

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME
Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
August 2005

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Foreword

Rossendale has a vibrant and diverse community base. It has a population of 65,669, centred on four main areas of Bacup, Haslingden, Rawtenstall and Whitworth. The strength of the Valley is in its diversity, in relation to culture, population and geography. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 provides a focus for the Council's ongoing work to ensure services are provided on an equal basis to all members of the community and there is equality of opportunity for all employees.

This Race Equality Scheme sets out the Council's role in securing racial equality across the Rossendale Valley. This is a challenging process and we recognize there is a lot of work to do.

This scheme outlines the Council's long term commitment to racial equality. It is important therefore, that we spend time developing an effective framework on which to build effective consultation and communication mechanisms with all the Communities we serve.

We welcome your views on, or assistance with the work that is planned.

Signed



Owen Williams
Chief Executive

If you would like to comment on this document please contact

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Large print, audio and translated copies of this document can be made available on request.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Race Equality Scheme (the Scheme) explains how Rossendale Borough Council (the Council) will respond to the general and the specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000¹ (the Act), building on its ongoing commitment to securing racial equality in both service delivery and in employment.

1.2 The general duty under the Act requires that the Council in carrying out its functions must:

- eliminate unlawful race discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups

1.3 The specific duties require the Council to:

- monitor existing functions and policies for any adverse impact and act on the results
- assess the potential impact of proposed policies and consult on the findings
- publish results of monitoring, impact assessments and consultations
- ensure all sections of the community have access to information and services of the Council
- train staff responsible for managing and delivering the Race Equality Scheme in the requirements of the general and the specific duties
- explain in the Race Equality Scheme what the organisation will do to set recruitment and representation targets to increase diversity at all levels in the organisation to include:
 - current employees/elected members
 - applicants for jobs, training and promotion
 - employees/elected members receiving training
 - employee appraisals
 - people involved in grievances and disciplinaries
 - those who stop working for the Council

The Scheme will be used to measure whether the Council is taking account of the needs of all its residents and employees. This document will be a 'living' document and will be revised and updated as new needs and priorities are identified.

In developing this Scheme, the Council is conscious that race equality issues do not stand in isolation from other equality issues and elsewhere, reference is made to the development of the Equalities Strategy for Rossendale focusing upon race, gender, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation.

¹ The detailed wording of the Act is set out at Appendix A

The Council has agreed to adopt a national Equality Standard for Local Government. This initiative will cover race, gender, and disability. Implementing the national Equality Standards will assist the Council in meeting its duties with regard to race equality.

2. Race Equality values, principles and standards

- 2.1 We are committed to our role in promoting racial equality through eliminating unlawful racial discrimination through promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations. Our Race Equality values are embedded within the Equal Opportunities Policy, which aims to ensure:

“That no person shall receive less favourable treatment on any grounds such as disability, ethnic origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, locality, property, birth or other status.”

- 2.2 The Council is committed to ensuring that institutional racism and discrimination in general, does not exist within Rossendale. Institutionalised racism is described by the Lawrence Inquiry as

“the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.”

3. Our Race Equality Strategic Aims

- 3.1 Our race equality scheme incorporates, as its strategic aims, the requirements:
1. to ensure we enable all customers from ethnic minority communities have equal opportunity in terms of access, treatment and delivery of council services.
 2. to ensure we give equal opportunities in employment, training and promotion to people from the minority ethnic communities
 3. to identify, challenge and take appropriate action on racist attitudes, remarks and behaviour
 4. to establish a common standard for assessing contractors compliance with the various discrimination acts. We will develop model arrangements with our contractors, sub-contractors and encourage them to implement equality practices that seek to promote positive action towards creating a level playing field for members of the community.
 5. to support the development of strong, secure, self reliant, self confident communities free from unlawful and unfair discrimination
 6. to work towards a diverse workforce representative of the community we serve
 7. to ensure that the Council’s commitment to race equality is reflected in all communications and publicity
 8. to value diversity so that we can improve our ability to deliver better services

9. to raise awareness of our commitment to equality

4. **Assessing the relevance of our functions to promoting race equality**

The Race Equality Scheme was initially adopted by the Council in 2002. Following its implementation an Equalities Implementation Group has been established. In addition, systems of monitoring have been put into place and a program of training initiated.

