

## Equality Action Plan 2013 – 2016 – Responses to key consultation themes

You said	We did
Don't include actions that are 'business as usual' in the Equality Action Plan.	Actions relating to completing Equality and Safety Impact Assessments (ESIAs), working to support victims of hate crime and harassment, equal pay and providing work force data are all deemed to be 'business as usual' and so taken out of the revised Plan. Another action considered to be 'business as usual' is that of improving procurement processes and funding information. Officers are developing an ethical procurement policy for the council that will also include equalities issues. The council is working with Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group to develop a joint training programme for staff that includes reference to equalities issues throughout the procurement cycle. Officers will produce funding information aimed specifically at equalities groups
Make actions more specific	The revised Plan includes measurable actions.
The council needs to improve how it consults with communities, particularly in giving feedback once consultation has finished	An action in the revised Plan has been included to update previous consultation guidance for staff to promote best practice.
Embed equalities and safety issues in the Council Plan	A number of key equalities and safety challenges have been included in the Council Plan which covers the period 2013 – 2016. These include actions around skills development, responding to the welfare reforms agenda, health inequalities and safeguarding. The decision has been taken not to duplicate the equalities issues in the Council Plan with those in the Equality Action Plan.
Produce "reader friendly" documents	All council documents are available in alternative formats if these are needed to make them more accessible. In addition, the Council Plan has been produced as a two sided document, highlighting key challenges. This is much shorter than in previous years so that it is an easy read, simple document.
There is a need to improve communications with less engaged groups, however more detail is needed about the suggested action to produce a Communications Strategy.	Following consultation feedback, rather than focus on developing a Strategy, the council has produced an equalities profile to better understand the needs of groups with protected equality characteristics. It will also develop an image bank that reflects the city's diversity to be used in council publications. This will link in with the action about improving how we consult.

<p>The suggestion of setting up a Fairness Commission is good in principle but needs more detail.</p>	<p>Cabinet approved the idea of setting up a Fairness Commission at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> June. This will be a time limited, independent body.</p> <p>The Commission will meet up to six times during 2013/14 to examine key areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• education, employment and</li><li>• pay</li><li>• access to a better local environment and services</li><li>• increasing citizen, community and voluntary sector involvement.</li></ul> <p>This is a separate piece of work but could inform future years of the Equality Action Plan.</p>
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