RACE EQUALITY SCHEME
FOR
LONDON BOROUGH OF
RICHMOND UPON THAMES

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Due to the change of political administration following the recent elections, parts of this scheme are subject to change as the Council’s overall aims and priorities are re-aligned. Once these are settled, the scheme will be updated highlighting any changes.

May 2002
FOREWORD

The Council is the sole body able to represent all the people who live and work in Richmond upon Thames. As such, it is conscious of the importance of equality of opportunity and the promotion of good relations between members of different groups to the way in which it discharges its functions and in the civic leadership it provides within the community.

The Council is fully committed to fulfilling its statutory duties under the Race Relations Act, as amended in 2000 and this Race Equality Scheme sets out how it proposes to do so.

More than just a way of meeting our legal responsibilities, we believe it provides a framework of standards and principles applying across Council services that will help us promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community, ensure we deliver good quality services in a manner that is fair to all sections within it, ensure everyone is treated fairly and that our workforce reflects the communities with which we work.

We will make sure that all Elected Members and employees of the Council are aware of our statutory duty and we will take the lead within the Council in ensuring its effective implementation.

Signed:

Councillor Tony Arbour
Leader of the Council

Gillian Norton
Chief Executive
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1. INTRODUCTION

This is Richmond upon Thames’ first Race Equality Scheme. Its purpose is to set out how the Council will fulfil its duties under the Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

All local authorities have a general statutory duty to promote race equality. To meet this general duty, we must aim, in everything we do, to:

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

One of the specific duties of local authorities is the requirement to publish a Race Equality Scheme by 31 May 2002. This document is intended to meet that requirement.

The Borough has a population of some 195,000 people (Office of National Statistics estimate for mid 2000). It is estimated that the proportion of people of ethnic minority origin is about 8 percent and rising. Promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination is therefore central, both to the delivery of good, accessible and responsive services throughout Richmond upon Thames and to the enhancement of the economic, environmental and social well-being of the whole community.

The Council’s Strategic Aims

The Council’s priorities are driven by its Vision, a Community Plan and a Service Planning process. Our first Race Equality Scheme, however, is due for publication as a new administration takes up the reins. The existing Community Plan, though remaining as a useful context for current programmes, will be superceded by one reflecting the approach and priorities of the new Council. Until this can be developed with its partners, the Council will work to a one year Plan now being prepared.

Clearly, the Council cannot yet be certain as to all the projects and policies it will pursue. Certain key facets of its overall approach, however, will influence future objectives, including those specific to equalities and diversity:

- commitment to the delivery of high quality services at a reasonable price will be absolute;
- the focus will be totally on outcomes - aiming to minimise bureaucracy and give priority to planning where it relates directly to service improvement;
- there will be tenacious pursuit of budget control and performance management;
- restoring civic pride for its people and communities will be paramount;
- it will actively seek to achieve objectives through partnership – with the police, health and the voluntary sector and with other like-minded authorities;
- its community leadership role will be one of
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♦ enabling partners, organisations and individuals to achieve their aims and objectives;
♦ leading by example, both in terms of service delivery and as the largest employer in the borough;
➢ it will seek to reduce costs wherever possible whilst developing means of increasing income and identifying alternative funding.

The priorities are:

➢ Prioritisation of the Delivery of Front-line Services
➢ Combating Crime
➢ Balanced Transport and Parking
➢ Quality Social Services
➢ Protecting the Environment
➢ Supporting Leisure
➢ Improving Schools
➢ Value for Money and competent financial management.

Equality Policy and Objectives

To make sure that equality becomes integral to our policies and procedures and embedded in all that we do, the Council has adopted:

➢ Diversity and Equalities Policy Statements (Appendix A)
➢ a Community Plan strategic objective for 2000-2004 “to promote equality of opportunity and help develop communities free from unlawful discrimination” (subject to review as outlined above)
➢ an Equalities and Diversity Action Plan incorporating action to improve the way in which the Council manages race equality issues
➢ a revised framework for Best Value reviews of its services.

The Council will use the Race Equality Scheme to build on this work and has developed a specific Plan to implement measures that will ensure the statutory duties are complied with and that the Scheme can be implemented effectively and on time. (Appendix G)

Key Commitments

The Council is committed to fulfilling its obligations in all parts of its organisation and will commit necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money).

The Council will make sure that it has effective internal arrangements in place to ensure that the duties are effectively complied with and for monitoring and reviewing progress. Further detail is provided in Section 6.
The Council will develop and deliver a planned programme of communication, training and development for its staff on the Race Equality Scheme. Further detail of this is provided at Section 9.

