

1. Overview

1.1 Our commitment to promoting race equality

South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, whatever their race or background. This applies to the residents and customers we serve, those we have to investigate or take regulatory enforcement action against, and the staff and contractors we employ. In accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, we will take reasonable steps, within the resources available, to:

- a) understand the needs of people from ethnic minorities;
- b) provide services that are accessible and aimed at meeting those needs;
- c) overcome cultural and language barriers and encourage participation and dialogue;
- d) promote respect for people from different ethnic groups; and
- e) comply with legal requirements and official guidance.

1.2 Official requirements

1.2.1 The Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a statutory general duty on the Council to make sure that our policies and services:

- a) eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- b) promote equality of opportunity; and
- c) promote good race relations.

1.2.2 As well as having to produce a Race Equality Scheme (RES) in 2002, the legislation also requires the Council to implement it and update it every three years. The Council has to fulfil specific duties to:

- a) assess the relevance of Council services and policies (and proposed policies) in terms of their contribution to the general duty to promote race equality;
- b) monitor policies for any adverse impact on promoting race equality;
- c) assess and consult on the impact that proposed policies are likely to have on promoting race equality;
- d) publish the results of assessments, consultations and monitoring;
- e) make sure that the public has access to information and services;
- f) train staff on the general duty and the specific duties; and
- g) carry out ethnic monitoring of the Council's employment practices.

1.2.3 Good practice guidance from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) highlights five features that councils with effective Race Equality Schemes are likely to display:

- a) a more representative workforce at all levels in the authority;
- b) no significant differences between racial groups in staff satisfaction;
- c) no significant differences between racial groups in public confidence in the authority;
- d) no significant differences between racial groups in service outcomes; and
- e) no significant differences between racial groups in people's satisfaction with services.

1.3 Summary of the Race Equality Scheme

- 1.3.1 This is the Council's second Race Equality Scheme, replacing the earlier version. It provides an update on progress made since 2002, based on a review and update carried out in 2005. This also takes account of:
- a) the Commission for Racial Equality's good practice guidance on Race Equality Schemes and ethnic minority monitoring, plus its Gypsy and Travellers strategy;
 - b) issues raised by Travellers in Cambridgeshire at the 'Travellers Voices' conferences, organised by the Ormiston Children & Families Trust in 2003 and 2004;
 - c) the views and experience of managers across the range of Council functions; and
 - d) learning from the Race Equality Schemes produced by other councils.
- 1.3.2 **Part Two** explains that, even though the ethnic minority population in South Cambridgeshire is relatively small, the issues are important – particularly since the arrival of a large influx of Irish Travellers in 2003. Alongside the significant changes that have taken place at the Council over the last few years, some good progress has been made in promoting race equality. That said, there is still room for greater co-ordination and improvement.
- 1.3.3 **Part Three** outlines how the Council's objectives, functions and strategies already relate to race equality. Those services most closely associated with Traveller Issues are seen to be the most relevant, and these will be addressed through actions in 2006/07. The importance of promoting race equality through cross-departmental working groups within the Council and co-operation with partner agencies is also highlighted.
- 1.3.4 **Part Four** identifies the contextual issues facing the Council in the next few years, ten principles for strengthening the Council's approach to race equality, and targets up to 2008. This is followed by a Race Equality Action Plan for 2005 - 2008 in Part Five.
- ### 1.4 Implementation arrangements
- 1.4.1 The lead Cabinet member for overseeing this Race Equality Scheme is Councillor John Batchelor, portfolio-holder for Information and Customer Services. The lead officer for co-ordinating the day-to-day approach is Tim Wetherfield, Head of Policy & Communication.
- 1.4.2 The Race Equality Scheme applies to all Councillors and Council employees. All Cabinet portfolio-holders and managers are responsible for eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting race equality within the services for which they are responsible.
- 1.4.3 Good practice guidance from the CRE highlights that elected members should:
- a) understand fully their responsibility to promote good race relations;
 - b) provide clear leadership for this work internally and outside the authority;
 - c) make sure the duty is implemented effectively by local authority staff;
 - d) make sure their own practice and public statements are consistent with this duty;
 - e) make sure their political parties give clear support to the duty; and
 - f) use their political parties to promote ethnic minority participation in local government.
- 1.4.4 The Council will receive an annual report (the first by May 2007) on progress made in implementing the Race Equality Scheme.

2. The local context

2.1 Ethnic minorities in South Cambridgeshire

2.1.1 At first glance, the ethnic minority population in the district appears relatively small. The 2001 Census showed that 97.1% of our residents were 'white', compared to 91% nationally. 93.3% of the South Cambs population is 'White: British'. Added to this, the 2004 Index of Deprivation ranked South Cambridgeshire as one of the least deprived local authority areas in England (345th out of 354, where 1 is the most deprived).

Ethnicity	England	County	South Cambs
White	91.0%	96.0%	97.1%
Asian / Asian British	4.6%	1.3%	0.8%
Black / Black British	2.3%	0.5%	0.5%
Chinese	0.4%	0.7%	0.4%
Mixed	1.4%	1.0%	0.9%
Other	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%

Note: The 0.9% of the South Cambridgeshire population which categorises itself as 'Mixed' includes 0.3% White/Asian and 0.3% White/Black. A more detailed analysis of the ethnicity statistics for South Cambridgeshire from the 2001 Census can be found in Appendix A.

2.1.2 There is more to these Census statistics than first meets the eye, however. Although only 2.9% of the district's population is non-white, three wards have much greater ethnic minority communities.

Ethnicity	District	Girton	Milton	Teversham
White	97.1%	94.2%	92.5%	91.9%
Ethnic minority: Total	2.9%	5.8%	7.5%	8.1%
• Asian/Asian British	0.8%	2.4%	3.5%	2.1%
• Black/Black British	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	1.3%
• Chinese	0.4%	0.8%	1.9%	1.5%
• Mixed	0.9%	1.3%	1.0%	2.5%
• Other	0.3%	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%

2.1.3 People from ethnic minorities in South Cambridgeshire make up a relatively high percentage of the client base for some services. For example, ethnic minorities account for around three in four of the licensed taxi-drivers within the district, and around 20% of the cases of infectious diseases that are dealt with by Environmental Health.

2.1.4 The 2001 Census understated the scale of the issues, as it did not count Roma/Gypsy Travellers and Travellers of an Irish Heritage, who are officially recognised as ethnic minorities that are protected by the Race Relations Act. The travelling community has been a traditional part of rural life in South Cambridgeshire for many years. Added to this, there was a large influx of Irish Travellers into the district in 2003, particularly around Smithy Fen, Cottenham.

