

AGENDA ITEM No. 2 NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (FINANCE) SUB-COMMITTEE	Subject: Departmental Race Equality Action Plan – Progress Report
From: DIRECTOR OF FINANCE	
Date: 19 April, 2005	Ref: LB/AC

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Policy and Resources (Finance) Sub Committee on the progress of the implementation of the Finance Department's Race Action Plan.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 On 31st March 2002, the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Order 2002 came into being. The Order gave force to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and place both general and specific duties upon all public bodies in Scotland including Local Authorities.
- 2.2 The aim of the general duty is to mainstream the elimination of discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations by making these an integral to how we carry out public services.
- 2.3 One of the specific duties placed upon the Council was to publish a Race Equality Scheme setting out the Council's arrangements for ensuring compliance with the legislation. This was published in November 2002 together with a corporate action plan. The Council is required to review the Race Equality Scheme after three years – in November 2005.
- 2.4 To ensure the Finance Department's compliance with the legislation, a Departmental Race Action Plan was developed and was approved at Committee on 27th January 2004. It is the purpose of this report to update the committee on the progress of the plan to date.

3. **Progress**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 shows progress against plan for all actions.

4. **Recommendations**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) note the content of this report



Director of Finance

DEPARTMENTAL RACE ACTION PLAN	
FINANCE DEPARTMENT	
Action	Progress to Date
<p>a) Initially, the Finance Department Support Services Officer (a member of the Departmental Racial Equality Working Group) has been working closely with personnel from those sections of the Finance Department dealing directly with public to identify policies and functions. These functions and policies have been identified as being priority.</p> <p>b) Impact Assessments of each of these priority functions and policies are being carried out. This work is due to be completed by Mid February 2003.</p> <p>c) Following the above the work of the Support Services Officer will be extended to all other sections of the Department to identify all other policies and functions. To be completed by end April 2003.</p> <p>d) Regular updates on the work of the Support Services Officer are made to the Departmental Management Team</p>	<p>This has been completed. Following the introduction of the Corporate Race Equality Toolkit, all functions and policies have been reassessed and prioritised.</p> <p>Initial Impact Assessments were completed for a number of functions identified at the time as being high priority. Following the introduction of the Corporate Race Equality Toolkit, full impact assessments are being carried out for the reviewed list of highest priority functions and policies.</p> <p>see a) above.</p> <p>The Support Services Officer reports to the DMT on a four weekly basis and regularly updates on race equality.</p>

<p>Policy And Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face meeting will be held with the leaders of each of the sections at a) above. The Support Services Officer will provide guidance in assessing each of the policies and functions as to their relevance to the duty to promote race equality. • These policies and functions will then be assessed as to their relevance to the duty to promote race equality (a list of these policies and functions is attached). This work is to be undertaken by the sections themselves. Subsequently, assessment of new functions or policies or amendments to current functions and policies will become routine. • On completion of this phase, the assessment work will be extended to all other sections and divisions of the department • It is intended to use this system to raise awareness in the first instance amongst the managers of public facing services and this is currently underway. This will then be extended throughout the department by June 2003. • The Director and Heads of Service receive regular updates via the Support Services Officer and this information will be disseminated via Team Briefings and Staff Awareness Sessions. Regular updates will be made as required. • The corporate arrangements for making service users and staff aware of the Council's Race Equality Scheme will be fully utilised by the Department. 	<p>Three members of staff from the Finance Department (including the Support Services Officer) have attended Impact Assessment Training Sessions. Arrangements are being put in place to progress Impact Assessments on an urgent basis.</p> <p>Complete. Plus see b) above</p> <p>-see c) above</p> <p>Presentation made at Staff Awareness session and information published in Finance Department Newsletter.</p> <p>Initial team briefings and staff awareness sessions complete and Departmental Management Team has met with Race Equality Consultants to progress this process.</p> <p>Staff advised that Plan and Scheme are available on the Intranet</p>
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<p>Service Delivery and Customer Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future postal surveys of Cash Collection/Municipal Bank customers will include an ethnicity question. • We currently have language line advertised and available in all of our Cash Offices/Municipal Banks and have staff members trained in its use. This facility has been available for some time. • The Finance Department currently utilises corporate translation facilities e.g. Language Line and will make arrangements for translation of documentation to be made available as required • The Finance Department will make use of all corporate initiatives in relation to ensuring that all customers are made aware of these translation facilities. This will be included when available. • The Service Improvement Plan for 2004-05 takes account of Race Equality Scheme. • The Corporate Complaints Procedure is utilised by the Department. All other localised comments/complaints procedures will be reviewed by end of March 2004. 	<p>Underway</p> <p>Facility extended to Insurance Services. To date we have received no requests for its use.</p> <p>The department has recently arranged to have one document translated for customers. Arrangements have been agreed with another customer to provide information in Spanish.</p> <p>The department is represented at the Corporate Communications Working Group. No guidance available as yet.</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Localised comments/complaints procedures reviewed as part of Charter Mark submissions (4).</p>
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<p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of Employees – is done corporately for the Finance Department • Training – the Finance Dept will fully utilise the corporate training facilities for Race Equality when available. . • There are trained members of staff in each of the Cash Collection/Municipal Bank offices who are trained in using Language Line. This will be extended to all staff working with the general public. To be completed by March 2004. 	<p>To date 10 managers of front line services have attended Diversity in Action Training and 28 staff and managers of front line services have completed the Diversity Online Training Programme. The departmental representative on the Race Equality Working Group has attended Commission for Racial Equality Training and the Jane Elliot Seminar. T</p> <p>Complete. All frontline services have access to Language Line</p>
<p>Marketing and Corporate Image</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The work of the Corporate Communications Group will be taken on board by the Department and used for all external publications. b) All localised publications are being reviewed by end of March 2004. 	<p>No guidance as yet available</p> <p>We await corporate guidance in relation to raising awareness and providing mechanisms for translation services.</p>

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