

Brent Council

**RACE EQUALITY SCHEME
2003-04**

DRAFT

Brent Logo

Beacon Council logo, Urban Green Spaces 2002,
Neighbourhood Renewal, 2002
Removing Barriers to Work, 2003

Disability Symbol (two ticks)

Foreword

'Celebrating Diversity' by Councillor Ann John, Leader of Brent Council

Brent Council serves one of Europe's most diverse multi-cultural communities and we believe that our diversity is our strength. Our workforce reflects that diversity and we are unique in having an ethnic majority workforce serving an ethnic majority population. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of everything that we do, both in terms of employment and service delivery.

As a Council we have worked hard to break the "glass ceiling" which persists in so many organisations and which prevents talented and well-educated women, and men and women from black and Asian communities, from reaching the top jobs.

Black and Asian staff make up 53% of all employees, and 7% of staff are Irish. Black and Asian staff hold 47% of all management posts. 5% of staff are known to have a disability and we have set up a Mentoring Scheme, which targets women, black and Asian and disabled staff to encourage them to apply for more senior posts with the Council. We also support black and Asian staff through a Black and Asian Staff Forum.

We have also worked hard to promote good community relations and the council sponsors a range of cultural and religious festivals including Christmas, Diwali, Eid, Chanukah, and St. Patrick's Day. Brent has avoided the communal strife that has affected some northern cities and the Cattle Report on Community Cohesion, which followed the riots in Bradford, commended our approach.

Our Meals Service for vulnerable and elderly people has been widely praised for the range of ethnic foods it provides. We run an innovative project to help refugees into jobs. Our schools promote mutual respect and understanding of different cultural traditions and I believe that multi-cultural education is the key to the future success of our multi-cultural community.

Access to learning and culture is also a priority. People with disabilities can use the Internet free in all libraries through specially adapted personal computers. Every October, in 'Black History Month', Brent libraries reflect the art and culture of our African and African-Caribbean communities. Last year Brent Library Service launched the ImaginAsian project to promote Asian Literature in three Asian languages and in English. All Council publications (like this one) are available in community languages other than English.

There are many other ways in which the Council works to celebrate diversity. We have made very good progress in promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations. However, there is still much to do and I will not be satisfied until our workforce accurately reflects the wider community at every level including senior management.

INTRODUCTION

The Chief Executive, Gareth Daniel

Brent Council is proud of its diversity and the richly multi-cultural community it serves. We have a long record of achievement in delivering services to people of all races, religions, cultures and lifestyles. We are Britain's second most multi-racial local authority.

This Race Equality Scheme sets out how we seek to meet the needs of this diverse and cosmopolitan community. Whether in employment matters or in the services we provide, our aim is to meet the different needs of our customers and staff.

We have welcomed the new legal requirement to prepare a Race Equality Scheme and are investing in a new team of diversity specialists to help take us further forward. A new post on my management team will oversee and lead our work in this area.

We actively monitor and evaluate our performance and, in particular we will work closely with our black and minority ethnic communities.

While there is much to be proud of, we accept that there is more to be done and much still to be achieved. We accept that challenge at both political and managerial levels and will work hard to secure the respect for diversity on which cohesive communities depend.

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

This Race Equality Scheme is the Council's response to the duties placed on all councils by the Race Relations Amendment Act. The Act places the Council under a specific duty to produce a Race Equality Scheme and this booklet is our Scheme for 2003-2004. The Act gives all public authorities (which include councils, like Brent) a new legal duty to promote race equality. There are three parts to the duty, and Brent must demonstrate how it intends to meet all three parts. These are;

1. Our plans to eliminate racial discrimination
2. Our plans to promote equal opportunities
3. And our plans to promote good relations between people of different races

Under the General Duty as it is known, there are also specific duties, which include the publication of this Race Equality Scheme. The Scheme should cover how the Council is going to meet both the general and each of the specific duties. The Scheme should also include some reference to how the Council intends to consult with the local community, and what arrangements are in place to raise awareness or train staff in race equality.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Race Relations Amendment Act was the Government's response to the recommendations made in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (February 1999). It amends and strengthens the 1976 Race Relations Act, so the first time ever councils are prohibited from unlawfully discriminating in carrying out **any** of their functions. Whilst functions like employment and the provision of services were already covered under the original 1976 Act, many of the functions of councils (like enforcement, regulatory, licensing and inspections) were not. But the real power of the Act is that it introduces the new General Duty to promote racial equality. Now all local authorities must publicly demonstrate their awareness and commitment to race equality, regardless of their size, or the make up of their workforce or local community.

The Act is also set against a backdrop of the modernisation agenda, key to which is national performance management framework. This agenda has focussed on the importance of community cohesion (following the disturbances in Burnley, Bradford and Oldham in the summer of 2001), community leadership, and equal and fair access (Best Value performance indicator for 2003-04, BV2). The Council is also aware of the joint CRE/LGA consultation draft on Racial Equality and Procurement in Local Government and has prioritised this council function for this coming year.

BRENT'S SCHEME

This is our Scheme for 2003-04. The Council will publish further schemes in future years. In writing the Scheme we have linked service area priorities with the Council's corporate priorities and used this as the basis for our Race Equality priorities for this year. The Scheme will be reviewed next year by members of the Leadership Group on equalities and diversity and a new plan agreed with members of the officer group on equalities and diversity, each of who represent the Council's respective service areas. The Head of Diversity will assume responsibility for reviewing and writing the Race Equality Scheme in future years. Following the publication of this year's Scheme, service areas will develop a Race Equality Action Plan which will identify the tasks which need to be undertaken to ensure that the priorities for this year are met.

