

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

27 November 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME 2009-2012 AND DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Report by the Chief Constable

SUMMARY

To meet the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended, the Equality Act 2006 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended.

INTRODUCTION

The Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a statutory general duty to promote race equality. Under the Act and the statutory Code of Practice that came into effect in 2002, the general duty states that, as Northern Constabulary carries out its duties and powers, we must aim to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people from different racial groups.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a general duty on Northern Constabulary to have due regard to the need to:

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

The Equality Act 2006 places a statutory duty on the police, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women

BACKGROUND

In line with the above legislation, Northern Constabulary has a statutory duty to promote equality and prevent discrimination in the areas of race, gender and disability. This year the Force has gone beyond its duty to comply with legislation and has extended its scheme into the areas of religion/belief, age, sexual orientation and gender identity. This will assist the Force to create a simpler, more effective and manageable strategy for mainstreaming equality matters across the Force and the action plan sets out how the Force will achieve this over the next three years. It also assists the Force in preparation for the provisions of the pending Single Equality Act.

Northern Constabulary's new Single Equality Scheme is attached at Appendix 1 for the information of the Board. A report outlining the Force's progress against the work set out in its Disability Equality Scheme action plan for 2008-2009 is attached at Appendix 2. This concludes the Force's reporting obligations under that Scheme document, its ongoing responsibilities in this area now being incorporated into its Single Equality Scheme.

PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS

The Scheme is monitored through the Equality and Diversity Progress Group. An annual report will be produced in June each year covering all of the Single Equality Scheme activities for the current period and will be available for noting by the Board.

RECOMMENDATION

Members of the Board are invited to note and make comment on the Single Equality Scheme 2009 – 2012 and Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report 2009.

I Latimer
Chief Constable
Date: 11 November 2009