

Group Finance

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Introduction to Group Finance

As a provider of financial and commercial services we have a key role to play in contributing to the Department's agenda of equality and opportunity for all by ensuring that our financial and commercial policies and the services we deliver embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity.

Group Finance remains committed to ensuring its services embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity. We are also committed to equality and diversity within our workforce. We have made good progress in ensuring that these commitments, reinforced by our values, are embedded in our day-to-day working practices with all our customers, colleagues and partners. However we recognise that we still have some way to go before we achieve our vision of being recognised not just for our professionalism but also more importantly for the way that we welcome, respect and treat the contribution of all individuals.

We continue to involve and consult with our employees as we progress our equality schemes and our diversity action plans; we will use surveys and focus or discussion groups. We will monitor results and maintain action plans to improve our performance on diversity and equality.

Why we are reviewing our disability and gender schemes early

In our equality schemes annual progress reports, published in November 2007, we explained that we had decided to review all our equality schemes in 2008 for the following reasons:

- race legislation requires race equality schemes to be reviewed by May 2008;
- to take on board comments on our first disability and gender equality schemes;
- to move towards our objective of mainstreaming and aligning with the usual April-March planning cycle used across government, and to align our cycle with the Spending Review cycle; and
- to move towards a single equality scheme.

This will help to embed diversity and equality into the way we do business. As this review is significantly earlier than required for disability and gender, we discussed this decision with the Disability Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission before they became part of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights in October 2007. They supported the proposal to carry out the third year review early with a 'light touch' review of our disability and gender equality schemes at the same time as we review our race equality schemes.

Our aims and objectives

Our business aim is to support and enable the Department for Work and Pensions to deliver its key objectives and outcomes.

Our customers are:

- Department for Work and Pensions businesses and client groups to whom we provide commercial and strategic financial management advice;
- Ministers, the Departmental Board and the Executive Team to whom we provide corporate planning, financial and performance management and assurance.

We provide them with the following key services:

- a commercial strategy to deliver and evaluate contracts worth £3.5 billion for 2008/09, including the delivery of Welfare to Work programmes and estates services;
- we provide commercial expertise and support to employees concerning £3.8 billion yearly expenditure with external suppliers – the largest civil procurement expenditure in Government;
- we have overall responsibility for the management of the Department for Work and Pensions contract with Land Securities Trillium for the provision of fully serviced accommodation for most of the Department for Work and Pensions, including Jobcentre Plus, The Pension, Disability and Carers Service, Child Support Agency and our Corporate & Shared Services;
- we have overall responsibility for the Department's contribution to the United Kingdom Strategy for Sustainable Development and its associated social, economic and environmental objectives and targets. Diversity, equality and community issues form a significant part of the United Kingdom Strategy;
- we lead the Department for Work and Pensions' planning and performance management function, negotiating spending provision for the Department's £7.945 billion (2008-09) Departmental Expenditure Limit;
- we specify the systems that pay benefits to customers, along with paying Department for Work and Pensions salaries;
- we provide assurance on the risk management activities and controls in managing social security benefit expenditure and administrative expenditure;
- we work with the National Audit Office and other external stakeholders towards removing all qualifications for Department for Work and Pensions Accounts;

- we develop and maintain finance policies and controls, and ensure that external and internal standards in finance policy and practice are met;
- we develop and implement the finance strategy, and ensure that the Executive Team's sub-committees discharge their corporate responsibilities;
- we lead the retention, recruitment and development of finance professionals within the Department.

Overview of progress

Over the last year the Group Finance diversity champion and Group Finance diversity managers have spent much time and effort planning, assessing and promoting activities that will enable us to meet the objectives and actions we have committed to in our schemes. A detailed activity plan has been drawn up and is to be published on our intranet site.

These are some areas where we have made significant progress:

- we have commenced a continuing training programme to provide relevant employees with the skills required to undertake equality impact assessments;
- equality impact assessments undertaken on priority areas of policy and functions including Department for Work and Pensions Estates Strategy, Financial Management Development Scheme and Communications Strategy;
- detailed planning sessions and workshops have been held to identify key activities and communications required to deliver objectives and actions outlined in Group Finance equality schemes plans;
- induction processes have been improved and best practices shared throughout the group;
- we provide reasonable adjustments for all staff and follow accessibility guidance, and have improved our process for collating quarterly statistics on provisions that have been made;
- the Group Finance management team has attended a recruitment diversity workshop;
- analysis work underway to identify ways to improve Group Finance current diversity figures for both staff in post and new employees in line with Department for Work and Pensions targets;
- key performance indicators have been identified to monitor progress of our diversity action plan and of diversity targets.

Group Finance

We follow departmental policies for recruitment and development of staff. However Group Finance does have specific responsibility for the recruitment and development of finance professionals – accountants, auditors, procurement specialists, etc.

We are reviewing the diversity of these professions within the Department for Work and Pensions using data obtained from relevant professional institutes. We have significantly improved the diversity of applicants, particularly from ethnic minority groups, for our training schemes. Though we had previously used media, targeted at ethnic groupings, this had not been particularly successful for us.

We improved our recruitment pool by including associations and societies at the universities run by the students themselves, such as the Bristol University Afro-Caribbean Student Society, and relevant charities, such as Ethnic Access Link, Somalian Employment and Training Project etc. 55% of applicants in this exercise were from minority ethnic groupings but will continue to look at diversity of applicants, and each stage in the process.

The Department has a number of flexible working policies designed to help employees achieve a good work life balance. These policies include flexible start and finish times; part time and or term time working patterns and home or remote working options. There are also arrangements for employees to take special leave to help in an emergency.

