City of Sunderland

Race Equality Scheme
# Race Equality Scheme

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Summary

Welcome to the City of Sunderland’s first Race Equality Scheme. This Scheme has been developed using guidance produced by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in support of the Race Relations Amendment Act.

This scheme outlines the Council’s commitment to race equality and describes how, as a Council, we will work to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equal opportunities and good race relations. The Council will start to do this by assessing our functions, services and policies and reviewing the processes in place within them by delivering a structured action plan. This scheme sets out the arrangements for assessment, review, monitoring and consultation, action planning, and publication.

This Scheme will be used as a basis for consultation with people in the community, our partners and our employees and as such the Council hopes that you will share your views and comments on the Scheme with us. To help you to do this easily a feedback form is included in section 7 of this Scheme.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Equality has been high on the City of Sunderland’s agenda for a long time now and we are committed to removing barriers to access and opportunity, experienced by different groups of people. This commitment is supported by our Equal Opportunity Policy and our Race Equality Statement and relates to both employment and service delivery issues. Across the Council we try to ensure that equality is built into all policies and procedures at the earliest stage possible, however the Council recognises that it has a lot more to do in terms of race equality and that this is just a starting point.

1.2 The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) has built on this commitment and has placed a general duty, upon all public authorities to:

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

1.3 To fulfil the general duty, the Council is required to meet specific duties covering policy, service delivery, and employment. Achieving these specific duties can, in part, only be achieved by producing a Race Equality Scheme. The scheme will assess all of our functions, services, and policies, for their impact on eliminating racial discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and promoting good race relations in all we do.

1.4 The City of Sunderland has a detailed Equal Opportunities Policy (appendix 1) that covers service delivery and employment issues. This policy is regularly reviewed and aims to eliminate discrimination against groups of people due to their race or ethnic origin, age, gender, ability or disability, and sexuality. The Council also has a Race Equality Statement (appendix 2) that aims to eliminate racial harassment within Sunderland. It describes the actions that will be taken by the Council to create an environment where racism in Sunderland is unacceptable and explains how the Council
will work where racial harassment is reported, including working with partners where appropriate.

1.5 As a Council we have a number of plans and strategies that act as a basis for improving services and implementing schemes and initiatives. These plans and strategies guide the Council’s actions and ensure that all work contributes to the long-term vision for Sunderland, please see section 3 ‘A Vision for Sunderland’. These plans and strategies consider issues related to equality and further confirm our commitment to equality. The main plans and strategies are discussed further under ‘City Overview’ below.

2.0 City Overview

2.1 The City has a population of 289,500 and covers an area of some 138 square kilometres. The area was granted ‘city’ status in 1992 and is the largest city between Leeds and Edinburgh. Although the City is mainly urban, Sunderland includes a range of environments. It takes in the traditional City Centre area as well as former pit villages (such as Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole) and the ‘new town’ of Washington. The area is rich in reminders of former industries, including coalmining and shipbuilding, as well as unspoilt countryside and a magnificent coastline. However, the closure of these industries left a legacy of unemployment and economic decline that we are working to remove.

2.2 The community that the City Council serves is diverse and is one of the reasons why we recognise the importance of equality and are committed to ensuring that we consider issues from as many viewpoints as possible. The 1991 census showed the City’s diversity and gave a breakdown of the ethnicity of the City. This demonstrated the diverse cultures within the community at that time. The Council is now awaiting the new data from the 2001 census to show how our ethnic minority communities have grown and including the arrival of asylum seekers from a huge range of cultural backgrounds.

2.3 The City Council has been working with the other organisations that make up the City of Sunderland Partnership to develop priorities to improve the City as a whole. The other partners include agencies working in the City (the Health Authority, Police, and Fire Services, University of Sunderland, City of Sunderland College and the Learning and Skills Council), private sector organisations (through the North East Chamber of Commerce), and the voluntary and community sectors. Based on your views and opinions the Sunderland Partnership has developed a Community Strategy. The Strategy explains our shared vision for the future of the City, and gives key priorities and core values to underpin all of our activities and help the Council achieve the vision.

3.0 A Vision for Sunderland

3.1 Developed through consulting with you, the community and our partners the following vision has been agreed as the focus of the City’s development over the coming years:

“Sunderland – A City to be Proud of”

The statement below captures what we want the City to be so that we can achieve the vision, simply, our aim is that:

“Sunderland will be a prosperous International City, a desirable and secure place to live, work study and visit and where people can reach their full potential.”
3.2 The vision has three main elements (Prosperity, Place and Potential) and the City Council’s priorities work to achieve these elements. Nine priority areas have been developed and key aims and targets are developed under each priority.

3.3 The priorities are:

- **Economic Prosperity**
- **Community Safety**
- **City Centre**
- **Environment**
- **Social and Cultural Opportunities**
- **Lifelong Learning**
- **Healthy City**
- **Young People**
- **Housing**

3.4 All of these priorities have key aims and targets which, when achieved, will directly impact on equal opportunities and equal access to services. Further to this some of the priorities have key aims that will specifically target issues such as ‘Reducing Hate Crime and Racism’ (Community Safety).

4.0 The City of Sunderland - Your Council

4.1 The City Council has been working to modernise itself as an organisation. The Council looks after the City through 75 democratically elected Councillors. At a referendum, in November 2001, local people rejected an elected mayor. As a result the Council developed a new ‘Leader and Cabinet’ structure that was implemented on 23rd May 2002. This structure, together with a small number of other key committees, is designed to be more efficient and effective than the old multi-committee structure. It is complemented by a new Standards Committee to make sure that Councillors act in a proper manner and 6 Review Committees will oversee the Council’s drive for continuous improvement. The introduction and continuation of six Area Committees has been designed to increase the local focus of Councillors’ work, and encourage participation by local people.