Within the Council, Equalities has been at a very developmental phase. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires us to assess all of our functions and policies (including proposed policies) that are relevant to the duties imposed by the Act and prioritise them for review based on the greatest relevance to the Act.

As the Council has travelled on its journey of self improvement it has been recognised that many of the policies in place have been inadequate. Consequently the Council's priority is to assess its new proposed policies as part of the policy formulation process. In addition the following methodology has been adopted to assess existing policies and functions:

High Priority 2005/06

Customer facing areas of service and those functions that are relevant to all or part of the general duty, and for which there is some substantial evidence that different racial groups are (or could be) differently affected, or about which there is public concern, should have the highest priority for mainstreaming race equality and be addressed in the first year.

Medium Priority 2006/07

Those functions that are relevant to all or part of the general duty, and for which there is little or some evidence that different racial groups are (or could be) differently affected, or about which there is public concern, should have medium term priority for mainstreaming race equality and be addressed in the second year.

Low Priority 2007

All other functions should be scheduled for mainstreaming race equality in the third year. Some functions (for example, IT Services) may have very limited relevance to the general duty – except of course, in employment, but they should still be addressed and reconsidered every three years.

- 4.1 Within the 2005/06 we will focus on those functions we have assessed as highly relevant due to their high customer contact and new policies currently being developed. In many of these services systems are in place and much work has been done to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations. We will review this work and share good practice within other services to address remaining challenges.

4.2 Appendix B shows the Council services and the relevant Directorate. Each Directorate has been assessed according to the relevance of each function in relation to race relation, taking into consideration:

- the impact on the public and/or employees or have consequences for them
- evidence or reason to believe that some racial groups could be differently affected
- how much evidence is available
- public concern that this function or policy is operated in a discriminatory manner
- evidence of initiatives that counter allegations or perceptions of racial discrimination

5. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of our proposed policies on the promotion of race equality

5.1 All Committee reports identify the implications of their proposals on equal opportunities including racial equality. Those reports include results of any consultation on their proposals (where applicable) and details of consultees and their organisations.

5.2 We have developed training and guidance for Managers on assessing the impact of service plans and new policies and on undertaking relevant consultation.

5.3 Our existing consultation arrangements will be developed to specifically consult on the race relations implications of new policies. We will work with and alongside the ethnic minority communities in monitoring the effectiveness of our consultation.

6. Monitoring our policies for adverse impact on the promotion of race equality

6.1 Our performance management systems include monitoring ethnic origin of employees, racial incidents reported to and within the Council and those which require further action.

6.2 As part of our Best Value Performance process, targets will be established relating to the general duty to promote race equality and these will be incorporated into service plans. The management performance of these targets will be reported to our Overview & Scrutiny Committee

6.3 We will review our monitoring data annually and report it in the annual Best Value Performance Plan.

7. Publishing results of consultations, assessment and monitoring

7.1 The Scheme will be made available in printed form and other formats on request

7.2 We will make publicly available the outcome of any race equality impact assessments, consultation and monitoring we undertake

7.3 The public will be informed about the availability of this information through:

- Best Value Performance Plan
- Grapevine (staff newsletter)
- Council Website
- Press releases
- Public notices

8. Ensuring public access to information and services

8.1 We want to ensure that everyone has access to information as and when they need it. Our Communications Strategy will set out the Council's commitment to communication with all members of the community, employees, members and partners.

8.2 We will provide information in printed form and via the Council website. On request, we will provide translations into minority ethnic languages, large print, or on tape. We are currently reviewing other formats in which we can communicate with all members of the community.

9. Employee/Member Training

9.1 There is a training programme in place which will ensure all employees/members have a greater awareness of the implications of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and Equal Opportunities.