To meet our specific duty, the Council has set out in this Scheme:

- How it will decide which of its services and policies are relevant to the general duty to promote race equality;
- All the functions and policies the authority has initially assessed as being relevant to the general duty;
- How it will assess and monitor its service and policies, including services and policies it is proposing to introduce, to make sure that they are not affecting some groups negatively, and that all communities are satisfied with them;
- How it will deal with evidence that its service and policies are not in line with the general duty;
- How it will consult the general public and, particularly, involve ethnic minorities at all stages;
- How it will deal with complaints about the way it is meeting the duties, or other complaints about racial equality;
- How it will publish the results of its assessments, consultations and monitoring;
- How it will make sure that everyone, whatever their ethnic background, has access to information about the authority and its services;
- How the authority will monitor its own staff, applicants for jobs, promotion and training by racial group.
- How it will make sure that its entire staff understand the responsibilities under the duty;
- How often it will review the Scheme.
2. THE COUNCIL’S ROLE AND HOW WE WORK

The Role and Functions of the Council

The Council’s Constitution commits it to provide clear leadership to the community in partnership with residents, businesses and other organisations; support the active involvement of the public in the decision-making process; take decisions efficiently and effectively; identify clearly those responsible for decision making and hold them to public account; and improve the delivery of services to the community.

Council Services

The services provided by the Council are structured in directorates, described briefly below:

Education and Leisure

Education
Schools and nursery schools including support services, education planning.

Adult education (2 adult education establishments), youth clubs, Childcare Information Service (including information on playgroups, day nurseries and childminders), special educational needs, pupil and student support (tuition fees, loans and other).

Leisure
Arts (gallery, theatre etc.), parks and open spaces, conservation and biodiversity, library and information services, playgrounds, recreation grounds, sports centers, swimming pools, sports development.

Environment and Sustainability

Environmental Planning and Review
Transport planning, planning policy and design (including parking), parks, open spaces and cemeteries, health promotion.

Environmental Protection
Planning and building control, environmental health, trading standards, registration and licensing.

Management of contaminated land, air quality monitoring, health development including food hygiene, consumer advice, environmental health, licensing, Register Office (births, marriages and deaths).

Environmental and Operational Services
Street cleansing, refuse collection (domestic & commercial), clinical and special waste collection, highways management & maintenance, transport services, building maintenance, catering, civil emergency planning, recycling,
parking, accessible transport unit, graffiti removal, sign manufacture and vehicle maintenance.

**Customer and Support Services**
Allotments, Halls for hire, property services (Council owned or tenanted), functions, reception.

**Social Services and Housing**

**Services for Adults**
Services for older people, people with learning difficulties, people with disabilities and sensory impairment including care assessment and management; support and advice for carers; practical help in the home; care in residential homes, day services and help with employment training, education and leisure, equipment and adaptations for people with disabilities. Mental health services through local multidisciplinary teams and specialist day care.

**Services for Children and Families**
Services to children and families in need, including looked after children, disabled children, children with mental health difficulties, family support centres, foster care and residential placements, adoption services, assistance to young offenders.

**Housing**
Strategy and development, grants and enforcement, administration of the housing waiting list, allocation of housing, supporting people, adaptations, housing advice, homelessness, domestic pest and noise control.

**Strategy and Resources**

**Finance and Corporate Services**

**Finance**
Revenues and benefits, audit, paymaster, accountancy, home loans.

**E-Government**
Development of the E-Government strategy

**Information Technology**
Communications technology, network services and support internally to the Council.

**Legal Services**
Legal advice and services internally to the Council, electoral registration and the management of elections, ombudsman referrals and probity issues.

**Chief Executive’s Office**

**Corporate Policy, Communications and Media**
The Council’s Community Plan, liaison with Business, Health Services and the Police, crime and domestic violence, voluntary sector grants, tourism, town centre management, diversity and equalities.

Press and media enquiries, internal and external communications. Co-ordination of translation and interpretation services and filming.

**Democratic Services**
Administration and conduct of Council and Committee meetings, Councillor support.

**Best Value and Business Planning**
Planning and performance management of Council services

**Personnel**
Provider of personnel management services to the Council and its workforce.

**How the Council Operates**

The Council comprises 54 Councillors, elected every four years.

Council meetings are open to the public unless confidential matters are being discussed. Here Councillors decide the Council's the overall policy framework and set the budget each year. The Council has adopted a Leader and Cabinet model of government, which operates within the budget and policy framework. Its actions are scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (see paragraph below – Overview and Scrutiny).

The staff (also known as officers) who provide support to the Council and implement its policies are organised into Directorates and Services.

The Chief Executive oversees the work of the Directorates through the Executive Board, which is also responsible for the corporate management of the Council.

The Chief Executive is responsible for providing advice to the Council on strategy, on the planning and allocation of resources and for the day to day management of services.

**How Decisions are Made**

The Council has a defined range of duties and powers. The **Cabinet** is the part of the Council responsible for most day-to-day decisions. The Cabinet is made up of the Leader and 8 Councillors appointed by the Council. When decisions are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Cabinet’s **Forward Plan**, in so far as they can be anticipated.

