

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME – PROGRESS REPORT

Report By: Director of Policy and Community

Purpose

1. To note progress against the Action Plan which accompanies the Council's Race Equality Scheme.

Background

2. In line with the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) Herefordshire Council published a Race Equality Scheme in May 2002 providing a framework for how the Council intends to promote race equality through:
 - Eliminating unlawful racial discrimination
 - Promotion of equal opportunity
 - Promotion of good relations between people of different racial groups
3. It is an integral part of the Race Equality Scheme that the Authority's progress is monitored. This report aims to highlight the progress..

Considerations

4. A revised action plan for the Race Equality Scheme was accepted by Cabinet in June 2004.
5. A report on the progress to date against the Equality scheme action plan is attached at Appendix 1.
6. Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 2b sets out a number of actions against which the Council's performance is measured. The target for 2004/05 is 60%, however, due to the current review of the Council's racial complaints system the achievement of a 60% target may not be met.
7. Key initiatives to promote Race Equality from June 2004 to date included:
 - Holocaust Memorial Day 2005, organised through the Herefordshire Equality Partnership. The event will be commemorated using an exhibition developed by an organisation called Heartstone. The exhibition will mark Holocaust Memorial Day and be open to the public from 27th - 29th January. A larger, two-day conference is planned to be brought to Herefordshire in early June 2005.
 - Poster competition, produced by the Herefordshire College of Art to celebrate the Holocaust Memorial Day. The work will be presented at the Heartstone exhibition in January 2005.
 - Race Equality Awareness sessions for Herefordshire Council's employees led by the Herefordshire Race Equality Development Officer.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Yulia Tarbath, Policy Assistant on (01432) 383635

- In autumn 2004 the Herefordshire Equality Partnership together with Hereford United Football Club participated in the promotional anti-racism event called "Week of Action". Schools were asked to design a poster or write a poem with an anti-racist theme. The match was attended by over two hundred people.
8. There has been further progress on Diversity training delivery. This included:
 - During October, November and December 2004 senior managers and officers, participating in the first year of the Impact Assessment received the Impact Assessment and Respecting Customers and Colleagues training.
 - The wider Diversity training approach for all Council employees was proposed by the external consultants, who led the Impact Assessment training. It is also planned to provide the training to the Council's Race Equality Staff Group in early-mid 2005.
 9. Herefordshire Council has adopted a framework for the provision of translation and interpretation services. Further work to develop a monitoring and reporting system is currently being undertaken.
 10. Employees within the Council who speak languages other than English have been identified. This will contribute to the Council's work on translation and interpretation services delivery.
 11. The Council's Race Equality Scheme is currently under review. The revised scheme will be completed and agreed by 31st March 2005.
 12. Herefordshire Council's Travellers' Policy is being reviewed. The appointment of a Traveller Liaison Officer is planned early in 2005.

Recommendation

THAT progress to date be noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None