

Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

Meeting: Equalities Forum

Date: 17 January 2005

Report of: Director of Strategy & Governance

Subject: Race Equality Scheme (RES) update on implementation

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To inform the Equalities Forum of the recent progress in implementing the council's Race Equality Scheme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Equalities Forum notes that the RES includes a commitment to ensuring that issues of gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and faith are considered as well as race when the council is carrying out its equalities impact assessments (EQIA).
- 2.2 The Equalities Forum notes the progress the council continues to make in implementing the RES since its publication at the end of 2002.

3. The legislative framework for the RES

- 3.1 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 has given public authorities, including Brighton & Hove City Council, the general duty to promote race equality.
- 3.2 The aim of the duty is to make race equality central to the way public authorities work by putting race equality at the heart of our strategic planning, policy making, service delivery and employment practice.
- 3.3 Under the general duty the council must:
- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination

- promote equal opportunities
 - promote good race relations between people from different racial groups.
- 3.4 There are specific duties to support this general duty. One of these is to produce a Race Equality Scheme (RES) setting out our plans to implement the Act. An RES must include a three-year programme of Impact Assessments.

4. The Council's Race Equality Scheme (RES)

- 4.1 The Race Equality Scheme was published in December 2002. It sets out how we plan to improve our delivery on race equality so that we can meet the requirements of the Act by April 2005 (Objectives 1-8), meeting each of the following specific duties:
- Assessing, consulting on, and monitoring our functions and policies for adverse **impacts on race equality** (Objectives 1,2 &3)
 - **Monitoring** employment and services (Objective 4)
 - Ensuring our **employment practice** is fair and promotes race equality (Objectives 5&6)
 - Making sure the public have **access** to information and services (Objective 7)
 - Ensuring **contractors** also meet the requirements of the Act (Objective 8)

The RES can be viewed on the council's website: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

5. Progress update since November

- 5.1 The Equalities Forum received a report at its November meeting on the progress that had been made on implementing the RES. This report provides information on the areas where there has been some significant progress since November. It does not report on the areas of monitoring, employment practice, access to information and services or complaints because in these areas work is on-going but there is no significant change since November.

6. Progress update - Equalities Impact Assessments (Objectives 2,&3)

- 6.1 The council took the opportunity offered by the requirements of the RES to take a broad equalities approach to assessing its functions and policies by making a commitment to using Impact Assessments to consider all aspects of 'Equality' including:
- Race and Minority Ethnicity
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender issues
 - Disability

- Age
 - Faith
 - Gender
- 6.2 Within the Race Equality Scheme, all relevant functions and policies have been timetabled to complete an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) by April 2005.
- 6.3 Changes to the structure of council services since 2002 have resulted in revisions to the original timetable of EQIAs. A summary of progress against the timetable is attached as Appendix 1. Whilst there are still many assessments to be completed every directorate is working to a timetable which aims to complete them by April 2005.
- 6.4 The impact assessment work is being supported corporately by a training programme for staff, a co-ordinated approach to consultation and information for staff, including a toolkit for assessments, which is continually updated on the council's intranet (the 'Wave')
- 6.5 There is a legal requirement for the council to publish the results of its impact assessments. The RES made a commitment to publish the results widely to ensure that communities of interest were aware of the work undertaken and the consultation and improvements to services that resulted. The council will be publishing the results of its EQIAs during 2005 using its website, City News and other community publications. Council staff and Members will be informed about the results of the EQIAs through the 'Wave'.

7 Progress update – contractors (Objective 8)

- 7.1 The Contract Officer Forum held on 20 October included a joint Procurement and Learning and Development initiative to update Council officers on the RRAA and Equalities.
- 7.2 Standards against which to monitor contractors are in the process of being implemented and will be included in the revised version of the Procurement Workforce and Equalities code of practice.
- 7.3 At the request of the council the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply has agreed to build equalities issues into their Procurement Corporate Award training programme. The programme will be undertaken by 16 council officers during 2005 - this is a significant achievement for the council which will further advance progress in implementing the RES scheme within Brighton

and Hove

8. Consultation with communities of interest

- 8.1 People who participated in the 'Equal to the Challenge' consultation event in early 2004 received their second feedback document in December detailing the progress that has been made in addressing the issues raised at the event. This document has been sent out in translation where necessary.
- 8.2 Consideration is being given to the most effective way to consult the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-gender) communities and gypsies and travellers.

