



Race Equality Scheme 2008 – 2011

(Review of 2005 – 2008 Scheme)

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1. Introduction and Context

1.1 The Legal Context

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 strengthens the Race Relations Act 1976, by making public authorities subject to the RR(A) A when carrying out all its purposes. The RR(A)A also places a legal General Duty on public authorities that in carrying out all their purposes to have a due regard to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity; and
- Promote good race relations between people of different racial groups

The General Duty is supported by a series of specific duties one of which is that public authorities produce a Race Equality Scheme.

A Race Equality Scheme shall state, in particular:

i) those of its functions and policies, or proposed policies, which have been assessed as relevant to its performance of the duty imposed by section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act; and

ii) arrangements for:

- assessing and consulting on the likely impact of its proposed policies on the promotion of race equality
- monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality
- publishing the results of such assessments and
- ensuring public access to information and services which it provides
- training staff in connection with the duties imposed by section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act

The specific duties also include a duty to monitor by ethnic group all employees, and all applicants for jobs, promotion and training. An organisation has to monitor the number of employees from each ethnic group who:

- receive training
- benefit or suffer disadvantage as a result of performance assessment
- are involved in grievances
- have disciplinary action taken against them
- end employment with the authority

If monitored properly, the above data will enable employers to determine whether or not people from certain racial groups are at a greater disadvantage than others and take remedial action.

In 2003, the Government introduced the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003, which incorporates the European Union Race Directive into

UK Law by making changes to the Race Relations Act 1976. The new regulations introduced new legal definitions of harassment and discrimination; a new legal burden of proof in tribunal or court cases concerning racial discrimination or harassment; and a new exception from the prohibition to discriminate in employment where being of a particular race is a genuine and determining requirement for the job in question.

1.2 What is a Race Equality Scheme

The Council's Race Equality Scheme is effectively a strategy and an action plan that summarises the Council approach to race equality. Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, public authorities have a legal General Duty to promote race equality. The point of its duty is to ensure that race equality is fundamental in the way public authorities' work, by putting it at the centre of strategic development, service delivery and employment practices. The Council's Race Equality Scheme shows how the authority intends to fulfill its legal General Duty under the Act.

The primary purpose of this scheme is to set out the race equality objectives we will be focusing on over the next three years.

The scheme also:

- Sets out our intentions to make race equality a reality for people accessing our services, seeking job opportunities and who are currently employed with the Council
- Fulfils our legal responsibilities
- Highlights some of the work we have undertaken and the progress we have made to promote race equality
- Informs people of our responsibilities and what we expect of them. This includes residents, elected members, managers, staff, our partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors
- Explains how race equality is integrated into the planning of our services and performance management systems
- Provides information about our consultation and engagement, monitoring and training arrangements, and
- Presents progress on current performance.

1.3 The South Cambridgeshire Context

Census data input here

Employment stats needed from HR

2. SCDC Race Equality Scheme 2005 – 2008 Review

Main Achievements 2005 – 2008

2.1 Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination

- Staff made aware of the Council's policy and procedures and on their roles and responsibilities in relation to race equality.
- Members made aware of their responsibilities and Commission for Racial Equality [CRE] good practice in relation to race equality.
- The CRE's good practice guidance for journalists on reporting race issues was included in an updated version of the Council's Media Pack
- The Council's Complaints and Compliments leaflet was updated to highlight the Council's commitment to taking allegations of racial abuse seriously
- Developed a proofing system to ensure the Council's South Cambs Magazine avoided any potential sensitivities in relation to race equality issues.

2.2 Promoting Good Race Relations

- Continued to liaise with occupants of Traveller encampments to try to find them alternative, acceptable locations and to comply with planning law.
- Provided information on audio tape for Travellers and other ethnic minority communities as requested.
- Worked with Active Sport and other councils in Cambridgeshire to identify ways to address the needs of ethnic minorities in rural areas.
- Assisted the Ormiston Trust / Cambridgeshire Travellers Initiative with the release of a CD providing independent advice for Travellers on the planning process.
- Publicised the availability of translation and interpreting services via South Cambs magazine.
- Facilitated information-sharing between SCDC Officers working particularly closely with ethnic minority communities in order to raise awareness of the wider range of services available to BME groups.
- Gained Council approval to sign up to the Declaration on Fair Trade.