4.2 The Council provides a huge variety of services to reflect the differences of the City, its people and their needs. The Council itself is one of the City’s largest employers with a workforce of approximately 14,000 (both part time and full time) in roles such as teachers, social and care workers, refuse collectors, grounds and roads maintenance, environmental and health protection, housing and benefits services, administration and many others.

*As an overview the City Council provides and manages:*
- 17 secondary schools; 96 primary schools; 8 special schools; 6 residential care homes for the elderly; 21 libraries; 42 Community Centres; 10 Leisure Centres; 52 parks; 1,270 hectares of public open space; 3065 km. of roads, footpaths and street lighting; 2.8 million square metres of industrial and commercial floorspace; and much, much more...

4.3 As part of the Council’s role as service provider, employer and community leader we accept a wide range of legal responsibilities and in addition to those responsibilities the Council is committed to broad principles of social justice and are opposed to any form of discrimination and oppression. The Council wants to ensure that no-one is treated less favourably on the grounds of gender, race, religion, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, age, disability or their personal beliefs or circumstances.

4.4 Further to the Community Strategy mentioned above, the Council produces an annual Best Value Performance Plan. The purpose of which is to inform the citizens of Sunderland
- which services the Council provides for you.
- how well these services are run.
• how the Council’s performance compares with our own targets and how we compare with other councils.
• how we are trying to improve our services for you.

4.5 The Best Value Performance Plan looks at services and performance in each of the nine priority areas mentioned earlier. This helps the Council to make sure that actions are consistently working towards achieving the vision for the City. The City Council has also developed a Community Consultation Framework, which demonstrates the Council’s commitment to gaining views and opinions from right across the community and using these comments to inform our actions and future work areas. To further support this commitment the Council is currently setting up an initiative called ‘Community Spirit’, this is a group of people from the community, representing the local population, and sharing their views on a range of issues. It is hoped that this will help the Council to make sure that actions meet your needs and expectations.

4.6 A number of principles act as the foundation for all of the Council’s policies and strategies, these are:
- **Partnership**: ensuring that public, private and voluntary sectors work together, so that we can make the best use of resources and take a co-ordinated approach to achieving common goals.
- **Participation**: improving communication and consultation by developing new ways to help and encourage individuals and groups to shape and influence City-wide decisions, and enable vulnerable adults and children to participate and contribute to the community and their lifestyles.
- **Protection**: in terms of eliminating all forms of discrimination and ensuring that the environment is given effective protection and that natural resources are used cautiously.

4.7 The City Council also has six core values, which underpin the work that the City Council carries out and the way in which we conduct our affairs. Our values are:
- **Quality**
- **Access**
- **Opportunity**
- **Choice**
- **Equality**
- **Safety**

4.8 The policies and procedures developed by the City Council aim to uphold these values in our services to the community and partners. Further to this, employment related policies and procedures have been developed to guide the behaviour of employees in line with council values. These include the Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, the Code of Practice on Recruitment and Selection, the Customer Service Standards, the Harassment at Work Policy, and the Whistleblowing Procedure.

5.0 **Background**

5.1 **The need for Equality in the UK**
5.1.1 Following the tragic events of 22nd April 1993, where Stephen Lawrence (an 18-year-old A-Level Student with ambitions of becoming an architect), was murdered in a racially motivated attack, the Stephen Lawrence inquiry became one of the most important pieces of work in the UK in terms of race equality.

5.1.2 The Inquiry highlighted concerns regarding institutional racism within the Police Service and went on to make 70 recommendations for various public services. The Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000, fulfils one of these recommendations and requires all public authorities to consider their functions in terms of race equality; this includes the Council.
5.2 Race Equality Scheme
5.2.1 The Race Relations Amendment Act has built on the Council’s commitment to equal opportunities and has placed a legal requirement upon us to publish this Race Equality Scheme. This scheme assesses all of our functions, services, and policies, for their impact on eliminating racial discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and promoting good race relations, in terms of services to the public and employment issues.

5.2.2 Where a function, service or policy is relevant to race equality, or where new policies/functions are proposed, the Council must review and monitor them for any negative impact on racial equality. This will involve consulting with the community, publishing our findings and making sure you can access information and services.

5.3 Our Learning Curve
5.3.1 The Council has never produced a scheme of this type before, this means that we still have a lot to learn. We want the Race Equality Scheme to reflect the needs of our diverse community and to develop the Scheme as more is learnt about specific requirements. To do this the Council will carry out a full review of this Scheme during the first year, using your input and expertise to guide the developments. The Council intends to publish a revised Scheme at the end of the first year; it will then include a detailed action plan to help us improve our services in line with your needs. There is more information about the review process later in this Scheme, please see the ‘Review’ section.

5.3.2 This copy of the Race Equality Scheme comes with a feedback form. You can use the form to comment on the Scheme, highlight the issues of importance for you and ensure that the Council’s priorities match with yours – there is more about this later, in the ‘Consultation’ section.

6.0 Your Race Equality Scheme
6.1 The Basics
6.1.1 Having a Race Equality Scheme means that you can see exactly what the Council is doing to ensure equality in the City. It gives you a commitment that we will be reviewing our actions on an annual basis to make sure we are improving our services to make them free from discrimination, ensure that services and information can be accessed throughout the community, and to promote good race relations. It also commits the Council to doing this for all new policies that are introduced.

6.1.2 This scheme has documented the importance placed on equality by the Council, but now the Council has the chance to prove just how much emphasis is placed on it. By considering equality at the earliest possible stage of developments the Council aims to ensure that it doesn’t inadvertently prevent anyone accessing or using services because of their ethnic origin.

