



ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME 2009-2012 FIRST YEAR: April 2009 - March 2010

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides a brief overview of the progress made during 2009/10 by Cheshire Probation Trust (CPT), in particular those significant achievements made during that year. This report also highlights the achievements made in relation to the specific race, disability and gender equality duties. This review should be read in conjunction with the final quarter review of the Single Equality Scheme (SES) action plan which details all the actions and progress made against those actions. Finally this report also identifies areas of work still to be developed and sets out the agreed actions for 2010/11 and into the future.
- 1.2 CPT has made considerable progress and significant achievements during 2009/10. During this period the Trust reviewed and further developed the role of the Equality and Diversity Action Group (EDAG) making it closer to probation and employment practice, so progress can be clearly tracked over the years. EDAG is an important and effective mechanism that enables the Trust to monitor performance, highlight inequalities and seek ways to address this for both service delivery and employment practice.
- 1.3 EDAG is part of a wider diversity accountability structure, at the head of which is the Board. A member of the Board chairs the Diversity Panel and reports back to the Board both achievements and concerns in relation to equality in service delivery and employment practice. This includes monitoring the progress of the SES. The Diversity Panel sets the strategic steer and has representation from race equality and disability equality organisations, as well as SMT, the unions, Human Resources. EDAG meets quarterly and has representation from many functions within the organisation, including the performance unit. The group is chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive (ACE) with responsibility for equality and diversity.
- 1.4 A central focus for EDAG is identifying where there is negative disproportionality to address in relation to achieving anti-discriminatory and diversity practice. Staff in EDAG can act as a conduit to practice and are able to focus questions around where there may be disproportionality in service provision. The staff network groups, e.g. LGB, disability and race staff groups are also represented on EDAG and can report the non-confidential minutes of their group as well as raising concerns. These are

discussed and the group can advise the Strategic Management Team (SMT) on possible ways forward or propose work that EDAG can undertake that can further analyse issues to ameliorate or address the disproportionality identified.

- 1.5 The group meets quarterly and monitors the Area's progress of the SES, including the reviewing of both employment monitoring data and service delivery outcomes across the different diversity strands. The quarterly review is published on the website to demonstrate the progress CPT is making in achieving the actions set out. As a part of its work, the group reviews a Diversity Grid (agreed as a regional approach and unique to the North West) which focuses on specific performance outcomes across critical areas of service delivery in relation to race, disability, gender and age. Where disproportionality is identified recommendations are made to SMT, e.g. commissioning additional research/analysis/ monitoring to identify the reasons behind the disproportionality and find ways to address it. One example was that CPT identified a significant number of court reports where no proposals were made. This was seen as possibly contributing to custody outcomes. A range of actions were taken and the number of "no proposals" has been reduced from 87 in 2008/2009 to 71 in 2009/2010.
- 1.6 During the year EDAG have recommended a number of actions that have led to changes in practice and have progressed actions in the SES. The most critical outcomes across the equality strands are shown below:

2. **DISABILITY EQUALITY**

- 2.1 **Monitoring** - CPT has improved disability monitoring to 99% of all cases. This has been maintained over a six month period. This has shown that approximately 20% of all the offenders in contact with CPT say that they have a disability. This knowledge assists CPT's understanding of the barriers that offenders may have and informs the actions that may need to be taken. Further analysis of the management data is as follows:-

- Mental Ill Health - 32% of those who say they have a disability identified the disability as mental ill health. Staff have been provided with training around understanding mental health barriers and needs this year. CPT will be focusing during 2010/11 on identifying new pathways to treatment so that staff may more effectively support offenders with enduring mental health conditions. Monitoring has also helped us to understand (supported by the Corston and Bradley Reports) that there are a significant number of women with mental health problems. In addition, a bid to the Director of Offender Manager (DOM) was successful in securing additional money to commission a dedicated mental health resource for each of the Local Delivery Units (LDUs). This will reach fruition in 2010/11.
- ADHD – at an EDAG meeting issues were raised about difficulties with supporting offenders with ADHD to comply with their orders and therefore

to challenge their offending behaviour. This led to work with national ADHD groups to be able to identify how we can best support offenders with ADHD to reduce re-offending. This work is currently in the early stages and will continue during 2010/11.

- Dyslexia - monitoring and discussions at EDAG have helped CPT to recognize that there is a gap in provision in terms of accessing educational psychologists for offenders with dyslexia to assess their needs and help them to better engage and so ultimately comply with their orders and reduce re-offending. This is something that we will continue to be working on during 2010/11.
- Employment practice – CPT have been assessed as complying in relation to 'Two Ticks' Positive about Disability symbol by the local Job Centre Plus Disability Employment Advisor.

