

# MINORITY ETHNIC PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES IN HEREFORDSHIRE

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

17TH FEBRUARY, 2005

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To consider the report setting out the findings, conclusions and resulting recommendations of a research project examining 'minority ethnic people's experiences in Herefordshire'. An executive summary together with conclusions and recommendations are set out in the Appendices. The full report is enclosed as a separate document for Cabinet Members and is available in the Members' Room, on the Council's website and on request.

### Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

### Recommendation

- THAT (a) the generally positive conclusions drawn from the research be noted, whilst recognising that there is no room for complacency and that there is still a great deal of work to be undertaken in ensuring that minority ethnic communities have equality of access to services and they are not discriminated against in the wider community,**
- (b) it be noted the actions taken to date which will address some of the areas of concern raised in the report, and**
- (c) it be noted that the revised Race Equality Scheme and Action Plan to be presented to Cabinet on 24th March 2005, will include proposals to address the issues raised by this report.**

### Reasons

In its role as a direct service provider the Council has a duty to ensure equality of access to information, services and employment. In its community leadership role the Council also has a duty to promote the integration of communities and racial harmony.

The report's findings will be used to inform policy development in a number of areas including the revised Race Equality Scheme and Action Plan as required by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, which it is anticipated will be put before Cabinet for consideration on 24th March, 2005. The conclusions drawn from the research and resulting recommendations can be found at Appendix 2.

## **Background**

1. Recognising that relatively little was known regarding those from ethnic minorities residing and working in the County, in order to inform development of the Council's Race Equality Scheme and associated Action Plan this research was commissioned.
2. The research was commissioned, and largely funded by the Council with a contribution from West Mercia Constabulary (Herefordshire Division), via the Herefordshire Race Equality Partnership.
3. As previously reported to Cabinet and Strategic Monitoring Committee, publication of the report has been delayed until now in order to resolve concerns over the content of one passage in the report which referred to a specific incident which had been the subject of a criminal trial and conviction. Following legal advice the detailed passage has been removed from the report. In order to maintain the integrity of the report a summary of the authors perceptions, based on the interviews conducted, has been included.
4. The research confirms the difficulty in achieving representative consultation and predicting the future needs of those from the relatively small and dispersed ethnic minority population within the County.
5. A review of the Council's Travellers Policy is underway and the appointment of a Travellers Liaison Officer is also planned which should assist in addressing some of the concerns raised in the report.
6. Since the report was commissioned the Council has commenced publishing copies of Herefordshire Matters in Portuguese and Russian, and is putting in place translation and interpretation services to facilitate easier access to services and information for ethnic minorities. The Council has commenced a three year programme of impact assessments to ensure that service delivery and policy development is sensitive to the needs of ethnic minorities, addresses inequalities and broader diversity issues.

## **Alternative Options**

None identified

## **Risk Management**

Not applicable

## **Consultees**

As detailed in the report.