

THE EXECUTIVE

5 APRIL 2006

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

REVIEW OF RACE EQUALITY SCHEME 2002/05 AND PRIORITIES 2005/08	FOR DECISION
<p>Summary:</p> <p>This report provides a review of the achievements secured by the Council's Race Equality Scheme (RES) 2002/05 and the race equality priorities in the Council's Corporate Equalities and Diversity Plan 2005/08</p> <p>The review shows that the RES 2002/05 has made a significant contribution to moving the Council forward on the equalities and diversity agenda. It identifies the major achievements and the major race equality priorities that have already been integrated in to the structure of the successor Corporate Equalities and Diversity Plan 2005/08.</p> <p>The report makes the additional recommendations that the Council complete its second review of the race equality implications of its policies/strategies, services and functions and publishes this on the Council website. This will be followed by a generic equalities review that covers the other equalities and diversity streams and community cohesion. The generic review should be completed and published by 31 December 2006, in advance of the introduction of the Equality Act 2006.</p> <p>Furthermore, it proposes that the Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Cohesion Board oversee a review of compliance with the information, monitoring and other specific duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Council's response to the additional specific duties arising from the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 and Equality Act 2006 on disability, gender, faith and sexuality.</p> <p>Wards Affected: All</p>	
<p>Implications:</p> <p>Financial: None.</p> <p>Legal:</p> <p>This report covers actions necessary to ensure the Council's compliance with statutory duties under the RR(A) Act 2000. It details outcomes of the Council's RES 2002/05 and those race equality priorities emerging from the impact/needs assessment process undertaken by all services.</p> <p>Risk Management:</p> <p>The report ensures compliance with Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) advice that Council's integrating race equality in to a corporate equalities and diversity plan should formally review the achievements of the 2002/05 RES and identify the authority's priorities for the subsequent three year period 2005/08. This review ensures compliance with this advice and guards against possible enforcement under the terms of the RR (A) Act 2000.</p>	

It is not necessary to have a separate RES if the Council has a corporate equalities and diversity plan, as long as the statutory race equality elements are clear and discernible. The Council's race equality priorities have been integrated in to the Council's successor Corporate Equalities and Diversity Plan 2005/08.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:

Barking and Dagenham is a borough of rapidly increasing ethnic and cultural diversity. The Council needs to maintain a robust and proactive approach to race equality and community cohesion to ensure that it contributes to the creation of an inclusive and cohesive local community. The achievements of the Council's RES 2002/05 and its priorities (2005/08) have greatly contributed to improved inclusion and cohesion for local BME communities and will continue to do so.

Crime and Disorder: None.

Recommendation(s)

That the Executive endorse the review of the Council's race equality work for 2002/05 and priorities for 2005/08 and that the Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Cohesion Board commission a review of compliance with current and forthcoming statutory specific duties.

Reason(s) To ensure compliance with current race equality and future equality statutory duties on disability, gender, faith and sexuality.

Contact Officer:	Title:	Contact Details:
Bill Coomber	Corporate Equalities and Diversity Adviser	Tel: 0208-227 2105 Fax: 020 8227 2206 E-mail: bill.coomber@lbbd.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 This is the first review of the Council's statutory Race Equality Scheme (RES) 2002/05. The objective of the review is to:

- Assess the achievements of the Council's RES 2002/05 and identify those areas that need to address over the next three year period 2005/08.
- Review the arrangements that the Council has in place to fulfil its statutory obligation to fulfil the general duty and specific duties as laid down by the RR(A) Act 2000.
- Explain how race equality will be positively promoted, discrimination eliminated and good race relations promoted within the context of the Council's new Corporate Equalities and Diversity Plan 2005/08.

1.2 The promotion of race equality is central to the creation of a more inclusive and cohesive local community, where all citizens have an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of the borough.

- 1.3 The Council's equalities, diversity and cohesion policies, including those on race equality, are designed to ensure that the Council is a progressive organisation that:
- maintains a discrimination free work environment;
 - provides accessible and inclusive services (both directly and via the contracting process); and
 - ensures that community consultation/engagement processes and the provision of information include all sections of the local community.
- 1.4 However, the Council also has a community leadership role and strong links have been made with strategic partners via the Barking and Dagenham Partnership (BDP). The Council contributes to the community priority: 'Promoting Equal Opportunities and Celebrating Diversity.' We continue to work in partnership with our citizens, other statutory organisations, the community and voluntary sector and private business to achieve against the priority and our commitments in the 2020 Vision document.
- 1.5 The 2001 census identified Barking and Dagenham as an increasingly diverse borough, where the proportion of people from black and minority ethnic communities has increased to over 15% (latest 2005 estimates 19.1%). This trend is likely to increase over the next few decades and the planning and delivery of services needs to reflect this. Yet, the borough also has significant issues around deprivation, social exclusion and cohesion. The Council is committed to seeking effective solutions to these issues via multi-agency initiatives and the maximisation and allocation of available resources to effect positive change.
- 1.6 In particular, the Council is actively working to deliver:
- Improved community safety (including combating race hate);
 - The objectives and targets in the Social Cohesion Sub-Group Performance management Framework (PMF)
 - The commitments in the Community Cohesion Strategy, 2004/07 and
 - Campaigning work using the Partnership's Anti-Discrimination Charter