2.1.5 Extrapolations from the January 2005 caravan count would suggest that, at that time, there were around 1,400 travellers living in caravans in the South Cambridgeshire plus, perhaps, another 700 or so living in houses (based on the national assumption that a third of travellers live in 'bricks and mortar' accommodation). This estimated total of around 2,100 Travellers would equate to around 1.7% of the South Cambs population. This is a particular issue for those parishes that contain Traveller sites, especially Cottenham, Milton, Histon, Meldreth, Swavesey and Willingham.

2.1.6 The Council is acutely aware of the importance of addressing the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, who have a lower life expectancy, higher levels of infant mortality and lower academic levels of achievement than any other section of society.

2.2 Changes at the Council over the last three years

2.2.1 Since the Council's first Race Equality Scheme was produced in 2002, there has been a considerable amount of change that needs to be taken into account.

2.2.2 The Audit Commission carried out a Comprehensive Performance Assessment in 2004 and concluded that "South Cambridgeshire District Council is a fair council that is investing for future improvement. The Council has clear ambitions for the district, focusing particularly on the quality of village life and delivering good services to local people over a number of years. The Council is good at responding to the current needs of local people."

2.2.3 New corporate objectives, introduced in 2003, have highlighted the importance of making services accessible (see section 3.1 for more details). This has been reinforced by 'Improving Customer Services' being made a corporate priority. In addition, the last three years have seen:

- a) the launch of the Contact Centre (open twelve hours a day, six days a week);
- b) the move to new Council offices at Cambourne, whilst still retaining a Cambridge Office facility;
- c) a new customer 'Complaints and Compliments' procedure;
- d) the development of new customer service standards, developed by the 'Service First' corporate working group;
- e) further advances in the use of new technologies and the electronic delivery of Council services.

2.2.4 A number of new services and initiatives have come into being over the last few years. For example:

- a) legislative changes have led to the Council taking on new licensing responsibilities;
- b) national planning policy, targeting a 33% increase in the district's population by 2016, has focused efforts on preparing for new communities (eg, Northstowe);
- c) Traveller issues have received more attention from leading councillors and senior managers in the last few years than any other local concern. A new corporate projects officer has been recruited to co-ordinate the Council's approach.

2.2.5 At the same time, the Council faces new financial constraints. Even though four in five district councils spent more on services than SCDC in 2004/05, the Government still capped the Council's budget on the grounds that it was excessive. The required cutbacks of £2.6 million equate to almost a fifth of SCDC's original 2005/06 budget and represent a 13% reduction on 2004/05 spending levels.

2.3 Progress made towards the general duty to promote race equality in 2002 - 2005

2.3.1 Taking the views of service users as our starting point, the results of the most recent three-yearly Best Value surveys from 2003/04 show a good deal of similarity between the satisfaction levels of ethnic minority customers and all respondents.

Results from 2003/04 Best Value satisfaction surveys	All respondents	Non-white respondents
Residents' overall satisfaction with the Council's services	60%	55%
Residents' satisfaction with sports/leisure facilities	52%	54%
Residents' satisfaction with parks/open spaces	77%	70%
Residents' satisfaction with cleanliness standards in the district	63%	79%
Residents' satisfaction with household waste collection	87%	80%
Residents' satisfaction with recycling facilities	68%	70%
Benefit claimants' satisfaction with benefits service overall	84%	70%
Council tenants' satisfaction with housing service overall	81%	75%
Planning applicants' satisfaction with planning service overall	63%	57%

Whilst there are some differences between the two sets of scores, these are not viewed as significant given the relatively low levels of replies from ethnic minorities (even though official good practice guidance was followed to increase response rates).

2.3.2 The Council has made good progress over the last three years on the general duty to promote race equality, as set out below. More details about how SCDC has fared on the specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 can be found in Appendix B.

2.3.3 **Eliminating unlawful discrimination**

- a) SCDC planning decisions in relation to unauthorised encampments have been upheld as being fair. In particular, the Deputy Prime Minister has turned down planning appeals against the Council's refusal to permit Traveller encampments at Pine View and Victoria View, Smithy Fen.
- b) Equality and Diversity training has been provided for councillors and staff, including a cultural awareness session by the Ormiston Children & Families Trust on Traveller lifestyles and a tour of Traveller sites by Cabinet members and senior managers.
- c) An article recognising the difficulties facing Travellers was featured in the Summer '05 edition of South Cambs magazine, which is delivered to all households.
- d) South Cambs magazine's editorial board has changed the overall layout of articles and adverts in particular editions in order to avoid causing offence to ethnic minorities.

2.3.4 **Promoting equality of opportunity**

- a) Working with partners, the Council has supported the Girton Pakistani Health Project. This is aimed at providing health and fitness opportunities within the Pakistani community, which is particularly at risk of conditions such as coronary heart disease, diabetes and osteoporosis. Out of respect for religious beliefs, separate courses have been made available for men and women.
- b) Food Hygiene and Health & Safety training courses are available in ethnic minority languages.
- c) A translation service is provided on request for those who need information about Council services.
- d) Assessments are made of all households facing homelessness. Floating support is provided for vulnerable households.
- e) The Council has granted planning permission for more Traveller sites than most other local authorities. In January 2005, South Cambridgeshire had more caravans on authorised private plots than anywhere else in Britain. It was also in the top 10% of all districts for the number of caravans on council-run sites
- f) A major Traveller Housing Needs Survey has been carried out in 2005/06 in conjunction with other partners in the Cambridge sub-region. The headline results were reported in December 2005.
- g) Financial support has been given to the Cambridgeshire Travellers Initiative for the production of a CD for Travellers about the planning process.
- h) Planning enforcement officers have maintained regular contact with Travellers, making information available on tape/CD (eg, advice leaflets about homelessness) and helping them to access housing & council tax benefits to which they are entitled.