BRENT'S DIVERSE COMMUNITY

According to the 2001 Census 263,464 people live in Brent, an increase of almost 23,000 since 1991. 55% of the local community describe themselves as Black or Black British (including people who say they are Black Caribbean or Black African), Asian or Asian British (including people who are Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi) and Chinese. 7% of the local community is Irish.

In Brent, the largest minority ethnic groups are Indian (18%), Black Caribbean (10%) and Black African (9%). In Brent, the proportion of people who were born outside the European Union (EU) has increased from 31% in 1991 to 38% in 2001 and the borough has the largest Irish community in England and Wales.

The 2001 Census also revealed that almost half of residents describe themselves as Christians (48%), 17% as Hindu and 12% as Muslim. Brent also had Jewish, Sikh and Buddhist religious communities, which help make up the rich diversity of the borough.

PROMOTING RACIAL EQUALITY

Brent has an on-going commitment to promoting racial equality and this has been integrated into the everyday business of the council. For example, at the Council's Senior Managers' Conference in September 2000, Gurbux Singh, the then Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality gave one of the keynote speeches to help launch the Council's Improving Brent programme, which is organised along the twin themes of quality and equality.

Then in October 2000, staff, community groups and individuals were consulted on the Council's draft Equality Action Plans. These were later agreed with the Commission for Racial Equality at a meeting in the November, when leaders of the Council's three political parties and the CRE entered into a five year partnership agreement to deliver race equality.

In January 2001, Brent launched the Not Another Drop campaign to tackle gun crime in Harlesden. The campaign won no less than five awards over the next two years, including an award from the Commission for Racial Equality. The judges commenting on the campaign said, "(Brent) effectively addressed the serious social and multi-cultural consequences of the increase in gun crime" and "illustrate (Brent's) continued commitment to racial awareness".

In January 2001, the Council also introduced a new mentoring scheme for black and Asian staff, which gave employees the chance to pair with a more senior member of staff who offered them guidance and advice on their career. And later in that year, the Council began to formally monitor the workforce, including the number of black and minority ethnic staff in management positions.

In the September 2001, the Council applied for Beacon status under the theme of Promoting Racial Equality. The Council was among those shortlisted and the judges commented "*the Council demonstrated strong political commitment for promoting racial equality and mainstreaming it into all the council's work*" and "*Brent has advanced quickly on staff development and employment issues and were the only*

applicant that has a majority of employees from Black and Minority Ethnic groups including representation at senior grades”.

In November 2001, the Council launched a Black and Asian Staff Forum with guest speakers Shahid Malik from the Commission for Racial Equality and Ravi Chand, from the Black Police Association. Whilst in the December 2001, the Council held an Improving Brent seminar, on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, with Ronnie Wilson, from the CRE as guest speaker.

In January 2002, the Council formally adopted a new strategic diversity policy statement, and the strapline, **Brent – Proud of our Diversity**, and ran a poster campaign to help promote the new policy and strapline. And in March 2002, the Council appointed a Community Safety Officer whose brief it is to develop and improve services to those affected by racial harassment. In March, the Council also organised a St Patrick’s Day parade in Willesden.

In April 2002, the Council received feedback about equalities from the Staff Attitude Survey. 64% of staff reported that equal opportunities were taken very seriously in their work area. 60% said that fair treatment of people was a strong value in their service unit and almost half (48%) stated that they thought the Council had given equalities a higher priority in the last two years.

In May 2002, the Council published its first Race Equality Scheme and in September 2002 hosted its Staff Achievement Awards ceremony where it honoured staff who have “promoted equal opportunities and community cohesion”. In September 2002 too the Mayor of Brent, Cllr Abdul Sattar-Butt led Councillors and staff and observed a minute’s silence to mark the events of September 11th 2001.

In October 2002, the Council published its first Annual Workforce Monitoring Report and made copies available to local Councillors, other Councils, our partners and the public through the One Stop Shops. In October too, the Council celebrated Black History Month and Diwali, the Festival of Lights, with a whole host of events designed to bring together the community. And in November 2001, a Menora light adorned the front of the Town Hall to celebrate the Jewish festival Chanukah.

In December 2002, the Rt. Hon Paul Boateng MP, launched Brent’s innovative “Safe Haven” project by announcing a 20% reduction in street crime in South Brent. The project which was funded from the Government’s Neighbourhood Renewal Fund is based on the Stonebridge Precinct and brought together the local community, Police, the Council, the Fire Service, Stonebridge Housing Action Trust and others.

In January 2003, Brent marked Holocaust Memorial Day with an event at the Town Hall which was open to staff and members of the community alike. The theme was Children and the Holocaust and guest speakers include Ben Helfgott, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and Gena Turgel, both of whom are Holocaust survivors.

In January 2003, Brent also advertised a new senior level appointment for a Director of Human Resources and Diversity and agreed to fund a new Diversity team to help support service areas on equality issues.

In February 2003, the Council launched a Confidential Harassment Advisory Scheme, aimed at staff and designed to combat workplace harassment, including racial harassment. The new Scheme was launched at an Improving Brent Seminar

with guest speakers, Terry Day, the Equality Champion from London Underground and Andrea Ismael, Director of Dignity at Work from the Work Foundation.