In order to help employees achieve a good work life balance the Department has set up a work life balance network group, run by staff for staff. The group has a remit to raise awareness of work life balance and to influence new policy to include work life balance. Feeding into the wide cross government agenda, the Department also has a representative on the Whitehall Well-being working group, which aims to improve individuals' well-being.

We regularly monitor Group Finance employee data against our Group Finance diversity targets in our Information Technology systems and a paper was presented at the September 2007 Group Finance deputies' forum and was further discussed in October when detailed analysis was presented on achievements against targets. This is being monitored, reported monthly and findings presented to future deputies forum.

The People and Professional Capability Team has carried out analysis work in conjunction with Human Resources to analyse and identify improvements in diversity representation amongst the three professions across the department and also to widen the analysis to other areas.

Risk Assurance Division has conducted an external recruitment exercise and provided Group Finance deputy forum with a paper on the management of the exercise and of the diversity considerations in this process.

Balanced scorecard and key performance indicators are now in place for diversity monitoring and these have been expanded upon to be more implicit in their requirements in line with Department for Work and Pensions monitoring targets. This will also enable Group Finance to highlight the good work already completed and underway in a number of the teams and this will be reflected in the additional key performance indicators on the Group Finance scorecard.

Mentoring

Group Finance is piloting the reverse mentoring scheme with grade 6s and Senior Civil Servants across the country. We are also participating in conducting a mentoring circles pilot in London with the Diversity and Equality Director taking the lead. This will help participants to identify and resolve barriers under-represented groups may face when looking at their career progression within the Department.

Impact assessments

The Department for Work and Pensions has developed processes to ensure that we assess change, and this is detailed in the Department for Work and Pensions equality schemes.

As part of this process Group Finance has and will continue, by using Department for Work and Pensions processes, to assess all its own specific policies to ensure that the general duty requirement is complied with. Our assessments will be published in line with the departmental policy.

We have invited representatives from the Department for Work and Pensions' Diversity and Equality Centre of Expertise to deliver impact assessment workshops to our staff. This is a continuing process. By offering these workshops we have ensured a greater understanding of

- what an equality impact assessment is;
- our legislative commitments to carry out such assessments;
- what we must impact assess and when;
- governance and accountability routes

We have plans in place to assess all our policies and functions for their impact on disability by December 2009 and gender by April 2010. Our network of diversity and equality representatives will work alongside their business managers to undertake full impact assessments within the given timescales with the Diversity Manager overseeing all activities.

Group Finance

Additional staff have now undertaken Impact Assessment training. This additional resource will now enable us to go through the back catalogue of any functions and policies that still require impact assessments.

To date, Group Finance has published one impact assessment on changes to the Department for Work and Pensions Head Office Estate Strategy.

Procurement

We have embedded the “Duty to promote greater diversity and equality” into contracts where external suppliers are providing a service to the public sector. We have introduced, promoted and monitored more assertive diversity and equality requirements in new Department for Work and Pensions contracts and in Department for Work and Pensions commercial codes of practice.

Planned work is underway to review Commercial Employment Provision terms and conditions in respect of Office for Government Commerce standard and law requirements. The current terms and conditions meet requirements.

The Department for Work and Pensions procurement service is committed to the judicious use of public procurement to promote greater diversity and equality through all expenditure with the Department’s suppliers, and to mainstream equality considerations in day-to-day dealings with them. The Department is also aware that the legally binding ‘Duty to promote greater diversity and equality’, which has applied to all United Kingdom public bodies since 2006 and this passes over to those Department for Work and Pensions’ suppliers who are providing a service, on our behalf, direct to the public.

Estates

All Departments have a series of targets to improve sustainability generally and environmental impacts specifically. The key targets relate to the need to drastically reduce the carbon emissions which lead to climate change. But we also owe it to our staff to reduce the burden or travel on their family life and the risks to their health and safety. The Department for Work and Pensions has introduced new business travel rules in line with the Department for Work and Pensions Sustainable Procurement Strategy. They include reducing our business mileage and selecting greener fleet cars for Official Vehicles and Private User Scheme cars. The new policy has halved the daily mileage limit for grey fleet (people’s own cars), and has drastically reduced the annual limit. There are three reasons for trying to reduce our mileage. Firstly, it’s about our staff – improving work/life balance, reducing the personal risks of road travel, tackling stress. Secondly, it’s about helping the planet by reducing our carbon footprint. Thirdly, it’s about improving the way we work, reducing travelling time and removing meetings that don’t add value. Travel policies are currently being reviewed with regards to disabled people and an impact assessment is being conducted at the moment.

The Department's sustainable procurement strategy has been re-written and was re-launched at the end of September 2007. Category management teams now have outlined plans to deliver sustainable development targets. Sustainable procurement implementation group facilitates the pursuit and management of activity to meet sustainable development targets. Commercial policy and process team were involved in developing the proposals in the Discrimination Law Review Green paper.

Social impacts on, or that are caused by, the Department's operations and also impacts that are caused by customers or that impact on customers are clearly included within the Department's sustainable procurement strategy.

One of the mandates within the Sustainable Operations on Government Estates is for all government departments to encourage employees to take an active role in volunteering in the community. The department actively encourages this with participation in Community 5000. Employees taking part in the scheme report a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities and feel they have given something back to the community.