2.3.5 **Promoting good race relations**

- a) The Arts service has supported a number of cultural awareness projects, including:
 - the 'Festival of Indian Culture' in Comberton, which involved a week of workshops and free activities open to the public;
 - a dance group, which aims to promote a better understanding between cultures by sharing the tradition of Middle Eastern dance and music;
 - 'Arts in Cambs on Tour', which has celebrated cultural diversity by offering professional touring performances from a variety of traditions to the villages of the district. Recent examples include Annapurna Indian Dance Company and Brekete - a traditional African drum and dance ensemble.
- b) The Travellers' Liaison Group, involving the travelling community and parish councils from the northern part of the district, was set up in early 2005.
- c) Support has also been given to theatre productions by the Romany Theatre Company and drama presentations in schools and at Traveller sites to help raise public awareness of Traveller lifestyles and traditions. The Council took part in the Inter-cultural Day, organised by Cambridgeshire County Council, in Cottenham, July 2005.
- d) The Council has also has been involved in the Cambridge Ethnic Minority Forum.

2.3.6 ***Room for improvement***

Whilst good progress has been made in many areas, which has made a substantial difference to promoting race equality, the Council does not fare as well on paper.

- a) The Council has not yet achieved Level 1 of the Equality Standard.
- b) SCDC's score for applying a good practice checklist on promoting race equality (a Best Value performance indicator) has remained static at 11% up to 2004/05.
- c) Ethnic minorities are under-represented in the Council's workforce (equating to 1.1% of staff, compared to 3.1% of South Cambridgeshire's economically active population and 4.9% of the job applications received in 2004/05).

2.3.7 The three-yearly review of the Council's Race Equality Scheme has helped to identify a number of important learning points.

- a. A lead officer for Race Equality is needed (within existing resources) in order to:
 - increase awareness and ownership of the RES amongst senior managers;
 - raise the profile of race equality issues in the provision of services as well as in the Council's role as an employer; and
 - co-ordinate the implementation of the Race Equality Action Plan.
- b. The Race Equality Scheme needs to be a working document, more fully integrated into existing service planning and corporate working groups, in order to keep things simple and avoid duplication of effort.
- c. Although there are some good examples of how race equality issues (particularly in relation to Travellers) have been taken into account in a number of key strategies, there are still some gaps (notably in the Procurement Strategies and the annual Performance Plan). There is also scope to strengthen the approach taken in other strategies by including specific race equality actions.
- d. Whilst the satisfaction levels of ethnic minority service users have been monitored for many services, monitoring of service usage and outcomes is not so extensive and we cannot currently demonstrate whether services are provided equitably to all customers.
- e. Monitoring needs to be followed up with:
 - better analysis of what the findings mean;
 - setting clear actions (within available resources) which are then implemented;
 - better and more regular reporting of progress, followed by further action.

3. How the Council promotes race equality

The Council's approach to promoting race equality contributes to, and is supported by, a framework of corporate objectives and priorities, corporate policies, service plans and strategies, corporate working groups within SCDC and external partnerships.

3.1 Our corporate objectives and priorities

3.1.1 The Council has four corporate objectives, namely:

- a) high quality, accessible, value-for-money services;
- b) quality village life;
- c) a sustainable future for South Cambridgeshire; and
- d) a better future through partnership.

3.1.2 The organisation's corporate focus has been further strengthened by the setting of three corporate priorities for 2005 – 2008, aimed at:

- a) improving customer service;
- b) achieving successful, sustainable new communities at Northstowe and other major new settlements; and
- c) increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Race equality issues are being taken into account in all three of these priority areas – for example, through: new customer service standards; community development initiatives; and efforts to make sure that the Council complies with the Commission for Racial Equality's new Housing code of practice.

3.1.3 The Council's own corporate objectives and priorities are also set in the context of the work of the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy 2004 - 2007, aiming for:

- a) active, safe and healthy communities;
- b) building successful new communities;
- c) a prosperous district;
- d) good access to services;
- e) quality homes for all; and
- f) a high quality environment.

3.1.4 The Community Strategy makes particular reference to the needs of Travellers and features an action (being addressed through the Travellers Housing Needs Survey) to "determine and make appropriate provision for the accommodation and other needs of Travellers in the district, including health and educational services."

3.2 Our corporate policies

3.2.1 The Council's Equality and Diversity policy aims to give equal treatment and access to everyone, both in providing services and employing staff. Its goals are to:

- a) develop an effective workforce delivering a high quality service;
- b) ensure the Council's workforce reflects the diversity of the local population;
- c) raise the level of diversity awareness and understanding among employees and Members alike;
- d) work towards eliminating discrimination (direct or indirect) and all forms of harassment;
- e) understand the needs of our customers and provide services that are accessible to them and sensitive to their specific needs;
- f) act as a role model for others through good practice in service delivery & employment and seek to influence partner organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors;
- g) be accountable to South Cambs residents and encourage active participation of communities/groups in the development, review and application of the Council's policies and practices;
- h) target our resources to deliver services more effectively to groups and communities most excluded.

This policy is supported by the Human Resources Strategy 2004 – 2007 and a range of employment policies, including a Bullying and Harassment policy agreed in July 2005.

3.2.2 A specific policy on Traveller Issues, agreed in July 2004, sets out the Council's commitment to:

- a) uphold the rights of all local residents and Travellers to live peacefully and safely, with mutual respect for the rights of others;
- b) lobby for a national approach to Traveller issues and planning policy, which takes account of public provision and private ownership of Traveller sites, and keeps sites to a reasonable size;
- c) apply planning policy fairly and firmly in relation to Traveller sites;
- d) engage with Travellers and the local community in order to make available appropriate and authorised Traveller sites - identifying suitable additional sites, where necessary, and accommodating the service needs of Travellers, wherever possible;
- e) give full consideration to proposed private sites when Travellers approach the Council in advance about their proposals;
- f) safeguard and defend the local environment and local facilities & services from issues flowing from illegal and unplanned Traveller encampments and development;
- g) promote greater community cohesion between the settled and travelling communities.

3.2.3 The Council's Code of Conduct places general obligations on councillors to: promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person; treat others with respect; and not do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for or on behalf of the authority.

3.3 Our services

3.3.1 As part of the three-yearly review of the Race Equality Scheme, senior managers have assessed the relevance of Council services to the general duty to promote race equality.

3.3.2 The following key criteria, suggested by the Commission for Race Equality, have been applied to the assessment of services (see Appendix C for more details).

- a) Which parts of the Race Relations Act general duty apply to this service?
(ie, eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting race equality and/or promoting relations between different racial groups).
- b) How far could this service affect racial groups differently?
(with greater weight being given to services involving an application or enforcement process where there is a greater element of choice/judgement).
- c) How much evidence is there that some racial groups are affected differently?
(without necessarily inferring that there is active discrimination).
- d) Is there any public concern that the service is carried out in a discriminatory way?
(including media and public perceptions that, in some cases, ethnic minorities may receive a better service than the rest of the population).

