

APPENDIX TO EQUALITIES POLICY

Draft Race Equality Policy



**Copeland Borough Council
December 2005**

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1. Copeland's Equality Vision

1.1 Strategic Aims

This Council aims to be a quality Council. This is reflected by our commitment to providing equality through our services to the public, those requiring access to Council information, staff who are or could be employed by the Council, and our private and public sector colleagues.

1.2 Values & Corporate Responsibility

Copeland's values and principles on equality are identified through a number of documents such as our Equal Opportunities Policy. This Scheme outlines the Council's vision to be pro-active on race in ensuring that:-

- We consider the impact on ethnic groups in service planning and provision;
- Our services are accessible and available to all members of all ethnic groups;
- We consult with all groups where appropriate;
- We develop the competencies of all staff at all levels throughout the organisation in relation to issues of race and equality;
- The responsibility and accountability for race issues lies with management at all levels.

1.3 Copeland's Draft Race Equality Statement

Copeland Borough Council is fully committed to complying with its statutory duties under the Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000. In producing this policy, various codes of practice and recommendations produced by relevant bodies such as the Commission for Racial Equality, Improvement &

Development Agency, Employers Organisation and Local Government Association including the specific recommendations from the McPherson Report. It is one of the Council's Core Values to "...treat everyone fairly, with dignity and respect, and actively promote equal opportunities for all".

- In line with the McPherson report recommendations, Copeland Borough Council has adopted the definition of a racist incident as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".
- The Council is therefore committed to "the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups".
- The Equality Standard for Local Government was established as a result of partnership working between the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Employers' Organisation for Local Government. The Council has decided to adopt the Commission for Racial Equality's Equality Standard for Local Government and has set an initial target of attaining 'Level 1' by March 2006.
- As part of the Council's ethos of continuous improvement through Best Value, and now the Comprehensive Performance Assessment process, a raft of equality measures will be recommended for adoption by the Council. The Council's corporate undertaking to address equality issues will be further demonstrated in publishing this Policy, pertaining to recommendations made in the McPherson report into the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, and by various advisory bodies.
- In promoting equality of opportunity, Business Unit Managers will be required to assess appropriate areas of service delivery and to consider the impact of service delivery in terms of the needs and preferences of ethnic groups.

Copeland Borough Council will, wherever possible, look to work together with other local authorities, public sector organisations, and the community/voluntary sector in addressing its obligations as an employer, service planner, service provider and purchaser.

2. Copeland Background / 2001 Census

2.1 Population profile

According to the 2001 Census figures released by the Office for National Statistics on 13 February 2003, Copeland's population continues to fall. The total population of 69,318 published recently shows a change of -2,100, a 3% variation on the Census of 1991.

2.2 Ethnicity – 2001 ONS Census (Data sheets - Appendix 1)

The results of the 2001 Census show that of Copeland's total population (69,318), 99.3% (68,833) are white in ethnic origin. The remaining 485 people are classed as being non-white which is 0.7% of Copeland's population. This relatively low percentage places Copeland as 11/376 Boroughs or Districts in England and Wales for having the lowest proportion of ethnic minorities. Copeland is ranked 3/43 in the ONS' regional classification, and in terms of neighbouring authorities in the County only Allerdale and Eden have a lower percentage of ethnic minorities in their population structure.

2.3 Authorities with low ethnicity

Recommendations from the Local Government Association (LGA), Commission for Race Equality (CRE), and the Local Authorities Race Relations Information Exchange (LARRIE) stress that it is just as important for authorities such as Copeland with a low proportion of ethnicity, to address their obligations on race equality. What this Council acknowledges is that how we address our duties under the new legislation must, be both appropriate and in proportion to the needs of our constituents, and that we are firmly committed to delivering Race Equality in Copeland through liaison

with neighbouring authorities and those with a similar set of local circumstances and issues. This Council is an active participant in a County-wide Cumbria Equality and Diversity Group, reporting to the West Cumbria LSP.

3. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

3.1 The Act

Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 required local authorities to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that their functions were carried out with due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, and
- Promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Amendments to Section 71 of the Act were made on 2nd May 2000, following recommendations made in the McPherson report into the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.

3.2 The Change in Legislation

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 came into force on April 2nd 2001. The new Act amends the Race Relations Act of 1976 and strengthens its application to public authorities in several important ways:

- It extends the scope of the 1976 Act to cover areas that were previously excluded, and makes it unlawful for public authorities to discriminate on racial grounds in carrying out any of their functions;
- It places a general statutory duty on a wide range of public authorities to promote racial equality and prevent racial discrimination;
- It gives the Home Secretary the power to make orders imposing specific duties on public sector organisations bound by the general duty;

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) has been given new powers to enforce any specific duties imposed by the new regulations and to issue statutory codes of practice providing public authorities guidance on fulfilling the new requirements, something which this Council has completed extensive research on.