In February 2003, members of the Council's most senior management team also met for a one-day seminar to talk about the Race Relations Amendment Act and how they, as senior managers can help progress work around the Act and help promote race equality.

And in March 2003, the Council organised an Improving Brent seminar on work-life balance with guest speaker Lucy Daniells from the charity Parents at Work. The Council (which has been awarded funding from the Department of Trade and Industry) rolled out a new project to encourage more flexibility at work. If an individual's religion requires specific duties or imposes certain obligations, fulfilling these may be difficult to arrange within normal working hours, greater flexibility enables staff to observe their faith whilst also fulfilling their responsibilities at work.

In March, the Council also advertised for the post of Head of Diversity, and two Principal Diversity Officer posts. The Council also met to plan our involvement in Respect Week (July 12th –20th), and consulted with staff on the direction the Council should be taking on diversity. Councillors also attended a half-day session on the Race Relations Amendment Act to help raise awareness of the Council's new duties and develop a better understanding of the role they can play in promoting race equality.

"...everybody learned something that they were not aware of before. This knowledge will be essential for all Members", Councillor David Coughlin, Deputy Leader of the Council, speaking about the training Members undertook on the Race Relations Amendment Act in March 2003.

And in April 2003, the Council heard that it had won Beacon Council status under the category "Removing Barriers to Work". The award recognised the Council's innovative approach to employment programmes such as Brent In2Work, Refugees into Jobs and the Employer Partnership. Councillor Ramesh Patel, the Lead Member for Regeneration said, "Projects like Refugees into Jobs have helped hundreds of residents into training and employment. Over the coming years, Brent In2Work will further enrich our community by helping many more residents from differing backgrounds to access long term opportunities throughout the borough".

"We are delighted that Brent Council has once again achieved Beacon status. The authority's achievement is a real example of how a good service can make a real difference to people's lives. Excellent public services should be a goal we all strive towards. Not least because they have such a direct bearing on all our lives". Nick Raynsford, Local Government Minister, April 2003.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR US

The Council's workforce is as diverse as our local community. 60% of staff describe themselves as Black, Asian, Chinese, or Irish. 16% of staff describe themselves as Black Caribbean, 7% as Black African, 5% as belonging to another "black" group, 1% as Mixed Race, 22% as Asian, 1% as Chinese and 7% as Irish. 1% of employees describe themselves as belonging to another group. These figures are based on staff returns from January 2003.

Black and minority ethnic staff however are under-represented in management grades. 19% of the top 5% of earners in Brent Council are from a black or minority ethnic group. In Brent, 47% of black and minority ethnic staff hold management posts. 54% of all junior management posts are held by black and minority ethnic staff, 46% of all middle management posts and 37% of all senior management posts.

The Council has recognised under-representation in middle and senior management and has put in place a number of measures including using "positive action statements" in our recruitment advertising, running an internal mentoring scheme and we have launched a Black and Asian Staff Forum to help staff feel more supported at work.

The Council monitors all job applications to ensure that the recruitment and selection process is fair and free from bias. In the three-month period from November 2002 to January 2003, the Council received 602 job applications. Of these, 329 were from black and minority ethnic candidates and 273 were from white candidates. The Council invited 90 of those black and minority candidates to interview and 20 white candidates. The Council made 31 appointments, 20 to black and minority ethnic candidates and 11 to white candidates.

For more information about staffing and equalities issues please contact Tracy Walters in Human Resources on 0208 937 1117.

THE NEXT YEAR – 2003/04

The Council has just a new Director of Human Resources and Diversity to the Chief Executive's Management Team, and we are recruiting to a new Diversity Team, including to the post of Head of Diversity. It is hoped that these new staff will be in place by September 2003.

The Council intends to celebrate Respect Week this year (July 12-20th 2003) with a series of community events such as five-a-side football and a "party" in Roundwood Park. The July/August issue of the Brent Magazine will be dedicated to promoting Respect Week and staff will also be able to attend an Improving Brent seminar to mark the week as well. For more information about Respect Week and the events taking place contact Devbai Patel, Corporate Support Officer on 0208 937 1022.

During Respect Week, the Council will be piloting a new Forum to consult with local black and minority ethnic community groups on a range of issues. For further information about the Forum please contact Owen Thomson, Head of the Consultation Unit on 0208 937 1055. The Council also plans to roll out more training for staff beginning in September.

OUR VISION AND VALUES

The Council has a four year Corporate Strategy and has identified its core values as:

- **Achieving Service Excellence**
- **Raising the Quality of Life,**
- **Serving all our Communities**
- **Developing and Motivating our Staff**

The Council's key priorities for this Administration are:

- **Supporting Children and Young People**
- **Promoting the quality of life and the green agenda**
- **Regeneration and priority neighbourhoods**
- **Tackling crime and community safety**
- **Achieving service excellence**

The Race Relations Amendment Act requires the Council to review our "functions" (duties and powers), and employment practices, and then decide which of these is most relevant in terms of promoting racial equality. Brent has decided to use the Council's key priorities as a guide to deciding which of these we will review first. These priorities reflect the vision articulated in the manifesto upon which this Administration was elected.

