



RACE EQUALITY SCHEME II



UPDATE and
MOVING TO A
SINGLE EQUALITY
SCHEME

preventing
protecting
responding





RACE EQUALITY SCHEME II

(UPDATE AND MOVING TO A SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME)

20th November 2008

INTRODUCTION

Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service produced a second Race Equality Scheme (RES II) in November 2005.

The purpose of this report is to update on what progress and outcomes have been achieved in the third and final year in line with the objectives set out in the Action Plan.

In addition, the update report focuses on the next step for race equality and explains how the currently developing Single Equality Scheme will cover those areas and other key diversity strands both in legal terms and our own organisational needs and values.

The Single Equality Scheme is planned for release March 2009.

THE EXISTING RES II ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan was set out on 7 areas of objectives and outcomes and progress of delivery is listed below each one:

1. Development and delivery of RES II

- The scheme was delivered and endorsed by the Fire Board within the legal requirement time frame.
- Published copies were sent to identified public areas such as libraries, medical waiting rooms, other local authority services and targeted bme organisations.
- Feedback letters were encouraged.
- Access to the RES II was provided on our web pages.
- Managers were briefed on the content and importance of the document at meetings and lunchtime briefings.

2. Identifying policies relevant to race equality

- All policies considered relevant to race equality have been identified by relevant Managers.
- These have been published in Appendix B of RES II.

3. Assessing and consulting on potential impact of revised policies

- Equality Impact Assessment training has been provided in two training sessions to every Functional Manager and Service Delivery Manager on how to assess their policies

for potential impact on race - also including gender, age, sexuality, religious belief, gender reassignment and disability.

- Results of EIA`s provided for impact assessment.
- Provision of guidance to employees involved in external partnerships with bme groups.
- Review of existing suppliers on services with regard to race impact.
- Procurement policy developed in line with Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

4. Monitoring policies for adverse impact.

- Cultural Audit completed with feedback results and reports.
- Focus Group has been set up to address Cultural Audit issues.
- Action Plan formed.

5. Ensuring access to information and services by public

- Review of information services in different languages.
- Appointment of a dedicated BME Outreach Officer in January 2008 to carry out work on ethnic applicant attraction and community outreach work.
- Additional financial resources provided by Corporate Group to carry out improved Outreach work in line with RES II action points.

6. Training employees in RES and diversity issues

- Internal diversity trainers developed within the organisation.
- Training sessions and materials developed.
- Diversity training programme designed for all employees.
- Programme completed for all LBFRS employees.
- Training inputs reviewed utilising external verifiers.
- Further RES training carried out at lunchtime briefings.
- EIA training for all Functional Managers and Service Delivery Managers.
- Phase II Diversity Training being planned for 2008 in line with external consultants recommendations.

7. Employment monitoring by employers

- Provision of statistics in line with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 specific duties to the Corporate Group on the following areas :
 - Applicants for recruitment.
 - Employees in post.
 - Applicants for training.
 - Applicants for promotion.
 - Trained employees.
 - Employees involved in grievances.
 - Employees involved in discipline.
 - Resignations.
 - Dismissals from Service.

MOVING TO A SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME (RACE / DISABILITY / GENDER)

Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service is in the process of developing a Single Equality Scheme which will overarch seven main diversity strands of:

- Race
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Belief
- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Disability

All 3 Equality Schemes in use in LBFRS will be superseded by the Single Equality Scheme and will be outcomes based in terms of the action plan.

The key difference between the existing 3 Schemes and the Single Equality Scheme will be focussed on the outcomes laid out in the Single Outcome Agreements document as opposed to a loose local action plan.

OTHER ONGOING CONSIDERATIONS

In considering the completed work delivered in the 3 years, it should also be noted there are areas of work ongoing which have still to be completed in line with the Action Plan.

This work includes :

- Developing an internal and external website for EIA work.
- Monitoring effectiveness of managers EIA work so far.

- Ensuring all identified policies are EIA.
- Encourage more cross-functional approach to EIA.

Ross Wynn.

20th November 2008.