

Single Equality Scheme

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Audience	YPLA Board
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Agenda item	10

Summary

Issue

- S1 The YPLA Board is asked to consider and approve the Single Equality Scheme for External Consultation. The Scheme will contain the Board's equality objectives and its action plan to deliver them.

Reason for bringing this to the YPLA Board

- S2 There is a statutory requirement for YPLA have an Equality Scheme and set Equality objectives. It also provides an opportunity for the Board to re-state its commitment to all young people.

Summary of Proposals

- S3 The Board is invited to consider the Scheme both as a funding body and as an employer. It proposes a number of objectives for its focus for action in the period 2011-13 from which the Board is invited to agree a recommended four.
- S4 The Scheme also includes a challenge to the Board itself to consider how it will address the diversity of its membership, that of the YPLA workforce and how the Board will challenge and support the Executive.

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Recommendations

- S5 It is recommended that the Board:
- Given the levers available, to position YPLA as an exemplar employer and a public body that makes the best use of the data for EIA activity and decision making
 - To note the current constitution of the workforce and its own membership and reflect on this position
 - To consider the 4 recommended objectives at Annex 3:
 - YPLA workforce
 - Equality Impact Assessment
 - Academies
 - Data analysis
 - Subject to any amends, to agree the Scheme is published for wider external consultation, including the action plan and the agreed objectives
 - To agree that at a future meeting (evening session) the Board considers the responses to the consultation, and how the Board will monitor delivery of the agreed objectives and action plan.

Main Paper

Background and introduction

- 1 This paper introduces the proposed YPLA Single Equality Scheme (our Scheme) for the Board to consider and approve for wider, formal consultation.
- 2 The Scheme is a specific requirement of our current remit letter, provided by the then Secretary of State in March this year, and reflects our responsibilities, as a public body, that are outlined within equality legislation. A brief summary of the Equality Act 2010 is provided at annex 1. In addition, our Scheme also takes into account the recent revisions to our remit, as confirmed by the coalition government.

Purpose

- 3 Our Scheme brings together our approach to inclusion, equality and diversity and reflects both our internal remit as an employer, and our external remit as a funding body, including improvement activity for academies.
- 4 It describes how we will fulfil our statutory duties to:
 - promote equality of opportunity;
 - avoid discrimination;
 - place the advancement of inclusion, equality and diversity at the centre of our work;
 - fulfil the requirements of our remit in a way which promotes equality; and
 - ensure best practice as an employer in pursuit of equality.

Key points/issues

- 5 The Board are asked to note that the following issues arise as a result of the Scheme. The Board are invited to focus in particular on item c below and Annex 3 – the Objectives to be included in the Scheme:
 - a. in the context of the YPLA's revised remit and levers available to YPLA, and the approach of the new coalition government to professional autonomy - ***What can the YPLA reasonably be expected to achieve through providers?***
 - Is it YPLA's role to tell providers how to address/improve E&D issues?
 - How does YPLA's remit sit with our strapline to 'champion' for all young people?
 - How could/should the funding level be employed?
 - Is there a situation when we might take robust action in this area?
 - Is Impact Assessment a more appropriate lever?

- b. ***does the Scheme properly reflect the Mission, Vision and Values and position the YPLA as an exemplar public body?*** See annex 2 workforce data.
- What does being an exemplar employer mean?
 - How do we maximise impact with minimum resource?
 - Are we asking the right questions – capturing the right information?
- c. mindful of (a) above and the statutory requirements on the Board as a public body to set Equality and Diversity objectives – ***are the objectives reasonable, sufficiently challenging, and do they reflect the Board's ambitions?*** See Annex 3 - proposed objectives.
- Are three or four objectives too few or over ambitious part way through the year?
 - Would the Board prefer a single objective focus?
 - Are the proposed objectives right?

Recommendations

- 6 The Board is recommended to agree that:
- The YPLA, given the levers available and its remit, acts as an exemplar employer and makes the best use of the data in the Equality Impact Assessment process in our decisions
 - The Board notes the current constitution of the workforce and its own membership that it should receive information and reflect on this position and the objective set, using the baseline data in annex 2
 - The Board agrees a maximum of 4 objectives under the following headings (see annex 3):
 - objective 1 – YPLA workforce
 - objective 2 – Academies
 - objective 3 – Equality Impact Assessment
 - objective 4 – Data collection and analysis
 - Subject to any amendments discussed by the Board, the Scheme is published for wider formal consultation including the action plan based on the objectives agreed.
 - The Board delegates final sign off of the consultative documents on the Scheme and action plan to the Chair and the Chief Executive.
 - The Board take a report on the outcomes of the consultation at a future evening session, where the Board also considers monitoring arrangements and how best to hold the Executive to account on the delivery of the agreed objectives.

Clearance

- 7 In preparing the proposed Scheme, we have undertaken benchmarking of similar organisations, reflected the views of our employees and learners who have influenced the proposed scope, content, format, and the development of the list of possible objectives for the Board's consideration. More detail on how this informal consultation was conducted is detailed in the proposed Scheme (paragraph 18).
- 8 The YPLA's senior management champion, Rob Wye, has agreed the Scheme and associated papers for consideration by the Board.

Legal implications

- 9 The proposed Scheme has been reviewed by our legal adviser and meets the YPLA's statutory obligations. Any further revisions, prior to formal consultation, will be subject subsequent clearance by the legal team.

Financial implications

- 10 There are limited costs in the production of our Scheme itself.
- 11 We are committed to ensuring that all financial decisions made by the YPLA are covered by an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure equality and diversity issues are evidenced in the decisions taken by the Board and its Executive.

Risk management

- 12 The production of the Scheme and Action Plan is an active, visible expression of the YPLA's Mission, Vision and Values. Failure to produce a Scheme would diminish the YPLA's commitment to all young people and leave YPLA open to a compliance audit from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) which could lead to a financial penalty.

Next Steps

- 13 The proposed Scheme will be finalised in the light of the Board's comments and, subject to its agreement to delegation, it will be signed off and issued for formal consultation on its behalf in September 2010.
- 14 Following the formal consultation, the Board will receive a report that sets out responses to that consultation, the proposed final scheme and associated action plan for formal publication.

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