

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE - May 28<sup>th</sup> 2003**

**REPORT FROM THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**FOR ACTION**

**ALL WARDS**

**The Council's 2003/04 Draft Race Equality Scheme**

**1. SUMMARY**

This report introduces the Draft of Brent Council's Race Equality Scheme for 2003/04 (see Appendix to this report).

**2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members of the Executive are recommended to approve in principle the draft in the Appendix to this report and delegate the finalisation of the Scheme for publication as Brent's Race Equality Scheme for 2003-04 to the Chief Executive.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The costs of publishing this year's scheme in full and summary versions, in community languages, in large print and on audiocassette are estimated to be £15K. These costs will be met from the £200K Diversity Budget agreed at Council on March 3rd 2003.

**4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Every member of staff will receive a copy of the summary Scheme with their pay advice slips in the summer and will be able to download copies from the Intranet.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Under the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended, the Council has a general duty and specific duties. The general duty is that in carrying out its functions the Council must have due regard to the need to:

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

- 5.2 The publication of a Race Equality Scheme (which is a specific duty) should show how the Council intends to fulfil its general duty under the Act.

## **6. DETAIL**

- 6.1 The deadline for the production of a race equality scheme was 31<sup>st</sup> May 2002 and Brent Council was among the relatively few authorities which had a published scheme in place by the deadline.
- 6.2 A recent internal report commissioned by the Council and undertaken by TMP Worldwide described “an overall picture of the Council as one that has striven to tackle race and diversity issues over a number of years, and, compared to many other local authorities, has been proactive in its approach”. Brent has recognised however that we need to go further in order to “mainstream” equalities and to that end we are reviewing our approach to diversity, including re-visiting our race equality scheme document.
- 6.3 We have consulted employees through the Staff Panel and consulted a hundred local black and minority ethnic community groups as part of the new Scheme. Their comments on diversity have been summarised in this draft. We are also consulting with the community via a conference organised by Brent Race, Health and Social Care Forum on May 16<sup>th</sup>, and their comments will be reflected in the final publication as well.
- 6.4 Copies of the final scheme will be available to coincide with the Council's Respect Week in mid-July and will be distributed to staff, Members, local community groups, our partners, other local authorities, the GLA, the three local Members of Parliament and Euro MP. Copies will also be made available to the public through the libraries and One Stop Shops. The final publication will be available in hard copy and on the Intranet and the Internet. A summary copy will also appear in the Brent Magazine.
- 6.5 The scheme will be reviewed next year as part of the work programme of the new Diversity Team and they will also become responsible for the writing of future schemes. It is likely that future Schemes will take a longer view than just one year, but this decision rests with the new Leadership Group on equalities and diversity.
- 6.6 Further work to support the Scheme has already been agreed. This includes service area action planning, undertaking equality impact assessments on high priority functions and reaching a consensus on ethnic monitoring. Plus the Council has agreed to roll out a year long training programme to all staff on the Race Relations Amendment Act to be delivered by Equality Works.

## **7. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality, CRE.  
The Duty to Promote Race Equality: A Guide For Public Authorities (non-Statutory), CRE.  
Report by the Chief Executive to Corporate Deciding Committee, 17 April 2002. For further information contact Tracy Walters, Senior Human Resources Policy Adviser Telephone 0208 937 1117

MARCO HENRY  
Interim Director of Human Resources