The business case for equality

strong cohesive places = understanding communities + tackling inequality

the Social Housing Equality Framework (SHEF) is a tool for local government to self-regulate its own performance
The Equality Framework for Local Government

- **Community engagement and satisfaction**
  - Measure outcomes and get regular, ongoing feedback

- **Strong cohesive places**
  - Knowing your communities
  - Use evidence to inform decisions and set priorities

- **Understanding communities and tackling inequality**
  - Responsive and accessible services
  - Leadership and partnership

- **A modern and diverse workforce**
  - Deliver on priorities

- **Create an effective organisation to deliver services**

**Levels**
- Developing
- Achieving
- Excellent
Underpinned by:

- The General Duties (PSED)
- The Equality Frameworks
- Effective equality analysis
- Continued dialogue about key areas of policy and practice, e.g. procurement and commissioning
**SHEF in the current context**

- **PSED**
  - covers protected characteristics (adding age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment)
  - general duty to: (i) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; (ii) advance equality of opportunity; and (iii) foster good relations
  - new transparency on data to drive culture change

- removal of KLoE and national performance structures – need for other ways to benchmark and learn

- Localism Bill and Welfare Reform – need to understand impact and manage change

- Big Society – putting more power in the hands of local communities?

- equality impact assessing cuts and organisational change
Equality Frameworks

• Refreshing the Frameworks to bring language and content in line with PSED – by Dec 2011
• Provide sector-led consistency and challenge for strong local equality practice
• Opportunity to identify good practice and share learning
• Contribute to the continued business case for recognising and meeting the needs of ALL communities; focus on outcomes
Social Housing Equality Framework

• ‘sister’ to frameworks for local government, the Fire Service and Police; pilot framework NHS
• based on the EFLG – in use since March 2009 (replaced the Equality Standard)
• developed in response to requests from the housing sector
• for use by ALMOs and RSLs and non registered housing associations
• Currently undergoing refresh in line with the Equality Act and other regulatory changes
What it is…

• a sector-led learning and improvement tool
• a tool for benchmarking and sharing practice
• a framework for thinking, discussing and evaluating the way you do things
• focused on activities and outcomes – continuous improvement
• an opportunity to identify and share good practice
• delivered through web-based self assessment and external peer challenge
...and what it is not

• compulsory
• an ‘inspection’
• a box-ticking exercise
• an end in itself
• burdensome
SHEF structure

The new “refreshed” version still has 3 levels – developing, achieving and excellent, measured against 5 performance areas:

– knowing your customers
– leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
– community engagement
– responsive services and customer care
– skilled and committed workforce
Performance areas

knowing your customers

• collecting information
• analysing and using information
• sharing data between partners
Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment

- leadership, vision, commitment
- mainstreaming equality
- equality analysis
- equality objectives and legal duties
- monitoring and scrutiny
- communicating and promoting commitments
- procuring and commissioning
- promotion of equality and participation
- leading by example
- good practice and benchmarking
Community Engagement

• community engagement structures
• effective engagement
• fostering good relations
Responsive services and customer care

- tackling harassment and domestic abuse
- providing accessible services
- take up of services
- assessing satisfaction
- human Rights
• Skilled and committed workforce
  • workforce planning
  • a more representative workforce
  • workforce monitoring
  • equality Analysis of HR policies and procedures
  • staff engagement
  • promoting a positive working environment
  • equal pay review
  • harassment and bullying
  • appraisal and
  • learning and development
Sector-led peer challenge

- Ef:ect – web based submission of evidence
- self assessment – developing
- self assessment and peer challenge – achieving and excellent
- peer assessment team – 2-3 days with final presentation and ‘next steps’
- areas for development - cycle of continuous improvement
- case studies and peer support to others
Become an LGG Diversity Peer

- A great opportunity to network nationally
- Learn how things are done elsewhere
- Contribute to sector development
- Need to be able to demonstrate diversity knowledge and experience within housing sector
- Need to satisfy generic peer competencies
- Accreditation by experience
The SHEF can help with going forward on …

- Knowledge, data and mapping
- Shared (equality) objectives across diverse local provision
- The relationship between citizens and the state
- Implementing and explaining cuts and changes to services
- Defining and championing the role of the public sector within localism
- What is ‘local’? (e.g. homelessness; welfare reform)
- Effective procurement and commissioning
- Local democracy and community leadership
- Community engagement, empowerment and vulnerability
- Socio-economic inequality
Questions and feedback

ernest.opuni@local.gov.uk
gill.elliott@local.gov.uk

CoP:
www.communities.idea.gov.uk