



Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee
15 February 2012

One County One Team, Fairness and Respect Strategy

Purpose of the report: Policy development and review

This report:

- updates the Committee on the development of the Council's Fairness and Respect Strategy; and
- as part of the consultation to finalise the Strategy, invites the Committee to comment on the draft priorities to be included in it.

Introduction

1. The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty that places new statutory responsibilities on public bodies. In order to ensure that Surrey County Council complies with the new Duty and to support the organisation's commitment to promote fairness and respect in the services it provides and the way in which it operates, the Council is developing a Fairness and Respect Strategy. This Strategy will replace the Council's previous policies on equality and diversity.

Fairness and Respect

Background

2. The *One County One Team*, Corporate Strategy 2012-2017 was endorsed by the Cabinet on 31 January 2012 and presented for approval to the County Council on 7 February 2012. The Council is developing a Fairness and Respect Strategy that will be aligned to and support the delivery of the Corporate Strategy. It will set out how the Council will embed fairness and respect in its One Team approach to becoming the most effective Council in England.
3. The Fairness and Respect Strategy is also a response to the new statutory duties placed on public bodies. The duties require the County Council to set equality objectives every four years beginning 6 April 2012. The Council is taking a proportionate approach to these requirements. It is complying by integrating delivery of fairness and respect priorities, which fulfil this duty, into

the mainstream of Council business planning and performance management arrangements

4. The Council's commitment to fairness and respect is aligned with the Government's aim to redefine the relationship between public services and citizens. Its emphasis is on empowering people to take greater responsibility and focussing resources in a way that is fair and delivers value for money.

Developing the draft Fairness and Respect priorities

5. A key element of the Fairness and Respect Strategy will be the commitment made to deliver a small number of priorities. These priorities have been identified through analysis of existing data, internal testing and refinement with Directorates and consultation with external stakeholders via the Council's established forums.
6. Developing the fairness and respect priorities alongside the Corporate Strategy outcomes was initially agreed by the Council's Quality Board on 18 July 2011. This allowed time to develop the approach with the Corporate and Directorate Leadership Teams, and through Directorate Equality Groups.
7. A cross-partner advisory group, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, has also endorsed the approach and considered the draft priorities as they have developed. In addition, public health colleagues within NHS Surrey have contributed to the underpinning analysis.

The proposed approach

8. Set out below are the proposed priorities to be included in the Fairness and Respect Strategy and the associated Corporate Strategy outcome which each supports. Officers would welcome the views of Committee Members on these draft priorities both as Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and as Chair's of their respective Select Committee.

One County, One Team – Fairness and Respect Strategy**Draft priorities**

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Draft Fairness and Respect Priorities
Our economy is strong and competitive	Work with public, private and third sector partners to increase employment and training opportunities for young people (19-25)
Every child has a great start to life	Invest in our support to schools to further the attainment of pupils, especially those from vulnerable groups
	Provide targeted support to low income families to increase access to employment, training and improve quality of life
Every child or adult in need of care is protected and supported to lead an independent life	Continue to support older people, physically disabled and learning disabled residents to live independently
	Reduced differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities
	Support carers to balance their caring role and maintain their independence and quality of life
Surrey has strong and vibrant communities	Increase volunteering rates across all of Surrey's communities
	Reduce instances of domestic abuse within Surrey
The county is low-carbon with a sustainable infrastructure that conserves our rich environment	Ensure rural communities have access to services through new technology
Surrey County Council is acknowledged as the most effective council in England	Increase our understanding of the needs of Surrey's residents and their differing experiences of Council services
	Surrey County Council's workforce is representative of the communities it serves

9. Progress on meeting the fairness and respect priorities will be monitored through the quarterly Cabinet business report, which is already scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Financial and value for money implications

10. The development of the Council's Fairness and Respect Strategy is being undertaken as part of its annual business planning process. Priorities within this

Strategy will be integrated into Directorate Strategies and delivered within existing resources.

Equalities Implications

11. The Fairness and Respect Strategy supports the Council in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty, specifically by ensuring the Council has agreed equality objectives for the organisation by 6 April 2012.

Risk Management Implications

12. There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.
13. Integrating fairness and respect priorities into the Council's Directorate Strategies will help ensure that risks associated with them are managed as part of the Council's performance management arrangements.

Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy

14. The proposed approach described in this report is aligned to the *One County One Team*, Corporate Strategy 2012 – 2017 and will support the achievement of the Council's vision to become the most effective Council in England by 2017.

Recommendations:

15. That Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
 - Comments on the draft priorities to be included in the Council's Fairness and Respect Strategy.

Next steps:

16. The *One County One Team*, Fairness and Respect Strategy will be finalised and presented to the Quality Board on 27 February 2012 en route to Cabinet approval on 27 March 2012.

Report contact: Mike Wiltshire, Senior Policy Manager, Policy and Performance, Chief Executive's Office

Contact details: 0208 541 7723, mike.wiltshire@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

- Government Equality Office (2011) Equality Act 2010 – Specific Duties to Support the Equality Duty. What do I need to know?
- Government Equality Office (2011) Public Sector equality Duty. What do I need to know?
- *One County One Team*, Corporate Strategy 2012 – 2017