Proposals to amend existing policies or adopt new policies are generally considered by the Cabinet on the basis of a written report prepared by appropriate officers. In the case of proposals in respect of key policies or
policies which affect more than one function, the Officer Executive Board will have considered the issue in advance of the meeting of the Cabinet.

Following discussion at the Cabinet meeting, agreement will be reached on the action to be taken and this will be *minuted*.

**Overview and Scrutiny**

There are presently 4 Overview and Scrutiny Committees, which complement and support the work of the Executive and the Council as a whole - Strategy and Resources, Social Care and Housing, Education and Culture and Environment and Sustainability. With the establishment of a new Health Scrutiny Committee, this will become five.

They monitor the decisions of the Cabinet. They can ‘call-in’ a decision that has been made by the Cabinet, but not yet implemented. This enables them to consider whether the decision is appropriate. They may recommend that the Cabinet reconsider the decision. Overview and Scrutiny Committees also allow residents and other stakeholders to have a greater say in Council matters by holding public inquiries into matters of local concern. These lead to reports and recommendations, which advise the Cabinet and the Council as a whole on its policies, budget and service delivery. The Committees may also be consulted by the Cabinet or the Council on forthcoming decisions and the development of policy.
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3. DELIVERING RICHMOND UPON THAMES’ RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

There will be four strands in the process of delivering the Scheme:

- Overall responsibility
- Guidance on development and implementation
- Delivery on the objectives of the Scheme, including effective consultation
- Monitoring and Review

Overall Responsibility for the Race Equality Scheme

Statutory responsibility for the effective implementation of the Race Equality Scheme lies with the Council, which is committed to the fulfilment of the general duty under the Race Relations legislation in the performance of all its functions, powers and duties. To demonstrate the priority being given to this commitment, the Council decided to establish a specific corporate strategic objective in its community plan. This objective is entitled “to promote equality of opportunity and help develop communities free from unlawful discrimination”. Its immediate targets focus on the implementation of all aspects of the Codes of Practice accompanying the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Commission for Racial Equality standard for the management of race equality matters. The Community Plan spans a three year period, but is reviewed each year and new targets set.

Specific responsibilities have been allocated as shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
<th>FOR WHOM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of overall performance and action plans on behalf of the Council</td>
<td>The Cabinet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring and scrutiny role on behalf of the Council</td>
<td>Strategy and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure effective implementation of general duty</td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance on development and implementation of the Scheme and detailed monitoring of progress</td>
<td>Corporate Equalities Working Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for implementation of administrative arrangements, advice and guidance</td>
<td>Equalities and Diversity Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational delivery of the Scheme</td>
<td>Directors, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service</td>
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Key new developments and achievements will be discussed by the Cabinet. The Strategy and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will monitor the Council’s progress on implementing its Race Equality Scheme.
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Training of elected Members on equalities issues and in their responsibilities has been incorporated into Member induction and training programmes.

Operational responsibility for carrying out the decisions of the Council lies with the Chief Executive, who is responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that the Council effectively implements the general duty.

Guidance on Development and Implementation

An Equality and Diversity Manager and two other principal officers have been appointed to support the implementation of the administrative arrangements and provide corporate advice and guidance across all aspects of equality and diversity. The manager and one of the principal officers are employed in the Corporate Policy Unit; the third officer is in Corporate Personnel focussing on internal employment issues.

The Equality and Diversity Manager will act as the main point of contact for the Council in respect of the Race Equality Scheme.

The post is presently occupied by Suganya Ranganathan who can be contacted at:

Chief Executive's Office,
Corporate Policy Unit
Civic Centre
44 York Street
Twickenham
Telephone: 020 8891 7829
Fax: 020 8891 7703
Minicom….. 020 8831 6218
E-Mail: s.ranganathan@richmond.gov.uk

The Equalities and Diversity Manager has direct access to the Chief Executive and will report regularly to the Cabinet and to the Strategy and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Role of the Corporate Equalities Working Group

A Corporate Equalities Working Group was set up in June 2001. The role of the Group is to develop, monitor and review the policies and action plans for diversity and equality. Chaired by the Chief Executive, it comprises representatives of departments and additional Heads of Service together with corporate policy staff. Representatives of the (internal) Minority Ethnic Workers’ Support Group, Women’s Network and Staff Disability Action Group also attend and the Director of the Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group (for the Richmond upon Thames Borough) now receives meeting Agendas and Minutes and will attend discussions as necessary.

The Working Group operates at a senior management level and the members have defined roles and responsibilities to achieve the objectives outlined in the terms of reference. These show how the Group plans to mainstream diversity
and equalities in the Council. They identify the key roles of the Group as involving:

- Developing policy
- Monitoring implementation and outcomes
- Auditing processes and practices to improve outcomes
- Facilitating communication between operational levels and policy levels

The Group meets monthly. The bulk of the work so far has been monitoring and pursuing implementation of the Council’s agreed action plans. The Group will research good practice, monitor and advise on the implementation of the obligations across the entire Council. Progress is reported to the Strategy and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the Annual Report (see paragraph below – Monitoring and Review).