- Supported the Romany Theatre Company's production of 'Our Big Land' in Girton
- Took an active part in Cambridgeshire County Council Inter-Cultural Day in Cottenham.
- Co-ordinated the Council's involvement in meetings with community leaders in Cottenham and CRE re: Smithy Fen Travellers sites.
- Ran workshops for Councillors on addressing the needs of Travellers and the wider community
- Raised awareness of Councillors of the CRE Safer Communities Initiatives briefing on Gypsies and Travellers
- Launched the district-wide Traveller Liaison Forum
- Arranged an awareness raising workshop at a local school run by the Romany Theatre Company
- In partnership with other agencies arranged and publicised a second Romany Theatre Company production to raise awareness amongst the wider community regarding Traveller culture, traditions and ways of life.
- Held consultation events for parish councils as part of the preparations for a Development Plan Document on future Traveller site provision.
- Ensured the duty to promote race equality and good race relations and issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers were written into service level agreements with voluntary and community organisations which receive grant aid funding from the Council.

2.3 Developing Policies and Strategies – Mainstreaming Race Equality

Updates needed here (points B1 – 14)

- Updated guidance for report writing on specific issues to be addressed in the 'equal opportunities implications' section of relevant Cabinet and Committee reports
- Carried out an update of service compliance with the Race Relations Act General Duty as part of the annual service planning process.

2.4 Monitoring and Mainstreaming Data

- Updated and introduced new ethnic monitoring categories and began monitoring in the following areas:
 - ⇒ Service satisfaction surveys and service usage monitoring
 - ⇒ Council housing application form
 - ⇒ All existing council tenants

- ⇒ Existing benefit claimants
- ⇒ Homelessness monitoring form
- ⇒ SCDC recruitment
- ⇒ Compilation of monitoring figures relating to attendance at food hygiene and health and safety courses.

2.5 Consultation

- Held twice yearly meetings with trade unions to discuss equality issues.
- Consultation framework established with Ormiston Children and Families Trust and other relevant community groups on strategies being developed.
- Undertook customer satisfaction surveys.

2.6 Publishing Results and Access to Information

- Featured an article in the South Cambs Magazine about issues affecting Travellers.
- Presented the final report for South Cambridgeshire of the Traveller Housing Needs Survey to the Cabinet.
- Developed the Race Equality pages on the Council web-site and kept them updated.
- Highlighted the Race Equality Scheme in the Council's Performance Plan.
- Featured an article on the Race Equality Scheme in the South Cambs magazine.
- Consulted the Ormiston Children and Families Trust on ways to improve how the Council provides information to Travellers.

2.7 Training

- Provided Traveller cultural awareness training for Cabinet members run by Ormiston Children and Families Trust.
- Arranged a tour of Traveller sites in the district for Cabinet members and senior managers.
- Featured a Race Equality component in the staff induction training for new/recent starters.
- Incorporated a Race Equality module into the customer care training that was provided to all Council staff.
- Carried out cultural awareness training for partnership agency staff as part of the Community Safety Strategy.

2.8 Employment

- Used the staff appraisal / action planning process to highlight how individual employees can contribute to SDCC's duty to promote race equality.

Need updates on points 8.1, 8.3 and 8.4

3. SCDC Race Equality Scheme 2008 - 2011

3.1 Corporately we commit to:

- Be more consistent and better at communicating with all our residents, to let them know what services are available and how they can access them.
- Ensure that we understand and meet the needs of our newest arrivals in the community, for example migrant workers from Eastern Europe and refugees and asylum seekers, as well as our long-standing Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- Develop our understanding of the needs of the BME community and proactively address the issues and tackle the barriers that they face.
- Be more sophisticated in our methods of consultation, engagement and involvement, and ensure that all residents know how we have used their feedback to make changes to services or policies.
- Ensure that we are taking a consistent approach to race equality monitoring to help us improve as an employer and service provider.
- Support our staff as they manage external contracts to ensure services delivered through others meets the needs of our diverse community.
- Ensure efficient and fair delivery of services through a well trained workforce, knowledgeable about race equality issues.
- Improve minority ethnic representation at all levels and in all departments within the Council.
- Further develop the Council's approach to the scrutiny of progress being made on race equality; and
- Strengthen our work with partners in the public sector to promote race equality and to develop and share good practice.