And in order to achieve its priorities, the Council has also adopted a number of key strategies, including;

- Communication Strategy
- Consultation Strategy 2001-04
- Community Plan
- Community Care Plan
- Early Years Development and Childcare Plan
- People Management Strategy
- Brent Youth Crime Prevention Strategy
- Regeneration Strategy

HOW THE COUNCIL MAKES DECISIONS ON RACE EQUALITY

The Council is made up of 63 Councillors who are elected every four years. They are accountable to the people who vote for them and to the community as a whole.

All Councillors meet together as a Council. These meetings are normally open to the public. At these meetings the Council agrees its policy framework and sets the budget each year. The Council also has a Cabinet, which helps to implement the Council's policy. It is made up of a smaller number of Councillors and the Leader of the Council.

Scrutiny Committee monitors the decisions of the Cabinet and can "call-in" a decision to consider whether it's appropriate. They can even recommend that the Cabinet reconsider their decision. The Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Equalities has the overall Lead Member responsibility for delivery on race equality, although the Director of Human Resources and Diversity is the lead officer responsible for its overall management. (Note: This section may need updating following Council meeting of May 19th and establishment of number of Scrutiny sub-committees)

Chief Officers at Brent also take responsibility within their own service areas and have established local Equality Action Groups to progress service area plans. Plus, the Council has a corporate Leadership Group on equalities and diversity (which is a sub-group of the Corporate Management Team) chaired by a member of the Corporate Management Team (currently the Director of Social Services, Jenny Goodall). The Group is made up of three Directors plus the Lead Member for Equalities and Service Improvement, supported by the Head of Diversity.

There is also a corporate officer group, made up of representatives from each of the service areas plus Human Resources. Jenny Goodall also chairs this group.

Brent expects all staff (whatever their job) to show a commitment to helping promote racial equality. Equality and Diversity are key values of the organisation and staff receive training during their induction and throughout their career with Brent.

CONSULTING LOCAL PEOPLE

The Council regularly consults local people through Area Consultative Forums, Area Housing Boards, User Consultative Forums and through the Resident's Attitude Survey. We know that consulting well is the key to understanding the needs and satisfaction levels of those who use our services.

Last autumn, we undertook specific consultation with residents from the borough's black and ethnic minority communities. The Council ran a series of workshops in Willesden, Harlesden and Wembley and people were asked to express their opinion on what it's like to live in Brent.

There was a general sense of living in harmony and being part of a diverse community. Participants also reported a good level of tolerance towards people of a different race or faith. And, diversity was seen as a positive aspect of living in Brent and something to be proud of.

CONSULTING MANAGERS

The Council also organised a two-day senior management seminar in April 2003 where Managers were consulted to identify and prioritise their service functions in accordance with the general duty under the Act.

CONSULTING STAFF

The Council also consulted with staff. Last year Brent set up a Staff Panel to consult with employees on a whole range of different issues, and in March this year we convened a Staff Panel workshop with employees to hear their views on equalities and diversity.

Staff identified a number of key issues including

- Access to information – how do people access information about the Council's performance on equalities and information about council services?
- Physical access to Council buildings - particularly applicable to people who are disabled, the elderly with mobility difficulties, or those with pushchairs or prams
- Social inclusion and issues of affluence verses deprivation – poverty and the perceived lack of opportunity breeds discontent and ultimately leads to unrest
- Community Identity, understanding and valuing cultural differences
- The democratic process, honesty, accountability and accessing the process itself

The results of the Panel workshop have been fed back to senior managers in the Council and appear on the Council's Internet site under the Human Resources web page. A copy of the Report is also available from Human Resources by telephoning Tracy Walters on 0208 937 1117.

CONSULTING WITH ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTING MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN BRENT

Brent has also consulted with one hundred local community groups representing the interests of different minority ethnic groups. We surveyed what's known as "group and organisational views" rather than individual views, through a self-completion questionnaire. The survey asked ten questions covering perceptions of diversity and the Council, service provision, the Council as an employer and representation and consultation.

Results show that whilst diversity had a wide community focus, race relations are regarded as a priority for the Council. All of the Groups which have responded so far, said that they are happy to take part in future consultation and become more involved in local decision-making. A majority of respondents said that the views of their organisation are not adequately represented by elected Members and here is general support for the idea that the representation of minority views could be improved by the establishment of specific forums covering black and minority ethnic or faith issues.

Consultation is on going and the Council has agreed to pilot a forum specifically for members of black and minority ethnic groups as a result of these comments, starting in July this year.

KEEPING EVERYONE UP TO DATE

The Council will publish a full and summary version of the Race Equality Scheme in July of every year in which a new scheme is published. We will also review the Scheme year on year and publish the results on the Council's Internet site (go to www.brent.gov.uk/HumanRes.nsf and look under Diversity)

A summary of the Scheme will also be published in the Brent Magazine (which is delivered to every household in the borough). Copies will also be sent to all Councillors, to local MP's, to other partner agencies, to other council's in London and to the Association for London Government.

Copies of the Scheme will be made available to the public via the Libraries and One Stop Shops and people will be able to request copies by phone and email via the Internet. The Scheme will be published in local community languages and copies will also be available in large print and on audiocassette.

Council staff will receive information about the Scheme in our in-house magazine which is called Brent Matters, via the Chief Executive's Newsletter, and via the Core Brief (which is cascaded throughout the organisation). Staff will receive separate notification of the new scheme in mid-August with their pay advice slips. A full and summary copy of the Scheme will also appear on the Council's Intranet for staff to download.

