic environment. The provisions of the Equality Act 2010 are not yet fully defined, particularly in relation to the new specific duties for public bodies which come into force in April 2011, although the provisions relating to goods and services; facilities; and employment became law on 1st October this year. These environmental changes have occasioned a review of the original plan and the feedback from the Diversity Peer Challenge in order to consider overall feasibility of the original actions and to consolidate work on the EFLG, Equality Act and Single Equality Scheme in an integrated approach.

An overview of progress under each of the five EFLG headings follows:

a) Knowing your Community and Equality Mapping

- An initial survey has been carried out to inform the development of a profile of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) communities and will be followed up with focus groups to explore the issues raised in more depth.
- A detailed “New Communities and Migration” Briefing has been produced as a central source of information on new Black and Minority Ethnic communities and migration trends.
- The profile of disabled people has been updated.
- Audit of current equality monitoring (what is collected and how data is used) by directorates will be finished by March 2011, with changes implemented from April 2011 in line with the requirements of the Equality Act to publish information.
- In August 2010 Cabinet approved a proposal for a Customer Service Consolidation Programme to maximise the use of RBT and Council investments in customer service infrastructure, including people, processes, buildings and technologies.

b) Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment

- The Single Equality Scheme (SES) has been updated and final changes will be to update the section on the specific equality duties once these are confirmed. Revisions have been made to the SES implementation plan to

incorporate the EFLG work and this will be delivered through the work programme for the Corporate Equality and Diversity Officers Group (CEDOG). The corporate Equality Policy has also been refreshed to reflect the new Corporate Plan priorities.

- Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) continue to be carried out by Directorates and a new schedule will be developed for implementation from April 2011. Refresher workshops are held as required – for example Early Years in July 2010.
 - NAS have carried out or commenced 22 EIAs so far during 2010 with some still at a draft stage as consultation is ongoing. Examples include: Rothercare Direct - impact of extended rotas and training of staff in new protocols; Parish Charters - good practice needs sharing with Parish Councils where tackling barriers has begun;
 - Finance regularly review their EIAs and actions are considered and incorporated within the service planning round.
 - CYPS scheduled 29 EIAs originally for this year and subsequently added another ten. To date nine have been completed, including the Aiming High for Disabled Children – Short Break Strategy and the C&YP Plan 2010-2013, with a further 16 at draft stage.
 - HR has carried out EIAs on a range of updated policies. The EIA on the Recruitment Management System (on-line job applications) led to a change to allow people to apply off-line for reasons related to disability.
 - In EDS 18 EIAs have been completed in the last year. Positive examples include: Emergency Planning - needs of older people, BME and disabled people are now incorporated into protocols set up to deal with emergency situations. For the BME community a group of volunteers has been set up to help in an emergency. Similar arrangements have been set up for disabled people. Both these interventions were identified whilst carrying out the EIA. Engineers on Street Corner - equality monitoring question recently added to standard questionnaire to ensure equality in service delivery. Seven schemes were assessed in the first year – no disparity in satisfaction levels between people on the grounds of disability, ethnicity, age and gender. A new report is currently being compiled, which will assess 16 different projects/schemes.
- Future scrutiny work will be considering how best to deliver the wide agenda on self regulation, transparency and accountability, which will encompass equality and cohesion.
- Further embedding of the current process for reviewing equality and diversity requirements in contracts by contract managers will be rolled out with the Community Engagement and Cohesion Manager due to attend a procurement managers group by December 2010.