10. Workforce Data

10.1 The Council seeks to have a diverse workforce representative of the diverse community it serves. To work towards achieving this, the Council has set the following targets in respect of equality in employment in addition to targets associated with the Equality Standard and the duty to report Race Equality:

Indicator	2004/05 Outturn	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Equality Standard for Local Government	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	Level 3
Duty to report Race Equality	52.63%	57.89%	63.16%	68.42%
Top 5% of earners from Ethnic Minorities	4.99%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Ethnic minority representation in the workforce	1.25%	3.00%	3.50%	3.80%

10.2 Monitoring arrangements are in place which include:

- Number of staff in post by ethnic origin, department, grade

- Applicants for jobs at application, short-listing and appointment stages and by department and grade
- Employees involved in disciplinary procedures
- Staff receiving training
- Employees involved in grievance procedures
- Staff leaving employment of the Council
- Dismissals

11. Complaints Procedure

11.1 The Authority has established methods of allowing individuals to complain:

- The Council's Grievance Procedure (for employees of the Authority)
- The Council's Complaints Procedure

12. Review

12.1 The Council recognizes that priorities change and this may affect the urgency of reviewing some functions. The Action Plan timetable will be reviewed annually in light of new policies, revised legislation, experience and evidence of unfair or potential for unfair discrimination becoming apparent where it is not identified initially.

Appendix A

A Race Equality Scheme should show how the public authority plans to meet its statutory duties under section 71 (1) & sections 2(2) & (3) of the Race Relations Act (Statutory Duties) Order 2001 which says:

- 2 (2) *“A Race Equality Scheme shall state, in particular –*
- a. those of its functions and policies, or proposed policies, which that person has assessed as relevant to its performance of the duty imposed by section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act; and*
 - b. that person’s arrangements for –*
 - (i) assessing and consulting on the likely impact of its proposed policies on the promotion of race equality;*
 - (ii) monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality;*
 - (iii) publishing the results of such assessments and consultation as are mentioned in sub-paragraph (i) and of such monitoring as is mentioned in sub-paragraph (ii);*
 - (iv) ensuring public access to information and services which it provides; and*
 - (v) training staff in connection with the duties imposed by section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act and this Order.*
- 2 (3) *Such a person shall, within a period of three years from 31st May 2002, and within each further period of three years, review the assessment referred to in paragraph (2)a”.*

The specific duties on employment are covered in Sections 5 (1) (2) and (3) of the Race Relations Act (Statutory Duties) Order 2001, which state the following:

- 5 (1) *“A person to which this article applies shall,*
- a. before 31st May 2002, have in place arrangements for fulfilling, as soon as is reasonably practicable, its duties under paragraph (2); and*
 - b. fulfil those duties in accordance with such arrangements.*
- 5 (2) *It shall be the duty of such a person to monitor, by reference to the racial groups to which they belong,*
- a. the numbers of –*
 - (i) staff in post, and*
 - (ii) applicants for employment, training and promotion, from each such group, and*
 - b. where that person has 150 or more full-time staff, the numbers of staff from each such group who*
 - (i) receive training;*
 - (ii) benefit or suffer detriment as a result of its performance assessment procedures;*
 - (iii) are involved in grievance procedures;*
 - (iv) are the subject of disciplinary procedures or*
 - (v) cease employment with that person.*
- 5(3) *Such a person shall publish annually the results of its monitoring under paragraph (2)”*

Appendix B – RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

Assessment of Functions' relevance to Race Equality

Function	Relevance to the Scheme (Priority)
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH Nuisances: Building Defects Drainage Clean Dwellings Housing Property Checks Food & Hygiene Abandoned Vehicles Dog Warden Pollution Control Contaminated Land Pest Control Mgt of Rossendale Market	Medium Medium Medium High High Medium Medium Medium Low Low Low
HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICES Estate Management –NH Offices Tenant Involvement Adaptations Buildings and Repairs Housing Capital Buildings Programme Homelessness Housing Needs/Lettings Income Generation Team	High High Medium Medium Medium High High High
STRATEGIC HOUSING Housing Needs and Market Assessment ME Housing Policy Neighbourhood Management Elevate Housing Grants/Assistance Adaptations Empty Homes Policy Energy Efficiency	High High High High High Medium Medium Low
COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS Local Strategic Partnership Young People Social Inclusion Community Development REGENERATION	High High High High