Finally, we will endeavour (wherever possible) to include the names of key officers people can contact for further information and we intend to make the Scheme as accessible and user friendly as possible. If you have any comments about either the content or layout of the Scheme please contact Tracy Walters in Human Resources on 0208 937 1117. Any feedback (positive or negative) is welcomed.

THE COUNCIL'S SERVICES

The Council is made up of different service areas or Units. There are nine senior managers on the Corporate Management Team including the Chief Executive, Gareth Daniel.

The Corporate Management team is made up of Directors from the Corporate Centre, Education, Arts and Libraries, Housing, Policy and Regeneration, Environment, Finance, Social Services, and Human Resources and Consultancy Services.

The Corporate Centre

The Corporate Centre is made up of the Chief Executive's Office, and the Communications and Consultation Unit (which publishes the Brent Magazine, consults with staff and the public and manages the Language Section), Corporate Property and Corporate Support. The Information Technology Unit, Legal and Democratic Services and the One Stop Shops, the Policy and Regeneration Team and Human Resources and Consultancy Services are all also part of the Corporate Centre.

The Policy and Regeneration team supports the Council in its programme of continuous improvement, they support the vision and values of the Council through their policy work and support the local community through their work on regeneration, including helping people into jobs.

Whilst the Human Resources and Consultancy Services team are concerned with the recruitment and retention of good quality staff. The role of the team is to support the Council to become an employer of choice and part of that is to monitor the Council's employment policies and workforce profile to ensure a balanced workforce in terms of race, gender and disability.

Education, Arts and Libraries

Education, Arts and Libraries includes Lifelong Learning and Cultural Services (including Festivals, the Museum Service, Brent Adult Education Service, Early Years Development, the Childcare Partnership and the Youth and Voluntary Sector team). The Service also supports schools, tackles underachievement, runs a social inclusion project and an Education Psychology and Learning Support Service.

Housing

Housing encourages the provision of new housing, works to reduce the number of empty and under-occupied properties, offers people housing choices and provides advice on housing issues including homelessness. The Service also works on redevelopment programmes such as Chalkhill, in co-junction with social landlords and works closely with Brent Housing Partnership on improving the quality and

standards of our housing and homes. Housing also plays a key role in regeneration of areas like Kilburn.

Environment

This service area leads on the Council's "green agenda". The Service delivers key functions like Environmental Health, Building Control, Planning, Trading Standards and Streetcare. The Service is instrumental in ensuring a healthy environment in which our streets and parks are safe and clean places for us to enjoy. Environment leads on the Council's Green Travel Plan, which encourages people to look at alternatives to car travel such as public transport and aims to reduce congestion, air pollution and travel accidents.

Finance

This service area ensures that the Council manages its financial resources properly so that we can provide good quality services. Finance also collect money on behalf of the Council in the form of local taxation and is responsible for the assessment and payment of Council Tax and Housing Benefits.

Social Services

Social Services is the largest of the Council's departments. Social Services essentially supports people in the community because of their vulnerability, frailty, disability or mental illness. The service area also supports carers. The largest part of the service is the team dedicated to supporting children and their families, but there are also services to support adults, including older people, people with a physical disability and those who with a mental illness or learning disability.

For a list of all the relevant the Council's Function, please see the appendices at the end of this booklet.

Include here an organisational chart of the Council

THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES FOR THIS YEAR, 2003/04

When the Council started to look at which of its functions and policies were key to the general duty, we ascribed a high, medium or low priority to each. We have decided to include as many "high" priorities as we think are practicable in this year's Scheme. The remainder of the "high" priority functions or policies will be incorporated into next year's Race Equality Scheme. The Council has decided on the following priorities for 2003-04:

Corporate Centre

Communication and Consultation with stakeholders (including service users)
Community safety and crime reduction
Regeneration and social inclusion (including work with refugees)

Corporate Services

Customer care and relationship management

Education, Arts and Libraries

Voluntary Sector Support
School Improvement
Cultural Strategy
Recruitment and Retention of school based staff

Housing

Assessment for Housing
Housing Strategy
Enforcement in Private Sector Housing

Environmental Services

Enforcement
Licensing
Planning Policy
Sports Strategy

Financial Services

Procurement

Social Services

Child Placements
Support for People with Mental Health needs
Monitoring ethnicity among service users
Fair access to services for adults

Human Resources and Consultancy Services

Recruitment, selection & retention, including "hard to recruit" staff i.e. Social Workers

Monitoring the workforce
Monitoring HR Policies

Working with our Partners

In order to ensure that we are not duplicating the work of partner agencies (Brent PCT, NW London Hospitals Trust, Mental Health Trust, and the Strategic Health Authority) the Council has taken part in a consultation exercise led by the Brent Race, Health and Social Care Forum. Feedback from that Forum is included in the appendices at the back of this booklet. (*Note: The Forum does not meet until May 16th, so comments will be incorporated into appendices after that date.*)

The Action Plan and Timetable

This Race Equality Scheme will be reviewed next year and a new Scheme agreed and adopted by elected Members. Following the publication of this year's Scheme the Council undertakes **to agree and publish an Action Plan**. This Action Plan will be published in full on the Internet and the Intranet.

In future years, the Head of Diversity undertakes to review and write the Council's Scheme, and every service area will produce an Action Plan to accompany the Scheme. The Action Plan will identify the tasks that need to be completed to ensure that the Council's priorities on race equality are met.

