Our equality, diversity and inclusion policy

The Money Advice Service values diversity and works inclusively. This enables us to meet our core aim of helping all people take control of money and to enhance their lives as a result. This means that we:

- Value diversity and work inclusively as an employer and comply with UK legislation
- Provide a universal service that is accessible and responsive to people’s needs
- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion issues, opportunities and risks are identified and acted upon throughout the organisation.

To work towards each of these outcomes, we have set objectives and specific actions for 2011/12.

1. **We value diversity and work inclusively as an employer and comply with UK legislation**
   a. Enhance staff consultation and feedback channels.
      i. Review the Staff Consultative Committee’s Terms of Reference to ensure diversity, equality is and inclusion is covered in the terms of reference.
      ii. Seek feedback from staff on their perception of equality, diversity and inclusion in the planned staff engagement survey, and act on the results.
   b. Further improve recruitment approach to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are taken into account.
      i. Set out and implement an effective approach for collecting, monitoring and acting on equality data on applicants throughout the recruitment and selection process.
      ii. Publish and implement new recruitment policy, so that staff understand and engage with the new system.
   c. Ensure our working environment remains accessible.
      i. All facilities management, including the setup of, and move to, the new office will take account of equality, diversity and inclusion and ensure the building is accessible to all staff, applicants and visitors.
      ii. Take accessibility into account in selection and design of our new IS system.
   d. Establish staff responsibilities and learning needs around equality, diversity and inclusion.
      i. The HR team leads the development of a learning needs assessment in relation to the organisation’s equality, diversity and inclusion needs and determines appropriate learning intervention options, and implements accordingly.

2. **We provide a universal service that is accessible and responsive to people’s needs**
   a. Improve our understanding of our customers’ needs, and our reach and impact on them; and explore differences.
      i. As part of the proposition development and Customer and Market Insight workstream, the review of our future data needs and our approach to research will reflect the requirement to
ensure our service is accessible and inclusive across all channels. We will implement effective means by which to measure our accessibility and make changes as appropriate, looking at both reach and impact so that any differential effect on particular groups is identified and acted upon.

b. Ensure our plans for service delivery take equality, diversity and inclusion into account from the beginning.
   i. Ensure that the Service’s design principles include accessibility and inclusivity, and accountability for these is embedded in the organisational design.
   ii. Introduce a straightforward mechanism by which to ensure that all project papers (eg concept papers, business cases, implementation plans and evaluation reports) consider the impact on accessibility and inclusiveness as a built-in, not bolted-on, part of the concept from the beginning.

3. Equality, diversity and inclusion issues, opportunities and risks are identified and acted upon throughout the organisation.
   a. Establish a steering group to identify and act on issues, opportunities and risks.
      i. Establish a diversity and equality steering group with ownership from the Executive Director (Lesley Robinson). The steering group will:
         o provide regular updates to the Executive Leadership Team, to the Board and to the staff
         o communicate and take forward current issues, mainly focused on progress against the action plan
         o monitor trends so as to identify and action any emerging risks and opportunities, and
         o be responsible for devising and monitoring the annual equality and diversity action plan.
      Terms of reference will be produced and membership will include those with specific responsibilities for progressing our diversity and equality agenda and staff representation from the SCC. It is proposed that the steering group meets quarterly.
   b. Establish mechanisms for external input on equality, diversity and inclusion issues.
      i. An approach to seeking external input on equality, diversity and inclusion issues is established, to gain input on our policy, strategy and service development and delivery. This will make use of expertise on the Consumer Forum and beyond, to cover the characteristics covered by the Equality Act and other aspects of accessibility.
      ii. Our diversity and equality steering group helps to deliver our commitment to this policy by:
         o regularly updating our Executive Leadership Team, our Board and our staff
         o communicating and taking-forward current issues
         o monitoring trends to identify and act upon any emerging risks and opportunities, and
         o devising and monitoring our annual equality and diversity action plan.