Our strategic goal for sustainable development is to support the Government's aims by applying the principles of sustainable development and by embedding them into all that we do. While we recognise that it is important to make progress in all areas, we have identified four high priority areas:

- further embedding sustainable development in all the Department's businesses;
- reducing our carbon emissions from offices and business travel and improving our energy efficiency;
- becoming an exemplar in sustainable procurement; and
- developing robust climate change adaptation plans.

We will be working to ensure that our external suppliers, particularly those providing a service on our behalf, are aware of their responsibilities in supporting the Department in meeting its obligations under equality legislation. We will ensure that this responsibility is highlighted and prioritised within our tendering process. We will also be working to promote supplier diversity within the Department's supplier base.

The revised Department for Work and Pensions Estates Strategy and supporting Asset Management Plan can be found on the internal Department for Work and Pensions Estates website. It informs departmental planning through the period 2007-2011. It outlines objectives and processes for delivering future estate changes (including the reduction of the Estate) that enable delivery of departmental and business transformation. Full information is available on the internal Department for Work and Pensions Estates website along with details of the impact assessment undertaken on the Strategy which is reviewed annually.

Monitoring and evaluation

We will assess and report progress on our action plans annually or as directed by Department for Work and Pensions. As part of that process we will ensure that we continue to involve customers and employees and use the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation.

We will keep our schemes under review by integrating them into our business planning round. Results from our consultations with departmental colleagues on our approach to gathering evidence and information will be used to formulate future equality schemes.

We have improved monitoring of progress on each of the schemes and at each stage of the exercise.

Monitoring of employee data against Group Finance diversity targets is undertaken monthly and findings presented for discussion by the senior management team.

We are working with Human Resources to establish a communication to send out to all employees encouraging them to complete personal details on Information Technology systems to capture management information. It is important to encourage individuals to provide personal information if we are to have robust data for monitoring. By communicating information about how monitoring has helped to identify issues and what action has been taken to bring about improvement we hope to help create confidence in the integrity of the monitoring processes.

In terms of monitoring within procurement, consideration is given to the nature of the service or function performed and contracts specify the evidence the contractor needs to gather and supply to demonstrate its compliance with the general or specific duties.

Group Finance Diversity and Equality Manager now has access to all the Department's diversity reports which will be used to monitor Group Finance targets against the ten point plan.

Employment data

We monitor, analyse and evaluate a range of information on our staff to meet the specific requirements of the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act. This helps us to ensure that our employees from under-represented groups receive equal outcomes and are able to fulfil their potential. Our employment data are reported in the chapter on Corporate Human Resources.

Equal pay review

We undertake regular equal pay audits to review our pay policies and their application. Our pay statement is included in the chapter on Corporate Human Resources and in others across the Department where they have responsibility for recruiting professional staff.

Extent to which our services and functions meet the needs of disabled people

Group Finance is committed to providing services that embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity. We recognise the value of a diverse workforce in delivering our business objectives, valuing and respecting the contribution all of our people make towards achieving our priorities.

Our equality schemes action plan sets out our activities to eliminate any unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different diverse groups. We have taken some specific actions to raise awareness and improve diversity amongst our staff; these include encouraging line managers and staff to take advantage of the learning and development materials on diversity and equality. We have also provided presentations for cascade and we provide regular updates through various methods of communication, bulletins, line managers briefing packs and newsletter items.

We will continue to monitor staff perception of diversity and equality through the annual Department for Work and Pensions staff survey and additional employee engagement activities.

We follow departmental policies for recruitment and development of staff. However Group Finance does have specific responsibility for the recruitment and development of finance professionals – accountants, auditors, procurement specialists, etc.

We are reviewing the diversity of these professions within the Department for Work and Pensions using data obtained from relevant professional institutes. We have significantly improved the diversity of applicants, particularly from ethnic minority groups, for our training schemes.

Consultation and involvement

We have put procedures in place with external and internal customers working together to progress the diversity and equality agenda and to share best practice.

We continue to use existing customer forum networks within Department for Work and Pensions when appropriate to maintain a dialogue with external customers especially as we develop relevant policy and services.

We continue to involve and consult with our employees as we progress our equality schemes and our diversity action plans, we have used and continue to use surveys and focus or discussion groups. We will monitor results and maintain action plans to improve our scores around diversity and equality.

Improving our service

Diversity and equality principles are key to developing and delivering the services we aspire to give to our customers. We are committed to meeting our obligations to comply with the general duties required and ensuring equality of opportunity for all in all of our business practices and in the fair employment and career opportunities provided for our employees. Our detailed action plans encapsulate what we are trying to achieve as part of our programme of continuous improvements. For example we will ensure reasonable adjustments are in place for disabled employees to carry out their duties. We will ensure that any specifications for new financial systems or new finance learning materials take into consideration the latest Department for Work and Pensions guidance on accessibility. We will provide access to learning and development opportunities to increase awareness of diversity and equality issues.

