

factsheet

Excellent Council

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME 2006-08

The purpose of our second Race Equality Scheme is to reaffirm our commitment to achieving race equality for everyone who works, lives and visits Charnwood. In many ways this is a recommitment to the strategic aims outlined in the previous scheme. These are:

- To achieve fair and equitable provision of good quality services to all individuals and groups irrespective of their ethnic origin or any other irrelevant factor
- To ensure equality and ease of access to services to all individuals and groups irrespective of their ethnic origin or any other irrelevant factor
- To provide recruitment services and employment conditions which are fair to all individuals and groups irrespective of their ethnic origin or any other irrelevant factor

However these have been further developed to embrace the broader impact of the Council on local equality and diversity issues. The strategic aims of the revised plan are as follows:

- **Community Leadership** - We will ensure that in our work with partner organisations from the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors we actively promote race equality and share good practice.
- **Service Delivery** - We will provide services to our customers that are accessible and free of unlawful discrimination.
- **Employer of Choice** - We will increase the number of people applying for employment with the Council (whether as a direct employee or contractor) by promoting the Council as an Employer of Choice
- **Mainstream Equality and Diversity** - We will firmly embed race equality within our business planning processes to ensure equality action plans are thoroughly performance managed
- **Promote and Celebrate Diversity** - We will aim to celebrate diversity through the full range of the services we provide particularly through our leisure, culture and arts provision.
- **Train and Equip** - We will provide members, directors, managers, employees and those delivering services on behalf of the Council with the knowledge and skills to deliver their responsibilities within the Race Equality Scheme



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Direct discrimination has been outlawed since the 1976 Race Relations Act but, as the inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence showed, this is not enough to prevent organisations, groups and individuals from behaving in a way that indirectly causes discrimination. The government therefore, recognised that positive steps were needed to promote racial equality by requiring organisations to examine their activities to identify where direct or indirect discrimination is happening and to take action to put it right. This resulted in the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) (RR(A)A), which came into force in April 2001.

One of the primary aims of the legislation was to tackle institutional racism, defined in the MacPherson report as:

“The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.”

The Act places a ‘general duty’ and some specific duties on all public authorities, including local councils, to promote race equality. The aim of the duty is to make racial equality central to the way public authorities work and at the heart of policy making, service delivery and employment practice. This duty means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- b. promote equality of opportunity; and
- c. promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

• General and Specific Duties

The Act imposes a number of general and specific duties on public authorities and these are listed below:

1. Publish a Race Equality Scheme which sets out how we will meet the general and specific duties
2. Assess all functions and policies for relevance to the general duty to promote race equality and publish the list in the scheme
3. Assess and consult on the likely impact of proposed policies on the promotion of race equality
4. Monitor policies for any negative or adverse impact on race equality
5. Publish the results of any assessment, consultation and monitoring
6. Make sure there is public access to services and information
7. Provide training for staff in relation to the duties required by the Act
8. Carry out detailed employment monitoring by ethnic group and publish the results each year



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• **Identifying relevant functions and policies**

Race equality will be more relevant to some functions than others. Relevance is about how much a function affects people, as members of the public or as employees.

To decide whether a function or policy is relevant to the general duty to promote race equality, we should consider whether that function or policy could affect different ethnic groups in different ways or affect good race relations. We can do this by asking:

- Whether, and how, each of the three parts of the general duty – eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity, and promoting good race relations – applies
- Which ethnic groups are affected
- Whether there is any reason to believe that people are, or could be, differently affected because of their ethnic group
- Whether there is already evidence that the function or policy is affecting some ethnic groups differently
- Whether there is any public concern that the function or policy in question is causing discrimination, and
- Whether there is any public concern that the function or policy is damaging good race relations

• **Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies and functions**

Assessing the impact of a policy or function will help to identify whether that policy or function might have different impacts on some groups of people and whether it contributes to good community relations. The assessment will involve using:

- Information that is already available,
- Research findings,
- Population data, including census findings,
- Comparisons with similar policies in other authorities,
- Survey results,
- Data on ethnicity collected at different stages of a process (for example, when people apply for a service and then when they receive the service),
- One-off data-gathering exercises, or
- Specially commissioned research.

Our EIA process follows the best practice from the Commission for Race Equality by having a separate screening and full impact assessment process.

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The aim of the equality impact assessment process is to:

- Identify and highlight the potential effects that proposed policies will have on different groups,
- Take action to reduce or eliminate any identified adverse impact that cannot be justified before the policy is implemented, and
- Identify issues in the context of other relevant policies.

• **Monitoring our policies and functions for adverse impact**

In order to establish if our policies or functions are having an adverse impact on particular groups it is vital to carry out equality monitoring. Monitoring allows us to test:

- How different groups are affected by our policies and functions (e.g. how often and why people use our services, how often and why they make complaints etc).
- Whether people from all groups are equally satisfied with the way they are treated and the services we provide
- Whether services are provided effectively and according to need to all communities and
- Whether services are suitable and designed to meet different needs (e.g. cultural needs, language barriers etc).

