

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Social Work: Race Equality Standards Document
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 7 March 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: Calum Mackinnon	
REF: JD/GMCI/CMACK/JMCF	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Social Work Committee of the background to the Social Work: Race Equality Standards Document which has been produced by the West of Scotland Community Relations Council, and to seek support for same.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Race Equality Standards document is based upon the Commission for Racial Equality: "Race Equality Means Equality, Standard". It is intended to assist all local authorities to meet their statutory duties of ensuring equality. It is organised in such a way that each local authority can implement the contents as and when their resources allow. The document, when approved, will be the property of all participating authorities.
- 2.2 The work to produce the Standards Document was undertaken by the West of Scotland Community Relations Council, in conjunction with the new local authorities which make up the former Strathclyde Regional Council.

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS DOCUMENT

- 3.1 Following the production of the Race Equality Standards Document, the West of Scotland Community Relations Council is inviting all local authorities within this area to endorse the proposals which are designed to assist Councils achieve acceptable standards in the area of Race Equality.
- 3.2 It is planned to launch the document in the next three months and it is recommended that North Lanarkshire Council should associate itself with the proposals and give permission for the Council Logo to be reproduced on the final publication.
- 3.3 The Association of Directors of Social Work, and the Commission for Racial Equality have been requested to provide the introduction to the policy document.

- 3.4 The working group which produced the document, recognised that it would be difficult to introduce all of the recommendations in a short period of time. Therefore, the final document is designed to include a section in which individual local authorities will detail their responsibilities, outcomes, performance indicators and comments over a timescale which is reasonable and manageable for each authority.
- 3.5 Whilst there are costs associated in implementing the proposal it should be noted these will be no greater than that which will be incurred by the Council if there were to meet their statutory obligations in the field of equality.
- 3.6 In the event that the Council gives approval to the Race Equality Standards Document, it is proposed that officers should consider the implications of the proposals and to report back with arrangements on how the matters can be implemented.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct costs involved in approving the principles of the document. Any costs which arise should be dealt with in subsequent reports.
- 4.2 The document has been created specifically with the functions of Social Work Departments in mind. The working group which prepared the report considered that the contents of the document should be easily transferable to all other local authority departments. It has therefore been constructed in such a way that it should be easily useable by all other departments of the Council.
- 4.3 Given that it may take time to implement the proposals the working group recognised the differing abilities of the various local authorities to implement the provisions contained in the document, e.g. relating to size of authority. For this reason additional pages relating to timescales, responsibilities, outcomes, performance indicators and comments will be added to the final production allowing each authority to react as it is able.
- 4.4 Implementation timescales will depend upon many factors, Personnel and Financial implications being amongst the major factors.
- 4.5 It is likely that Community Relations Council will approach all the participating authorities requesting a contribution towards the costs of the document and seminar at which the document will be launched. The exact costs are not known at this stage, however, Committee is requested to agree in principle to this, and a report on the costs will be presented to Committee at a later date.

5 LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that their procedures comply with Equality Legislation.

- 5.2 Endorsing and implementing the procedures contained in this document would go a long way to ensure that participating local authorities did comply with their statutory duties, and be seen to be so complying.

6 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no Personnel implications in meeting the statutory requirements in the first instance. If the document is endorsed and implemented most of the preparatory work, will have been done, thus reducing future Personnel implications.

7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Adoption of the proposals will assist the Council to meet its statutory responsibilities in respect of race equality.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The document is based upon the Commission for Racial Equality: Race Equality Means Equality, Standard. All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that their procedures comply with Equality Legislation. Endorsing and implementing the document goes a very long way in ensuring compliance by North Lanarkshire Council.
- 8.2 There are Financial and Personnel implications, however these implications already exist if the Council is to meet its statutory duties with respect to Equality Legislation. The endorsement and implementation of the contents of this document will reduce the overall costs of meeting these statutory duties as much of the work has already been carried out.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee is requested to:

- (i) Endorse the document and agree that the North Lanarkshire Council logo may be used in the final Social Work: Race Equality Standards document, to be produced by the West of Scotland Community Relations Council.
- (ii) Give in principle approval to assisting with the costs of publishing the document and its launch, subject to a further paper setting out detailed proposals for cost sharing.
- (iii) Note that the publication of the document and its implementation will be the subject of a future report.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 A copy of the document is available in the Members Library for inspection.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
28 February 2000

For further information on this report please contact [George McNally, Principal Officer \(Strategy\) \(TEL: 01698 332063\)](#) or [Calum MacKinnon Development Officer, Strategy \(TEL: 01698 332061\)](#)