- Updated committee report template includes a compulsory section on equality and cohesion.
- The updated CEDOG work programme includes the following actions:
 - to strengthen DMT level quality assurance of the consideration of equality and cohesion implications in policy and decision making.
 - to develop and maintain a structured approach to addressing the equality agenda in all directorates (either through a standing item on DMT agendas or through a directorate equality group).
- Equality objectives will be aligned and included in the refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

c) Community Engagement and Satisfaction

- The Council recognised that information about our local LGBT community was limited, hence the survey and work to develop the profile mentioned above.
- NAS incorporate sexuality monitoring in surveys, for example housing allocations/carer – about 80% responded to the questions and approx 3% identified as lesbian or gay and 1% as bisexual.

d) Responsive Services and Customer Care

- Concerns about under-reporting of hate incidents prompted the following actions:
 - New structures for work on hate incidents and tension monitoring
 - Advertising on Rotherham Interchange plasma screens
 - Community Cohesion Officer is developing and rolling out Hate Crime Awareness training for front-line staff across partners, initially targeting Safer Neighbourhood Teams
 - New RMBC web and intranet hate incident reporting e-form
- Due to the changing demographic profile of Rotherham the corporate strapline to promote access to published information has been simplified and revised. It is still translated into five community languages with Slovak and Kurdish having replaced Chinese and French, in addition to Arabic, Farsi and Urdu.
- Work is continuing to improve accessibility to the Council website.
- RiDO – Market Stall administration; RiDO – Business development; Development Control - planning applications; and Streetpride – Community Delivery; are all monitored on an on going basis. Analysed data currently shows equality in service delivery.
- NAS carry out monitoring and analysis in relation to a range of services including Applicants Participating/Not Participating in Key Choices; Furnished Homes customers and Adaptations customers. Monitoring of Adult Services use by different groups demonstrated further research and needs assessment

work is called for to understand why there is continued consistent low take up from BME communities for Adult Social Care services, particularly around residential and nursing care.

e) Modern and Diverse Workforce

For simplicity to keep all learning and development activity together in one block Member development has also been included under this heading.

- Two seminars on community cohesion were delivered by the Institute of Community Cohesion (ICoCo) on 3/3/10 and 16/3/10. Prevent workshop was delivered to Members by IDeA Prevent Peer Advisors on 30/6/10. Induction for new Elected Members included equality and diversity in the session on the Code of Conduct. A workshop on EIAs is also planned for later this year.
- Further publicity will be rolled out to encourage more employees to update their personal information in YourSelf, which now includes a wider range of equality information – on disability, caring responsibilities, sexuality and religion/belief.
- The latest Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) carried out this year within CYPS included these wider categories for the first time and these will also be included in 2011 for the full RMBC EOS survey.
- Under the new mentoring initiative there are 14 mentoring relationships taking place, comprising of 28 mentees and mentors in total.
- 28 people have achieved Skills Gain qualifications with another 70 who are still completing.
- Information to support the roll out of Worksmart is being disseminated through briefings and Q&A pages on the intranet. Across CXD, EDS, NAS and CYPS nearly 700 people have been through the Worksmart process, with a further 76 in EDS to be signed off imminently and work having recently commenced with another team of 150 employees in NAS.

7.4 Complaints monitoring

Scrutiny Panel members had previously raised their concerns that equalities data was not being collected for complaints. Following enquiry it can now be confirmed that the information is being collected and can be reported on over any time period.

There is however an issue about the low number of people who fill in the equalities information, resulting in difficulties in using the data to drive service improvements, and thus officers from Chief Executives and Financial Services Directorates are exploring whether there are opportunities to collate this info in a different way, to give more meaningful service data.

This information will be being reported via the normal reporting routes (SLT, Cabinet Member and PSOC) by Financial Services.

7.5 National Indicator 4 TSF (Target Support Fund) Project (2009-2011) and Connecting Communities (2009-2010)

7.5.1 Target Support Fund

The Target Support Fund (2009-2011) was approved by the Department for Communities and Local Government and this also complemented the Connecting Communities Project (see 7.5.2 below).

In Year 1 (2009-2010) the following activities were initiated.

Rotherham People Power (Community Engagement Bulletin)

- 2 Rotherham People Power Bulletins published and distributed (Feb 2010 & August 2010), the February edition was highly commended by the previous Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
- 4 Training sessions for volunteers have taken place to enable them to quality assure Rotherham People Power bulletins.

Disabled People

- 33 people with learning disabilities taken part in the active citizenship course organised and run by Speak Up a local voluntary sector organisation. This has been promoted as good practice at the RACLA (Regional Active Citizenship Alliance) People Power Conference on 1st October 2010 in York with Speak Up alongside its learners running a workshop on the work they have done and showcasing the materials produced by the disabled learners.