Economic Development Regeneration SRB	High High Low
CUSTOMER SERVICES & E-GOV Housing Benefits Housing Revenues Reception Switchboard Media Relations Consultation Income generation Team	High High High High High High High
CULTURAL SERVICES Tourism Tourism Development and Management Tourist Marketing Tourist Information Centre	Low Medium Medium Medium
HUMAN RESOURCES Recruitment & Selection Employee Training and Development Member Training and Development Health and Safety Payroll Services BVPI Monitoring Race Relations Monitoring Advice to Managers	High High High Low Low High High High
DEMOCTRATIC SERVICES Member Services Reprographics Electoral Services Contracts and Conveyance Advice and Litigation Land Charges	Low Low High Low Low Low
STREET SCENE AND LIVEABILITY Refuse Collection Recycling Grounds Maintenance Street Cleaning Public Toilets Cleaning Community Safety Emergency Planning	Medium Medium Low Low Low High Low

Licensing : Taxi, Liquor and Entertainment Cemeteries Highways Residual Function Traffic Enforcement Street Naming	Medium Low Low Low High
CONTRACT SERVICES Rossendale Leisure Street Lighting	High Low
SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT Economic Regeneration Development Control Building Control Facilities Management Local Development Framework	Medium Medium Medium Low Medium
FINANCE Insurance and Risk Management Fraud Investigation Debt Collection	Medium Medium Medium

To decide how relevant a particular service is to the Equalities study, the following questions should be asked:

- 1) What is the purpose of the function? Who is it intended to benefit? How will they benefit?
- 2) Is there public concern (especially amongst black and minority ethnic communities) that certain functions or policies are discriminatory or racist or potentially disadvantage people?
- 3) How much evidence do you have – none, a little, some, or a lot (for example from research, consultation, complaints or ethnic monitoring) of this?
- 4) Are there areas where there could be a direct or indirect unequal impact on different groups? Consider whether any unequal effect amounts to adverse impact on certain groups or unlawful discrimination.
- 5) Is the function likely to be the subject of complaints and grievances under the provisions of the act?
- 6) How does this function affect different groups in the community we serve?
- 7) Which of the three parts of the general duty – eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity, and promoting good race relations – is relevant to this function?

Is there any reason to believe that people from minority groups are being, or could be, adversely affected by this function? Which groups do this function affect?

Appendix C

ACTION PLAN TO DELIVER RACE EQUALITY IN ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
2005 – 2008
AT 25 NOVEMBER 2005

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
Leadership and Corporate Commitment					
Establish an Equalities Group	Deputy Chief Exec	Head of HR		Implementation Group established	Yes
Identify a Member lead for Equalities	Deputy Chief Exec	Head of HR		Councillor Steen	Yes
Identify a Chair of the Equalities Group	Deputy Chief Exec	Head of HR		Deputy Chief Executive	Yes
Consultation and Community Development and Scrutiny					
JCC to sign Equal Opportunities Policy	Head of HR		July 2005	JCC made commitment to promotion of Equalities.	Yes
Consult through the LSP via the Community Cohesion Working Group	Head of HR		January 2006		

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
Develop a community and engagement strategy. Identify local groups and representative organisations. Schedule meetings and outline rationale for selection of groups to be consulted.	Head of Community and Partnerships	Head of HR	2006	Partnership Business Plan Groups identified and consulted with revised RES	
Include and engage ethnic minority groups in all consultations	Head of Economic Regeneration and Spatial Development, Head of Community and Partnerships, Head of Customer Services and E-Govt, Head of StreetScene and Liveability		Ongoing		

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
All policies and procedures to include Impact Assessment. Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be advised of their role in relation to Impact Assessments.	Head of HR	Heads of Service	November 2005	Head of HR attended Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting 15 November 2005. Impact Assessment agreed and process in place. RES agreed at Exec 25.Nov.05	
Include targets in relation to Equalities in Business Plans	Head of HR		March 2006	During 2005 all Heads of Service established a commitment to Equalities within Business Plans. Initiate target setting for 2006/07.	
Business Plans will make reference to equality actions	Line Managers	Heads of Service			Yes
The Report Template in relation to Management and Committee Reports will be amended so reports have to address the impact of decisions on the ethnic minority communities	Head of Legal & Democratic Services	Admin Team		Impact Assessment been introduced in relation to all new policies and procedures.	Yes