The Corporate Equalities Working Group also links into the Customer Services Improvement Team to promote:

- progress on action plans;
- communication of initiatives;
- integration of diversity and access issues into service planning, operations and reviews.

Delivery on the Objectives of the Scheme at Service Level

Delivery of the Scheme at service level will be the responsibility of Directors and Heads of Service. Responsibility for the delivery of the Council’s Equal Opportunities policies and plans has been incorporated into their job descriptions and will form part of performance appraisal, which takes place on an annual basis.

The service based members of the Corporate Equalities Working Group also have direct responsibility as a “champion” for ensuring necessary arrangements are in place at service level to implement decisions on equalities’ priorities and action.

Many services have prepared service diversity policies based on the corporate diversity policies for employment and service delivery agreed in March 2001 (Appendix A). Though some, notably internal services will continue to use the corporate policies, all are committed to preparing service based action plans. These will be linked with or incorporated into Service Plans, which will be monitored and reviewed as part of the Performance Review Process.

The process for consultation at corporate and service level is set out in Section 5 below.
Monitoring and Review

The Corporate Equalities Working Group has a special role in the detailed monitoring of progress in implementing the Scheme and members will also participate as auditors in the Council’s future programme of Equalities Audits.

The Council will prepare an annual review of progress made in implementing the arrangements specified in its Race Equality Scheme and in complying with its obligations, which will cover all the Council’s functions. This will form a part of the Annual Report on Equality and Diversity to the Cabinet and the Strategy and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Initial Work

The Council will assess over a three year period how its current and proposed policies impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity and the promotion of good relations in line with the general duty. In regard to equality of opportunity, this will be done through equality impact assessments (see below Section 4) and the timetable at Appendix C will be followed. For the purpose of assessment of current policies, a number of policies within a function may be grouped together for one assessment. Consultees on such equality impact assessments will be drawn from the organisations listed in Appendix E.

Complaints

The Council will monitor complaints that it has not fulfilled its statutory obligations and will seek to resolve such complaints bilaterally. (See Section 14)

Reviewing the Scheme

The Council will conduct a comprehensive review of this Scheme within three years of its publication. (See Section 12)
4. ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF POLICIES ON THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS

EXISTING FUNCTIONS AND POLICIES

The Council Service Areas, listed above in Section 2, have a number of functions. Each function must be screened to assess its relevance to:

- Eliminating unlawful racial discrimination
- Promoting equality of opportunity; and
- Promoting good relations between people of different racial groups

The priority for each relevant function and policy to be subject to an impact assessment then needs to be determined.

An initial screening of functions and policies has been carried out to decide their relevance. The results are shown in Appendix B.

As part of this process, in order to help organise the immediate priority order for conducting full assessments, each relevant function and its associated policies has also been assessed for its potential impact on the promotion of equality and good relations. To do this, the following criteria, set out in the Commission for Race Equality’s statutory guidance, have been used to assess the possible or potential impact of each function and policy:

- Whether there is any reason to believe that some groups could be differently affected (e.g. higher or lower uptake or participation by different groups);
- How much evidence there is of groups being differently affected;
- Whether there is any public concern that functions or policies are being operated in a discriminatory manner.

Where the answer to any of these questions was in the positive, the policy or function has been included in the list of those to be subject to the equality impact assessment. The degree of priority given to the commencement of a review of a function or policy was based on the degree to which the three criteria were met.

Where there was a lack of evidence on which to base a decision during the screening process, the policy was included in the list for impact assessment.

The draft list of functions and policies, indicating the year in which reviews are planned to commence, is attached as Appendix C. A list of the Strategic Plans, both statutory and non-statutory, that may be affected by reviews is attached at Appendix D.

The next stage will involve:

- further/detailed analysis of all forms of evidence available;
deciding whether it is practical to obtain additional evidence quickly and in an appropriate manner, where this is currently insufficient. If it is not practical, and there are other reasons to believe that there is higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups, or that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities, the policy will remain in the list for impact assessment and further evidence will be gathered during the assessment.

reviewing the priority order of impact assessments/reviews.

The impact of each current or new policy will be examined applying the following criteria set out in the Commission for Race Equality’s Guide to the Statutory Code of Practice:

- Is there any evidence of higher or lower uptake or participation by different groups?
- Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?
- Is there an opportunity to promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering the policy?
- Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies, functions or duties create problems that are specific to them?

Reviews will be conducted in accordance with the Commission for Racial Equality’s recommended procedure.

NEW POLICIES

An assessment of the impact on equality of opportunity of each proposal to amend a significant policy or adopt a new policy will be outlined in the written report to the Cabinet, Committee or Sub-Committee that first considers the proposal. In making any decision with respect to such a policy, the Council will pay due regard to any such assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

Guidance notes and a checklist will be produced for managers on the issues that must be addressed in reports in terms of the equalities implications and consultation requirements.

