Appendix 3: Recommendations

Equality Monitoring and Data Collection

1. Consider a review of the terminology and range of options in the data forms.

2. Consistently provide a 'prefer not to say' option for all characteristics in data collection processes and monitor those responses. This may indicate characteristics which still attract stigma and act as barriers to an open and respectful culture.

3. Add gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity to the full data collection and reporting processes or otherwise ensure there is a mechanism to monitor these protected characteristics.

4. Consider why non-disclosure rates are disproportionately high for ethnicity at the job application stage and for sexual orientation and religion among the workforce. This may require reflection on a 'it's no-one's business but mine' belief and consideration of the benefits of an open-minded and trusting workforce (see 'Disclosure: Being our 'Whole Self' at Work', page 34.

5. Amend the data collection process to ensure collection and analysis of successful and unsuccessful applications for employment and promotion by reference to protected characteristics in order to further evidence commitment to the public sector equality duty. We know, for example, that this year 11% of job applicants were from the BAME community but what was the conversion rate? What proportion was offered a job compared to other ethnicities? If certain protected groups were disproportionately failing in recruitment stages, it is important to know this and consider the impact of issues like unconscious bias.

6. The new regular reminder to staff to keep their data up to data is positive. Consider monitoring the response rate by retained staff who may not have the same levels of access to the office and may need a facilitated time to do this to demonstrate the importance of this exercise. Consider clearly articulating the benefits of disclosure, reflecting our communities and having accurate data (see 'Disclosure: Being our 'Whole Self' at Work', page 34.

7. Check that the current I.T systems are being fully utilised to their full reporting capabilities.

8. Evaluate staff's understanding of disability in its true broad terms using training and surveys. Also, seek to combat myths and unnecessary fears by exploring opportunities internally and in recruitment to demonstrate real life examples of adjustments which the Service has implemented to support disabled staff.

Equality Framework: Advancing the Equalities Agenda

1. Consider developing, in consultation with staff and community groups, an Equality and Inclusion Strategy which demonstrate the importance placed on equality and diversity by the organisation and its leadership.

2. Identify who should lead the equality and diversity agenda from both a behavioural and practical/expertise perspective.

3. When promoting initiatives and activities, carefully communicate who they seek to target or support in order to avoid suggestions of 'wooly' policies.

4. Review equality impact assessment processes against their purpose.

5. Identify the Service's equality messages (and language that reinforces this) and take steps to ensure this is integrated in all future corporate documents.

6. Vehicles for staff to influence policy should be promoted and broad cross-sections of staff should be encouraged to get involved to seek fresh perspectives on an evolving issue.

7. Staff groups charged with influencing and monitoring equality policy and outcomes need robust training.

8. The revised equality objectives (required under public sector equality duty) need to be taken through a process which is grounded in evidence and results measurable objectives.

9. Take steps to ensure all policies consciously consider the equality objectives so that the Service can begin to openly embed them in strategy and in staff's minds.

10. All protected characteristics should be considered in equality matters but this is particularly required under the public sector equality duty.

11. Improving data collection processes on protected characteristics will enable the Service to identify differing impacts on different groups, help evidence fulfilment of the public sector equality duty and potentially identify gaps in delivering to certain groups.

12. Use vehicles such as the Organisational Development group and positive action group to explore opportunities for fostering good relations and utilise internal and, crucially, external communication channels to promote activities.

13. Continue to explore the reporting and scrutiny process for activities which advance the equality agenda eg is the Organisation Development group the right vehicle and, if so, are its recommendations and outputs being scrutinised thoroughly and by the right people?

14. Review the extent to which the public is approached in setting (and challenging progress on) the equality objectives.

15. Ensure any equality and diversity strategy involves clear direction on communication, both internally and externally.

16. Seek out opportunities to evaluate access to internal and external communication channels by minority groups in order to take steps to mitigate potential barriers.