6.1.3 The Race Equality scheme is a strategy and an action plan, it will help the Council to consider the effects of our actions and activities in terms of race equality and make the changes needed so that services are delivered effectively throughout our multi-cultural society

6.1.4 The Council will assess our performance on race equality in the following ways.

- The Council is working to incorporate race equality assessment into the performance management systems used within the Council. These performance management systems include
  - Best Value
  - The Community Strategy
  - Local Strategic Partnerships
  - Our Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
A major assessment of the Council’s performance on race equality will come from reviewing the work carried out on this scheme during each year, this will help the Council to see what has been done to make a difference to community groups in terms of accessing council services, it will also highlight actions that the Council have failed to take.

6.1.5 Within the Best Value process there are a number of performance indicators. These indicators help the Council to compare our performance to that of other councils in the UK and also help to monitor any improvement between years. Some of the performance indicators relate to race equality, specifically, these are:
- The level that the Council has achieved under the Commission for Racial Equality’s (CRE’s) Standard for local government.
- The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities compared with the percentage of the local minority ethnic population who are economically active.
- Percentage of economically active minority ethnic community population in the area.
- Does the authority follow the CRE’s Code of Practice for Rented Housing.
- The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 1000 population.
- The percentage of racial incidents that result in further action.

6.1.6 The Council is committed to the work and principles outlined in this Scheme at a number of levels. All Directors and Heads of Service have signed up to the Scheme and approval for the Scheme has been granted from both Cabinet and Council. Any Director or Head of Service can be contacted in relation to the application of the Scheme within their Directorate or Service Area. The Elected Members who are Portfolio Holders for each service are also committed to supporting the Scheme within their Service Area.

6.2 Assessment
6.2.1 Assessment was the first part of the journey to producing this Race Equality Scheme. So that the Council can assess the organisation thoroughly we have broken the organisation down into areas of work and then into processes within these areas. This breakdown was done as part of the Council’s e-Government work and whilst it is thorough – it highlighted over 1000 processes, it needs some further work to make it more appropriate to the Race Equality Scheme. Also to ensure that the assessment meets the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act, the assessment of each process required considering all policies associated with that process.

6.2.2 A team of senior managers in each department then used this list of processes to assess the relevance to Race Equality. For each process there were three steps:
- whether it impacted upon eliminating racial discrimination,
- whether it helped to promote equality of opportunity,
- and whether it promoted good race relations.

At each step the Council considered whether there was any evidence or reason to believe that some racial groups could be differently affected and whether there is any public concern that it is being operated in a discriminatory manner. Finally, the Council looked at whether the process had been covered by a Best Value Service Review. At each stage points were awarded as a means to assessing our current position. An example of the assessment form that we used can be found in Appendix 3.

6.2.3 It is possible for a process to score up to 13 points through this assessment. High scores don’t necessarily mean that they are discriminating against people of different racial backgrounds. It does mean that these processes are likely to make a greater impact on eliminating race discrimination and promoting equality and good race relations. Because
of this, it is vital that the Council get the delivery of these services and processes right as in this way a major difference can be made to the community.

6.2.4 Based on results of our assessment the Council has been able to prioritise the order in which processes would be reviewed. The higher the score the earlier the review, however under 'Action planning' below you will see that corporate actions need to be taken prior to reviewing the processes. However the detailed results from the assessment exercise are available on request, as Annex A, from the Policy Team by calling 0191 5531154 or by email to Policy.Team@Sunderland.gov.uk.

6.3 Reviewing Council Policies
6.3.1 The review process is the method for reviewing everything that has been assessed. It is a procedure that will allow the Council to ensure that processes (including associated policies) do not discriminate on the basis of race, promote good race relations where possible, and ensure equal access to the service and associated information. To ensure a detailed review the Council will monitor the use of the service, consider satisfaction levels and any complaints. The Council will also research the needs of local community groups and consult on any proposed changes that we consider based on our findings. An explanation of the full arrangements for the review procedure, including staff training and awareness can be found as appendix 4.

6.3.2 Where a service undergoes a Best Value review the Council will incorporate race equality in to the process. Depending on the Best Value review programme, process and policies may be reviewed earlier than the priority assigned to it. The Council will be working to incorporate the review for race equality issues within performance management mechanisms, as a matter of priority.

6.3.3 The timescale for reviewing each process will vary depending on the information already available and the accessibility of appropriate statistics and consultation mechanisms. However, the Council is committed to carrying out reviews in a timely manner, ensuring that your views are considered and telling you about the changes implemented as a result of the review.

6.4 Proposing New Council Policies
6.4.1 The process for developing and proposing new policies is vital to ensure that all new developments take account of issues related to race equality from the earliest stage possible. The procedure will allow the Council to ensure that all new processes (including associated policies) do not discriminate on the basis of race, promote good race relations where possible, and ensure equal access to the service and associated information.

6.4.2 To ensure that the relevant race equality issues are considered when policies are proposed the Council will develop a profile of the people within the community who will use the service, research the needs of these users, develop proposals and drafts based on the findings. Based on comments and consultation, policies would be implemented along with systems for monitoring the use of the service, a full schedule for future review. Again, details of the full arrangements for this process, including staff training and awareness can be found as appendix 5.

6.5 Consultation
6.5.1 The City Council is committed to consulting with the community and with the Sunderland Partnership. As such the Council wants to make sure that it carries out consultation in an inclusive, suitable manner. This means keeping the people who are consulted with fully informed from the beginning to the end of consultation. The following principles are the basis for any consultation exercise carried out by the Council.
- To ensure the consultation is as inclusive as possible.
- To use a consultation technique suitable for the issue and the research group.
• To communicate clearly with those involved throughout the consultation (ensuring that it accessible to all community groups).
• To ensure the results are used to inform the service delivery and policy development.
• To work in partnership across the Council and with external organisations, where appropriate.

