

DISABLED PEOPLE AND THE POLICE

Report by the MPS Disabled Staff Association

Summary

This report looks at MPS progress towards achieving its Disability Equality Scheme action plan commitments (D1 to D18), including within them the 48 recommendations of the report – Disabled People and the Police.

It gives the views of members of the MPS Disabled Staff Association on how these recommendations have been progressed by the MPS. It also looks at possible hindrances to the MPS meeting the objectives of its Disability Equality Scheme and suggests ways forward.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The MPS DSA Chair Paul O’Keeffe and Vice-Chair Andy Garrett met with DCS Allison (DCFD) on 27 April 2007. We agreed to consult DSA membership on their views specifically relating to MPS progress on the disability equality actions (D1 to D18) with the MPS Equality Scheme Action Plan. The brief included interest in identifying the views of disabled MPS staff on possible hindrances to the MPS achieving its DES objectives.
- 1.2 It was understood DCFD were seeking this input to assist in its preparation of a progress report for MPA EODB on disability equality recommendations within the GLAD report ‘Disabled People and the Police’

2 DSA submission

- 2.1 This report was produced following consultation with members of the Disabled Staff Association (DSA) It has subsequently been agreed between the DSA and Chief Superintendent Ed Bateman of DCFD that the main body of this report would be referenced within the DCFD progress report and become an appendix to it. The DSA SWOT analysis appendix would be referred separately to the Equalities Scheme Steering Group meeting in November for consideration alongside this report.
- 2.2 The MPS DSA makes this submission as representing views of people directly affected by the scheme, and anticipate the MPS DIAG have been asked to prepare similar feedback.

3. Method

3.1 The SWOT analysis method adopted was to circulate a table of the DES actions (objectives), key elements, outcomes and indicators for members to comment upon;

- **Strengths** – implied by the stated commitment
- **Weaknesses** – that might undermine achievement of the stated commitment
- **Opportunities** – that could be developed further support the stated action
- **Threats** – to the MPS of failing to meet this commitment.

3.2 A composite of the comments received from DSA members is available on request.

4 General DSA observations on the DES action plan

4.1 These observations are drawn from views of DSA members. Overall what appears to be missing is evidence of:

- Activities and initiatives at both corporate and local level that would deliver these commitments (DES Actions)
- Any audit trail & monitoring of DES initiatives (corporate and local)
- Progress made or underway -. Does the disabled and deaf community have to wait until the due date before evidence of progress (or not) is made available?
- Coordination of disability expertise

4.2 Disability equality initiatives across the MPS should be linked directly to specific DES actions, registered with and monitored by DCFD.

4.3 The DES action plan clearly suggests much greater commitment to consultation with disabled people (internally and externally) but it is in our (DSA) experience perhaps not recognized or fully understood throughout the MPS at senior level that the diversity of disability issues makes that consultation more complex, sometimes more time consuming and of course more costly. The cost issue is significantly important and differs from the requirements of other diversity strands. Carers, interpreters, transport and translation are among the requirements often needed to facilitate disability consultation but less necessary with other communities.

4.4 DSA has seen little evidence that this is understood and is being addressed within resource planning, corporately by DCFD and by other business units. This is likely to be a significant barrier to achieving the consultation and engagement elements of DES actions in the scheme.

4.5 Apart from the current corporate consultation with DIAG/DSA on policy etc, in order to deliver progress on disability equality actions, OCU SMTs and business change managers need to have sufficient access to disability advice and indeed

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turn to the correct source of disability advice with the same regularity & confidence they currently do with BME & Federation / Union reps.

- 4.6 Who should managers turn to for disability advice? Any distinctions between the roles of the Disability Focus Team, the DSA, DIAG and the planned Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) are neither made clear nor understood. This is a significant source of confusion to many and evidence of a general lack of coordination of disability knowledge, both likely candidates for barriers to the success of this DES.
- 4.7 As an example, if DLOs are already on line in BOCUs, the DSA, have not been involved in their selection, training or ongoing development. In effect, we (DSA) don't know their remit and probably they know not ours! Furthermore what about disability advice to non-borough OCUs?
- 4.8 Overall there is not a tangible link to the MPS values within the DES Action Plan, the performance measurements seem poor or almost impossible to achieve and it appears there is confusion over what elements of the scheme are strategy and which are tactics.
- 4.9 Satisfaction surveys are mentioned as indicators throughout the action plan however; we understand there is no such activity in place currently. The Public Attitude Survey (PAS) is perhaps too crude a measure. For example, it does offer respondents opportunity to declare a disability, but the data set of returns is in fact (they tell us) too small to publish. Perhaps more directed disability surveys, developed with involvement from DSA/DIAG & DLOs, are required to measure progress on these actions.
- 4.10 The DES actions lack bite as drivers for change. We all know OCUs focus attention on the prevailing PIs. (B)OCU level activity is vital in improving performance of any description and disability equality should be no different. Currently it appears we have a glossy set of commitments with little evidence of effect; or if progress is being made, the scheme has no clear communication of it. Robust PIs on disability could be identified so they could become integral to policing plans, thereby driving performance improvement and delivering the schemes commitments.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Whilst the MPS main report rightly identifies there has been progress made towards disability equality, this report indicates from the perspective of disabled members of the MPS at least, that there is still much more to be achieved.
- 5.2 Through a renewed commitment by the MPS to effective and meaningful engagement with the DSA, backed by resources to enable this, we might together realise the goal of true equality including meeting commitments made within the MPS Equality Scheme Action Plan.