3.2 At service level we commit to:

- Be more consistent and better at communicating with all our residents to let them know what services are available and how they can access them.

- Continue to undertake robust and effective Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA's) to enable us to better understand the needs of our diverse community.
- Improve our data analysis in order to better understand who is and who is not using our services and why.
- Better engage and involve the BME community in the decision-making process.
- Use the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) tool to more effectively identify service level race equality objectives and targets.
- Take positive action to make our workforce representative of our diverse community.
- Strengthen individual Service Plans to contain race equality priorities for action; and
- Better promote the Council's message on race equality so that all members of staff better understand their roles and responsibilities.

3.3 In relation to our workforce, over the next three years we commit to:

- Improve our communication with the workforce – in terms of both understanding their diverse needs and in terms of promoting the Council's message on race equality.
- Build capacity in the workforce (through, for example, Positive Action measures) in order that all staff have the opportunity to realise their potential and progress within the Council.
- Address the issue of lower success rates for certain groups, such as members of the Black and Minority Ethnic community, who apply for Council jobs, as highlighted by the annual workforce analysis.
- Monitor and review the take-up of learning and development opportunities in order to take appropriate action to ensure all staff at all levels have access to these activities.
- Consider the introduction of a BME Workers Group, and work with this group to inform the Council's decision-making processes.
- Improve take up of race equality learning and development activities for all staff; and
- Review employment policies and guidance to managers in line with the findings of the Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA's).

4. Action Plan

Action	Tasks	Timescale	Lead Officer
Demonstrable leadership and corporate commitment to race equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete all Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) as indicated in the EqIA schedule, quality assure them and establish process for their scrutiny • cabinet reports to contain a section on EqIAs • staff to undertake equality and diversity training • elected members to undertake equality and diversity training • strengthen consideration of race equality issues in Partnerships • embed race equality in partnership working and activities • tackle issues of myths and misinformation about certain sections of the community, such as Gypsies and Travellers, in a positive and proactive way • actively champion and raise awareness and understanding of race equality issues in relation to employment and service delivery • support and organise activities and events to promote and celebrate diversity (for example Black History Month and Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month) 		
Improved community engagement and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish more effective mechanisms to positively communicate the Council's messages on race equality to employees, partner organisations and other stakeholders • identify current consultation with communities at risk of discrimination with a view to establishing new approaches to engagement and involvement to encourage active participation in the Council's decision-making processes • work with stakeholders to decide the right approach to scrutinising the Council's progress on race equality • develop a thorough understanding of the needs of the BME community through targeted research 		
Race equality reflected in service delivery and customer care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actively promote the importance of reporting all hate crime – racist and religious • departments to better embed race equality in service planning • ensure fair and equitable access to our services 		

Action	Tasks	Timescale	Lead Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure race equality is embedded within the Council's procurement processes • ensure a more consistent approach to equality monitoring across the Council and partnerships, and ensure such information is used to inform policy development and service delivery • improve access to information about employment and services to employees/potential employees and customers/potential customers • ensure all policies and services are culturally appropriate and meet the needs of all sections of the community 		
<p>Employment practices and training to improve race equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the number of BME people at senior levels in the authority • improve the intake of people from all sections of the community through improving the recruitment process • develop positive action schemes for certain groups of staff • ensure all elected members, managers and staff are trained on race equality issues and their responsibilities • support and develop a BME Workers Group to enable them to become a crucial element of the consultation and service improvement mechanism, as well as improving links with communities • provide a voice for under-represented groups in the workforce 		

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

This Scheme will be reviewed every three years. The Action Plan will be reviewed every year. Progress on the Scheme and Action Plan will be reported to the Equal Opportunities Steering Group, Chief Officers, Corporate Management Team and Cabinet on an annual basis.

In addition to the above we will also:

- Produce an annual Race Equality monitoring report to the Cabinet, including progress on the Action Plan and monitoring of relevant performance indicators and targets.

- Advise all Service Heads on the specific actions from this Race Equality Action Plan that they need to incorporate into their respective annual service plans.