6.5.2 The City Council’s commitment to consultation demands that, as a council, we will make every effort to ensure that target groups are representative, and make specific efforts to include those in hard to reach groups, by dealing with barriers to participation. The City Council’s commitment to Consultation can be seen in appendix 6.

6.5.3 In terms of consulting with the community on the Race Equality Scheme, the Council intends to make use of ‘Community Spirit’ (the Citizens Panel), this will enable the Council to get the views from people within the community who have expressed an interest in being consulted with on this Scheme. Comment forms are also printed on the last page of this document so that anyone can give their views on the City of Sunderland’s Race Equality Scheme. Using the comments received through these avenues we will review the contents of the Scheme and develop specific elements of the Scheme as appropriate.

6.5.4 Ongoing consultation will also be carried out as part of the review and assessment process for policies and procedures that have been assessed as relevant to the general duty of eliminating racial discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and good race relations.

6.6 Publication & Review
6.6.1 The City of Sunderland’s first Race Equality Scheme will be published in full in July 2002, this will be after Cabinet has approved the Scheme during their June meetings. The Council has already emphasised that this first version is by no means perfect, and as this issue is of such high importance the Council feels it is vital that it is continually developed and improved. This can only be done with your input and by developing the skills and understanding of the people responsible for developing this Scheme. As a result the Council is intending to carry-out a full review during the first year, this will involve achieving some corporate actions to ensure that the foundations are in place to support a detailed Race Equality Scheme as well as getting your input into the Scheme and priority areas.

6.6.2 The Council hope to publish a reviewed, and more complete, scheme at the end of May 2003. The May 2003 Scheme will contain a three-year action plan for reviewing all of our policies and processes relevant to race equality. After this the Council will publish annual updates describing the actions that have been taken during the year and the impact these actions have had on race equality in Sunderland. This annual update will also detail the results of consultation and monitoring and the specific actions taken as a result. The annual review will be available in a number of formats and languages to make sure it is accessible to all community groups. The document will also be available on the internet and a summary of the Scheme will also be produced, giving an overview of the actions taken and the areas for review over the following year.

6.6.3 During the coming year the Council will be looking at the best ways of producing this information so that they are accessible throughout the community, this is as part of the commitment to overcoming any barriers experienced within the community in accessing the information contained in the City’s Race Equality Scheme.
6.7 Ensuring access to Information and Services

6.7.1 The Council’s commitment to ensuring that services and associated information are accessible throughout the community covers a number of aspects. The Council is committed to ensuring that you have access to:

- information regarding the services provided;
- your rights under the service/policy;
- the service itself;
- the complaint procedure, should you need it;
- and, employees who are able to support your access needs.

6.7.2 Translation and Interpretation services

6.7.2.1 Sunderland City Council can provide both interpretation and translation for about 30 languages including the six main languages in Sunderland (Cantonese, Bengali, Hindu, Urdu, Arabic and Punjabi) other than English. The Council can also access services to support people who speak any number of other languages used within Sunderland. The different types of interpretation and translation that the Council can provide are listed and explained below:

1. **Face to face Interpretation**
   Using the services of a network of local interpreters, our in house Interpretation and Translation Service can provide face-to-face interpretation, mediating between the customer and the service provider. This service needs to be booked in advance in order to make necessary arrangements.

2. **Telephone Interpretation**
   The Council has entered into a contract with the Language Line Service. This service provides telephone interpretation for all council services when required. Front line staff have been trained to use the service and further support is given to employees who have access to the Council’s internal intranet. This service can provide telephone interpretation in over 100 different languages, and can be used wherever further support is required for the customer.

3. **Audio Translation**
   Document translation is available in spoken form on audiotaape. This is provided for customers who cannot use the written form of their language, or those who have a visual impairment, or those who simply prefer to have an oral translation. Again, this service can be provided in a wide range of the languages used within our community.

4. **Printed Translation**
   The Council can translate any document that has been produced by the Council into a wide range of community languages.

6.7.3 Training and Development

6.7.3.1 As part of the Council’s commitment to ensuring everyone can access the information and services provided, the Council is committed to training our employees. In line with CRE guidance, there will be two different types of training delivered as part of the Scheme:

1. **Race Relations Amendment Act and Race Equality Scheme Training**
   The Council will be concentrating on training employees who have special responsibilities for developing, managing and introducing this Scheme. This is so that the knowledge and understanding of the team who will review the Scheme during the first year can be developed, ensuring that the Scheme will better meet the needs of the community following it’s review. This training will also be delivered to the people who commit to delivering the Scheme on behalf of the Council; this includes Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Managers and Elected Members.
2. **Eliminating Discrimination Training**
   Another element of training is for employees delivering the services, developing the policies and working in communities to understand issues specific to race, enabling them to do their jobs without discriminating against different community groups and also ensuring that they understand the options available to them when helping the community to access services (such as language line, translated documents, or interpretation services).

### 6.8 Complaints

6.8.1 Sunderland City Council is committed to providing, high-quality services, the Council recognise that this scheme will help to do this and ensure that the needs of minority ethnic groups are taken into consideration. So that the Council can take account of your views we have developed a complaint procedure that lets you comment on policies and services quickly and easily. The Council values your feedback and would like to hear your comments on the scheme. You can give us your comments, both good and bad, on the Scheme using the form at the end of the document, however, if you want to lodge a formal complaint regarding the Scheme, this can be done by contacting, in the first instance, the Policy Team on 0191 5531154, or by email to Policy.Team@sunderland.gov.uk.

