
REPORT TO:	FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:
DATE OF MEETING:	11 DECEMBER 2003	
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	IAN REID EXT 5790	DOC:
SUBJECT:	DRAFT RACE EQUALITY SCHEME	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM 14

1.0 Recommendation

1.1 That the Committee approve and adopt a draft Race Equality Scheme (Appendix A to this report).

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- (1) outline the background and process which has led to the submission of the appended draft scheme;
- (2) outline the consultation process undertaken; and
- (3) invite the Committee to approve and adopt the draft scheme.

3.0 Background

3.1 The Committee on 16 October 2003 approved and adopted a revised Equality and Diversity Policy Statement to take account of current legislation and national guidelines. In particular, the statement reflects the framework provided by the Equality Standard for Local Government in assisting to "mainstream" equalities into service delivery and employment in all aspects of the Council's work.

3.2 The officers' Equal Opportunities and Diversity Action Group (EODAG) has now also considered and approved a draft Race Equality Scheme, as required by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This is intended to be very much a working document and includes:

- (1) a list of the functions and policies assessed as being relevant to the Council's general duty to promote race equality; and
- (2) the Council's arrangements to:
 - (a) monitor its policies for any adverse impact on promoting race equality
 - (b) assess, and consult on, the impact that proposed policies are likely to have on promoting race equality
 - (c) publish the results of its assessments, consultation, and monitoring
 - (d) make sure the public have access to information and services
 - (e) train its staff and elected members on the council's race equality duties.

3.3 Each Department has carried out a priority-based assessment of its functions and policies, on the basis of which departmental action plans have been produced for inclusion in the draft scheme.

3.4 Following EODAG approval, the draft scheme was submitted for consultation within the Council and throughout the wider district community. The consultees (a list of whom forms Appendix B to this report) included local partners and other relevant organisations, members of the Derbyshire Equalities Forum, all South Derbyshire District Councillors, and the recognised trade unions representing this Council's employees.

3.5 Responses to the consultation exercise were received from the Derbyshire Association for the Blind, who strongly support the Council's initiative, and the East Staffordshire Racial Equality Council, who have also responded positively. The appended draft scheme incorporate amendments made as a result of the consultation exercise.

4.0 Future Action

4.1 The EODAG is also giving detailed consideration to the provision of a comprehensive training programme for staff and Elected Members, as well as mechanisms for incorporating the Equality and Diversity Policy Statement and the Race Equality Scheme into corporate strategies and service plans, through progressive action plans and ongoing monitoring, review and community involvement.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 It is expected that any additional expenditure can be accommodated within existing departmental budgets.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 The Council's commitment to equality and diversity, and the implementation of that commitment, are likely to have widespread implications for all corporate activities.

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 Once approved and adopted, the appended draft is intended expressly to promote race equality throughout the South Derbyshire community.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The approval and adoption of the appended Race Equality Scheme will be a further step towards achieving a comprehensive programme of action on equality and diversity. The next steps for the EODAG are outlined in paragraph 4 above.

8.2 Further reports will therefore be brought from time to time - both to inform the Committee of progress in the Council's Equality and Diversity agenda, and to ensure Elected Members' active involvement in that process.

9.0 Background Papers

9.1 Agenda and consultation papers considered by the EODAG.