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
All monitoring reports detailing information in relation to each area of service will be circulated to the Management Team and to Committee every six months	Head of HR	Heads of Service		Six monthly. Attended August 2005. Due to attend February 2006.	Process established
Service Delivery and Customer Care					
Establish a strategy in relation to monitoring of customers. Each area of service will identify who their customers are, utilising a process of monitoring or some other mechanism	Head of HR		End of February 2006		
Monitor complaints from customers in relation to ethnicity	Head of Customer Services and E-Govt		October 2005		Yes
Each area of service, as part of the Business Planning process, to identify policies they will impact assess on an annual basis.	Heads of Service		End March 2006		
Ensure Procurement Strategy addresses issue of Equalities.	Head of Finance			Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting 15 November 2005.	Yes
Develop guidelines to ensure implementation of strategy does not have negative impact on minority groups.	Head of Finance		End March 2006		

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
Ensure new One Stop Shop/Call Centre has access to interpreters/translations, appropriate signage/information in community languages	Head of Customer Services and E-Govt		November 2005		
Upon request, to be able to provide a summary of a document in other community languages	Assistant Media Officer				Yes
Upon request, to be able to provide an interpreter for community languages	Assistant Media Officer				Yes
Equalities and accessibility issues to be built into the Web Development Plan	Head of Customer Services				Yes
Procurement to have a pre-qualification questionnaire to ensure that companies that we deal with have equalities standards within their workforce	Head of Finance		Ongoing	Confirmed re Revenues and Benefits Partnership.	
E-take up questionnaire to be issued with equalities/ethnicity paper to assess which social groups we are capturing for e-take up and how we can widen the take up to hard to reach groups	Head of Customer Services		December 2005		
Equalities to be included in monthly team briefing	Heads of Service		January 2006	Ongoing.	

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
Employment and Training					
HR will use appropriate media to ensure vacancies reach a wider audience	Principal Personnel Officer	Head of HR		All vacancies advertised internally/externally unless individuals at risk.	Yes
HR will publicise the role of the Council as an Equal Opportunity Employer	Principal Personnel Officer	Assistant Media Officer	December 2005	Statement included on all adverts.	
HR will ensure that all vacancies will be advertised internally or externally unless they are required to facilitate alternative employment or redeployment	Personnel Officer	Head of HR		HR Team monitoring.	Yes

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
HR will review recruitment process, including employment publicity and job advertising, and actively encouraging applications from currently disadvantaged groups	Head of HR		November 2005	Recruitment and selection code updated and streamlined November 2005. On-line recruitment available on website. Employment publicity and job advertising to be reviewed following conclusion of change programme in Street Scene and Liveability. Positive action not being undertaken at this time.	
HR will analyse and produce reports in relation to applications and appointments in relation to potential employees from the ethnic minority community	Personnel Officer			Reports submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee August 2005. Next report February 2006.	Yes

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
The Council has utilised the London Scheme for Job Evaluation as part of its organisational review. As part of a wider strategy, the Council is committed to a full pay and job evaluation review	Head of HR	Heads of Service	31 March 2007	Support currently being identified. Training confirmed for Trade Union and management representatives.	
All employees will receive training in race equality and discriminatory practice where the Race Equality Scheme and Strategy will be circulated	Head of HR	Line Managers/ Heads of Service		Training commissioned via Keith Burrell.	Yes
All line managers will receive training on impact assessment	Head of HR	Line Managers		Individual in each service area received training on Impact Assessment.	Yes
All Members will receive training on their legal obligations in relation to Equalities and the role of Committees	Democratic Services Manager	Head of HR	September 2005	Role identified to Overview and Scrutiny Committee November 2005. Training for members commissioned January/February 2006.	

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	PARTNER	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS	COMPLETED
Employees who have a direct customer interface will attend training in relation to Customer Contact	Head of HR	Line Managers/ Heads of Service		Training commissioned through Hear First, Keith Burrell and Customer Focus.	Yes
At least one member of staff on all recruitment episodes to be trained in recruitment and selection with an EO element	Head of HR	Line Managers		Recruitment and Selection Code updated. Training commissioned via NW Employers. WEF 2006, Greengage.	Yes
All employees will be trained in customer care with an element of equal opportunities	Head of HR	Line Managers		Training commissioned through LCC. WEF 2006, Greengage.	Yes