6.8.2 You can complain about anything that leaves you dissatisfied with the Council, this includes treating you unfairly (including discrimination), failing to do something that should have been done, doing something that shouldn’t have been done, giving you a poor service, and excessive delays. The Council’s complaint procedure is currently being reviewed, however the Council aims to deal with all complaints as quickly and smoothly as possible.

6.8.3 Where your complaint relates to a service you have/are receiving you can speak directly to the person you are dealing with or ask to speak to their supervisor. Where a complaint is not easily linked to one aspect of a service, or you don’t know who best to speak to about it you can contact the Customer Services Manager on 0191 5531065 (or alternatively by email Customer.Services@Sunderland.gov.uk). It is also important to point out that every effort will be made to ensure that people from right across the community will be given the opportunity to complain by incorporating the translation and interpretation services into the complaint mechanism.

6.8.3 As part of the complaint procedure the Council is committed to:

- Ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to make a complaint.
- Dealing with your complaint quickly and fairly.
- Keeping you informed about the progress of the complaint and investigation.
- Treating any information, supplied by you to us, in confidence.
- Explaining the reasons for the decision we make.
- Using complaints to improve the services we provide to the community.

6.8.4 If you need to report an incident relating to racial harassment we have a 24-hour help line. The telephone number for this service is 0191 5671123 and can be used to report any incident or complaint of racial harassment or abuse.

### 6.9 The Council as an Employer

6.9.1 As part of the Race Relations Amendment Act the Council has specific responsibilities that are related to employment issues. These responsibilities are centred on the monitoring of employees. The Race Relations Amendment Act requires the Council to monitor all employees by their racial group. The Council must also monitor promotion, training, grievances, disciplinary action and employees leaving the authority. The Council also has a responsibility to monitor applicants for jobs within the Council. The results of this monitoring will be published as part of our annual report.
6.9.2 So that the Council can do this effectively we need the co-operation of all employees, to ensure that the reports are accurate and up to date employees will need to work together with the Council, with each individual taking on the responsibility for ensuring that their information is provided when requested.

6.9.3 The Council believes that it is imperative that the data collected on employees and on potential employees is as accurate as possible as this ensures that the Council can make informed decisions regarding developing policies, both current and proposed. The Council has recently set out to implement a new system that will enable all of this information to be recorded electronically. The starting point for this exercise is the tendering process where companies who provide HR systems demonstrate how they will meet our needs.

6.9.4 Implementation times for such large and integrated system are lengthy and once implemented there will be a number processes which we will need to go through to get the system to a stage where it can be used across the organisation. Until the new system is in place the Council will need the co-operation of employees so that various aspects of employment can be monitored, however you can be assured that the new HR system will be implemented as soon as possible.

6.10 Assessment Summary
6.10.1 The full copies of our completed assessment (Race Equality Scheme; Annex A) are available by calling The Policy Team on 0191 5531154 (or by email to Policy.Team@Sunderland.gov.uk). The assessment shows how each one of the Council’s processes relates to supporting race equality. The scoring demonstrates the level of priority for reviewing each process and takes into consideration any policy required as a part of the process.

6.10.2 The procedure the Council has followed to carry out this assessment has highlighted some areas of variation. This is due to differences in the understanding and development stage of departments and managers assessing the processes. As a result we acknowledge that the Council, at a corporate level, must take a number of key actions. Carrying out these actions will enable the Council to develop our list of functions and services to better integrate it with the race equality scheme assessment. It will also ensure that the Council has a corporate level of understanding to ensure that when the functions and services are re-assessed there is a common approach to scoring and prioritising.

6.10.3 The following action plan overview details the corporate actions that will be taken during the first year, culminating in the production of a revised Scheme in May 2003.

6.11 Action Plan Overview
6.11.1 As mentioned throughout this Scheme the Council want to review the scheme at the end of the first year, during this year we will to carry out a number of actions that will enable our knowledge and understanding to be developed, ensuring that the review makes the Scheme even more valuable. The following plan highlights the actions that the Council will take to develop our knowledge and to set up systems and processes that will support more specific, service related actions, in the second and third years.

6.11.2 The actions that the Council will take during this first year fit in to six main areas: Resource Allocation, Training, Awareness, Performance Management Integration, Monitoring and Consultation, and Scheme Review. These areas are broken down over the following pages highlighting key tasks and timescales for completion.
### Resource Allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify and secure resources for the achievement of the action plan, including employee time, Council-wide commitment and financial resources</td>
<td>End of July 2002 - Chief Officers, Cabinet &amp; Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing commitment to resource requirements</td>
<td>Ongoing from July '02 - Directors and Heads of Service</td>
</tr>
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### Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a training programme for employees who will be involved in reviewing the Scheme at the end of the first year.</td>
<td>End of July 2002 - Corporate Training &amp; Development Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a plan to integrate race equality issues into training for frontline employees.</td>
<td>End of July 2002 - Corporate Training &amp; Development Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake a training needs analysis and develop a list of participants for training for employees with an ongoing involvement in developing the Scheme.</td>
<td>August 2002 - Directors &amp; Heads of Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue guidance to all training staff on integrating race equality issues into front-line staff training</td>
<td>End of September 2002 - Corporate Training &amp; Development Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organise and co-ordinate a training programme for employees with special responsibilities under the Race Equality Scheme</td>
<td>September 02 - December 03 - Corporate Training &amp; Development Section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop and publish a leaflet for the community to raise awareness of the Scheme.</td>
<td>End of June 2002 - Personnel Services &amp; Central Policy Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicise translation, interpretation, language line and the Racial Incident reporting line services with frontline staff.</td>
<td>Ongoing from July '02 - Translation &amp; Interpretation Service, in conjunction with CityTalk and individual exercises within Directorates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure the monitoring of employment issues.</td>
<td>Ongoing from September '02 - Personnel Service and Directorate Staffing Sections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Performance Management Integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider options for integrating Race Equality Scheme assessment into the Best Value Review Process</td>
<td>End August '02 - Best Value Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider appropriateness of integrating Race Equality Scheme assessment in to other Performance Management systems</td>
<td>End October '02 - Best Value Team and co-ordinators of other performance management systems as specified by Heads of Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Develop plans for implementation into the above, as appropriate, based on options available | End December ’02  
- Best Value Team and co-ordinators of other performance management systems as specified by Heads of Service