2. What is a Race Equality Scheme?

- 2.1 Following the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, the Race Relations Act 1976 was amended to address the issues raised by the subsequent public inquiry. In particular, the issue of 'institutional discrimination' came to the fore and the way in which organisations fulfil functions or deliver services can have unintended consequences that adversely impact on black and minority people.
- 2.2 The RR(A) Act 2000 came in to force in 2001 and required public authorities (local authorities, police forces, NHS Hospital Trusts, etc) to fulfil a new statutory general duty to:
- Promote race equality,
 - Eliminate discrimination; and
 - Promote good race relations.

2.3 In order to help them do this a number of specific duties were also included in the Act. These required public authorities to produce an RES, on a three year cycle that covers:

- The race equality policies and structures of the authority;
- A three year action plan;
- Arrangements to assess policies, services and functions for their relevance to race equality
- Plans to carry out impact assessments to identify and tackle adverse impact
- Arrangements for carrying out impact assessments and reporting the results
- Arrangements for consulting with the community and reporting the results
- Arrangements for monitoring and reporting the results;
- Arrangements for providing information in community languages

2.4 The Council published its first RES 2002/05 by the statutory deadline of 31 May 2002.

3. RES 2002/05: Assessment of Achievements

3.1 The Council's race equality work over the last three years has been guided by the following Race Equality Statement of Intent:

'From now on, we will mainstream race equality by working on four fronts:

- Forging Partnerships
- Providing Leadership
- Developing shared vision
- Shifting Public Perceptions

To achieve our objectives we will focus on three aspects of our work over the next three years:

Year One (2002/03):	Human resources
Year Two (2003/04):	Community Involvement
Year Three (2004/05):	Service Delivery'

3.2 The following is a breakdown of achievements against these areas in each of the last three years of the RES:

Summary of RES 2002/05 Achievements

Human Resources - Year One (2002/03)

- Significantly improved the representative nature of the Council's workforce by increasing the percentage of BME staff to 11.1% over the three years of the RES.
 - Ensuring that all elected members and staff received appropriate training and/or briefing on the new race duty and diversity issues. As part of this we targeted front line staff to ensure that they received appropriate customer care training.
 - Race Equality mainstreamed in to all corporate training and development. The development of tools to assess potential contractors/tenders and contracts and auditing current practices amongst providers/trainers.
 - Corporate training programmes audited for its race equality and diversity content. Race Equality improvements commenced from the finalisation of the Corporate Training and Development Programme from 2003/04 onwards.
 - Held regular six monthly meetings with approved Consultants to facilitate the race equality mainstreaming process.
 - Used contact with organisations locally and nationally to identify further key training providers and consultants with specialist race equality and diversity knowledge and skills. Developed proposals for future community stakeholder scrutiny and validation of training courses.
 - Supported the development of the BME Staff Network and launched a range of positive action initiatives, such as the introduction of the PATH schemes.
 - Consulted with BME communities on Council's Equalities and Diversity in Employment Five Year Strategy and results fed in to the review of the Strategy
 - Commissioned a research project to determine priorities for action to facilitate the creation of a more representative workforce at all levels. Issues considered included:
 - Trainee Schemes
 - Targeted advertisements
 - Outreach projects
 - Profile raising
 - Reputation management
 - Positive action initiatives
- Final research submitted to corporate Human Resources to consider the findings and implement appropriate recommendations.
- Race Equality integrated in to all new person specifications; core competencies for managers; personal appraisal; and performance management tools.

- Provided improved advice and procedures for contractors; and targeted training and development to better equip Council staff to interact with all sections of the community and forge meaningful partnerships that resulted in improved customer care and better quality public services.