Annex 1 – Group Finance: Assessment of functions and policies

All our functions and policies have been impacted against the requirements of the diversity and equality legislation as detailed below

Finance owner: John Codling, Finance Director General

Functions and Policies	Race	Gender	Disability
Providing corporate policies within which the various departmental organisational units deliver against their objectives	High	High	High
Planning – primary responsibility for ensuring that the Department's priorities are appropriately resourced	High	High	High
Performance management – responsible for ensuring that the Department delivers against its commitments	High	High	High
Investment management – responsible for ensuring that the Department invests funds appropriately	High	High	High
Assure the Department's stakeholders of the Department's ability to meet its objectives, by providing an objective and independent assurance service	High	High	High
Negotiation and monitoring of contracts for banking services, including deposits, withdrawals, petty cash and security items	High	High	High
Lead the recruitment of finance professionals within the Department	High	High	High
Procurement and management of corporate contracts and service level agreements required for the payment of social security benefits, including the departmental method of payment policy	High	High	High
Responsibility for the management of the Department's contract with the Land Securities Trillium for the provision of fully serviced accommodation for most of the Department, including Jobcentre Plus, The Pension, Disability and Carers Service, The Child Support Agency and our corporate and shared services	High	High	High

Functions and Policies	Race	Gender	Disability
The Department's commercial function provides procurement, market analysis, contract management and commercial policy advice to business customers in all areas of the Department and some other government departments. It exists to support business objectives and efficiency challenges, enabling business customers to obtain the goods and services they require at the best value for money and through the proper use of commercial supply options. The function is organised on commodity lines, with groups of specialists developing detailed knowledge of the contracts and marketplace for particular goods and services. The commodity teams are supported by central units that lead on strategic sourcing, professional development, supplier development, and overall policy and strategy	High	High	High
Responsibility for the Department's contribution to the United Kingdom Strategy for Sustainable Development (which includes diversity, equality and community issues) through delivery of the commitments in the Department's sustainable development action plan	High	High	High
Providing financial control frameworks and guidance, including investment appraisal guidance that emphasises the importance of distributional analysis as per the guidelines in the Treasury's Green Book	Medium	Medium	Medium
Business modelling and analysis – providing support to the planning and performance management functions	Medium	Medium	Medium

Annex 2 – Race Equality Action Plan

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Ensure future functions and policies are impact assessed with regard to the general duties	Introduce and promote more assertive diversity and equality requirements in all new departmental contracts	Ongoing	All new functions and policies are assessed to ensure that they take account of the general duty with regard to race	Impact assessment training commenced and ongoing Allocated impact assessment manager responsible for overseeing quality impact assessments in each Senior Civil Servants/ Grade 6 command
	Embed the 'Duty to promote' greater diversity and equality into contracts where our external providers are providing a service to the public	Ongoing	Our commercial agreements reflect the legislative requirements and set out clearly what our expectations are	Risk Assurance Division looking at feasibility of incorporating impact assessment in audit process Monitoring of progress and compliance issues Analysis commenced to identify key communications, reports, stakeholders, formats available and contingency arrangements, this will ensure we have captured all the areas where functions and policies may have an impact on our customers and allow us to focus on making sure they meet their needs

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Ensure future functions and policies are impact assessed with regard to the general duties (<i>continued</i>)	Continue to promote 'zero tolerance' on unlawful discrimination and harassment	Continuous	Provision of quality services that reflect the diverse needs of our stakeholders and we work with our external suppliers to meet legal requirements and continually improve their service	<p>Work commenced in finance policy and practice and commercial directorate to identify key policy/control managers allowing us to ensure diversity and equality is embedded into contracts with our external suppliers</p> <p>Commercial directorate captured and monitor diversity and equality requirements in external contracts</p> <p>Departmental estates strategy impact assessment completed April 2007 and reviewed annually</p>
Develop and deliver an ongoing engagement strategy to increase understanding of diversity and equality with particular regard to race	<p>Identify opportunities in our communication planning process to ensure we promote racial equality</p> <p>Ensure staff have the required skills and knowledge to undertake impact assessments</p>	<p>June 2008</p> <p>June 2008</p>	All staff understand their roles and responsibilities under the revised legislation and are properly equipped to meet the general duties	<p>Communications to all staff by way of information bulletins, line managers briefing notes and our Intranet site</p> <p>Planning for communicating messages about diversity and equality is discussed at diversity managers meetings</p> <p>Impact assessment training commenced in and ongoing</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Develop and deliver an ongoing engagement strategy to increase understanding of equality and diversity with particular regard to race (continued)	Ensure staff are aware of the Department's Diversity and Equality Learning Zones and have time to complete the e-learning and diversity training to be included in divisional learning and development plans	Ongoing	<p>Our policy and decision makers understand the system for assessing proposed policies and amendments to existing policies for their likely impact on race equality</p> <p>We demonstrate our commitment through our communication activities to promoting race equality and to re-enforcing our commitment to eradicating discrimination and harassment</p>	Diversity and Equality Learning Zones introduced at planning and performance management directorate conference and cascaded to all staff via communication

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>Agree and implement a strategy for monitoring progress on our areas of responsibility and review the overall effectiveness and impact</p>	<p>Make a positive contribution to the achievement of departmental targets to increase the representation of ethnic minority staff at higher grades</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The impact of our actions will be visible and we will demonstrate that our recruitment policies and practices are fair and equal</p>	<p>Analysis work has started on the review of management information reports to see if information available on recruitment and promotion for our specialist posts</p>
	<p>Monitor recruitment and promotion exercises to ensure processes are followed and that they are conducted in a transparent manner</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The directorate will have a clearer picture of the experience of ethnic minority staff within the organisation and have a plan in place to address the issues they face as a result of their ethnicity</p>	<p>Monitoring and evaluation of senior civil servant recruitment in progress. Diversity & Equality data now included in monthly management information pack for Group Finance senior managers, monitored and included in planning processes</p> <p>Diversity and equality key performance indicators in place. Monitored by senior managers and discussed at Group Finance Directorate deputies forum</p> <p>Work underway to consider and plan how we can influence and improve results against targets</p>
	<p>Review all of our professions for diversity by gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief and develop actions to address our findings</p>	<p>March 2008 – June 2008</p>		<p>Analysis undertaken of staff survey and Investors in People results. Our deputies' forum members are responsible for ensuring action plans in place and actively managed in each business unit to address problem areas</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Agree and implement a strategy for monitoring progress on our areas of responsibility and review the overall effectiveness and impact <i>(continued)</i>	Monitor the views of our people through the annual staff perception survey and encourage participation in diversity network groups	Annual survey and programme of network group events during the year	The directorate will benefit from a diverse workforce, who are proud to work for their part of the organisation	Analysis commenced to Identify key communications, reports, stakeholders, and formats available and contingency arrangements
	Review the methods we adopt when consulting with customers and staff to build greater confidence that there is no discrimination in any respect	June 2008		Diversity and equality key performance indicators identified and are updated and monitored monthly. These indicators are measures that inform senior managers that we are making progress on meeting our objectives and targets
	Ensure our business and operating plans include the action plan objectives	Annually		Standing agenda item at diversity managers meetings