Consider options for incorporating the Scheme and the summary of the scheme into the BVPP and the BVPP summary, respectively | End March ’03  
- Central Policy Team & Best Value Team

### Monitoring and Consultation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Progress with implementation exercise for corporate HR system to ensure monitoring of staff as directed under the act | Ongoing  
- Personnel Services |
| Produce guidance on consultation methods, to effective utilisation of community consultation and research across Council services. | July ’02  
- Best Value Research & Business Management Unit |
| Publicise the guidance outlined above to all Council employees              | Ongoing from July ’02  
- as above |
| Develop guidance and procedures for implementing monitoring systems into service delivery. | September ’02  
- Best Value Team |
| Publicise monitoring guidance and encourage integration of monitoring into key services to start to develop statistical information for future review. | Ongoing from October ’02  
- Best Value Team |
| Provide support, as part of the social inclusion agenda, for the Tyne & Wear Racial Equality Council in developing a diversity forum | Ongoing from June ’02  
- Development and Regeneration Directorate |
| Review and assess the impact of the CCS Diversity Project                  | End of December ’02  
- Personnel section within Community & Cultural Services Directorate and Central Personnel |

### Scheme Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Produce detailed action plan for reviewing the Scheme based on increased knowledge, improved understanding and community feedback. | End of December 2002  
- Race Equality Steering Group |
| Develop a more appropriate listing of functions, services and policies for assessment under the Scheme | January ’03  
- Nominated Officers who have participated in the training |
| Develop a more appropriate assessment and scoring mechanism for prioritising follow-up actions | February ’03  
- as above |
| Assess the functions, services and policies using the revised scoring method | March ’03  
- as above |
| Prioritise services and policies for review and develop detailed action plans for each directorate, over three years | March ’03  
- as above |
| Consult with the community and with partners on the appropriateness of the priorities and proposed actions | During April 2003  
- Best Value Consultancy |
| Develop a Scheme based on consultation and findings | During May ’03  
- Race Equality Steering Group |
6.12 Welcoming Your Views

6.12.1 Remember your views are vital to the success of this Scheme, this is just the first attempt, the Council want to make this scheme something that will have an impact on the people of Sunderland, particularly in terms of race equality.

6.12.2 Please comment on this scheme by completing the feedback form in the section 7 of this document. You can return it to the address overleaf or drop it in to any Council Office. These views will have a major impact on the review of the Scheme that will be carried out during the coming year and the Council will be consulting on other related issues as they arise using community groups and the citizen’s panel ‘Community Spirit’. If you wish to be consulted on other aspects of the Scheme over the coming year please return the feedback form and mark the form as appropriate.
7.0 Comment Form

The form on the following page can be used to give the Council your views on this Race Equality Scheme. Please complete the form and return in an envelope to the address below. Alternatively you can drop it in to any council building and it will be returned to the correct office.

The Council values your comments and will work to act on them as appropriate. Completing this form also gives you the opportunity to request involvement in further consultation regarding the scheme.

Please send your completed comment form to:

Race Equality Scheme
Policy Team
Chief Executive’s
Civic Centre
Sunderland
SR2 7DN
Race Equality Scheme

Comment Form

1. How did you hear about the Race Equality Scheme? (please tick all that apply)
   - City News
   - CityTalk
   - A Community Group
   - The Council’s Website
   - By Visiting the Council
   - The Local Press
   - Other, please specify

2. What is your overall opinion of the Race Equality Scheme? (please tick one)
   - Very poor
   - Poor
   - Average
   - Good
   - Very Good

3. What is your opinion of the actions that the Council intends to take during the next year? (please tick one box from each column)
   - Inadequate
   - Inappropriate
   - Adequate
   - Appropriate

4. Are there any other actions that you think should be taken during this first year?
   - Yes
   - No

   If yes, please specify which other actions you think should be taken in the first year

5. How easy did you find this Scheme to read? (Please tick one)
   - Very easy
   - Quite Easy
   - Neither Easy nor Difficult
   - Quite Difficult
   - Very Difficult

Please Turn Over

Note to Council Employees:
If you have been passed this form by a member of the public please place in an envelope and return in the internal post to the Policy Team, Chief Executive’s, Civic Centre – marking the envelope ‘Race Equality Scheme’.
6. In what format(s) do you think future updates for the Scheme should be published? (please tick all that apply)

- Printed
- Large Print
- Audio
- Audio – Translated
- Printed – Translated
- Large Print - Translated

Where you think the Scheme should be translated, which language would you require?

Please specify:

7. Do you wish to be consulted on further developments of the Race Equality Scheme?

- Yes
- No

If yes please provide your contact details

Name
Address
Postcode

8. Please use the space below if you have any other comments regarding the Scheme.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Your views will be used as part of the ongoing development of this Race Equality Scheme and will help the Council to ensure that your needs are addressed.

