

Item no.

Report to: **District Council of Easington**
Date: **7th July 2005**
Report of: **Executive Member for Organisational Development**
Subject: **Race Equality Scheme 2005 - 2008**
Ward: **All**

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present for approval a new Race Equality Scheme for District of Easington Council.

2. Consultation

2.1 The following staff and partners were consulted on the content of this Scheme:

- Chief Executive
- Assistant Chief Executive
- Directors for District of Easington Council
- Heads of Service for District of Easington Council
- Durham and Darlington Racial Equality Council
- Society for the Promotion and Advancement of Romany Culture (S.P.A.R.C)
- Northeast Christian Churches Together
- Chinese Association Northeast Region
- Easington District Carers Association
- Valerie Moody MBE, National Education Liaison Officer for The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain

3. Background

3.1 In response to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA) placed positive duties on all public authorities to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination in all of its functions;
- Promote equality of opportunity; and
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

The RRAA also places a duty on public authorities to publish a Race Equality Scheme at least every three years, which outlines how the organisation will meet the three general duties above. This document must also contain a list all of the Authority's functions that are relevant to the three general duties, a three year action plan outlining how we will meet the three general duties and a position statement and action plan detailing how we will promote the three general duties in employment. Best Value performance indicator 2b measures whether we have a race equality scheme and how well it is embedded in Council activities.

3.2 Currently the RRAA is the only piece of equalities legislation that places positive duties on public authorities. However, this will change in the near future. When implemented the following pieces of legislation are expected to impose similar duties to publish schemes which contain action plans to promote equalities:

- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (Duty to publish a disability equality scheme)

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- Equality Bill (Due to be passed by parliament in 2006. Duty to publish a gender scheme)

3.4 In order to progress through the five levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government, the Council must show that they have a Race Equality Scheme and that it is embedded into relevant service plans. The Race Equality Scheme will form part of the Council's overall approach to equality and as this is developed it will be presented in a coherent way.

3.4 The Council's existing Race Equality Scheme covered the period 2002 to 2005 and there is a statutory requirement to have the new scheme in place by June 2005.

4. Position Statement and Option Appraisal

4.1 The Local Authority needs to adopt a Race Equality Scheme to ensure it complies with the RRAA and achieve an outturn for BVPI 2b.

4.2 The attached Scheme (Appendix A) incorporates all the required elements of a Race Equality Scheme and is arranged under the headings of the Equality Standard.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

5.2 Legal Implications

This document is statutory under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

5.3 Policy Implications

The Race Equality Scheme has implications for policy and service planning across the Council.

5.4 Risk Implications

A risk assessment has been carried out and the necessary actions required to manage the risks will be implemented.

6. Communications

6.1 If agreed this policy will be communicated to both staff and service users via:

- Staff newsletters
- Website
- Infopoint
- All

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 *Corporate Plan and Priorities*

As this is a corporate document and affects all services, if agreed, this document will help to address all of the corporate objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan. It also has implications for the Community Strategy.

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7.2 *Service Plans*

Actions from this document must be written into service plans in order to ensure actions are completed and to satisfy the requirements of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

7.3 *Performance Management and Scrutiny*

Actions in this Scheme will be monitored through the performance management framework.

7.4 *Sustainability*

There are no sustainability implications.

7.5 *Expenditure related to 'well-being' powers*

This policy will promote the social and environmental well being of the District by promoting racial equality and equality of opportunity.

7.6 *Human Resource Implications*

There will be some training requirements regarding duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and in order to help staff implement some of the actions in the document.

7.7 *Information Technology*

There are not any I.T. implications in relation to operation of this document. The document will be available to view and download from the Council website.

7.8 *Equality and Diversity*

This document ensures compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, ensures an outturn for BVPI 2b, helps us to progress the Equality Standard for Local Government and helps to mainstream equalities throughout the organisations.

7.9 *Crime and Disorder*

There are no crime and disorder implications over and above specific actions identified for the Community Safety unit.

7.10 *Human Rights*

If agreed, this document will have regard to Article 14: Prohibition of Discrimination of the Human Rights Act 1998.

7.11 *Social Inclusion*

If agreed, this policy will have regard to social inclusiveness by promoting good relations between different racial groups.

7.12 *Procurement*

This report does not contain any procurement issues over and above specific actions identified for the Procurement unit.

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8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that members agree the attached Race Equality Scheme.

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Background Papers

The following background papers were used when developing the Race Equality Scheme 2005-2008:

- District of Easington Council Race Equality Scheme 2002 - 2005
- Various documents on www.cre.gov.uk