Young People

- 3 members of the Children and Young People Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium, RUCST (Rotherham United Community Sports Trust), UMCC (United Multi Cultural Centre), GROW (Rotherham's Women's Network) have all been working with disengaged young people in Rotherham North and South.
 - GROW- young women developed 'How your borough works materials'.
 - Worked with a group of young people in Masbrough through RUCST, who have secured a piece of land for sport – and undertook a visit to the parliament as a result and are setting up a Masborough Youth Forum (cited as good practice in the YHEP's (Yorkshire and Humber Empowerment Partnership) Contributions to a Bigger Civil Society document, which has been sent to the new Government.
 - UMCC- effective use of flip video to improve communication. As a result the young people have recorded a number of issues that they would like addressed in their area, ranging from the removal of graffiti to the repairing of bus shelters, with assistance from elected members and local services.

In year 2 (2010-2011) the following activities have initiative.

Disabled People

- Speak Up has commenced the active citizenship course with 13 people who have physical disabilities which started on 13th September.

Young People

- The Children and Young People Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium is working on Year 2 objectives to invite expressions of interest from consortium members. Using the model of communication and influence developed and refined in year one, the project will be rolled out in the remaining five Area Assembly areas, using the local voluntary community sector. An evaluation event will take place in March 2011 to explore some of the good practice and how we can share and embed the learning in some of the practices when engaging young people.

Rotherham People Power

- Even though the Rotherham News has been discontinued, the remaining 3 community engagement bulletins 'Rotherham People Power' will still be produced and disseminated working alongside the volunteers who have been trained to quality assure the bulletins before they are published and distributed. Consultation has been undertaken with volunteers to look at how the bulletin is produced and disseminated as widely as possible. The indications are that the volunteers would like 3 separate bulletins targeting young people, older people and the disabled people.

7.5.2 Connecting Communities (2009-10)

Maltby Model Village Community Association

- An Impact Survey was carried out in October 2009 which has led to identification of priorities which has informed a Maltby Model Village Neighbourhood Agreement which will address issues such as crime, environment, ASB and housing etc. The Connecting Communities programme provided a Local Improvement Advisor to facilitate the development of the Neighbourhood Agreement working with the with members of the Maltby Model Village Community Association, WV Area Assembly and local service providers to ensure they meet the local needs identified. This agreement has been agreed by the Proud Board and was launched on 12th October and the Agreement was published in a calendar version. Also as part of the Connecting Communities resources, 12 people from the Maltby Model Village Community Association were trained as community champions to work on the Neighbourhood Agreement and 10 partners in the area have worked with the community champions to develop the Neighbourhood Agreement for the Maltby Model Village. This is being promoted as good practice in the YHEP Voices Publication.

Work with Birk Holts TARA through Rother Fed

This work includes:

- Joint SNT/youth service visit with families Support for Young People to get involved in supporting the TARA, the community house and activities on the estate
- Support for all community to get involved in supporting the TARA, the community house and activities on the estate
- Capacity building training with community members

Community Funding Training for Community groups (TSF)

- There are current gaps, community groups do not know where they can help fill and contribute to area requirements. Therefore the Wentworth Valley Area Assembly with Maltby Town Council will get together the Maltby Community groups- working with service providers and funders to get things done! The idea is to move forward from a 'meet the funder' type event and produce something more interactive. There will be a series of Meet the funder workshops which will explain how to apply for funding and applying for funding with service providers support and information.

Connecting Communities in Dinnington

- In Dinnington there were intergenerational issues as there was a negative perception of young people in the area and therefore the following projects were developed as a result of Connecting Communities and NI4 TSF

Tactile/Sensory intergenerational work with Davies Court Residential Home (Connecting Communities)

- Supported Dinnington Comp Students in Year 12 (as part of A Level work), to turn memories captured by dementia residents at the Home, to produce tactile sensory art pieces for display around the home and supporting Dinnington Comprehensive Students in Year 10 (undertaking a BTEC Construction Course) to build a sensory garden. This is been promoted as good practice in the YHEP Voices Publication.