3. RACE EQUALITY

- 3.1 **Working with Racially-Motivated Offenders (RMOs)** - the programme, Against Human Dignity, has been put in place and staff have been trained to deliver it. This is specifically directed at RMOs, and helps them to consider their attitudes and beliefs, how those develop and are maintained and contribute to Racially-Motivated offending. This programme can also be used in relation to offenders who commit other hate crimes.
- 3.2 **Hate crime** - through representation on the Local Criminal Justice Board Race and Equality Sub Group, CPT has been working with other criminal justice agencies across Cheshire Halton and Warrington to consider how effectively it addresses hate crime and to determine whether different communities have the confidence to report hate crime.
- 3.3 **Challenging Discrimination Training** - this was rolled out to all staff across the organisation, including SMT and the Board. This came out of a recognition that staff had possibly less confidence in working with people in groups different to themselves, also barriers presented by what was seen as the PC social context. Feedback from staff has indicated that this has proved to be a successful training event with staff feeling that a lot of barriers have been broken down. Staff say they are now more confident to be able to understand how discrimination and prejudice can impact on relations with other people and how they can affect service delivery and employment practice outcomes. The SMT has invited the trainer to a future SMT meeting to discuss issues arising from the training and how SMT can ensure that positive practice continues throughout the organisation
- 3.4 **Telephone interpreting** - is now in place across CPT to ensure that there can be immediate access to interpreting where this is necessary. This is particularly useful in Community Payback settings and where there is an immediate need to be understood that had not previously been anticipated. This should assist compliance.

- 3.5 **Written communication to offenders** - letters have been reviewed and re written in Plain English to ensure that they are clear. This will assist offenders who may either have literacy difficulties or have English as an additional language to understand what is required of them and help them to comply with their orders.
- 3.6 **Monitoring for service and employment disproportionality** - CPT works with other criminal justice agencies across Cheshire Halton and Warrington to meet the requirements of the government Public Service Agreement 24 (PSA 24). This monitors the progress of BME offenders through the different stages of the criminal justice system, and also in relation to BME staff the different stages of employment practice. This is to identify where there may be disproportionality and take action to address it.

4. GENDER EQUALITY

- 4.1 **Corston report response (working more effectively with women offenders)** - an action plan was drawn up to meet the recommendations from the Corston report. There have been a number of significant achievements, some of which have been identified above. In addition:

- CPT has identified a women's champion in each of the Local Delivery Units (probation offices) and interventions functions to be a conduit, focus and support for developing more effective practice to ensure that the needs of women offenders are better understood and met. This will ensure they are more fairly supported to comply with their orders and reduce their re-offending.
- Pre-sentence reports - identifying where there may be disproportionate outcomes in proposals and outcomes and working to address them, eg higher numbers of women remanded into custody who are ultimately not sentenced to custody and a significant impact on children for whom they are often the primary carer.
- Recognizing the differing needs of women offenders - working to identify gaps in terms of effective support and service provision to aid compliance and ultimately reduce re-offending, e.g. community solutions designed to take account of vulnerabilities, domestic and childcare commitments.

5. DIVERSITY GRID

- 5.1 Analysis of the Diversity Grid has led to a number of key developments:-
- The requirement to extend the existing diversity grid to include proposals and results in relation to Fast Delivery Reports (FDRs), which will eventually comprise 70% of reports to the courts. This will enable CPT to better understand whether there is disproportionality at the 'gateway' into

probation. If found steps would then be taken to consider how this would be addressed. FDRs will be incorporated into the quarterly Diversity Grid review process during 2010/11.

- The redevelopment of the template for the race equality audit. This enabled CPT to identify additional specific issues requiring specialised knowledge and input e.g. developing guidance for staff around working with foreign national offenders.
- The redevelopment of the template used as the basis for the audit on women offenders.

5.2 Analysis highlighted disproportionality between the numbers of male victims who take up the service offered by the Victim Liaison Unit compared to female victims. CPT will be undertaking work to understand why male victims don't take up the offer of contact to the same levels as female victims during 2010/11.

6. EMPLOYMENT DATA

6.1 **Disproportionality re gender profile** - monitoring of employment has highlighted that female staff make up over 75% of the organisation staff group whilst the offender profile is over 80% male. This is replicated on a national basis. Quarterly monitoring over the last two years has encouraged CPT to work with the local university to commission research into identifying where the gender disproportionality may lie and what actions may be required to impact on it.

6.2 **Disproportionality re applicants from a range of ethnic backgrounds** - quarterly monitoring shows that there are a lower number of BME applicants for vacant posts. All job adverts are sent to CHAWREC (Cheshire Halton and Warrington Race Equality Centre) to disseminate. CPT will consider what additional steps may need be taken in order to see to increase the number of BME people applying for vacant posts during 2010/11.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This last year has demonstrated that the structure is effective in ensuring that actions in the SES are progressed and thus achieved, and that the SES remains a live document. The SES now reflects the progress across CPT relating to all aspects and functions of Cheshire Probation. Each successive year has its roots in work of the previous year, building on a greater understanding of where disproportionality can and does lie and how this can be addressed. In addition the opportunity to reflect on practice and employment issues in EDAG and at Diversity Panel has led to CPT pursuing new goals, e.g. ADHD work that will ultimately assist the work of the organisation in helping offenders to comply with their orders.

- 7.2 This review of 2009/2010 has highlighted where CPT is on its journey to ensure and embed equality and anti-discriminatory practice in all its work. The actions for 2010/11, shown on the attached action plan, have been determined in a number of different ways:
- developments from ongoing work, highlighted above;
 - practice developments;
 - actions not achieved during 2009/2010;
 - legislative changes and research.

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