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Agree and implement a strategy for monitoring progress on our areas of responsibility and review the overall effectiveness and impact (<i>continued</i>)	<p>Adopt and implement the Department's strategy on monitoring and evaluation, include appropriate measures and indicators in our business performance management reporting processes</p> <p>Compare progress and lessons learned with other departmental business areas and share good practices</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	(See above)	(See above)

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Deliver the sustainable development action plan and sustainable procurement strategy	<p>Review sustainable development action plan</p> <p>Develop commodity based sustainable procurement strategies to incorporate diversity and equality issues</p> <p>Review Department's sustainable development policy statement</p>	<p>3 year plan with progress updates every quarter</p> <p>May 2008</p> <p>3 yearly review</p>	<p>Further develop social issues within overall sustainable development objectives</p> <p>Detailed plans for sustainable specifications and continuing improvement within procurement exercises and ongoing contract management</p> <p>Improved policy and understanding of links between social aspects of sustainable development and equality agenda</p>	<p>Departmental sustainable procurement strategy has been re-written and was re-launched at the end of September 2007</p> <p>Category management teams now have outline plans to deliver sustainable development targets</p> <p>Sustainable procurement implementation group facilitates the pursuit and management of activity to meet sustainable development targets</p> <p>Commercial policy and process team were involved in developing the proposals in the Discrimination Law Review Green paper</p> <p>Planned work is underway to review Department/commercial employment provision terms and conditions in respect of Office for Government Commerce standard and law requirements. Note current terms and conditions meet requirements</p> <p>Social impacts on, or that are caused by, the departments operations and also impacts that are caused by customers or that impact on customers are clearly included within the Department's sustainable procurement strategy</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>Develop and deliver an ongoing engagement strategy to increase understanding of diversity and equality with particular regard to race</p>	<p>Hold workshops with commercial directorate procurement professionals to explore how equality issues can and should be accounted for in procurement exercises</p>	<p>March 2008 – 2009</p>	<p>Procurement professionals throughout commercial directorate will build equality issues into all procurements and ongoing contract management of suppliers</p> <p>Contract managers will be able to spot areas for concern and raise these with contractors</p>	<p>Series of workshops held with procurement professionals</p> <p>Diversity and equality requirements included in the commercial and estates strategy document and active within individual teams</p> <p>Sustainable procurement risk assessment methodology is mandatory for all procurements</p> <p>Newsletters produced and guidance and recommendations are available on the departmental sustainable development, commercial policy and process and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs websites</p> <p>Contracting teams have measures in place to assure suppliers are reputable and have record of diversity and equality</p> <p>Diversity and equality requirements specified and questioning and establishing of credentials of suppliers at pre-qualification stages</p> <p>Policy on diversity and equality routinely examined in competition and contracting. Quality plans sought from suppliers contain relevant measures</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>To Pilot a reverse mentoring scheme in Group Finance with nominations from under represented groups mentoring Group Finance senior managers to better understand barriers in career progression within the Department.</p>	<p>Nominees for the scheme are invited from across all the network groups. The pilot will run for 12 months and will involve each mentor spending time with their chosen mentee. This part of the process will be determined by both the mentor and mentee, a guide for both has been developed to assist both parties</p>	<p>Pilot April 2008 – March 2009; however, if this pilot is proved to be successful then a full roll out will be considered within the Department during the piloting year</p>	<p>Improved understanding from senior managers as to the possible barriers faced by under represented groups in progressing their career in the Department and how we try to overcome them</p> <p>The aim of the pilot is to share best practice, look at lessons learnt and then roll out to other businesses within the Department</p>	<p>Initial discussions have taken place with the Director General of Group Finance, Group Finance Management Team and the Diversity and Equality Centre of Expertise</p> <p>A work plan, guidance and a matching exercise took place during March 2008 with the pilot starting in April 2008</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>Develop and deliver an effective engagement strategy to raise awareness and understanding of diversity and equality with particular regard to disability</p>	<p>Ensure our staff are aware of the changes to disability legislation and ensure that this is built into induction for new staff</p>	<p>March 2008-March 2009</p>	<p>Improved levels of knowledge and understanding for all staff and demonstration of positive attitudes towards disabled people</p>	<p>New induction programme ‘Building Business Knowledge’ in place for Senior Civil Servants and new senior managers - links in to diversity and equality requirements and legislation</p>
	<p>Ensure that staff are aware of the wider learning opportunities available to them on disability issues and are encouraged to benefit from these and include this in their development plans</p>	<p>Ongoing activity</p>	<p>Improved levels of satisfaction with the actions taken to ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments are made for our staff and stakeholders</p>	<p>Trained coaches will now deliver Building Your Business Knowledge to new starter Grade 7 and below</p> <p>Diversity and equality covered in induction procedures and processes, best practice shared through diversity and equality managers meetings</p>
	<p>Ensure that staff are aware of current policy regarding reasonable adjustments</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Staff understand their roles and responsibilities under the revised legislation and are properly equipped to meet the general duties</p>	<p>Presentations to line managers highlighting their responsibilities</p> <p>Diversity and Equality Learning Zones promoted at management conferences</p> <p>Diversity & equality key performance indicators in place. Monitored by senior managers and discussed at Group Finance Directorate deputies forum</p> <p>Work underway to consider and plan how we can influence and improve results against targets</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Develop and deliver an effective engagement strategy to raise awareness and understanding of diversity and equality with particular regard to disability (continued)	Work with Diversity and Equality Centre of Expertise to ensure reasonable adjustment processes efficient and effective	Ongoing	Procurement professionals throughout commercial directorate will build equality issues into all procurements and ongoing contract management of suppliers	Communications to all staff by way of information bulletins, line managers briefing notes and our internal website Quarterly 'Diversity Matters' Newsletter for all Group Finance staff commencing Spring 2008
	Hold workshops with procurement professionals throughout commercial and estates directorate exploring how equality issues can and should be taken into account when conducting procurement exercises	Ongoing	Contract managers will be able to spot areas for concern and raise these with contractors	Reasonable adjustment statistical returns produced and submitted every quarter Network groups and business units include diversity and equality agenda in their terms of reference Group Finance piloting a reverse mentoring scheme Series of workshops held with procurement professionals Diversity and equality requirements included in the commercial and estates strategy document and active within individual teams Sustainable procurement risk assessment methodology is mandatory for all procurements