3.3.3 The assessment has highlighted that the services most closely associated with Traveller issues have the greatest scope for promoting race equality. The most relevant are:

- planning applications;
- planning enforcement and appeals;
- planning policy;
- management of Council-run Traveller sites;
- corporate co-ordination of the Council's policy on Traveller issues;
- community safety;
- legal services;
- homelessness and housing advice;
- council tax collection; and
- housing and council tax benefits.

The impact of these services on race equality will be considered in more detail during 2006/07 alongside the development of a new Council Strategy on Traveller Issues.

3.3.4 Other important (medium relevance) services, which are provisionally scheduled for more detailed assessment in 2007/08, include:

- general environmental health and handling of nuisance complaints;
- licensing;
- food safety, and health & safety;
- household waste collection and recycling;
- applying for Council housing;
- community development;
- SCDC's employment practices / human resources; and
- public relations / communications.

3.4 Our service strategies

- 3.4.1 The Community Safety Strategy 2005 – 2008 features a specific aim and supporting actions “to promote greater community cohesion between the settled and Travelling communities”. This includes addressing issues around the fear of crime and hate crime. Research has revealed that minority ethnic groups feel isolated and live with an awareness and fear of racial abuse. Interviews conducted with the Gypsy and Traveller community found that racial abuse and discrimination are commonplace and members of the community have difficulty accessing local services.
- 3.4.2 The Housing Strategy 2004 – 2007 includes research findings on BME (black and minority ethnic) groups in South Cambridgeshire, identifying Travellers as the biggest group. Actions include support for the Ormiston Trust to work with Travellers and carrying out the Traveller Housing Needs Survey in partnership with other agencies.
- 3.4.3 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, adopted in February 2004, features planning policy HG23 – setting out criteria to be met for the approval of sites for Gypsies and Travelling Show-People. A new Local Development Framework (LDF) is being prepared, and this will include supplementary guidance on the future provision of Traveller Sites.
- 3.4.4 The Homelessness Strategy 2003 – 2008 highlights that people from ethnic minorities are no more likely to present themselves as homeless than anyone else in the district. It includes actions to collect more monitoring information and liaise with the Council’s Traveller officer and other partners so that the support needs of Travellers are represented in the Supporting People programme.
- 3.4.5 Race equality issues are also mentioned in the:
- Communications Strategy;
 - Environmental Health Enforcement Policy;
 - Licensing Policy; and
 - Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy.

3.5 Our partnerships and working arrangements

- 3.5.1 A number of corporate working groups within SCDC, comprising officers from a wide range of Council service units, have central roles in helping to integrate the promotion of race equality into day-to-day practice. These include the:
- ‘Service First’ Group on customer care;
 - Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues; and the
 - Efficiency Savings Working Group.
- 3.5.2 The following partnerships reinforce the Council’s approach to race equality:
- South Cambridgeshire Strategic Partnership;
 - South Cambridgeshire Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership;
 - Supporting People Programme;
 - Cambridgeshire Travellers Initiative;
 - Traveller Co-ordination Group (formerly Traveller Implementation Group);
 - Improving Health Partnership (with its Improving Health Plan); and
 - Children and Young People Strategic Partnership.

4. Moving forward

4.1 Future issues for the Council

4.1.1 Financial constraints will continue to be a big issue. This will inevitably affect the extent to which we can strengthen our approach to race equality – no extra funding is available for actions in the Race Equality Action Plan for 2005 - 2008. In these circumstances, priority has had to be given to actions relating to Travellers, as the biggest ethnic minority in the district.

4.1.2 The Council has already had to make budget cuts of £1.65 million in 2005/06 and £2.74 million in 2006/07. The medium-term Financial Strategy forecasts the need for further significant savings in 2007/08. Service cutbacks already made necessary by the Government's council tax capping include:

- a) less grant-funding for voluntary organisations and community groups for housing, arts, sports and community development projects;
- b) not renewing funding for police community support officers posts;
- c) withdrawing discounts for people on benefit for pest control & bulky waste collection;
- d) increased licensing fees; and
- e) halving the corporate staff training budget.

4.1.3 The Council also faces the following key issues in the next few years.

- a) By implementing the "Transformation Project", the Council aims to: make work processes more effective via business process re-engineering; streamline the top-management structure; and enable specialist officers to focus more fully on their areas of expertise.
- b) By 2008, the first houses at Northstowe are due to be completed and new residents will be moving in. Preparations for developing these new communities will continue. It remains to be seen how the demographics of South Cambridgeshire (and ethnic minority populations, in particular) may change over the next decade or so.
- c) The Council will continue to address the challenges of unauthorised Traveller encampments (eg, those at Smithy Fen, Cottenham where planning appeals have been rejected by the ODPM). Following the Travellers' Housing Needs Survey, we will develop LDF supplementary guidance, planning for the further provision of approved sites both within the district and across the Eastern region more widely. The Government is expected to produce new official guidance early in 2006.
- d) A range of Council strategies will be coming up for renewal by April 2008, and preparations for the updated versions will need to take place over the next two years.
- e) From December 2006, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) will be amended to place a duty on all public bodies to promote disability equality and have a Disability Equality Scheme in place. The Government is also in the process of consulting on proposals for a Gender Equality Bill. In the next few years, the Council may wish to consider combining its response to these requirements in a single Equalities Scheme.
- f) The Government is developing its approach to Comprehensive Performance Assessment for district councils up to 2008/09, Local Area Agreements and ways to streamline the organisation of public services (incl. police, fire and health services).

4.2 Strengthening our approach to race equality

This Race Equality Scheme is based on the following principles for strengthening the Council's approach to race equality.

