

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	15 July 2003
Subject:	Race Equality Scheme First Year Progress Report 1 June 2002 – 31 May 2003
Key decision:	No
Responsible Chief Officer:	Chief Executive
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder For Partnership and Property Portfolio Holder For Finance And Human Resources & Performance Management
Status:	Part 1
Ward:	N/A
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 - Race Equality Scheme – Summary Progress Report 01 June 2002 to 31 May 2003 Appendix 2 – RES Year 2 (2003/04), Year 3 (2004/05), Employment Action Plan and Summary of Council's Action Plan

1. Summary

- 1.1 In order to meet the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RRAA) 2000, the Council's published Race Equality Scheme (RES) sets out a three year priority order for its functions and policies to meet the general and specific duties placed by the Act.
- 1.2 This report sets out the progress made by the Council in the first year of implementing Harrow's RES for its year one priority areas for service delivery and employment.
- 1.3 The report also identifies the senior officers responsible for management of the scheme both on an interim basis and under the New Harrow Project restructuring.

2. Recommendations (for decision by Cabinet)

- 2.1 That the progress made in service delivery and employment for the first year of Harrow's Race Equality Scheme, 1 June 2002 to 31 May 2003 be noted.
- 2.2 That Cabinet receives another progress report in a year's time.
- 2.3 That departments continue with actions to achieve the second year priorities.
- 2.4 That Cabinet note the revised arrangements for management of the scheme.

Reason: These recommendations comply with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and Harrow's commitments under its RES as well as organisational changes within the authority.

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors

- 3.1 N/A

4. Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)

- 4.1 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Commission for Racial Equality 's Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality places a statutory duty for all public authorities to produce a Race Equality Scheme.
- 4.2 Cabinet approved Harrow's RES on 25/6/03 – Minute 29. The RES includes a commitment to report on progress annually.

5. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 This report addresses the Council's stated priority of striving for a community which is cohesive and strong, which strengthens Harrow's local community by valuing and celebrating the rich diversity of our local community.

6. Background Information

- 6.1 This report is in accordance with the general and specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups. It also complies with the Commission for Racial Equality 's Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality, which supports the implementation of the RRAA.
- 6.2 All managers, Council Members and Harrow's partners have been issued with a copy of Harrow's RES and it is available on the intranet and internet. Copies have also been distributed to all Harrow's libraries, reception areas and in youth and community centres.
- 6.3 The attached report summarises progress against Harrow's RES first year priorities for service delivery and employment (Appendix 1). A standard reporting format for year one functions/policies has been developed to maintain consistency. For each of the year one service delivery priority areas as identified in the RES, a proforma has been completed

by departments detailing work undertaken, these have been circulated as an information item for 15 July 2003 Cabinet.

- 6.4 Departments have worked through the areas identified in the first year namely:
- ◆ the launch of the Council's revised Equal Opportunity Policy,
 - ◆ publication of the Crime and Disorder Strategy,
 - ◆ development of the Harrow Strategic Partnership,
 - ◆ Education Development Plan,
 - ◆ considering the provision of a burial service to meet the needs of religious groups in Harrow,
 - ◆ review of the Council's code of practice for CCTV to ensure that there is no discriminating surveillance of ethnic groups,
 - ◆ homelessness strategy including applications,
 - ◆ Housing department's revised Racial Harassment Policy,
 - ◆ Locata scheme to provide a choice based allocations approach for housing applicants,
 - ◆ review of Children and Families Service to children in need of support and safeguarding
 - ◆ providing culturally appropriate meals to disabled/older people to assist them in living independently in their own home.
 - ◆ Personnel Services have reviewed monitoring processes to meet year one priorities.
- 6.5 Many departments have undertaken consultation on their specific areas and have established monitoring systems to capture data to inform the Council on the take up/application of the service, function or policy, whether there is any evidence of inequality and how the results are to be used to develop the service, function or policy to remove any inequality. Some further impact assessments have been undertaken and action to reduce any adverse impact on ethnic minorities has been identified.
- 6.6 A framework for working through the RES and each of Harrow's commitments to meet the specific duties has been developed to assist managers in carrying out monitoring, impact assessment and consultation to establish if Harrow's functions and policies have an adverse impact on race equality. This framework has been designed to meet the requirements for both the RES and the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- 6.7 Further training and support for departmental managers on undertaking impact assessments is being planned in conjunction with consultants approved by the Employers Organisation for Local Government.
- 6.8 For year two of the RES, departments will continue to develop systems and practices to meet the actions proposed for the first year priority areas as well as monitoring progress in these areas to ensure that they meet the RRAA and Harrow's RES commitments. In addition, departments will prepare to meet the specific duties for their year two priority areas. Priority areas for year two (2003/04) and for year three (2004/05) as well as the employment and Council action plan from the RES are attached at appendix 2.
- 6.9 The Heads of Service Equality Group will be reviewing the year two and three priority areas in light of the organisational change arising from the New Harrow Project restructuring and in light of Harrow's new corporate priorities.

6.10 Revised arrangements for management of the RES are to be put into place from July 2003. On an interim basis, the Head of Children and Community Services will be responsible for matters relating to Service Delivery. This interim arrangement will remain until the Directors of Strategy in each service directorates (Business Connections, First Contact, Urban Living) under the New Harrow Project have been appointed. The employment specific duty will be the responsibility of the Organisational Development directorate.

7. Consultation

7.1 Harrow Council for Race Equality, Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance, Unison and the Black Workers Groups have been consulted on the first year progress report. Comments have been incorporated and actions plans amended where appropriate.

8. Finance Observations

8.1 There are no additional financial implications as it is intended that any costs will be met from existing resources.

9. Legal Observations

9.1 None.

10. Conclusion

10.1 The RES first year progress report meets the Council's requirements under the amended Race Relations Act and is line with the action plan detailed in the RES. Some of the action identified in the first year report is ongoing and work will continue to ensure the Council meets its statutory duties.

11. Background Papers

11.1 Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
CRE Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality
CRE – A Guide for Public Authorities
Chief Personnel Officer's report on the RES to Cabinet 25 June 2002
Harrow's Race Equality Scheme 2002-2005

12. Author

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