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>Develop and deliver an effective engagement strategy to raise awareness and understanding of diversity and equality with particular regard to disability (continued)</p>	<p>(See above)</p>	<p>(See above)</p>	<p>(See above)</p>	<p>Newsletters produced and guidance and recommendations are available on the Department's sustainable development, commercial policy and process and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs websites</p> <p>Contracting teams have measures in place to assure suppliers are reputable and have record of diversity and equality</p> <p>Diversity and equality requirements specified questioning and establishing of credentials of suppliers made at pre-qualification stages</p> <p>Policy on diversity and equality routinely examined in competition and contracting. Quality plans sought from suppliers contain relevant measures</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Ensure all future functions and policies are impact assessed with regard to the general duties	Ensure staff have the skills and knowledge required to undertake impact assessments	Ongoing (Continuous programme)	New functions and policies are assessed to ensure that they take account of the particular circumstances of disabled people	Impact assessment training and communications ongoing to raise awareness to both managers and relevant staff
	Identify all of our key communications and reports for customers and stakeholders and provide these in alternative formats on request	Ongoing	Commercial agreements reflect the legislative requirements and set out clearly what our expectations are	Allocated impact assessment manager responsible for overseeing quality impact assessments in each Senior Civil Servant/ Grade 6 command
	Introduce and promote more assertive diversity and equality requirements in new Departmental contracts	Ongoing	Adoption of more progressive policies by our suppliers	Risk Assurance Division looking at feasibility of incorporating impact assessment in audit process
	Embed the 'Duty to promote greater diversity and equality' into contracts where our external providers are providing a service to the public	Ongoing		Analysis commenced to identify key communications, reports, stakeholders, formats available and contingency arrangements, this will ensure we have captured all the areas where functions and policies may have an impact on our customers and allow us to focus on making sure they meet their needs
				Communication planning workshops in place to ensure we are working together to deliver and publish key messages
				Commercial and estates directorate captured and monitor diversity and equality requirements in external contracts

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Ensure all future functions and policies are impact assessed with regard to the general dutiesgeneral duties (continued)	(See above)	(See above)	Provision of quality services that reflect the needs of our stakeholders and we work with our external suppliers to meet legal requirements and continually improve their service	Departmental estates strategy impact assessment completed April 2007 and reviewed annually

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Agree and implement a strategy for monitoring progress on our areas of responsibility and review the overall effectiveness and impact	<p>Monitor recruitment and promotion exercises to ensure processes are followed and that they are conducted in a transparent manner</p> <p>Review all of our professions (accountancy, procurement, audit, operational research) for diversity by gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief and develop actions to address our findings</p>	<p>As exercises occur</p> <p>May 2008</p>	<p>Through delivery of our equality scheme action plans and through pro-active championship in our businesses we will make a positive contribution to the achievement of departmental targets to increase the representation of disabled staff at higher grades</p> <p>The impact of our actions visible and demonstrate that our recruitment policies and practices are fair and equal</p>	<p>Analysis work has started on the review of management information reports to establish information available on recruitment and promotion for our specialist posts</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation of Senior Civil Servant recruitment processes in progress</p> <p>Diversity & equality data now included in monthly management information pack for Group Finance senior managers, monitored and discussed and included in planning processes</p> <p>Diversity and equality key performance indicators have been identified and are updated and monitored monthly. These indicators are measures that inform senior managers that we are making progress on meeting our objectives and targets</p> <p>Analysis commenced to identify key communications, reports, and stakeholders</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>Agree and implement a strategy for monitoring progress on our areas of responsibility and review the overall effectiveness and impact <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>Ensure that our business and operating plans include the action plan objectives</p> <p>Ensure that we adopt and implement the departmental strategy on monitoring and evaluation and include appropriate measures and indicators within our business performance management reporting processes</p> <p>Review methods we adopt when consulting with customers and staff to build greater confidence that there is no discrimination</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Continuous</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>(See above)</p>	<p>(See above)</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Deliver the sustainable development action plan and sustainable procurement strategy	Review sustainable development action plan	3 year plan with progress updates every quarter	Further develop social issues within overall sustainable development objectives	Department's sustainable procurement strategy has been re-written and was re-launched at the end of September 2007
	Develop commodity based sustainable procurement strategies to incorporate diversity and equality issues	Ongoing	Detailed plans for sustainable specifications and continuing improvement within procurement exercises and ongoing contract management	Category management teams now have outlined plans to deliver sustainable development targets Sustainable procurement implementation group facilitates the pursuit and management of activity to meet sustainable development targets
	Review Department's sustainable development policy statement	3 yearly review	Improved policy and understanding of links between social aspects of sustainable development and equality agenda	Commercial policy and process team were involved in developing the proposals in the Discrimination Law Review Green paper Planned work is underway to review Commercial Employment Provision terms and conditions in respect of Office for Government Commerce standard and law requirements. Note current terms and conditions meet requirements Social impacts on, or that are caused by, the department's operations and also impacts that are caused by customers or that impact on customers are clearly included within the Department's sustainable procurement strategy