- 4.2.1 All Council strategies, when updated, will include a race equality impact assessment of related services and actions for promoting race equality. All SCDC service units will consider race equality issues as part of the annual service planning process.
- 4.2.2 All relevant Cabinet/Committee/Council reports will include a section on race equality implications.
- 4.2.3 Questions about ethnicity will be included in relevant consultation exercises and customer satisfaction surveys. There will also be regular consultation with the Ormiston Trust and trades unions on race equality issues.
- 4.2.4 Monitoring of requests for services and service outcomes by ethnicity will be extended to more services that involve formal application processes (eg, Benefits claims) or enforcement of regulations (eg, Environmental Health)
- 4.2.5 A new corporate ethnicity recording system will be introduced, based on the model adopted by the Department for Education and Skills (and mentioned in CRE guidance), which includes categories for 'Gypsy/Roma' and 'Traveller of an Irish Heritage' (see Appendix D).
- 4.2.6 Information about the Council's approach to race equality will be publicised via South Cambs magazine and the Council's website.
- 4.2.7 A translation / interpretation service will be made available as appropriate and on request.
- 4.2.8 Training and advice will be available for both councillors and staff on race equality issues and cultural awareness.
- 4.2.9 Allegations of racial abuse or discrimination will be taken seriously via our 'Complaints and Compliments' procedure (in relation to service provision), our Harassment and Bullying policy (in relation to staff complaints about SCDC's employment practice), and our performance monitoring for Best Value indicators BV174 and BV175.
- 4.2.10 Progress made in implementing the Race Equality Scheme will be reported in an annual report to the Council's Cabinet.

4.3 Race Equality targets

The Council aims to:

- a) reach Level 1 of the Equality Standard by March 2007 and Level 2 by March 2008;
- b) score 25% in 2005/06 against the good practice checklist on promoting race equality, increasing this to 35% in 2006/07 and 45% in 2007/08; and
- c) increase the percentage of ethnic minority staff in the SCDC workforce to 1.4% in 2006/07 and 1.7% in 2007/08 (based on 3.1% of new recruits in each of the next two years coming from ethnic minorities).

No target is set for the number of racial incidents relating to SCDC service provision and employment (BV174 & BV175), which are largely beyond our control. All complaints will be taken seriously and addressed based on the specific circumstances of each case.

5. Race Equality Action Plan: May 2005 – April 2008

Following council tax capping these actions will be carried out within existing resources. The actions for 2007/08 are provisional. The action plan will be updated towards the end of 2006/07 once the practical implications of the budget reductions have been more fully assessed.

No.	Action	Who by?	Timescale
A. GENERAL DUTIES			
A.1 Eliminate unlawful discrimination			
1.1	Information to be made available to all staff via e-mail and the intranet on Council policy & procedures, and their roles and responsibilities in relation to race equality. Staff at Waterbeach and the Cambridge Office will be included in this awareness-raising.	Head of Policy and Communication	By April 06 Review by April 07
1.2	Advise councillors on their responsibilities and CRE good practice in relation to race equality.	Head of Legal Services	By June 06 Review by June 07
1.3	Include in the Council's updated 'media pack' the CRE's guidance for journalists on reporting race issues.	Communications Manager	By July 06. By July 07
1.4	Update the 'Complaints and Compliments' leaflet to highlight the Council's commitment to taking allegations of racial abuse seriously.	Executive Assistant to Chief Executive	By Dec 06 Review by Dec 07
1.5	Check proofs of the Council's 'South Cambs magazine' to avoid any potential sensitivities in relation to race equality issues.	Communications Manager / Editorial Board	Quarterly
A.2 Promote race equality			
2.1	Continue to liaise with unlawful occupants of Traveller encampments (particularly at Pine View and Victoria View, Smithy Fen), to try to help them to find alternative, acceptable locations and to comply with planning law.	Planning Enforcement and Community Services	On-going
2.2	Provide information on audio tape for Travellers and other ethnic minorities, as requested.	Corporate Projects Officer / Relevant Service Heads	On-going
2.3	Work with Active Sports and other councils in Cambridgeshire to identify ways to address the needs of ethnic minorities in rural areas.	Sports Development Officer	From Jan 06
2.4	Assist the Ormiston Trust/Cambridgeshire Travellers' Initiative with the new release of a CD providing independent advice for Travellers on the planning process.	Corporate Projects Officer	By Feb 06
2.5	Publicise the availability of translation/interpretation services via South Cambs magazine.	Communications Manager	By March 06 Repeat by March 07 and March 08

No.	Action	Who by?	Timescale
2.6	Facilitate information-sharing between SCDC officers working particularly closely with ethnic minorities, in order to raise awareness of the wider range of services available to BME groups, as appropriate.	Head of Policy and Communication	By June 06 Repeat by June 07
2.7	Seek Council approval to sign up to the Declaration on Fair Trade.	Community Dev'pment Officer / Strategic Development Officer	By June 06
2.8	Investigate the possibility of submitting a bid for EEDA 'Investing in Communities' funding for community facilities for Travellers in South Cambridgeshire.	Community Development Manager	By March 07
A.3	Promote good race relations		
3.1	Support the Romany Theatre Company's "Our Big Land" production in Girton.	Head of Community Services	June 05 – Done
3.2	Take part in Cambridgeshire County Council's Inter-Cultural Day in Cottenham.	Head of Community Services	July 05 – Done
3.3	Co-ordinate the Council's involvement in further meetings with community leaders in Cottenham and CRE re:Smithy Fen Travellers' sites, chaired by Reverend Michael Hore.	Head of Community Services	From Jan 06
3.4	Arrange a final meeting of the Traveller Liaison Forum for the north of the district, before the scheme is expanded.	Head of Community Services	By Feb 06
3.5	Run a second workshop for councillors on addressing the needs of Travellers and the wider community.	Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues	By March 06
3.6	Launch the new, district-wide Traveller Liaison Forum.	Head of Community Services	By June 06, then every six months
3.7	Arrange and publicise, with partners, another Romany Theatre Company presentation in the district, in order to raise awareness amongst the wider community of Traveller traditions and way of life.	Head of Community Services / Communications Manager	By July 06
3.8	Arrange an awareness-raising workshop at a local school, to be run by Romany Theatre Company.	Head of Community Services	By July 06
3.9	Hold meetings between the Cabinet and parish councils to raise awareness of the Council's approach and latest actions on Traveller issues.	Corporate Projects Officer	On-going
B.	SPECIFIC DUTIES		
B.1	Developing policies and strategies relevant to race equality		
1.1	Make the Head of Policy & Communications (as lead officer on Race Equality) aware of any strategies being developed or updated, and consult him throughout the process.	All relevant Service Heads	On-going
1.2	Update the Cabinet on the feasibility of applying for Government funding for new/refurbished council/RSL-run Traveller sites. Submit outline bid to ODPM.	Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues	By Jan 06
1.3	Commission consultants to develop LDF supplementary guidance on the provision of Traveller Sites.	Planning Policy Manager	By March 06