The dates of meetings when decisions on significant policies will be made or discussed, so far as these can be anticipated, will be published in the Forward Plan.
5. CONSULTATION

The Council’s Consultation Strategy expresses its commitment to involving local people and increasing their influence in the Council’s decision-making process. The principle of consulting proactively with all sections of the community, in particular those groups identified as target groups, forms a key part of the Council’s Diversity and Equality Policy. We will ensure that our consultation methods take account of the social, cultural, religious, language and access needs of all sections of the community.

Consultation on race equality matters presents particular challenges for Richmond due to:

- the relatively low proportion of the population that is of minority ethnic origin (about 8%), combined with the diversity of minority ethnic groups represented;
- the lack of organised groups representing ethnic minorities, e.g. no local Racial Equality Council, although the Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group acts as a local “umbrella” organisation (see paragraph below).

The Council, however, consults the community extensively in the formulation of its Community Plan. We involve partners and stakeholders (the Community Planning Partnership Forum - members listed in Appendix E). We have organised a Borough Conference of the wider community, including residents and representatives of local organisations, we consult a Citizens’ Panel and have public hearings. The Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group is consulted individually as a matter of course and will be consulted in detail on the Council’s Race Equality Scheme.

The Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group is one with which the Council works closely. Its aims are identical to the obligations on local authorities under the general duty and it shares many of the objectives of the local Race Equality Councils. The Group receives support from the Council and the new Strategic Grant Funding Arrangement from October 2001 sets 2001/02 targets for the Group to gain a strong representative base in the community.

Consultation is recognised as a vital component of the process of assessing policies and functions. For the purposes of the Race Equality Scheme, the Council will set up consultation processes (or use those it has in place) and incorporate the outcomes into the assessment process.

We will try to ensure that:

- People from all ethnic backgrounds are consulted and their views taken into account
- A range of consultation methods are used, involving face to face meetings, advisory groups, conferences, surveys, consultative panels (including Richmond’s Citizen’s Panel), internet discussions and other methods identified as best practice).
We consult all relevant stakeholders and partners e.g. through the Community Planning Partnership Forum.

A list of the partners, organisations and community groups that may be consulted is attached at Appendix E.

The Council is committed in its Equalities and Diversity Action Plan to developing its network of consultation with community groups.

A Handbook on consultation planning and methods is being prepared to accompany the Consultation Strategy. This will include guidance for service managers on methods of reaching and engaging groups that traditionally have been hard to reach e.g. older people, young people, members of particular ethnic groups. It is planned to be available for service managers by August 2002.
6. MONITORING

MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The key components of the monitoring system are set out in Section 3 – Delivering the Council’s Scheme.

Equality Standard

The Council has adopted the Commission for Racial Equality’s Standard for managing and developing performance in equalities and diversity. The Council was assessed as broadly having achieved Level 1 of the Standard from April 2001. An action plan is being progressed to complete implementation of the second stage of the system - Level 2 of the Standard - by April 2003.

The CRE standard will be replaced as a mandatory Audit Commission Performance Indicator by the new generic Equality Standard for Local Government next year. This will make it necessary for the Council formally to adopt the Standard, which it is planned to do by September 2002. The Council’s Equalities and Diversity Action Plan will be reviewed and updated to reflect any necessary changes in priority or direction.

Internal Equalities Audits

A new audit framework has been adopted by the Council, which includes the following features:

- A two-year audit programme will be co-ordinated, as far as practicable, with the timing of Best Value reviews already programmed for specific services;
- A mechanism for the external validation of the survey of equalities that is being developed. External validators will represent the main stakeholders for the service or process being reviewed, and where possible include participants from neighbouring authorities, representatives of the Council’s Minority Ethnic Workers’, Women’s, and Disabled Workers’ Forums, as well as the Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group and Richmond Disability Forum.

Best Value Reviews

A review of the Best Value guidelines, to ensure that diversity and equalities issues are fully explored and evaluated in future reviews in line with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, has been completed.

A Best Value Review of Access to Services was completed in February 2001. The Service Improvement Plan addressed a number of Race Equality Issues and included recommendations on:
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- keeping information on customers relating to their ethnic group and whether people have a need for info in different formats or languages so that this may be used in the forward planning process;
- the training of front-line staff to enable them to meet special needs;
- provision of information for front line staff about culturally sensitive services provided by the Council and others for black and minority ethnic elders via dedicated Intranet pages.

The Customer Services Improvement Team is monitoring implementation of these recommendations.

MONITORING FUNCTIONS AND POLICIES

The Council will be collecting data and developing indicators to measure the extent to which its Community Plan Objective of improving equality of opportunity and good relations is being achieved. The Council will publish the results of this research and performance under the indicators. The analysis of the results will feed into individual service/operational action plans.