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>To Pilot a reverse mentoring scheme in Group Finance with nominations from under represented groups mentoring Group Finance senior managers to better understand barriers in career progression within the Department.</p>	<p>Nominees for the scheme are invited from across all the network groups. The pilot will run for 12 months and will involve each mentor spending time with their chosen mentee. This part of the process will be determined by both the mentor and mentee. A guide for both has been developed to assist both parties</p>	<p>Pilot April 2008 – March 2009; however, if this pilot is proved to be successful then a full roll out will be considered within the Department during the piloting year</p>	<p>Improved understanding from senior managers as to the possible barriers faced by under represented groups in progressing their career in the Department and how we try to overcome them</p> <p>The aim of the pilot is to share best practice, look at lessons learnt and then roll out to other businesses within the Department</p>	<p>Initial discussions have taken place with the Director General of Group Finance, Group Finance Management Team and the Diversity and Equality Centre of Expertise</p> <p>A work plan, guidance and a matching exercise took place during March 2008 with the pilot starting in April 2008</p>

Annex 4 – Gender Equality Action Plan

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Develop and deliver an effective engagement strategy to raise awareness and understanding of diversity and equality with particular regard to gender	Ensure our staff are aware of the changes to gender legislation and ensure that this is built into induction for new staff	March 2008 - March 2009	Improved levels of knowledge and understanding for staff and demonstration of activity to promote gender equality Staff understand their roles and responsibilities under the revised legislation and are properly equipped to meet the general duties	<p>New induction programme 'Building Business Knowledge' in place for Senior Civil Servants and new senior managers - links in to diversity and equality requirements and legislation</p> <p>Trained coaches will now deliver Building Your Business Knowledge to new starter Grade 7 and below</p> <p>Diversity and equality covered in induction procedures and processes, best practice shared through diversity and equality managers meetings</p> <p>Presentations provided for line managers highlighting their responsibilities</p> <p>Diversity and Equality Learning Zones promoted by way of presentations at management conferences</p> <p>Communications to all staff by way of information bulletins, line managers briefing notes and our internal website</p> <p>Quarterly 'Diversity Matters' Newsletter for all Group Finance staff commencing Spring 2008</p> <p>Group Finance are piloting a reverse mentoring scheme</p> <p>Planning for communicating messages about diversity and equality is discussed at all diversity managers meetings</p>
	Ensure staff are aware of the wider learning opportunities available on gender issues and encourage staff to participate and include in development plans	Ongoing activity		
	Hold workshops with procurement professionals throughout commercial estates division exploring how equality issues can and should be taken into account when conducting procurement exercises	Ongoing		

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Develop and deliver an effective engagement strategy to raise awareness and understanding of equality and diversity with particular regard to gender <i>(continued)</i>	(See above)	(See above)	Procurement professionals throughout commercial estates division will build equality issues into all procurements and ongoing contract management of suppliers Contract managers will be able to spot areas for concern and raise these with contractors	Series of workshops held with procurement professionals Diversity and equality requirements included in the commercial and estates strategy document and active within individual teams Sustainable procurement risk assessment methodology is mandatory for all procurements Newsletters produced and guidance and recommendations are available on the Department's sustainable development, commercial policy and process and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs websites Contracting teams have measures in place to assure suppliers are reputable and have record of diversity and equality Diversity and equality requirements specified questioning and establishing of credentials of suppliers made at pre-qualification stages Policy on diversity and equality routinely examined in competition and contracting. Quality plans sought from suppliers contain relevant measures

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Ensure all future functions and policies are impact assessed, with regard to the general duties	Ensure staff have the skills and knowledge required to undertake impact assessments	Ongoing (continuous programme)	New functions and policies assessed to take account of the general duty with regard to gender	Impact assessment training and communications ongoing to raise awareness to both managers and relevant staff
	Identify opportunities in our communication planning process to ensure that we promote gender equality	Ongoing	Communication activities demonstrate commitment to promoting gender equality and to re-enforcing our commitment to eradicating discrimination and harassment	Allocated impact assessment manager responsible for overseeing quality impact assessments in each Senior Civil Servant/ Grade6 command Risk Assurance Division looking at feasibility of incorporating impact assessment in Audit process
	Introduce and promote more assertive diversity and equality requirements in new departmental contracts	Ongoing	Commercial agreements reflect the legislative requirements and clearly set out our expectations	Analysis commenced to identify key communications, reports, stakeholders, formats available and contingency arrangements, this will ensure we have captured all the areas where functions and policies may have an impact on our customers and allow us to focus on making sure they meet their needs
	Embed the 'Duty to promote' greater diversity and equality into contracts where external providers are providing a service to the public	Ongoing		Communication planning workshops in place to ensure we are working together to deliver and publish key messages Commercial and estates directorate have captured and monitor diversity and equality requirements in external contracts