9 Ensuring the RES is put into practice (Objective 1)

- 9.1 There are a number of groups which have a role in ensuring that the RES is implemented. The Policy & Resources Committee is responsible for the scheme overall and is supported in this by the Equalities Forum. The Overview and Scrutiny Organisation Committee receives an annual report on progress. Within the council there is an Equalities Programme Board which comprises senior managers from each directorate.
- 9.2 The actions arising from the scheme and from the impact assessments are incorporated into the council's business plans and the council's directors are responsible for ensuring that sufficient resources are allocated to achieving the aims of the scheme.

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Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The identification of resources (including in-kind resources) required for implementation of equalities initiatives and future legal duties (see below) is a matter for directors to keep under review through the Council's business and budget planning processes.

Finance officer: Nigel Marvel Date: 6 January 2005

Legal implications

The council is required to produce a Race Equality Scheme and undertake a 3 year programme of Impact Assessments under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, as set out in the body of the report. The Commission for Race Equality (CRE) can take enforcement action against councils who do not comply with these obligations.

In addition, the new draft Disability Discrimination Bill is likely to require councils to publish an equivalent Disability Equality Scheme. Brighton & Hove City Council's current approach of ensuring that all equality strands are considered as part of the Impact Assessments will assist the council to meet these new duties when they come into force.

Lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date: 6 January 2005

Corporate/Citywide implications	Risk assessment
The RES supports the council's value of inclusivity as described in the Corporate Plan and this in turn supports the Community Partnership's Community Strategy theme of an Inclusive City.	An assessment of risks has been incorporated into the implementation of the Race Equality Scheme
Sustainability implications	Equalities implications
None	The achievement of the Race Equality Scheme actions will significantly improve the way that the council operates in relation to equalities.
Implications for the prevention of crime and disorder	
The achievement of the Race Equality Scheme should improve the council's ability to contribute to the prevention of crime and disorder in the city.	

Background papers None.

Contact officer: Maggie Squire ext. 108
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Appendix 1

Equalities Impact Assessment Programme

Introduction

The council's Race Equality Scheme includes a list of council functions and policies that require a Race Impact Assessment. The phased timetable for these assessments ensures that all assessments will be completed by the end of March 2005. This timetable has recently been reviewed to take account of changes in the council's structure but the end date remains March 2005. Those assessments underway are taking account of gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and faith as well as race and are now called Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs).

Summary

The following is a summary of the progress that has been made on the Equalities Impact Assessment Programme by council directorate.

Housing and City Support

There are four divisions:

1. Housing Strategy . All Assessments completed and incorporated into Team Plans.
2. Customer Services. All Assessments completed and incorporated into Team Plans. There will be a single but comprehensive report for the whole division.
3. Housing Management. All Assessments completed. Incorporation into Team Plans still awaited.
4. Adult Social Care. Virtually all of the Assessments are completed and incorporated into Team Plans.

HCS have 52 Assessments of which 50 are complete.

This Directorate is looking to the final stage of publication of results.

Children Families and Schools

CFS have 36 Assessments.

14 have been completed, but still have to be incorporated into Team Plans.

Most of the remaining Assessments have been begun, with 12 having completed their Scoping stage (and 4 out of those 12 have also completed their Investigation Stage).

Human Resources

Human Resources have 10 Assessments.
3 of these have been completed.

Finance & Property

Finance and Property Services have 1 confirmed Assessment, which is in its early stages. They are investigating whether some other service teams need to embark on Assessments.

Strategy & Governance

Strategy and Governance have 6 assessments.
5 have completed their Scoping stage.

Environment

This Directorate has 32 Assessments.
16 Assessments have completed their Scoping stages, and some of them are progressing with the assessment stage.

Cultural Services

There are 17 Assessments.
9 Assessments have completed the scoping stage and are conducting the assessment stages. Of the remaining Assessments some have yet to begin, and others are conducting their scoping stage.