Note to Council Employees:
If you have been passed this form by a member of the public please place in an envelope and return in the internal post to the Policy Team, Chief Executive’s, Civic Centre – marking the envelope ‘Race Equality Scheme’.
8.0 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Equal Opportunities Policy & Statement

8.2 Appendix 2: Race Equality Statement

8.3 Appendix 3: An example Assessment Form

8.4 Appendix 4: Review Procedure for Council Policies and Procedures

8.5 Appendix 5: Implementation Procedure for Proposed Council Policies and Procedures

8.6 Appendix 6: The City Council's Commitment to Consultation
Equal Opportunities Policy

Equal Opportunities Statement

Background
Sunderland City Council has an equal opportunities policy covering both how its services are provided and the way its staff are recruited, selected and subsequently treated. The Council intends to adopt an equal opportunities programme that will put this policy into practice.

Statement
As well as accepting our legal responsibilities, we are committed to broad principles of social justice and are opposed to any form of discrimination and oppression.

Our policy will apply to all of those who come into contact with us, i.e. those who presently use directly provided services or services provided on our behalf; potential users of services; other agencies and professionals; employees and job applicants; and the general public.

We aim to ensure that no-one is treated less favourably on the grounds of gender, race, religious beliefs, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, age, disability, or their personal beliefs or circumstances.

As a Council we are committed to a programme of action to make this policy fully effective and, therefore, the policy will be regularly monitored, reviewed and responded to.
Appendix 1

Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy

The City of Sunderland Council recognises that, in our society, there is discrimination against groups and individuals. The aim of this employment policy is to ensure that the recruitment, selection, training and promotion of individuals is based solely on criteria of merit and ability, and therefore no individual will be discriminated against.

We aim to ensure that:

a) When applying for employment, all job applicants are considered having regard to only their individual aptitudes and abilities in relation to the job as stated in the job description and person specification.

b) All persons who participate in shortlisting, interviewing and selection processes are trained in all aspects of recruitment and selection and in Equal Opportunities issues.

c) All employees will be given equal consideration for training, career development and promotion.

d) All employees will be issued with guidance covering issues of day to day management and all expectations of the employer/employee relationship.

e) A rolling programme is established to make all of the Council's premises accessible and suitable for people with disabilities.

f) Measures are adopted to promote a more balanced workforce at all levels of the organisation.

g) Any breaches of our equal opportunities statement by staff will not be tolerated.

h) Advice is available to anyone who feels that they have been the victim of discrimination and that suitable avenues for comment and complaint are made available to them.
Equal Opportunities in Service Provision

It is the Council's intention that anyone seeking to use its services should be treated fairly and without bias. However, we recognise that groups and individuals can be discriminated against both directly and indirectly in the way that services are planned, organised and delivered. We wish to ensure that services are made widely available, are supplied on the basis of eligibility and are delivered in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. In the spirit of partnership, we believe that people who use the Council's services should also be mindful of these principles in their dealings with others.

We aim to ensure that:

a) All of those seeking to use the Council's services are given equal consideration having regard only to relevant criteria.

b) All considerations of requests for services are carried out using clear, published, non-discriminatory criteria for eligibility.

c) A rolling programme is established to make all premises accessible and suitable for people with disabilities.

d) All organisations and individuals working on the Council's behalf are conversant with and subscribe to our equal opportunities framework.

e) All of the services we make available are widely publicised in appropriate forms, having particular regard for people who do not use English as a first language or have special communication needs.

f) Any breaches of our equal opportunities statement by staff or service users will not be tolerated.

g) Advice is available to anyone who feels that they have been the victim of discrimination and that suitable avenues for comment and complaints are made available to them.
Race Equality Statement

Background

Sunderland City Council is committed to reducing incidents of racial harassment and to creating a climate where racism is unacceptable in Sunderland. The council will work in partnership to ensure that racism is addressed in all its manifestations and entirety.

Statement

We will provide a responsive and sensitive service to the victims of racism or racial harassment

We will take action against perpetrators of racism

We will introduce a 24 hour system for reporting of complaints / incidents together with a procedure for dealing with them

We will make all partners aware of our approach to race equality issues and share information with them

We will promote and celebrate our cultural diversity

We will review all policies and practices to ensure they are free from bias

We will provide training for employees of the council

We will take measures to address the under representation of black, Asian and ethnic minority people in our workforce

We will undertake to translate council documents

Colin Anderson
Leader of the Council

Colin Sinclair
Chief Executive
## Assessment Proforma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process description</th>
<th>Dept</th>
<th>Which of the following does the service relate to?</th>
<th>Is there...</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eliminating Discrimination? (2 points)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting EOP? (2 points)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting good race relations? (2 points)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>any evidence to believe some racial groups could be affected differently? (0-None, 1-a little, 2-some, 3-a lot)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>any public concern that functions/policies are operated in discriminatory manner? (0-None, 1-a little, 2-some, 3-a lot)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Has function been subject to BV Review (0-yes, 1-no)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Procedure for Reviewing Council Policies

1. **Policy Selection**
   A policy/procedure will be selected for review, this will be based upon the action plans developed as part of the Race Equality Scheme and the weighting (score) obtained from the assessment procedure - the higher the score the higher the priority.

2. **Monitoring Systems**
   This will vary depending on the policy/process that is being reviewed. Corporate guidance explaining different ways of monitoring services and processes will be provided to ensure that all aspects of monitoring are considered for their appropriateness to the process in question. This may, as a start, include monitoring the use of the service as well as the level of satisfaction experienced by community groups.