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Ensure all future functions and policies are impact assessed, with regard to the general duties (<i>continued</i>)	Continue to promote 'zero tolerance' on unlawful discrimination and harassment	Ongoing	Quality services that reflect the diverse needs of our stakeholders and we work with our external suppliers to meet legal requirements and continually improve their service	<p>Departmental estates strategy impact assessment completed April 2007 and reviewed annually</p> <p>Monitoring of progress and compliance issues in place</p> <p>Work commenced in finance policy and practice and commercial directorate to identify key policy/control managers allowing us to ensure diversity and equality is embedded into contracts with our external supplier</p> <p>Departmental estates strategy impact assessment underway</p> <p>Continue to promote and monitor 'zero tolerance' through staff survey results and focus groups</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Agree and implement a strategy for monitoring progress on our areas of responsibility and review the overall effectiveness and impact	Review all of our professions (accountancy, procurement, audit, operational research etc) for diversity by gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief and develop actions to address our findings	May 2008	Through delivery of our equality scheme action plans and through pro-active championship in our businesses we will make a positive contribution to the achievement of departmental targets to increase the representation of women at higher grades	Analysis work has started on the review of management information reports to establish information available on recruitment and promotion for our specialist posts Monitoring and evaluation of Senior Civil Servant recruitment in progress Diversity & equality data now included in monthly management information pack for Group Finance senior managers, monitored and discussed and included in planning processes
	Monitor recruitment and promotion exercises to ensure processes are followed and that they are conducted in a transparent manner	Ongoing	The impact of our actions will be visible and we will demonstrate that our recruitment policies and practices are fair and equal	Diversity and equality key performance indicator's in place. Monitored by senior managers and discussed at Group Finance Directorate deputies forum Work underway to consider and plan how we can influence and improve results against targets
	Monitor the views of our people through the annual staff perception survey and encourage participation in diversity network groups	Annual survey and regular network events throughout the year		Analysis undertaken of staff survey and Investors in People results. Group Finance deputies forum members responsible for ensuring action plans in place and actively managed in each business unit to address problem areas

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
Agree and implement a strategy for monitoring progress on our areas of responsibility and review the overall effectiveness and impact <i>(continued)</i>	Ensure that our business and operating plans include the action plan objectives	Annually	(See above)	Diversity and equality key performance indicators have been identified and are updated and monitored monthly. These indicators are measures that inform senior managers that we are making progress on meeting our objectives and targets
	Ensure that we adopt and implement the Department's strategy on monitoring and evaluation and include appropriate measures and indicators within our business performance management reporting processes	Ongoing		Analysis commenced to identify key communications, reports, stakeholders, formats available and contingency arrangements
	Review the methods that we adopt when consulting with customers and staff to build greater confidence that there is no discrimination in any respect	Ongoing		

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>Delivering the sustainable development action plan and sustainable procurement strategy</p>	<p>Review sustainable development action plan</p> <p>Develop commodity based sustainable procurement strategies to incorporate diversity and equality issues</p> <p>Review Department's sustainable development policy statement</p>	<p>3 year plan with progress updates every quarter</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Further develop social issues within overall sustainable development objectives</p> <p>Detailed plans for sustainable specifications and continuing improvement within procurement exercises and ongoing contract management</p> <p>Improved policy and understanding of links between social aspects of sustainable development and equality agenda</p>	<p>Department's sustainable procurement strategy has been re-written and was re-launched at the end of September 2007</p> <p>Category management teams now have outlined plans to deliver sustainable development targets</p> <p>Sustainable procurement implementation group facilitates the pursuit and management of activity to meet sustainable development targets</p> <p>Commercial policy and process team were involved in developing the proposals in the Discrimination Law Review Green paper</p> <p>Planned work is underway to review Department/commercial employment provision terms and conditions in respect of Office for Government Commerce standard and law requirements. Our current terms and conditions meet requirements</p> <p>Social impacts on, or that are caused by, the Department's operations and also impacts that are caused by customers or that impact on customers are clearly included within the Department's sustainable procurement strategy</p>

Objectives	Activities required	Timescales	Outcomes	Progress
<p>To Pilot a reverse mentoring scheme in Group Finance with nominations from under represented groups mentoring Group Finance senior managers to better understand barriers in career progression within the Department</p>	<p>Nominees for the scheme are invited from across all the network groups. The pilot will run for 12 months and will involve each mentor spending time with their chosen mentee. This part of the process will be determined by both the mentor and mentee. A guide for both has been developed to assist both parties</p>	<p>Pilot April 2008 – March 2009; however, if this pilot is proved to be successful then a full roll out will be considered within the Department during the piloting year</p>	<p>Improved understanding from senior managers as to the possible barriers faced by under represented groups in progressing their career in the Department and how we try to overcome them</p> <p>The aim of the pilot is to share best practice, look at lessons learnt and then roll out to other businesses within the Department</p>	<p>Initial discussions have taken place with the Director General of Group Finance, Group Finance Management Team and the Diversity and Equality Centre of Expertise</p> <p>A work plan, guidance and a matching exercise took place during March 2008 with the pilot starting in April 2008</p>