
REPORT TO:	FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:	14
DATE OF MEETING:	25 NOVEMBER 2004	CATEGORY:	DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE		OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	JOHN PORTER (Ext. 5780)	DOC:	
SUBJECT:	RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN 2003/04 (YEAR END REPORT)	REF:	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:	G

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that:

- The Race Equality Scheme Action Plan 2003/04 (Year End Report) be received and that arrangements be made for publicising the report on the Council's web site and within the local community
- The Project Brief for reviewing and rolling forward the Race Equality Scheme Action Plan be agreed
- Members provide an initial indication of possible themes and priorities for inclusion in the new Race Equality Scheme Action Plan.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Formally report progress on the delivery of the Council's Race Equality Scheme Action Plan over the period 1 November 2003 to 30 October 2004
- Finalise arrangements for reviewing and rolling forward the Action Plan

3.0 Detail

Introduction

- 3.1 The role of the Race Equality Scheme is to show how the Council intends to fulfil its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- 3.2 The Council's first Race Equality Scheme was formally approved and adopted in December 2003 (Minute No. FM/67 refers). The Scheme is accompanied by a three year Action Plan which the Council has a duty to monitor.
- 3.3 This report details the progress which has been made over the past year in delivering the Action Plan and outlines arrangements for reviewing and rolling forward the Action Plan for a further twelve months.

The Year End Report

Form and contents

- 3.4 A copy of the Year End Report is attached at Annexe A. Members will note that the follows very closely the format adopted for Service Plans, with sections on:
 - The background to the Race Equality Scheme and the Council's statutory duties under the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
 - The year in context
 - Achievements over the past year
 - Unfinished tasks (along with reasons for non delivery)
 - Performance in terms of the national Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs) and local indicators relating specifically to Council employees
 - Emerging issues and the lessons learned in the first year of delivering the Action Plan.

Key Messages

- 3.5 The report has a number of 'key messages', which are summarised below:
 - Work in the first year focused on the establishment of the necessary 'infrastructure' to take forward the equalities and diversity agenda.

This included the appointment of Councillor Isham as Member 'Champion'; the establishment of the officer *Equal Opportunities and Diversity Action Group* (chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive and with representatives from all departments); and, the creation of the *Values and Attitudes Forum*.

The Forum is made up of external stakeholders and since the inaugural meeting in July, has grown in strength and now includes representatives of most 'interest' groups.'

Also, during the year, mandatory 'awareness training was provided to councillors and officers and shortly, this will be rolled out to members of the South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership Board.

As a result of this ground work, work, the Council has achieved Level 1 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (BVPI 2a) and a score of 36.8% on BVPI 2b (duty to promote racial equality checklist).

- It is clear from the report (page 4) that a number of tasks remain unfinished. For the most part, the main reason for non delivery has been lack of resources (staffing) and competing priorities.
- Experience in delivering the Action Plan has highlighted a number of issues including:
 - The need for realism in developing the Action Plan (especially with respect to resources)
 - The need to strengthen linkages with the corporate and service planning process to ensure that race equality and other aspects of equality and diversity are 'mainstreamed' in service delivery
 - The need to work more closely with Black and Minority Ethnic Community Groups when setting local performance targets and service delivery standards
 - The need to move forward on Equality Impact Assessments

Publicising the Report

- 3.6 It is proposed to make the report widely available so that local people and other stakeholders can form a judgement about the Council's performance and progress on racial equality issues.

Looking ahead

- 3.7 The Race Equality Scheme Action Plan now needs to be rolled reviewed and rolled forward to cover the period 2005/2008.
- 3.8 A proposed Project Brief (including significant milestones) is set out at Annexe B.
- 3.9 Members will note the proposal to develop the new Action Plan around a small number of priority themes. This approach is designed to ensure that resources are not spread too thinly and that local people can see a real difference in service outcomes.
- 3.10 Possible themes include:
- **Impact assessment** - policy proofing of Council policies, plans and strategies
 - **Communication** - written, verbal, e-government etc
 - **Members and employees** - training and development, recruitment and retention

- **Leadership** - within the organisation and the wider community
- **Service delivery and standards** - mainstreaming equality and diversity issues
- **Performance Management** - indicators and targets

3.11 The Brief recognises that themes and priorities will need to be set in consultation with stakeholders, in particular the Values and Attitudes Forum. At this stage, Members' initial views on themes and priorities would be welcome.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There will be some costs associated with publicising the End of Year Report which can be met from existing budgets.

6.0 Background Papers

6.1 Race Equality Scheme File (Policy and Economic Regeneration Division).