3. **Research Procedure**
   Again, this will vary depending on the policy/process that is being reviewed. Corporate guidance advising on different ways of researching the opinions of service users is available (Name of Document). Further guidance will be provided on possible research areas specific to the Race Equality Scheme. This may, as a start, include researching barriers to accessing services and/or information and the extent to which different needs are provided for as part of the service/policy.

4. **Preparation and Awareness**
   All employees involved in the delivery of the service will be briefed to make sure that they understand the reasons for the monitoring and research, so that they can explain this to people using the service. Documentation and/or systems that are needed to carry out the monitoring and research will be produced and appropriate training will be given to employees to ensure the procedure is as clear as possible.

5. **Implementation of Monitoring**
   The monitoring systems will be launched so that evidence and statistics can begin to be collected.

6. **Conduct Research Exercise**
   The research will be carried out, this may involve telephone interviews, a postal survey, or the use of ‘Community Spirit’, the citizens panel.

7. **Evaluation**
   Responses, statistics and feedback will be collated and evaluated. Conclusions will be drawn to inform the next stage of the review.

8. **Investigation**
   Where the monitoring or research has identified patterns of inequality, investigation in to the possible causes will be carried out.

9. **Produce proposals**
   Based on the findings from the research, monitoring and investigation, proposals will be drawn up to address the possible causes of inequality and to address any other feedback highlighting areas where improvements can be made (such as service accessibility or alternative options for service provision for specific community groups).

10. **Consult on Proposed Changes**
    When the proposals have been produced these should be integrated into the policy document or the process overview and opinions should be sought on the changes from the minority groups highlighted within the research. This can be done through Community Spirit, community groups known to the service providers, or by contacting the people who responded during the monitoring and research phases of the review.
11. **Implementing & Reporting on the Changes**
    Following consultation the changes will be implemented, the changes will be publicised in the annual Race Equality Scheme Update and the report detailing the review process will be available on request.
Appendix 5

The Implementation Procedure for Proposing New Council Policies

1. **Policy Selection**
   Any policy/procedure that needs to be implemented to ensure delivery of a service will be assessed in terms of Race Equality before it is implemented.

2. **Produce Proposed Policy/Procedure**
   A policy/procedure document will be drawn up to take account of the need for the policy, this will include, so far as is possible, issues around equal opportunity and accessibility and differences in requirements by different community groups. This should incorporate any associated monitoring procedure to assess the use of the policy and any intended research to be undertaken following implementation.

3. **Consult on the Proposal**
   Opinions should be sought on the proposals from a representative sample of community groups. This can be done through Community Spirit, community groups known to the service providers, or by other research options.

4. **Preparation and Awareness**
   All employees involved in the delivery of the service will be briefed to make sure that they understand the provisions of the new policy/procedure and the associated monitoring that will be implemented. Documentation and/or systems that are needed to carry out the monitoring and to implement the policy will be produced and made available to all community groups in an appropriate medium.

5. **Monitoring Systems**
   This will vary depending on the policy/process that is being developed. Corporate guidance explaining different ways of monitoring services and processes will be provided to ensure that all aspects of monitoring are considered for their appropriateness to the process in question. This may, as a start, include monitoring the use of the service as well as the level of satisfaction experienced by community groups.

6. **Implementation of Monitoring**
   The monitoring systems will be launched so that evidence and statistics can be collected when the policy is launched.

7. **Implementing & Reporting on the new Policy**
   Following consultation the new policy will be implemented, this will be publicised in the annual Race Equality Scheme Update and the report detailing the assessment and implementation process will be available on request.

8. **Review**
   Once a policy/procedure is in place it will be covered by the Race Equality Scheme’s review procedure. The outcomes from the monitoring system will need to be analysed and appropriate research will need to be carried out to ensure the policy meets the needs of all community groups.
Appendix 6

The Council’s Commitment to Consultation

The Council wants to make sure that it carries out consultation in an inclusive, suitable manner. This means keeping the people who it consults with fully informed from the beginning to the end of consultation. The Council will build the results of consultation into Council policy and planning. The Council will also make sure it meets the following principles when it carries out any consultation.

The Council will seek:

To ensure the consultation is as inclusive as possible, through:
- Making all efforts to make sure the target groups are representative;
- Making specific efforts to include those in hard to reach groups. This means dealing with barriers to participation.

To use a suitable consultation technique for consultees, the nature of the service or issue the Council consults on, bearing in mind the resources available.

To communicate clearly with consultees throughout the consultation. This includes:
- Giving reasonable notice before consultation events so that people can take part.
- Explaining the point of the consultation, who the consultees are, why and how the Council will use the results, and what the next steps will be, if any;
- Ensuring the information provided for the consultation is fair, open and understandable, in the right language, written style and format;
- Providing help to participants if they need it;
- Listening to the views of consultees and respecting those views;
- Communicating the results of the consultation exercise to the consultees;
- Telling consultees what will happen because of the consultation, or an explanation to why consultation results have not been actioned.

To ensure consultation results are part of service planning and policy development through:
- Making consultation a necessary part of all strategy and service planning;
- Designing consultations to fit into the City Council’s strategic planning;
- Requiring demonstration of the use made of results as part of Best Value.

To promote quality throughout City Council consultations through:
- Spreading best practice on consultation techniques;
- Evaluating consultations undertaken;
- Developing a toolkit of best practice in carrying out consultation exercises.

To work in partnership across Departments and with external organisations, to:
- Avoid duplication and work towards Best Value;
- Minimise “consultation fatigue” or repeat consultation of groups or areas;
- Widen ownership of the results of the consultation, to increase the potential for joint action on issues arising out of the consultation.

To provide mechanisms wherever possible for those who wish to become involved in consultation and participation regularly.