Whilst monitoring arrangements are already in place in certain service areas, the Council will establish a consistent approach to monitoring the impact of policies in order to identify their effects on relevant groups. Monitoring arrangements will be relevant to the size of the function, the nature of the policy and its possible effect on the public (particularly racial groups). Within one year of publishing this scheme, the Council will assess the extent of existing monitoring within each of its main policy areas and identify the scope for extending it to meet the following needs:

- To find another way to meet our aims if one of our proposed policies is likely to lead to unlawful racial discrimination;
- To justify the policy because of its overall objectives, if one of our proposed policies could adversely affect people of certain racial groups;
- To adapt the policy, if that could compensate for any disadvantage;
- To meet different needs that the assessment or consultation exercise reveals that certain racial groups have, either within the proposed policy or by separate means;
- To identify whether the policy is harming good race relations;
- To assess whether changes to the policy are likely to be significant and whether we will need fresh consultation.

The Council will establish basic baseline data in relation to all policies identified as having implications for equality of opportunity within one year of this Scheme being published. Account will need to be taken of resource implications, the sensitivity of information and the willingness of the public to supply it. The Council will make use of proxy measures (e.g. postcode analysis) where appropriate.
Racial Harassment and Racial Incidents

The Council has well established racial harassment complaint procedures that are published on its web-site and complaint forms are available at its offices. The Council records this information and publishes it in the Equalities and Diversity Annual Report.

The Council’s Civic Centre offices are a part of the Third Party Reporting system where cases of racial harassment can be reported by those who do not wish to go to the police.

The monitoring of racial incidents is a Best Value performance indicator and the Council has been recording and reporting on them from all its service areas since 1999/2000. The Audit Commission requires only reports of incidents relating to the delivery of the Council’s services.

As part of the renewed focus on combating crime, the Council plans to make monitoring more robust and broaden reporting to include racial incidents borough-wide.

Data Sources

Data sources the Council may use include:

- The Census
- Labour Force Survey
- Continuous Household Survey
- Information from other Councils in the UK,
- Statutory agencies
- Deprivation studies and appropriate indices
- Published research reports
- Customer surveys, including targeted surveys
- Community views including those of Richmond upon Thames’ Citizens’ Panel and local community representation groups.
- The Council’s Residents’ Survey. (Format currently under review to decide feasibility of redesigning to assist collection of equalities related data)

This list is not exhaustive.
7. PUBLICISING ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND MONITORING REPORTS

To meet the need to communicate performance on different aspects of the Race Equality Scheme, it is planned to use a range of media relevant to Richmond upon Thames’ different audiences.

The Annual Report on Equalities and Diversity will be the prime means of bringing together the work undertaken over the preceding 12 months. This report will contain reference to monitoring data on service delivery and fulfil the Council’s duty to publish information on staff in post, applications, training grievances, disciplinary procedures and employees leaving the Council. The section focussing on the Race Equality Scheme will set out progress in implementing the Scheme itself, the results of policy impact assessments, assessment of new policy proposals and progress in implementing recommendations.

The Annual Report will be distributed to partner organisations and relevant community groups as well as to senior management within Richmond upon Thames. Key aspects of the Report will be summarised in the Council’s Best Value Performance Plan and will be made available on the Richmond upon Thames website. Hard copies in English and other languages will be provided on request.

Each directorate and the Corporate Policy Unit will maintain an up to date portfolio of equality impact assessments, including consultation. Assessments will be available on request and will be published to statutory and community stakeholders as necessary.
8. EMPLOYMENT

Since introducing a workforce monitoring survey of all staff in 2001, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames currently monitors the composition of its workforce, through collection of data at various points in the employment cycle (application, entry, training, formal procedures including disciplinary and grievance, as well as exit) and entry in to the computerised personnel and payroll database.

We intend to provide a full set of data on all workforce (in the first instance), as well as separately for school and non-school staff (in time). The data will be divided in sections, to provide analysis of composition by ethnic origin as well as gender, disability and age details in the following areas:

- staff in post
- applicants for employment and training
- staff who receive training
- staff who benefit or suffer detriment form performance assessment procedures
- staff involved in disciplinary or grievance procedures
- leavers

However, data collection in several sections is impeded by a combination of factors, including decentralised functions (eg recruitment), software limitations (eg Cyborg, the payroll/personnel database, does not allow for easy reporting) and resourcing.

As such, complete data is not available for all areas, but the analysis framework has been designed and most of the data collection processes are either in place or being implemented as a priority. Where this is the case, details of the constraints are provided, along with plans and timetables to obtain further data, in the summary for each area presented below.

A table showing a summary of the data currently available is attached at Appendix F.

Staff in Post

The data presented is currently based on 83.62% returns of Workforce Monitoring Forms (as at 30 May 2002). Although processes are in place to achieve a 100% returns (through management classification and final consultation of all staff concerned, in line with CRE recommendation and Data Protection requirements), progress was considerably delayed by technical problems and completion of the analysis is expected by late June.