4. Implementing our Duties on Race Equality

4.1 The General Duty

As referred to in Section 3.1 above, the general duty as set out in Section 71 (1) of the Act says that local authorities must have 'due regard' to the need;

- To eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- To promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

4.2 Main Principles of the Duty

Obligatory

The duty's main aim is to make race equality a central part of any policy or service that is relevant to the duty. The recommended approach made by the CRE is to build these responsibilities into the way the Council currently works by adapting our plans and priorities appropriately.

Relevance

The Council appreciates that some purely technical functions may not be as relevant to the duty as delivering services or in employment. We will therefore consider all our functions in order to assess their relevance with due respect to race equality.

Proportionality

In line with recommendations made by the CRE, we will make sure that the weight we give a function is in proportion to its relevance in promoting race equality and that we will prioritise those functions and policies which have the greatest potential to affect different racial groups in different ways.

4.3. How the General Duty relates to Specific Duties

As part of developing our Race Equality Scheme we are therefore committed to our specific duties to:-

- Prepare and Produce a Race Equality Scheme;
- Assess functions and policies for relevance to the General Duty;
- Set out arrangements for monitoring any adverse impacts of policies on the promotion of Race Equality;
- Set out arrangements for assessing and consulting on proposed policies;
- Set out arrangements for publishing assessments, consultation and monitoring results;
- Set out arrangements to ensure equality in access to information and services.

5. What Copeland will do

5.1 This Section outlines what the Council will do to meet the new requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act.

a) Policy & Service Planning & Delivery

We will:-

- Identify our functions and decide on their relevance to race equality;
- Prioritise these functions;

- Assess all relevant functions and policies for their effects on race equality;
- Continue to consult the general public, private, public and voluntary sector organisations and partners on proposed policies, by involving ethnic minorities at all stages where appropriate;
- Consider and make any changes to policies to meet the general duty;
- To ensure that the method for procuring goods and services is in line with Race Equality issues, and to encourage any organisations providing services in partnership or on behalf of the Council to adhere our working practices on race.

(b) **Recruitment, Employment & Training**

We will;

- Review and adopt, where necessary, recruitment procedures which use non-discriminatory practices;
- Review and adopt, where necessary, procedures to ensure that publicity for vacancies does not unfairly restrict the range of applicants;
- Produce a standard range of application forms and job descriptions that are clear and explicit;
- Review our Personnel Information System for monitoring suitability;
- Make procedures consistent with Employment Codes of Practice;
- Establish that Policies and Procedures associated with equalities are part of staff/member training and are understood by all;
- Plan training, where necessary, for all recruitment staff on the Equalities standard
- Build equalities objectives into management appraisal mechanisms.

(c) **Access to Information & Services**

We will:-

- Further develop and implement initiatives derived from the recent Access to Services Best Value Review to ensure equality;
- We will fulfill our commitments under the Equal Rights Act, Human Rights Act, Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act;
- Address, where possible e-enablement through e-government;
- Provide arrangements for an interpretation and translation service – Tongue Tied Ltd;
- Identify information needs of ethnic minorities where appropriate;
- Ensure we can provide corporate literature on policies and services in different languages on request;
- Continue to develop our Internet and Intranet sites to publicise our commitment to Race Equality and to enable ethnic minorities to utilise our advice services more effectively;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the need to publish documents and correspondence, in line with customer care ethics as set out in our Customer Service.

(d) **Liaison, Consultation & Communication**

We will:-

- Identify methods of improving social inclusion and involvement in the Council's consultation processes particularly for ethnic minorities;
- Work closely with public, private and voluntary sector bodies and partners on developing networking arrangements to drive Race work forward;
- Specifically liaise with Cumbria Police, Neighbouring Councils, and other organisations as appropriate - through the Community

Safety Partnership - and to contribute to the collation / monitoring of figures pertaining to Race Equality and to the development of any related initiatives;

- The Council will attempt to identify potential links to ethnic minorities through such mechanisms as the Local Strategic Partnership, Focus Groups, and the Citizens Panel and the recently formed AWAZ group;
- Investigate potential arrangements to encourage ethnic minorities to become more active in attending appropriate Council meetings, functions, and forums;