A Dispersal DVD has been produced with young people and shown the impact the dispersal order has had on ASB/Crime (NI4 TSF)

- Detached Youth Workers, Area Assembly and the JADE Project (Just Another Dance Event) which is a local project to provide an informal drop in provision and focused music technology and DJ training for young people engaged with young people during the dispersal order period to identify aspirations and choices and to work with them as part of exit strategy to identify possible projects. The DVD focussed initially on why it was required, the triggers/reasons for such radical action etc, and then go through a series of film, captions and music to take people through a journey with support from the JADE Project. The DVD show's footage of the area, will include interviews with detached youth workers, police, and young people who experienced it

first hand, with a clear message that it's about community cohesion and working together. Wanted viewers of the DVD to go away thinking about the difficulties young people today face compared to when they were younger; and that young people should not be discriminated against or isolated when communities are making decisions about services or changes in their neighbourhoods.

Local Democracy Week in Dinnington (11th to 15th October 2010) (TSF)

Initiatives undertaken include:

- **Political Speed Dating:** Students will be able to meet, challenge and question notable people working in their community about issues they feel strongly about.
- **RVS Manifesto Presentations:** Opportunity for students to experience writing and planning a future for their community.
- **Question Time:** Junior and Infant School students will be able to pose questions on any subject to and get honest and open responses. Creating a two-way, honest, transparent relationship in a relaxing, fun environment

A DVD will be produced capturing all these events.

Connecting Communities Research

The Campaign Company was commissioned to do some further research across Rotherham to look into perceptions of community cohesion. Interviews took place with senior public sector managers, front line customer facing staff, and members of the public across Rotherham. A report has been produced analysing the findings and have been disseminated in a council and partners workshops. Some of the key headlines from the research were:

- The One Town One Community (OTOC) initiative is being recognised by partners and different sections of the community and there is a need to maintain the momentum by rolling OTOC to the outer parts of the Borough.
- Recognise the continued impact of industrial decline and how this could potentially erode cultural and social foundations.
- Current economic climate poses further cohesion challenges and this needs to be managed and lead carefully
- There is a need to communicate positive messages back to the public making more use of community and residents as potential champions to 'spread the positive messages'.
- There is a clear correlation between areas where 'the Council' is active, visible and working well and community satisfaction.
- Opportunities for Elected Members and Parish Councils to be more actively involved in the OTOC need to be explored.
- Many local people do feel positive about their area and we need to build on this.

8. Finance

None specific arising from this report.

9 Risks and Uncertainties

None compliance with the new public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010 could lead to enforcement action by the Equalities & Human Rights Commission. A number of the provisions are yet to become law so the implications for the council are uncertain.

10 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The new Equality Act 2010 is now law. The main parts of the Act have come into force on the 1st of October 2010. The Equality Act 2010 replaces the existing anti-discrimination laws with a much easier and consistent Single Act. The Act aims to simplify and strengthen the equality law that is already in place, such as the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act. It also contains a range of new rights, powers and obligations to help the drive towards equality.

The Act creates a new integrated Equality Duty which will mean that public bodies (and private bodies that deliver a public function) will need to consider the needs of diverse groups when designing and delivering services so people can get fairer opportunities and equal services considering the characteristics mentioned above (of age, race, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity)

11 Background Papers and Consultation

- Equality Act 2010: What do I need to know? Government Equalities Office – GEO
http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality_act_2010/equality_act_2010_what_do_i_n.aspx
- Equality Act, Equality and Human Rights Commission - EHRC
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/>
- New Equality Act guidance, Download the guidance - EHRC
- <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>
- How fair is Britain? Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations in 2010 - The first Triennial Review released by EHRC – October 2010
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/triennial_review/how_fair_is_britain_-_complete_report.pdf
- [An Anatomy](#) of Economic Inequality in the UK - Report of the National Equality Panel, Jan 2010

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