Monitoring Compliance and Ensuring Accountability

Members of the Leadership Group on equality and diversity supported by the Head of Diversity will be **responsible** for ensuring Council **compliance with the duties** under the Act. Their job is to ensure that the tasks set out in the action plans are completed within the agreed timetable.

Arrangements for undertaking Impact Assessments

Individual service areas will be undertaking their own impact assessments (that is, assessing the impact on different parts of the local community, of introducing a new policy or service), and will **publish the results** of those assessments using the most appropriate media, be that the Brent Magazine, their own newsletters or on their web pages on the Internet.

In order to help service area managers in their duty, the Council is arranging for further training on impact assessments, which will cover the Equality Standard for Local Government as well as the Race Relations (Amendment) Act at the end of June 2003. The Council is also drafting **written guidance** for managers involved in undertaking assessments, which should be available from the **end of July 2003**. Copies of this Guidance can be downloaded from the Council's website at www.brent.gov.uk/HumanRes.nsf (look under Diversity) or call Tracy Walters in Human Resources on 0208 937 1117.

Arrangements for Community Consultation

Consultation with stakeholders (which includes service users) has been set aside as a priority for this year, and as well as setting up a new Forum to consult with representatives of local community groups, we are committed to consulting with other relevant stakeholders such as Trade Unions and staff.

The Consultation Team will undertake to **publish the results** of all the consultation exercises that take place with the newly established Black and Minority Ethnic Forum (BAMEF) on their web page at www.brent.gov.uk/consultation.nsf and to report at least once yearly on the Forum consultations in the Brent Magazine. For more information call Owen Thomson in the Consultation Team on 0208 937 1055.

Local service areas will also consult with service users using a variety of methods including face to face meetings, focus groups, surveys, and questionnaires, consultative panels and user forums; and will also publish the results of those consultations using the most appropriate medium, be it on their web pages, in a newsletter or in the Brent Magazine.

Arrangements for Consultation with Staff

Staff are formally surveyed on their views on a whole range of issues (including equality) every two years. The questions we ask ensure that staff from all ethnic backgrounds are satisfied with the way the authority is run and say that we are a good employer. During the next survey however, we intend to ask specific questions to gauge whether different staff groups perceive workplace harassment (including racial harassment) as an issue for Brent. We will **publicise the results** of the staff survey on the Councils' website during **July 2004** at www.brent.gov.uk/HumanRes.nsf.

Ethnic Monitoring across the Council

Ethnic monitoring is the key to knowing whether direct or indirect discrimination is taking place and therefore an elemental part of undertaking impact assessments. Service areas at present do monitor the take up of services but there is no system in place which allows the Council to "track" service users across different departments. In the longer term the Council plans to use something called a "customer management relationship system" which will allow us to "track" our customers. But in the meantime, the Council needs to formally agree how the information will be gathered and how often it will be reported. These issues will be addressed during the planned further training at end of June 2003, after which managers will be expected to have produced an Action Plan (with a timetable).

Our Arrangements for ensuring public access to information and services

The Council already produces an annual Workforce Monitoring Report, which is widely disseminated across the Council and to other London Councils. This information helps us to see whether we have a balanced workforce in terms of race, gender and disability. The Council also publishes an annual Best Value Performance Plan, which is also widely available through the libraries and One Stop Shops.

Both documents allow members of the public to make comparisons about the Council's performance from one year to the next. For copies of the Council's Workforce Monitoring Report please contact Tracy Walters in Human Resources on 0208 937 1117, or for a copy of the Council's latest Best Value Performance Plan, please contact Cathy Wellstead in the Policy and Regeneration Unit on 0208 937 1045.

The Council also undertakes to use the Brent Magazine, service area newsletters, and the Internet to help publicise our services, our performance on race equality and the results of the assessments and consultations we undertake in future.

MAINSTREAMING EQUALITIES

For a long time the Council has had a corporate group (chaired by a member of the Chief Executive's Management Team) which has led on equalities. Each service area has had its own Equality Action Plan, the Council has a Corporate Equality Action Plan and, has begun to use the Equality Standard for Local Government as a framework for auditing equalities.

A recent internal report commissioned by the former Director of Human Resources, 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 that we need to go further in order to "mainstream" equalities fully into employment and service delivery, and to that end we have taken a very critical look at ourselves.

Key to mainstreaming equalities, is the appointment at a very senior level of someone who can drive this agenda forward. The Council therefore has made a new appointment of a Director of Human Resources and Diversity, and is recruiting to the post of Head of Diversity, backed with the appropriate resources. We expect that both of these posts will be filled by September 2003.

Equality of opportunity is one of the Council's core values. There is reference to this value in all the Council's major strategy documents including the Council's Corporate Strategy, in the Improving Brent Programme, and in the People Management Strategy.

In the Council's four year Corporate Strategy document for example we state that one of our core values is **Serving All Our Communities** *"Brent is a borough of many communities and cultures. We will work to ensure all Brent's diverse communities are served sensitively and effectively. We will ensure that we always consult residents appropriately and that they are represented by local councillors and the council to the highest standards. We will promote tolerance, understanding and community cohesion between our different communities"* (Building a Better Borough, Our Corporate Strategy 2002-06).

