

**East of England
European Regional Development Fund Programme 2007 - 2013
Local Management Committee – Equality and Diversity Objectives**

The East of England Local Management Committee has adopted the following strategic Equality and Diversity Objectives from January 2012

- Leadership and Strategy: demonstrable commitment
- Policies, procedures, processes: equalities inputs and outputs mainstreamed
- Partnerships and Resources: actions to take account of diverse needs of stakeholders/beneficiaries
- Projects and programme results: systematic information collected

These objectives will be reviewed annually.

Evidence of consultation in mainstreaming equality and diversity into the ERDF programme

1 Equalities Group (EG) is a virtual group reporting to LMC, composed of representatives of hard to reach people, voluntary sector representatives and E&D experts, with questions on good practice, equalities issues, reports and action plans circulated for comment as required. The Chairman attends Competitiveness Delivery Group (CDG) to ensure equality and diversity matters are fully discussed at each level of assessment.

Terms of Reference for the Equalities Group, are:

- Develop strategic objectives with an action plan to set out methods for equalities mainstreaming across all of the region's ERDF programmes.
- Identify and promote good practice
- Monitor the equalities aspects of project selection criteria
- Prepare quarterly reports
- Monitor the implementation of equalities mainstreaming objectives and action plan

Actions to date (January 2012)

- Revised strategic objectives agreed. Action Plan for 2007-December 2010 has been implemented. Action plan is being reviewed and revised for 2012-2013.
- Good practice has been identified and promoted in individual projects through the work of the Facilitators.
- Project Selection Criteria were written with E&D outcomes specifically required. Concept and Business cases are screened by CDG for appropriate E&D targets for beneficiaries
- LMC has received a quarterly update at every meeting
- When projects are completed, they will be monitored

2 Local Management Committee members composed of local government representatives, voluntary groups, key funding stakeholders, MEPs: have agreed to implement the following in all ERDF programmes

- “have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups and
- foster good relations between people from different groups.”.

This applies to the protected characteristics of: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief (including philosophy), gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity. Marriage and civil partnership requires elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

Consideration has been given at CDG meetings on the effect of LMC policies and practices on equality for service users (see CDG minutes). All policies and practices in managing the ERDF programme have been examined for their effect upon equality for different groups (see Project Selection Criteria). The examination has influenced improvements such as the early assessment of projects from the beginning of the 2007-13 programme against the Excellence Framework. Case studies on projects include the outreach work and positive action around E&D for beneficiaries (see case studies such as the Disability Essex Centre). Policies and practices have furthered the three aims of the General Duty in: setting standards for the project leaders, requiring compliance with good E&D practice, demonstrating how different groups have worked effectively together towards the common goal of the project (see Case studies).

Information on the extent to which policies, procedures and actions have been improved was obtained from beneficiaries, project leaders, members of LMC and members of EG. Information was particularly gained on gender, race and disability requirements. This is now being extended to people with other protected characteristics.

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