Community Involvement - Year Two (2003/04)

- Actively promoted the race equality general duty through its 'shifting public perceptions' cultural diversity project. Rolled out the three cultural diversity films and engaged with community organisations, community forums, public bodies, strategic partners and local citizens in public venues and locations
- Specific work undertaken with schools. Celebrating cultural diversity class packs distributed. Integrated and delivered, in all secondary schools, via Citizenship and Personal development part of national curriculum. Cultural diversity films made available in DVD, VHS and CD Rom formats
- The establishment of a 'Shifting Public Perceptions' website linked to the Council intranet/internet. The three films streamed on the website, along with provision of information and feed back via e-mail facility.
- Production and distribution of an innovative corporate race equality leaflet and poster based on the 'Shifting Public Perceptions' images with the strap line 'Lets Celebrate Diversity.' The poster used for a local publicity campaign using the borough's JC Decaux sites.
- Organised a Council-wide Open Day for local BME groups designed specifically to improve the provision of information and access to services
- Adopted best practice guidelines for the consultation and engagement of BME and other 'hard to reach' groups and disseminated within Council.
- The establishment of effective consultation and engagement via stakeholder organisations, the Citizens Panel, focus groups and increased surveying. In particular, working with the Race Equality Council to develop the Community Consultation Network as a specific mechanism through which we consulted with the 12 largest BME communities on progress in achieving our RES.
- Extensive and effective consultation/engagement with the local community on the targets in the RES action plans. Race equality inserts published in two editions of the Citizen Magazine.
- Targeted publicity work with the local press and media produced improved coverage of the Council's race equality policies. The establishment of a mechanism to guarantee that images in all future Council publications/publicity reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the borough.
- Reviewed and made changes to the racist reporting system across the Council and improve liaison with strategic partners. This included setting up a Strategic Racist Incidents Panel to supplement and direct operational work

- Agreed a draft corporate policy for withdrawal/suspension of services from customers in the event of racist or other discriminatory incidents
- Reviewed the structure of the Dagenham Town Show and Barking Festival. Began mainstreaming race equality and cultural diversity into the structure and programme of the events
- Launched the first annual Molten Cultural Diversity Arts Festival during October 2002. Organised specific black history events, targeting schools and libraries.
- Launched the idea of a 'Community Languages Day' with the launch of a new Barking and Dagenham TIS Interpretation and translation contract
- Anti-discrimination conduct and practice mainstreamed into the conditions of use of Council and community facilities
- Community Housing Partnerships (CHPs) began monitoring monitor attendance and satisfaction with housing services by ethnicity. Community Forums began monitoring attendance at meetings by ethnicity. All data generated evaluated and issues arising addressed.
- Tenants and community groups signed up to the objective of opposing discrimination and positively promoting equalities and diversity, including race equality. This included race equality training/briefing packs for tenants and community groups.
- Monitored rates of BME participation and satisfaction using the 2001 Housing Status Survey as the baseline and the 2003 Survey as comparative data. Consulted BME tenants on barriers to participation and addressed the issues arising.
- Ensured race equality included in the contents of the voluntary sector COMPACT and monitored BME sign up to the COMPACT.
- Positively encouraged more BME groups to apply for Council grants. Began monitoring and evaluating the percentage of the total corporate grants budget received by BME groups.
- DEAL Monitored by ethnicity: school governors, adult literacy participants, funding of arts projects, participant in arts projects and library membership.

Service Delivery - Year Three (2004/05)

- The delivery of a Council-wide programme of impact/needs assessments on existing policies, services and functions by 31 May 2005.
- Ensured that the impact/needs assessments covered race/ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, faith, age and community cohesion.
- All services put the reports of their impact/needs assessments on the intranet and in local libraries. Began the process of drawing up the Impact/needs assessment outcomes for inclusion in future Departmental Equalities and Diversity Plans.

- The development of a proposal and procedure for impact/needs assessing new and revised policies and proposals.
- Worked to recent CRE guidance to improve the Council's procurement procedures to ensure that contracts have equalities and diversity clauses included. Subsequently, this has led to the development of guidance on building equalities into contracts, which includes a revised Pre-Qualification Questionnaire. There is also a greater emphasis on service delivery monitoring with all services encouraged to draw up and maintain a schedule of contracts and engage with contractors if the value of the contract is over £100,000.
- Reviewed the needs of the borough's BME voluntary and community sector and built clear equality and diversity and cohesion conditions in all Council grants.
 - Evaluated the current translation and Interpretation contract and began drawing up the specification and process for the tendering of a new contract. Also reviewed its current arrangements for using Language Line.
 - Began the process of improving service monitoring, evaluation and review across the Council and identifying those services that currently monitor their services.

