

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (FINANCE) SUB-COMMITTEE		Subject: Departmental Race Equality Action Plan – Progress Report
From: DIRECTOR OF FINANCE		
Date: 7 th August 2006	Ref: LB/AC	

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update on the progress of the Finance Department's revised Race Equality Action Plan.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 The Corporate Race Equality Working Group developed a Race Equality Toolkit and organised a number of training sessions for personnel from across the Council. The Working Group has also utilised the knowledge and experience of a firm of consultants who have provided training and advice both general and in the development of the toolkit.
- 2.2 The Finance Department is represented on Corporate Race Equality Working Group and a number of Finance personnel have been involved in developing impact assessments and implementing the actions flowing from them.
- 2.3 In line with the Council guidelines and requirements, the Department presented our Race Equality Action Plan to Committee in August 2005.

3. **Progress**

- 3.1 Using the toolkit developed by the Corporate Race Equality Working Group, the functions and policies of the department were identified and assessed for relevance in terms of the legislation. These functions and policies were then prioritised. Two areas were identified as of highest priority i.e. the Income Function and Procurement.
- 3.2 On progressing the Impact Assessments, a number of functions were redesignated as not relevant. Appendix 1 details those areas of high relevance.
- 3.3 The Action Plan will be progressed by carrying out relevant Impact Assessments and developing specification as required. (Appendix 2).
- 3.4 We have put in place monitoring arrangements for many of our customer facing services e.g. Cash Collections and Insurance. We are also making progress in our arrangements in relation to our Income Services via our Debt Advice Team. A consultation exercise on Debtors is timed to be undertaken following the return and analysis of the Charter Mark Cash Collection Survey.

3.5 In relation to the Procurement Function and Strategy, we aim to revise the Procurement Strategy and submit to Committee early in the new calendar year.

3.6 In addition, we have progressed departmental arrangements for publishing on North Lanarkshire Council's web-site.

4. **Recommendations**

4.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) approves the content of this report

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alister Bell', written in a cursive style.

Director of Finance

North Lanarkshire Council

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME
SUMMARY HIGH RELEVANCE

Department Name: Finance

Function/Policy/Service	Which of the 3 aspects does it relate to?	Priority Order
	1 Eliminating discrimination 2 Promoting equality of opportunity 3 Promoting good race relations	1, 2, 3 1 = high
Procurement Function inc. Strategy & Standing Orders	1, 2	1
Income Function a) Debt Recovery	1, 2, 3	1
Income Function b) Cash Collection	1, 2, 3	1
Income Function d) Municipal Bank	1, 2, 3	1
Public Inspection of Accounts Procedures	2	2
Insurance Claims Processing	2	2
Income Function c) Tax Administration – Non Domestic Rates & Council Tax	1 & 2	2
Whistle blowing Policy – redesignated to Administration Department	2	3
Financial appraisal of companies	2	3

**North Lanarkshire Council
Finance Department**

Race Equalities Action Plan 2005 - 2008

Action Point	Lead Section	Status	Anticipated Output	
1.	Policy and Planning			
1.1	Carry out impact assessments on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Inspection of Accounts Procedures • Insurance Claims Processing • Whistle Blowing Policy • Provision of Financial Advice re Treasury & VAT matters and Financial Appraisal of Companies 	Accounting & Budgeting Insurance Internal Audit Treasury	Complete Complete Referred to Administration Dept Underway October 2005	Impact Assessment Complete Impact Assessment Complete Impact Assessment Complete Impact Assessment Complete
1.2	After consultation prepare further Impact Assessment of Procurement Function and Strategy	Procurement Section	October 2005	Impact Assessment Complete.
1.3	Review all Impact Assessments	Responsible Sections	Per Impact Assessments	Potential gaps in improvements in service delivery identified
2.	Service Delivery & Customer Care			
2.1	Carry out consultation of Debt Recovery customers	Income Section	December 2005	Ethnicity Monitoring and identification of any difficulties for ethnic minority groups.
2.2	Consultation with Benefits Agency, Citizen's Advice and Money Advice Services.	Income Section	December 2005	Identification of any difficulties for ethnic minority groups.
2.3	Conduct research to identify best practice in procurement in terms of equality	Procurement Section	October 2005	Best practice examples to incorporate into our practices.
2.4	Carry out relevant consultation exercises	Relevant sections	Ongoing	Ethnicity monitoring incorporate with all systems.
3.	Promoting Good Race Relations and Development			
3.1	Review Procurement Strategy in light of Race Equality legislation	Procurement Section	December 2005	Strategy to meet legislative

Appendix 2

Action Point	Lead Section	Status	Anticipated Output
			requirements and raise awareness of race equality issues with our suppliers
3.2	Work with Partners e.g. ABC	Procurement Section	Raise awareness of race equality issues with our suppliers