No.	Action	Who by?	Timescale
1.4	Develop a Traveller Issues Strategy, incorporating a review of the Council's existing policy, plus race equality impact assessments for relevant SCDC services (see list of 'highly relevant' services under paragraph 3.3.3 of the Scheme).	Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues	By June 06 Review annually
1.5	Incorporate race equality considerations into a review of South Cambs magazine's editorial policy	Communications Manager	By June 06
1.6	Revise the Council's existing Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008 in order to make specific mention of how the needs of homeless Gypsies and Travellers are addressed in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002.	Housing Advice & Homelessness Manager	By Sept 06
1.7	Review and update the Council's Equality and Diversity policy, incorporating race equality impact assessments and race equality-related actions.	HR Manager	By Sept 06
1.8	Incorporate race equality impact assessments and race equality-related actions into the development of the 2007-2010 Community Strategy.	Head of Community Services	By March 07
1.9	Review and update the Housing Strategy 2007-2010, incorporating race equality impact assessments and race equality-related actions.	Housing Strategy Manager	By March 07
1.10	Develop a new Community Development and Cultural Strategy 2006-2009 (including arts & sports development), incorporating race equality impact assessments and race equality-related actions.	Head of Community Services	By March 07
1.11	Review and update the Council's Procurement Strategies, in order to develop appropriate contract clauses which expect contractors to reflect race equality good practice.	Procurement Officer / Head of Legal Services	By March 07
1.12	Oversee the development of LDF supplementary guidance on the provision of Traveller Sites.	Planning Policy Manager / Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues	By Dec 07
1.13	Review and update the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership's Community Safety Strategy 2008 - 2011, incorporating race equality impact assessments and race equality-related actions.	Community Safety Officer	By March 08
1.14	Review and update the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2008 - 2013, incorporating race equality impact assessments and race equality-related actions.	Housing Advice & Homelessness Manager	By March 08
B.2	Assessing proposed policies		
2.1	Review the Council's decision-making forward programme to identify those planned reports for which details of equal opportunity implications would be particularly relevant.	Head of Policy & Communication	Monthly
2.2	Update guidance for report-writers on specific issues to be addressed in the 'equal opportunities implications' section of relevant Cabinet and Committee reports	Head of Policy & Communication	By Jan 06 Review by Jan 07

No.	Action	Who by?	Timescale
2.3	Assess the extent to which Housing Services comply with the new CRE Code of Practice for Housing, identify necessary actions and report to the Housing portfolio-holder.	Head of Housing Strategy	By Feb 06
2.4	Carry out an update of service compliance with the Race Relations Act general duty as part of the annual service planning process.	All Service Heads (supported by Head of Policy & Comms)	By March 06 By March 07 By March 08
2.5	Carry out more detailed race equality impact assessments of those services identified as 'medium relevance' (see paragraph 3.3.4 of the Scheme).	Relevant Service Heads (supported by Head of Policy & Communication)	By March 07
B.3	Monitoring		
3.1	Introduce new ethnic monitoring categories for service satisfaction surveys and service usage monitoring.	Head of Policy & Communication	By Jan 06
3.2	Update the council housing application form, to take account of the new ethnic monitoring categories.	Housing Services Manager	By March 06
3.3	Send existing council tenants an ethnic minority/disability monitoring form with the annual rent increase letter – in order to develop an up-to-date profile and to enable subsequent monitoring equal opportunities monitoring.	Housing Services Manager	By March 06
3.4	Update the council tax and housing benefit application form, to take account of the new ethnic monitoring categories.	Head of Revenues & Benefits	By March 06
3.5	Send existing benefit claimants an ethnic minority/disability monitoring form with the annual benefits notification letter.	Head of Revenues & Benefits	By March 06
3.6	Update the Homelessness monitoring form, to take account of the new ethnic monitoring categories.	Housing Advice & Homelessness Manager	By March 06
3.7	Update the Community Services Grant application forms and guidelines, to take account of the new ethnic monitoring categories.	Head of Community Services	By March 06
3.8	Update the SCDC recruitment monitoring form, to take account of the new ethnic monitoring categories.	HR Manager	By March 06
3.9	Introduce ethnic monitoring for at least one extra Environmental Health service (eg, licensing applications) each year.	EHO Public Health Specialist	By March 06 By March 07 By March 08
3.10	Produce an analysis (by ethnic minority) of the food safety enforcement notices that have been served in 2005/06, and continue this monitoring in 2006/07 and 2007/08.	EHO Public Health Specialist	By April 06 By April 07 By April 08
B.4	Consulting		
4.1	Hold regular (at least twice yearly) meetings with trades unions to discuss equality issues.	HR Manager / Head of Policy & Comms	Twice yearly

No.	Action	Who by?	Timescale
4.2	Consult Ormiston Children & Families Trust and other relevant community groups on strategies being developed.	Relevant Service Heads	On-going
4.3	Identify those customer satisfaction surveys, to be carried out in 2006/07, which will need to include ethnic monitoring questions.	Service First Group / Policy & Perf. Review Manager	By March 06 Repeat annually
4.4	Undertake customer satisfaction surveys (including BVPI-related surveys of general households, housing tenants, benefit claimants and planning applicants).	Relevant Service Heads / Policy & Perf. Review Manager	Throughout 2006/07 Report results by March 07
B.5	Publishing results		
5.1	Feature an article in South Cambs magazine about the difficulties facing Travellers.	Head of Policy and Communication	June 05 – Done
5.2	Report the provisional results for South Cambridgeshire of the Traveller Housing Needs Survey.	Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues	Dec 05 – Done
5.3	Maintain and update the Traveller Issues pages on the Council's website.	Corporate Projects Officer	On-going
5.4	Develop the Race Equality Scheme pages on the Council's website, and keep them up-to-date (including key points from the annual Race Equality report from March '07).	Head of Policy and Communication	By Feb 06, then on-going maintenance
5.5	Highlight the Race Equality Scheme in the Council's Performance Plan.	Head of Policy and Communication	By June 06 By June 07
5.6	Feature an article on the Race Equality Scheme in South Cambs magazine.	Communications Manager	By June 06 Update by Sept 07
B.6.	Access to information		
6.1	Remind managers of the translation/interpretation service, which they can call on via the corporate contract with Language Line.	Communications Manager	By Jan 06 Re-publicise by Jan 07
6.2	Consult the Ormiston Children & Families Trust on ways to improve the information that the Council provides Travellers.	Communications Manager	By June 06 Review by Jun 07
B.7	Training		
7.1	Provide cultural awareness training on Traveller issues for Cabinet members, run by the Ormiston Children & Families Trust.	Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues	May 05 – Done
7.2	Arrange a tour of Traveller sites in the district by Cabinet members and senior managers.	Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues	June 05 – Done
7.3	Feature a Race Equality component in the staff induction training for new/recent starters.	HR Manager	From Jan 06 onwards
7.4	Review and update corporate guidance on staff recruitment and selection practices, and communicate to managers.	HR Manager	By June 06