In view of Richmond Borough’s low, and therefore potentially unrepresentative ethnic minority make up, the analysis of workforce composition uses both the borough population and the Travel to Work population as benchmarks. The latter has been analysed as composed of 8 main identifiable areas: LB Richmond (53.8%), LB Hounslow (13.9%), RB Kingston (6.5%), LB
Wandsworth (2.6%), Embridge DC (3.1%), Spelthorne DC (2.4%), LB Merton (1.8%) and LB Ealing (1.9%). A weighted average formula is therefore in place to provide benchmark percentages.

Finally we also intend to provide a breakdown of staff in post by grade and contract type, in order to identify any areas of work or levels in the organisation where ethnic minorities may be underrepresented and this is currently being worked on.

Applicants for Employment

All application forms for employment with the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames contain a monitoring section. However, at present, following decentralisation of the recruitment function, application monitoring is not carried out in a consistent manner. A manual collection and data input process is in place and some information is available, both from Corporate Personnel (who carry out approximately 50% of all recruitment) and those of Directorates who carry out their own recruitment and record monitoring data.

However, in order to capture all applications, a centralised electronic data collection system (using Access) has been developed, for implementation in late June 2002.

Applicants for Training

This area is currently not monitored by Richmond Council and present some difficulties. This is because training is only officially applied for by staff once they have gained their manager’s approval and training applications are therefore recorded by the Learning and Development Section upon receiving written confirmation of training request (complete with line manager’s signature). The above process would therefore not assist in highlighting potential cases where training is denied, as we understand is the purpose of this indicator.

We have not yet been able to identify a mechanism to collect this information. We are therefore pursuing further consultation with other local authorities in order to develop such a mechanism.

Staff Who Receive Training

Current data analysis only covers corporate training courses. Individual divisions also organise external training provision, which require separate data collection. Whilst this function is centralised within for some divisions (such as IT, Social Services, and parts of Education) who would find it relatively easy to report on, in others the information is disseminated and therefore difficult to capture.

Accordingly, as part of the organisation developmental plan, an improved data capture specification must be implemented. Designs are currently being
considered, to produce an electronic training request for on-line approval and automatic update of training database.

**Staff Who Benefit/Suffer Detriment from Performance Assessment Procedures**

This area is not currently monitored by Richmond Council and, due to the qualitative nature of the information required, it does not lend itself easily to systematic data collection.

We therefore aim to put in place a system of performance assessment audit. This is anticipated to run alongside a newly launched appraisal system, and would consist of interviews with a small representative sample of staff, at set points in time throughout the year (e.g., appraisal, year end review).

We are also consulting other local authorities in order to identify practices which might be useful to Richmond.

**Staff Involved in Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

At present, all employee relations cases, including disciplinary and grievance procedures, are recorded electronically and manually analysed.

However, an electronic database system is being designed (using Access) to improve data capture and analysis, with a deadline of June 2002.

**Leavers**

At present this data is being manually extracted and analysed, due to discrepancies within the electronic database system, and figures will be available mid June. In addition, an improved data analysis mechanism is currently being developed to allow regular reporting.
9. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Richmond Council currently provides a variety of diversity and equality training both at corporate level, through its Learning and Development section, or more specifically within Directorates.

Diversity is an inherent part of all corporate courses provided by the Learning and Development section. In particular, all potential interviewers are required to attend a corporate 3 day course on Fair and Efficient Recruitment and Selection, which includes one day on anti-discrimination legislation compliance, equal opportunities provision and the importance of managing diversity.

Until 2001, diversity training at corporate level consisted in a one day equal opportunity awareness course provided by the Corporate Personnel Department. However, since its creation in 2001, the Learning and Development section has been providing diversity training on a mandatory basis, as follows:

- Managing Diversity: 1 day course for all staff, aimed at enabling staff to recognise the diversity of service users and provide high level customer care accordingly.
- The McPherson Report and Managers’ responsibilities: 1 day course for all managers, aimed at increasing their awareness of the McPherson report, its findings and recommendations.

In addition to mandatory corporate training, individual divisions commission targeted diversity courses aimed at fulfilling the specific needs of client facing service providers. Most notably, Social Services and Environmental & Operational Services have been running diversity training programmes for a number of years, by direct commissioning through their training section.

FUTURE PLANS

Flexible diversity training

Information gained during in-house training initiatives has revealed the following:

- A lack of an overall understanding of why integrating diversity and equality into employment and service delivery practices is important;
- Minimum knowledge of CRE Level 2 and relevant criteria;
- Until recently little knowledge of the Diversity and Equality Policies.

Accordingly, the CEWG has concluded that the current approach to training is not the methodology to achieve the culture and behaviour change required to meet CRE Level 2 or the actions required of Richmond Council outlined in the
LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES
RACE EQUALITY SCHEME


As such, a proposal is currently being formulated to harmonise both corporate and departmental initiatives and provide a more flexible approach to diversity training, based on desired outcomes (in terms of legislation compliance and service levels) and any prior training for each member of staff. As such, diversity training is to be incorporated into staff objectives as part of the appraisal process, and a plan has been drawn to achieve completion of training for all current staff within two years (thereafter on a rolling basis).