Whilst in the Council's Management Agenda 2002-06 entitled The Next Four Years, the Chief Executive, Gareth Daniel writes, *"...I would expect the key features of Brent Council's organisation over the next four years to be ... a celebration of the diversity and wealth of experience within the council's workforce and in the wider community and a climate of unconditional respect for all staff and service users regardless of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation."*

The Council also has an explicit corporate Diversity Policy Statement (which we formally adopted in January 2002) and has used a poster campaign in all the One Stop Shops, Council reception points and staff offices to promote this statement and our equalities strapline, **Brent – Proud of our Diversity**.

OUR SPECIFIC DUTY ON EMPLOYMENT

Brent recognises that good employment practice needs to address whether staff at all levels are representative of the local community and whether they have fair access to training, development and the chance for promotion. In so doing we have looked at issues around recruitment, retention and advancement, whether our workforce is representative at all levels, if we are operating within the law and creating a sense of well being at work.

Every year the Council publishes a report on its workforce profile. We routinely monitor by reference to racial group, the following;

- All job applicants
- All those shortlisted and appointed
- Staff in post
- All applicants for internal promotion
- The job evaluation process
- The number of disciplinary and grievance hearings
- The number of Employment Tribunals we defend
- The reasons why staff leave the Council
- The take up of formal training opportunities

From this year we will also monitor the take up of (and non-take up) of training identified through the staff appraisal process and development opportunities such as secondments and sabbaticals, plus the results of assessment centres. The implementation of a new computerised Management Information System later in the year will help greatly in the collection of race equality data.

The Council does not currently monitor staff in schools and whilst the Department of Education and Skills has requested Local Education Authorities collect information on the ethnic origin of teachers from 2003-04, school based support staff are not included in this analysis. Discussions are however taking place between Education, Arts and Libraries, Human Resources and head teachers to ensure that we begin to collect data on all school based staff.

Over the last twelve months we have undertaken a staff survey, consulted with employees on equalities issues, we have set up a Confidential Harassment Advisers Scheme, and drafted a new policy on dealing with workplace harassment. We have also reviewed the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary policies, and have rolled out a two-year poster campaign to promote equality of opportunity. Finally we have piloted a work-life balance project in Social Services, have continued to support the Black and Asian Staff Forum and have rolled out a Mentoring Scheme.

Comparisons with the 2001 Census suggest that the Council's workforce quite accurately mirrors the profile of local community. Where we really need to make more progress is in ensuring that Black and Asian staff are properly represented in management grades (particularly in senior management). Monitoring of course is not an end in itself. It only highlights where the gaps are. Therefore we intend to continue to use positive action worded statements in our recruitment advertising and encourage managers to use the alternative media to advertise senior vacancies more widely.

Plus in response to comments made by the Black and Asian Staff Forum we are also consulting on a new Management Development Scheme aimed at junior and middle managers and designed to equip them with the skills they need for senior posts.

The Council also rewards staff who have (either individually or as part of a team) helped the Council promote equalities and community cohesion in their everyday work. The Council's Staff Achievement Awards ceremony takes place every year and recognises staff who have gone that "extra mile" on behalf of the people of Brent. Last year, saw a record number of staff nominations from across all the service areas. Among those who won an award, was Kingsbury Manor Asian Day Services who provide a range of mental health services for Asian people in the borough.

Training

The Council has already begun rolling out equalities training. Members of the Corporate Management Team and Councillors have attended training recently and there is a programme to ensure that all staff (whatever their role in the Council) receive adequate support in understanding their individual responsibility for promoting race equality. All staff receive guidance as part of their corporate induction and many service units also run their own training programmes for staff as part of their continuing commitment to customer care. Later this year, all staff will receive a Guide to Cultural Diversity which aims to help staff better understand the diverse faiths and cultures of our local community. By September 2004, all Brent staff should have completed specific training on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) and their responsibility for promoting racial equality.

HOW CAN I ACCESS INFORMATION AND COUNCIL SERVICES?

Information about Council services is available on the Council's website at www.brent.gov.uk, or by calling into one of the Council's One Stop Shops (their addresses are listed in the appendices at the end of this booklet) and speaking to a Customer Services Officer. Customers may also ring the main switchboard on 020 8937 1243 between 8.30am and 6pm, Monday to Friday (up to 5pm on a Friday). There is also an emergency out of hour's service, which can be accessed by telephoning the switchboard number. Alternatively, customers may call into their local library and ask a member of staff there for help with an enquiry.

NOT HAPPY?

The Council wants to hear from people who have either a complaint about how we are meeting our duties under the Act or have other complaints about racial equality. We have a written procedure for dealing with complaints, and any member of the public who is not happy about the service they have received from the Council can make a complaint face to face, over the phone, in writing or via the Internet. If a customer has a concern, they should first raise it with a member of staff or with the service manager. If the matter is not resolved, customers may wish to make a more formal complaint using the Council's written procedure. For further information telephone your nearest One Stop Shop, their number is in the appendices at the end of this booklet.

Appendices

**List of the One Stop Shops plus a list of all the Council's relevant Functions.
Kindly note that the Functions are listed according to their relevance to the
General Duty.**

Town Hall One Stop Shop
Forty Lane
Wembley
Middx
HA9 9HD

Brent House One Stop Shop
349-357 high Road
Wembley
Middx
HA9 6BZ

Willesden Green One Stop Shop
Willesden Green Library
95 High Road
Willesden
London
NW10 2SU

Kingsbury One Stop Shop
North Wembley Housing Office
522-524 Kingsbury Road
London
NW9 9HE

Harlesden One Stop Shop
Challenge House
1-2 Bank Buildings
High Street
Harlesden
London
NW10 4LX

Kilburn One Stop Shop
Hampton House
1b Dyne Road
London
NW6 6NN

Or telephone the One Stop Shop Call Centre on 0208 937 1200.