No.	Action	Who by?	Timescale
7.5	Incorporate a Race Equality module into the customer care training that is to be provided for all Council staff.	HR Manager / Service First Group	By March 07
7.6	Carry out management development training, making sure that all senior managers are aware of their responsibilities to help promote race equality.	HR Manager	By March 07
7.7	Carry out cultural awareness training for partnership agency staff as part of the Community Safety Strategy.	Head of Community Services	By March 07
B.8.	Employment		
8.1	Devise a standard corporate form for use by managers to report on employment practices in their respective service units (in line with the ethnic monitoring requirements specified by the Race Relations Act).	HR Manager	By March 06 Repeat collection by April 07
8.2	Use the staff appraisal / action-planning process to highlight how individual employees can contribute to SCDC's duty to promote race equality.	All Service Heads	By April 06 By April 07 By April 08
8.3	Carry out an ethnicity and disability survey of staff.	HR Manager	By June 06
8.4	Carry out staff satisfaction survey.	HR Manager	By Oct 06
C.	PROJECT MANAGEMENT		
1.	Advise all Service Heads on the specific actions from this Race Equality Action Plan that they need to incorporate into their respective 2006/07 service plans.	Head of Policy & Communication	By Jan 06 Repeat for 2007/08 by Jan 06
2.	Consult parish councils, Ormiston Children & Families Trust, other community groups, the Government Office for the East, trades unions and others on the RES and on specific arrangements for promoting race equality.	Head of Policy & Communication	During Feb–Mar 06
3.	Report to Cabinet on the feedback on the consultation draft of the RES, and finalise the Race Equality Scheme.	Head of Policy & Communication	By May 06
4.	Update the Portfolio-holder for Information and Customer Services on progress towards the RES Action Plan.	Head of Policy & Communications	Quarterly
5.	Equal opportunities issues to be considered by key corporate working groups, in order to identify necessary actions to promote race equality.	Corporate Working Groups	By Sept 06 Review at least annually
6.	Explore the possibility of integrating the RES with requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme.	Head of Policy & Comms / HR Manager / Community Development Manager	By Dec 06
7.	Develop a Race Equality Action Plan for 2007/08, in conjunction with Directors and all Service Heads.	Head of Policy & Communications	By Jan 07
8.	Produce an annual Race Equality monitoring report to the Cabinet (including progress on the Action Plan and monitoring of relevant performance indicators/targets).	Head of Policy & Communication	By May 07 By May 2008

APPENDIX A

Analysis of South Cambridgeshire population

	ENGLAND	COUNTY	SOUTH CAMBS	
	%	%	%	People
White: British	87.0%	91.0%	93.3%	121,378
White: Irish	1.3%	0.9%	0.8%	1,072
White: Other White	2.7%	4.1%	3.0%	3,844
Mixed: White/Black Caribbean	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	239
Mixed: White/Black African	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	141
Mixed: White/Asian	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	420
Mixed: Other Mixed	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	338
Asian/Asian British: Indian	2.1%	0.7%	0.5%	665
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	1.4%	0.2%	0.1%	173
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	62
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	228
Black/Black British: Black Caribbean	1.1%	0.2%	0.2%	229
Black/Black British: Black African	1.0%	0.2%	0.2%	233
Black/Black British: Other Black	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	93
Chinese	0.4%	0.7%	0.4%	545
Other Ethnic Group	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%	438
				130,098

Source: Census 2001

APPENDIX B

Progress on specific duties to promote race equality during 2002 - 2005

Identifying services and strategies relevant to race equality

- Set up the Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues.
- Agreed the Council's policy on Traveller Issues, which is committed to uphold the rights of all local residents and Travellers to live peacefully and safely, with mutual respect for the rights of others.
- Introduced a number of new strategies that have featured actions to address Traveller issues (eg, the Community Strategy, Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy and Community Safety Strategy).

Assessing proposed policies

- Reported the findings of the Access to Services (Best Value) review to Cabinet.
- Featured race equality implications in Cabinet reports on Traveller Issues over the last year.

Monitoring

- Monitored ethnicity of service users in relation to complainants, Council housing applicants and homeless applicants.
- Received external audit approval for the recording arrangements for those Best Value performance indicators of racial incidents relating to SCDC services (BV174 & BV175).

Consulting

- Established that satisfaction levels amongst ethnic minority respondents to the 2003/04 BVPI surveys are similar to those for all respondents.
- Supported/took part in Travellers' Voices conferences, run by the Ormiston Children & Families Trust.
- Held a focus group for people from ethnic minorities as part of the public consultation prior to the introduction of the new wheelie bin scheme.

Publishing results

- Lobbied the Government & issued news releases about the needs of Travellers and local communities.
- Published the Race Equality Scheme 2002-2005 on the Council's website.
- Launched in-depth 'Traveller Issues' web pages: www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/TravellerIssues/.

Access to information and services

- Established a corporate call-down contract established for translation / interpretation services.
- Featured articles on services for ethnic minority communities in South Cambs magazine – distributed to all households.
- Provided advice to staff on 'accessibility' on the Council's intranet.

Training

- All corporate induction training events include training on equal opportunities. In 2005, 51 employees attended this training.
- 85% of managers/supervisors and 10% of total workforce attended 'Equality and Diversity' training course between 2002 – 2005.

Employment

- Monitored all formal disciplinary, grievance and bullying and harassment cases.
- Ensured all employees receive an appraisal.
- Equalities issues discussed as a standing item at Revenues & Benefits team meetings.

APPENDIX C

Relevance of SCDC services to promoting race equality

Reply options for Column A:

1 = Eliminating discrimination; 2 = Promoting race equality; 3 = Promoting relations between different groups.

	Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
Service	Which parts of the Race Relations Act general duty apply to this service?	How far could this service affect racial groups differently?	How much evidence is there some racial groups are affected differently?	Any public concern that the service is being carried out in a discriminatory way?
Community services				
Arts	1 + 2 + 3	A little	A little	None
Community development	1 + 2 + 3	Some	None	A little
Community safety	1 + 2 + 3	A lot	None	Some
Milton Country Park	1	None	None	None
Sports	1 + 2	A little	None	None
Traveller site management	1 + 2 + 3	A lot	A little	Some
Environmental Health services				
Abandoned vehicles	1	None	None	None
Dog control	1	A little	None	None
Fly-tipping	1	A lot	None	Some
Food safety	1 + 2	A lot	None	None
General environmental health & nuisances	1 + 2	A lot	None	Some
Health & safety	1 + 2	A lot	None	None
Household waste collection and recycling	1 + 2	Some	None	Some
Licensing	1 + 2	A lot	None	Some
Pest control	1 + 2	None	None	None
Private sector housing and private rented housing	1 + 2	A lot	None	None
Street cleaning	1	None	None	None
Housing services				
Housing Strategy	1 + 2	Some	None	None
Applying for housing	1 + 2	Some	Some	None
Homelessness and housing advice	1 + 2	A lot	None	A lot

	Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
Service	Which parts of the Race Relations Act general duty apply to this service?	How far could this service affect racial groups differently?	How much evidence is there some racial groups are affected differently?	Any public concern that the service is being carried out in a discriminatory way?
Housing service for council tenants				
Anti-social behaviour	1 + 2 + 3	Some	None	None
House sales	1 + 2	A little	None	None
Housing repairs	1	Some	None	None
Re-housing	1 + 2	Some	None	None
Planning and building control services				
Building Control	1 + 2	A little	A little	A little
Land charges	1	A little	A little	A little
Listed buildings and conservation areas	1 + 2	Some	A little	A little
Planning applications	1 + 2	A lot	Some	A lot
Planning enforcement & appeals	1 + 2 + 3	A lot	Some	A lot
Planning policy	1 + 2	Some	A little	Some
Revenue services				
Business rates collection	1 + 2	A lot	None	None
Payment collection	1 + 2	None	None	None
Council tax collection	1 + 2	A lot	None	A lot
Housing and council tax benefits	1 + 2	A lot	None	Some
Rent collection	1	Some	None	None
Fraud investigation	1	A lot	None	A little
Corporate services				
Accountancy	1	None	None	None
Communications	1 + 2 + 3	Some	None	A little
Contact Centre	1 + 2	Some	None	None
Democratic Services	1	A little	None	None
Electoral registration	1 + 2	Some	None	A little
Human Resources	1 + 2	A lot	Some	None
ICT	1	None	None	None
Legal services	1 + 2	A lot	None	A lot
Policy & Performance	1	A little	None	None
Sustainable development	1	None	None	None
Traveller Issues co-ordination	1 + 2 + 3	A lot	None	A lot
Reception	1 + 2	Some	None	None

APPENDIX D

New corporate ethnic monitoring categories

These are the ethnicity categories that are proposed for use by the Council when carrying out relevant consultation exercises and monitoring of service usage and service outcomes, as set out in action B.3.1 of the Race Equality Action Plan 2005 – 2008.

These are the same categories that have been adopted by the central government Department for Education and Skills (and that were mentioned in CRE good practice guidance). They are preferred to the Census 2001 categories, which have been criticised by the Commission for Racial Equality for not counting Travellers.

White

- British
- Irish
- Traveller of Irish Heritage
- Gypsy/Roma
- Any other White background

Mixed

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed background

Asian or Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background

Black or Black British

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background

• Chinese

- Any other ethnic background (please specify)

APPENDIX E

Guidance for journalists on reporting race issues from the Commission for Racial Equality

This CRE guidance is to be included in the media pack distributed by the Council (see action A.1.3 of the Race Equality Action Plan 2005 – 2008).

Coverage of race and ethnic issues across the media has significantly improved over the past 20 years. There has been a wider and more constructive exploration of many questions and a reduction in the use of language that is offensive to members of different ethnic groups. However many problems remain. The following recommendations focus on Travellers & Gypsies, however the principles apply to all ethnic groups.

Travellers, Gypsies and the media

Poor quality reporting which exploits or panders to stereotypes can cause much hurt to those about whom the stories are written. By repeating false and negative stereotypes, the media can encourage bad practice on the part of those with whom Travellers and Gypsies deal and can validate the expression of language and attitudes which in any other circumstances would be seen as totally unacceptable.

The Commission for Racial Equality has handled cases under the Race Relations Act for Travellers and Gypsies for over 20 years. The number of such cases continues to run at several dozen each year. The majority of these cases involve clear breaches of the Act.

These guidelines are not intended to make the media shy away from covering issues and stories to do with Travellers and Gypsies. Quite the contrary. The CRE and those organisations representing Travellers and Gypsies want to see more coverage in the media but are keen to help the media develop a coverage that is honest and fair, open and inclusive.

- **Steer clear of exploiting prejudice:** The public wants a media that is campaigning, but those campaigns should be built on matters of genuine public concern, not simply prejudices against particular groups.
- **Check the facts:** Go to the experts who can help to set the context. Make sure that wherever possible you check the details with a relevant source and don't just rely on expressions of local or popular prejudice. Many allegations are made about Travellers, Gypsies and now Roma asylum seekers from Eastern Europe, but can those making the allegations actually substantiate them?
- **Don't let your news agenda only be driven by the way others are handling the issue:** Certain story lines easily dominate media discussion of Travellers or Gypsies while issues of great importance to the communities involved are downplayed or ignored altogether. Don't write about Travellers and Gypsies only in the context of disputes over stopping places, look also at the problems Travellers face.
- **Look behind the storyline:** Don't assume there is only one point of view. Always seek the views of Traveller and Gypsy organisations to see whether or not there is an alternative interpretation or a different and more significant story line to be presented.
- **Listen to the people you are writing about:** This is particularly important when it comes to the terms and language you use. Terms like 'tinker', 'itinerant' or 'gypo' are all highly offensive to those about whom they are used and should be avoided. The terms 'Traveller(s)', 'Gypsy' or 'Irish Traveller' should be used with initial capital letters. Offensive stereotypes (for example 'scroungers', 'dole dodgers', 'bogus asylum seeker') should only be used when they are accurate descriptions of particular individuals and should not be employed to negatively stereotype whole groups.
- **Don't label people if it is not relevant:** Reference to the fact that an individual is a Traveller, Gypsy or Irish Traveller should only be made when it is relevant and appropriate.