To help us identify policies and functions which have an adverse impact on different groups we will monitor using a variety of methods:

- Statistical analysis of ethnic monitoring data,
- Satisfaction surveys (including breakdown of ethnic groups)
- Random or targeted surveys, and
- Meetings, focus groups and our citizens' panel.

• **Publishing the results of assessments, consultations and monitoring**

It is important that we make the information gained from the work we are doing available to the public for several reasons: to make people aware of any changes; to explain changes that have occurred due to results; to form our impact assessment findings or consultation work; and let people know about the work we are doing to eradicate unlawful discrimination.

We will publish information on:

- Our consultation exercises
- Our equality impact assessments
- Service delivery monitoring data
- Employment monitoring data

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We will do this in a variety of ways;

- The Council's website
- The Charnwood News (the Council's newspaper)
- Service publications e.g. Housing News
- Giving feedback to individuals and organisations who have responded to consultations
- The Staff Discovery Day (annual day for staff to be involved in the Council's planning)
- The Council's Intranet for staff

• **Making information about the Council and its services available to the public**

We acknowledge that our services will only be successful if all our customers know about them and how to use them. We therefore aim to provide a wide range of information about our services to all sections of the community. We have made significant improvements to the Council's own website, which includes more up- to-date information on the Council's services. We aim to provide information through a range of other media including local press, Charnwood News, home visits for various customers including housing tenants etc. We also provide alternative services including internal and external interpreters, Charnwood Language Line, translated documents, Braille, audio and large print

• **Training Staff**

We recognise that the most effective way to deliver this scheme and any other equality and diversity initiatives is by training our staff. The Race Duty requires us to:

- Ensure staff responsible for meeting the duty are aware of their responsibilities, and
- Ensuring these staff members have the skills needed to carry them out.

The Council's Human Resources Section coordinates the corporate training programme called the Academy 'Learning in Leicestershire'. Equality and Diversity are an essential element of staff training and development and have been incorporated into the Academy programme. Currently every member of staff undergoes equalities training through the Induction Training Programme. We are investigating how to train staff appropriately to their role and the potential impact they have in relation to the RR(A)A and other equality legislation. This will also be included in the Member Development Programme to ensure Members are fully aware of their role in promoting good community relations through their community leader role.

• **Meeting the specific duties for employers**

The requirements of the RR(A)A duty for employers is largely related to monitoring our staff make up and changes within that make up. We are specifically required to monitor numbers and ethnicity, as follows:

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- The workforce profile
- Applicants for employment, training and promotion
- Staff who receive training
- Staff who benefit or suffer from performance appraisals
- Staff who are involved in grievance procedures
- Staff who are subject to disciplinary procedures
- Staff and the reason for leaving employment with us

The ethnic categories that we use are those used in the 2001 Census. We collect ethnicity data on detachable equal opportunities questionnaires which are included in the job application packs. These details are updated annually. The annual staff survey uses equalities monitoring to help us identify any differences in our employees' experiences at the Council. We will analyse any patterns of inequality that are shown by our monitoring of employment, and take what ever steps are needed. This may include taking Positive Action. For example, if our continued monitoring of the ethnicity of staff show that a particular ethnic group is unjustifiably under-represented, we may focus our recruitment efforts on that group.

• **Procuring goods, works and services**

We currently have a staff guidance on Equalities in the Contracting Process. However, this is scheduled to be reviewed in 2007 in line with the East Midlands Centre of Excellence for Procurement. We also administer a Community Grants Scheme where community and voluntary organisations can gain grant aid for providing much needed community services. This also includes requirements to deliver any Council grant aided schemes in a non-discriminatory manner. Many of the projects funded through the scheme are for cultural events which help promote equality and diversity.

• **Racist Incidents**

“A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person” (Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report)

We recognise that racial harassment and attacks are a reality in the lives of many people in our community. We are committed to helping people not only report those incidents but also support victims of racist incidents by carrying out follow up actions to remove the threat if it is related to one of our own services or contacting relevant agencies to deal with the problem. The Council's main Southfields Building is a racist incident reporting centre where members of the public who have been subject to a racist attack can report the incident in a safe non-confrontational environment.



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We are part the Common Monitoring Project with Leicestershire County Council to establish a coordinated way of reporting racist incidents across the County. For more information on reporting racist incidents please look on our website www.charnwood.gov.uk or telephone the Community Safety Team on 01509 634556.

If you require more information please contact:

Change Management
Charnwood Borough Council
Southfields Road
Loughborough
LE11 2TR



01509 634504



Email equality@charnwood.gov.uk

This information is available in different formats. To access these please phone (01509) 634560.

এ তথ্যাদি অন্যান্য মাধ্যমে পাওয়া যায়। এসব পেতে হলে দয়া করে (01509) 634560 এ নাম্বারে টেলিফোন করুন।

這資料具不同的格式，請致電 (01509) 634560 索取。

આ માહિતી જુદી જુદી પદ્ધતિઓમાં ઉપલબ્ધ છે. તે મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો (01509) 634560.

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