(e) **Monitoring Progress and Performance**

We will:-

- Monitor complaints by different ethnic groups through our formal complaints procedure to identify and highlight possible inequalities;
- Ensure complaints concerning race issues raised by employees will be dealt with through the harassment or grievance procedure whichever is appropriate;
- Ethnic monitoring will be included in any customer satisfaction surveys, one off surveys and any other consultation processes we undertake;
- Information about the Council's progress on race equality will be published in our Best Value Performance Plan;
- Through Best Value we will monitor appropriate Performance Indicators in line with Audit Commission recommendations; these include;
 - *BV2a – CRE Equality Standard for Local Government Level;*
 - *BV2b – Duty to promote race equality*
 - *BV11b - % of top 5% earners that are from ethnic minorities;*
 - *BV17a - % of staff from ethnic minorities;*
 - *BV17b – % of staff from ethnic minorities - local population*

- *BV74b – Overall service with landlord – black and minority ethnic satisfaction survey;*
- *BV75b – Tenant satisfaction with participation (Ethnic Minority Tenants)*
- *BV164 – CRE Code of Practice in housing, and CRE Code of Practice and good practice standards – harassment;*
- *BV 174 Racial incidents recorded by authority per 100,000 population;*
- *BV175 % of racial incidents requiring further action.*

6. The CRE Standard for Local Government

- 6.1 This Council has undertaken extensive research in developing its work on Race Equality. We have carefully considered all the recommendations made by appropriate advisory bodies, such as the Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA), Local Government Association (LGA), Employer's Organisation (EO), Audit Commission, and in particular the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE).

Furthermore, we have committed to adopting the CRE 'Standard for Local Government' as a framework for meeting our objectives on Race. A copy of the criteria for meeting Level 1 of the Standard is at Appendix 4.

7. Action Plan

Many of the objectives listed in Section 5 of this Policy Document reflect our commitment and identifying how we will approach our work on race. This framework highlights the specific actions we will look to undertake in meeting those objectives.

Task	Action	Officers Responsible	Target Date
1. The implementation of the Equalities Standard for Local Government.	Equality implementation group to be established to meet on a 4 month basis	Those officers appointed to the group	2005/06
2. Review & Prioritise Departmental Service Plans with reference to equality issues where they are relevant	Service Managers informed of the need to include these issues when assessing and drafting Service Plans	Business Unit Managers	Annually
3. Ensure the Race Relations Act legislation and associated codes of practice are followed in the recruitment and selection process.	Monitor complaints from applicants, review procedures	Personnel Manager	2005/06
4. Provide interpretation and translating service and corporate literature available in different languages	Provide information in varied format where necessary	Copeland Direct / Communications Officer	Where necessary
5. Ensure that communications are inclusive and accessible	Corporate documents etc published with due regard to race issues	As directed by Business Managers	2006/07
6. Monitor complaints by different ethnic groups and to specifically involve ethnic groups in consultation processes.	Record and monitor relevant PI's	Communications/Complaints Officer	Annual Review
7. Monitor and publish results on Performance Indicators in Section 5. (e)	Collation and analyses of PI's through Best Value Performance Plan	Policy Unit	Annually or as directed
8. Staff in front line services to receive training on equalities issues	Customer care processes to include equality issues	Equality and Diversity Group	2005

9. Improve access to leisure and cultural activities	Workshops with communities to be investigated, Best Value review findings to identify improvements	tbc	
10. Ensuring third party contractors or affiliates employed by or in partnership with the Council and have an equality policy in operation	To be reviewed as part of the letting of contracts procedure or affiliation process to the Council	tbc	2005/06

8. Glossary/Appendices

'Guidance for Local Authorities', June 1999, December 1999:	IDeA, EO, LGA
'Auditing for Equality', Dec 1999:	CRE
'Generic Equality Standard' 2000	CRE
'Paved with good intentions'; research briefing 6, March 2001	LGA
'Equality in Practice' survey Feb 2001	CRE, EO, LGA
'One year On' authority responses Sep 2000	LARRIE
'Implications for Race Equality' March 1999	CRE

Glossary:	CRE	<i>'Commission for Racial Equality'</i>
	LGA	<i>'Local Government Association'</i>
	EO	<i>'Employers Organisation'</i>
	IDeA	<i>'Improvement & Development Agency'</i>
	LARRIE	<i>'Local Authority Race Relations Information Exchange'</i>

Web-sites for above organisations:

www.lg-employers.gov.uk

www.lga.gov.uk

www.ida.gov.uk

www.cre.gov.uk