Relevant Function or Policy	High, Medium or Low Priority for the Council in terms of the Duty	Service Unit or Service Area
Managing and Supporting Communication with stakeholders incl. staff	High	Communications and Consultation Team
Managing and Supporting Consultation with stakeholders incl. staff	High	Communications and Consultation Team
Translation and Interpretation Services	High	Communications and Consultation Team
Electoral Registration	High	Corporate Services
Complaints Management	High	Policy and Regeneration
Community safety and crime reduction	High	Community Safety
Regeneration and social inclusion	High	Policy and Regeneration
Working with Partners	High	Policy and Regeneration
Policy Development	High	Policy and Regeneration
Best Value and Performance Management	High	Policy and Regeneration
Litigation	Low	Legal and Democratic Services
Democratic process	Medium	Legal and Democratic Services
Customer Care and relationship management	High	Corporate Services
Access to buildings and facilities	Medium	Corporate Services
Teacher Rec. & Ret.	High	EAL
Library services	High	EAL
Educational Psychology	High	EAL
Museums	High	EAL
Cultural services	High	EAL
Lifelong learning and community learning	High	EAL
School planning and man. Inf.	High	EAL
SEN policy and assessment	High	EAL
School Improvement	High	EAL
Youth service	High	EAL
Awards and student loans	High	EAL
Management of pupil referrals	Medium	EAL
Exclusion prevention and alternative provision	High	EAL
Comm and IT	Medium	EAL
Out of school support	High	EAL
School finances and	Medium	EAL

funding		
Vol. Sector support	High	EAL
Cap.prg. management	Medium	EAL
Management Information	High	EAL
Early years	High	EAL
Home to school transport	Low	EAL
Educational Welfare and attendance	High	EAL
Brent Housing Partnership	High	Housing
Housing Advice	Medium	Housing
Housing Resource Centre		
• Assessment	High	Housing
• Lettings	Medium	Housing
• Temporary accom.	Medium	Housing
Private Sector		
• Enforcement	Medium	Housing
• Grants	High	Housing
• Homeless prevention	High	Housing
• Incentive scheme	Medium	Housing
• Home Improvement Agency	Medium	Housing
Strategy and Regeneration		
• Supporting People	High	Housing
• Housing Strategy	High	Housing
• Regeneration	High	Housing
• Affordable Housing	High	Housing
Enforcement	High	Environment
Licensing	High	Environment
Planning Policy	High	Environment
Sports Development	High	Environment
Contract management	High	Environment
Parking	High	Environment
Transport Planning	High	Environment
Economic Dev.	Medium	Environment
Parks and open spaces	Medium	Environment
Food safety advice	Medium	Environment
Advice and info.	Medium	Environment
Pest control	Medium	Environment
Cemeteries and mortuary	Medium	Environment
Registrars	Medium	Environment
Entertainment and events	Low	Environment
Allotments	Low	Environment
Traffic management	Low	Environment
Street Scene	Low	Environment
Waste Management	Low	Environment
Housing Benefits and CTB	High	BFS
Cashiers	Medium	BFS
Insurance claims	Low	BFS
Audit, investigations and fraud	High	BFS
Procurement	High	BFS
Payroll	Low	BFS

Pensions	Low	BFS
Budget making and financial reporting	Medium	BFS
CIS	Low	BFS
Internal Audit	Medium	BFS
Sundry debtors	Medium	BFS
Recruitment and retention of SW staff	High	Social Services, HR Leading
User consultation	High	Social Services
Children on the child protection register	High	Social Services
Recruitment and retention of foster carers	High	Social Services
Unaccompanied Minors	High	Social Services
Adults with disabilities helped to live at home	Medium	Social Services
Access to residential care	High	Social Services
Helping people who are chronically sick or disabled to access support services	Low	Social Services
Adults with mental health problems to lives at home	High	Social Services
Supporting adults with drug or alcohol dependency	High	Social Services
Child Placements	High	Social Services
Fair Access to services for adults	High	Social Services
Support for young people with mental health needs	High	Social Services
Monitoring services by ethnicity	High	Social Services
Recruitment, selection and retention	High	Human Resources
Job evaluation and rewards	Low	Human Resources
Induction	Low	Human Resources
Supervision and appraisal	Medium	Human Resources
Training and dev.	Medium	Human Resources
Sickness Absence	Low	Human Resources
Workforce Planning	Medium	Human Resources
Worklife Balance	Medium	Human Resources
Health and safety	Low	Human Resources
Promoting dignity at work	High	Human Resources
Monitoring Exit strategies	Medium	Human Resources
Monitoring the workforce profile	High	Human Resources
Monitor HR policies	High	Human Resources
Run positive action projects	High	Human Resources
Support service areas on equality	High	Human Resources

OTHER FORMATS

A summary version of this Scheme is available in the following formats. If you, or someone you know, would like a copy, please let us know by returning this form to the address shown or by calling us on 0208 937 1117 during office hours.

Name

Address

Post code

I'd like you to send a copy of the summary Scheme in

Large print

Audio Cassette

List community main languages