**Corporate Induction**

Plans are currently being considered to reintroduce a corporate induction for new staff, which would include a diversity awareness and equality legislation compliance component.

**Positive Action**

Whilst staff monitoring analysis is being completed (as detailed in previous section), it is difficult to gauge whether Positive Action training initiatives are needed. However, in anticipation of any such needs, a review of training options has been circulated to the Executive Board for consultation purposes.
10. DUTIES OF THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Race Equality Policies for Schools

All schools maintained by Richmond upon Thames must fulfil the general duty under the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended in 2000.

The specific duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 require schools to prepare and maintain individual written race equality policies to help them tackle racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations across all areas of school activity.

The Council is committed to guiding, assisting and co-ordinating the written race equality policies and the production of action plans. The impact of the race equalities policies will be assessed and monitored in a way similar to that adopted for the Council’s Race Equality Scheme. The process will be integrated with existing arrangements for developing and reviewing policies to ensure full co-ordination and assessment will be guided by the recommendations in Commission for Racial Equality’s Code of Practice and Guide.

A Steering Group has been established for the development of policy statements and action plans. All Richmond maintained schools in the Borough will have written policy statements in place by the end of the Summer Term 2002.

Employment in Schools

The Council must monitor employment across all services and although the specific duties on employment do not apply directly to schools, schools will provide Richmond upon Thames Local Education Authority with ethnic monitoring data on their staff, so that it can meet the duty.

Overall Responsibility

Richmond upon Thames’ Local Education Authority as a whole retains responsibility for delivering the Race Equality Scheme and the maintenance and development of school policies.
11. PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

The Council has a positive approach to access to information with a system to ensure information is made available in other languages and formats on request. Languages currently include Punjabi, Gujurati, and Arabic.

Where necessary interpreters are provided in order to communicate with service users.

Provision of translation and interpreting services is currently under review to decide on the most cost-effective way of ensuring universal access to its services.

A free Internet access service has been implemented at public libraries in the Borough as part of its People’s Network Programme.

The Council’s is revising its Communications Strategy, which will incorporate communications on equalities and diversity, to enable implementation in the autumn. Amongst the initiatives to be included will be the development of community based information centres, and an A-Z Directory of Services. This will be linked to the development of the network of consultation with Community Groups referred to in the Section above on Consultation.

The Council’s Consultation Strategy will be supplemented by a new Handbook on consultation planning and methods by August 2002. This will include guidance to managers on ways of communicating with groups that have traditionally been hard to reach (see above Section on Consultation).

A programme of diversity training is under way to address the specific needs of its staff for skills, information and understanding to deal fairly and equally with all clients. Section 9 above on Training and Development outlines future plans.

The Council will conduct regular surveys of service users to establish information needs and opinions on how sympathetically and fairly their particular needs are met. Action will be taken as necessary to address concerns and issues revealed in the findings. A major survey of users of Environmental and Operational Services is currently under way.
12. ACTION PLAN AND REVIEW

In order to meet the general and specific duties and implement its Race Equality Scheme, the Council has made a commitment to take specific action in a number of areas. These key actions are summarised in the Action Plan in Appendix G.

It has also agreed a timetable to review its functions and associated policies – attached as Appendix C.

The plans will be reviewed and updated annually and revised at the end of three years to enable development of the Council’s next Race Equality Scheme.

The review will take account of any guidance issued by the Commission for Racial Equality to such reviews. It will include an assessment of how the Council has complied with its obligations and how equality of opportunity and good relations have been advanced in relation to the discharge of the Council’s functions. The Council will consult with those bodies listed at Appendix E.

13. PUBLISHING THE SCHEME

Richmond upon Thames’ first Race Equality Scheme will be published on the Council’s website.

Hard copies of the entire Scheme will be printed and made available to key stakeholders, community groups and council staff and to individual members of the public on request.

A summary of the Scheme will be published in leaflet form and distributed externally to public access points and internally throughout the council.

14. RACE EQUALITY SCHEME COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Definition of a complaint in relation to equality

A complaint, in respect of equality, is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Richmond Council about its perceived failure to comply with the Council’s Equality Scheme, drawn up and published in accordance with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.

The Complaints Procedure

This complaints procedure will be incorporated into the Council’s existing procedures for dealing with complaints and will be made available throughout all Council premises to which the public have access. Information on the procedure or assistance in making a complaint under the procedure may be obtained from:
LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES
RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

Customer Services
Civic Centre Reception
Civic Centre
44 York Street
Twickenham
TW1 3BZ

Telephone: 020 8891 7272
Fax: 020 8891 7990
Minicom 020 8831 6001