- 3.3 Progress on the RES action plans was regularly monitored via the Council's Corporate Monitoring Group. There were some areas of slippage. These were either picked up in 2005/06 or included in the Council's new Corporate Equalities and Diversity Plan 2005/08.
- 3.4 In Year 2 (2003/04) the RES action plan was broadened out to include the following strategic Objective: 'Promote Community Involvement with regard to gender, disability, sexuality, faith, age and community cohesion. It also included specific actions covering these areas. Similarly, in Year 3 (2004/05) objectives and targets covered all six equalities and diversity streams.
- 3.5 All three action plans, with targets and outcomes can be viewed on the equalities and diversity pages of the Council's website at www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk

4. Corporate Impact/Needs Assessment Programme 2002/05

- 4.1 The Council have undertaken over 70 impact/needs assessments over this three year period. They have included both frontline and support functions and have covered not only race, but also the other equalities streams and community cohesion. Initial Corporate guidance and a detailed Step by Step Guide were produced in the first year of the RES and the Council launched a comprehensive process of training and briefing for members, managers and staff. All of the reviews were carried out over years two and three of the RES 2002/05.
- 4.2 The theme is one of continuing improvement and the Council wish to continue to build on the positive outcomes produced by the RES 2002/05. An evaluation of the race equality outcomes from the impact/needs assessments revealed that there were a number of priority areas that need to be addressed over the period 2005/08.

These were translated in to a priority eight point plan, which has already been integrated in to the structure of the CEDP 2005/08:

- (1). Ensure that the workforce, at all levels, better represents the ethnic and cultural diversity of the community. Better use of positive action and improved retention and development of BME staff [**Refer to CEDP objective 23**]
- (2). Continuing staff training on all aspects of ethnic and cultural diversity to equip them to better understand race equality and deliver improved customer service to BME communities [**Refer to CEDP objective 25**]
- (3). Improving service level and departmental consultation and engagement with BME communities, including refugees and travellers and gypsies [**Refer to CEDP objectives 14, 18 and 19**]
- (4). Introducing systematic ethnic monitoring as part of the wider corporate equalities and diversity system of service monitoring, evaluation and review [**Refer to CEDP 9 and 21**]
- (5). Through monitoring, surveying and focus groups, to report regularly on BME take up of Council services and address under-representation [**Refer to CEDP objectives 14 and 19**]
- (6). To gauge BME satisfaction with Council services and develop a strategy for increasing levels of satisfaction and promoting community cohesion [**Refer to CEDP objectives 18 and 20**]
- (7). Ensuring that procurement processes are delivering race equality and other equalities and diversity outcomes [**Refer to CEDP objectives 16 and 17**]
- (8). Tackling race discrimination in the Council's policies, services and functions through impact assessment/policy proofing [**Refer to CEDP objectives 8, 10 and 11**]

4.3 DIALOG guidance on the Equality Standard (EQS) clearly states that the statutory duty to prepare an RES can be integrated in to the EQS requirement to produce a Corporate Equalities Plan, provided the RES elements are:

'easily identifiable, distinct and readily lends itself to external inspection.'

4.4 This is the approach that the Council has adopted, integrating the Council's race equality priorities and statutory duties in to the structure of a single corporate equalities and diversity plan.

5. Other Areas to be Reviewed

5.1 Officers have completed an interim, 2nd strategic review of the Council's services in terms of their relevance to race equality. This is now available on the Council website. A finalized strategic review of the relevance of the race equality duty to

Council services, policies/strategies and functions will be completed once the new Council structure is operative.

- 5.2 This will be followed by a generic strategic review of the Council's policies/strategies, services and functions in terms of their implications for disability, gender, faith, age, sexuality and community cohesion. This should be completed and published by 31 December 2006, in advance of the introduction of the Equality Act 2006 and the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005.
- 5.3 The CMT has asked that the Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Cohesion Board commission a review of compliance with the existing race equality specific duties and the forthcoming duties to be introduced by the Equality Act 2006 and the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005. This review will facilitate identification of strengths, weaknesses that need addressing and areas of future development.
- 5.4 Forthcoming legislation will come into force by December 2006 and will be subject to detailed guidance. Existing work on community stakeholder engagement and the scope and proactive nature of the CEDP have placed the Council in a strong position to respond to this new legislation. This will be the subject of a further report to the Executive in due course.

Consultees:

Cllr Geddes (Lead Member Social Cohesion and Community Safety)
Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team
Roger Luxton (Chair of Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Cohesion Board)
Equalities and Diversity Officers Panel
Financial Services
Legal Services
Corporate Human Resources
Barking and Dagenham Black and Minority Ethnic Staff Network
Barking and Dagenham Race Equality Council

Background Papers

Barking and Dagenham Council Race Equality Scheme 2002/05
Barking and Dagenham Corporate Equalities and Diversity Plan 2005/08
CRE Guidance on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
Corporate Guidance on Impact Assessments
Corporate Step by Step Guide on completing an Impact Assessment
Draft CPA (Line of Inquiry) Guidance