

North Ayrshire

Race Equality Scheme



NORTH AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL

**North Ayrshire
Race Equality Scheme**

November 2005

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1. Foreword

North Ayrshire Council recognises the tremendous benefits of the diversity within our area. The Council is endeavouring to ensure that it meets the needs of all of its communities and to deliver its services in a way which meets these needs. It has as its vision an inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. In addition to providing such opportunities, the Council will work to assist in overcoming barriers accessing its services and will do all it can to tackle discrimination and harassment wherever it occurs.

This Race Equality Scheme builds on the initial Scheme for 2002/05 and describes our arrangements for taking forward this work.

The recent survey of needs carried out by the Ayrshire Race Equality Partnership has highlighted some of the key issues for public authorities, particularly in relation to access to information and services. As a Council, we will respond to these issues and will work together with our ethnic minority communities and community planning partners to promote race equality throughout North Ayrshire.

David O'Neill
Leader
North Ayrshire Council
November 2005

2. Introduction to North Ayrshire

The North Ayrshire Race Equality Scheme sets out the Council's arrangements to meet its general duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between people of different racial groups. It also includes information on the Council's arrangements for complying with specific duties which it has as an employer.

The Council as an Education Authority has specific duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and these are dealt with separately in the North Ayrshire Educational Services Race Equality Policy and its associated Action Plan.

This Scheme has been developed from the initial Race Equality Scheme 2002/05 published by the Council in November 2002. The Scheme has been informed by:-

- The original Scheme and the Annual Reports produced on implementation of the Scheme over the last three years;
- The CRE's Code of Practice on the duty to promote race equality in Scotland;
- General advice and assistance offered by CRE on the review of race equality schemes;
- The recent needs assessment survey of the ethnic minority communities in Ayrshire which has provided useful information and a better understanding of their needs.

Section 2 of the Scheme describes the composition of the local population and the local organisations representing the ethnic minority communities in the area. This links to the Council's support to communities and its promotion of good race relations. It includes information on the strategic documents, such as the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, which link to the Scheme and provides details of the various partnerships engaged in this work.

In Section 3 there is some background information on the findings of the needs assessment survey. Section 4 gives information on some of the progress made in North Ayrshire since the publication of the first scheme in November 2002.

Section 5 of the Scheme explains the processes involved in assessing the relevance to race equality of the Council's functions and policies and describes the comprehensive review which was undertaken across all Council services. It gives information on the way in which these have been prioritised and on the action plans which have been developed as a result of this exercise. This section also describes arrangements for the ongoing assessment and monitoring of its functions and policies, how it will publish the results of its assessment and monitoring; arrangements for access to information on services and its training arrangements.

The Scheme therefore provides a clear picture of the Council's commitment to promoting race equality throughout all of its services and in its employment activities.

2.1 Profile

North Ayrshire is situated approximately 25 miles south west of Glasgow. Its total area is some 340 square miles, which is almost equally divided between the mainland and the islands of Arran and Cumbrae. It includes both rural and urban areas and its ethnic minority population is spread throughout its towns and villages.

The Census results from 2001 indicate that the ethnic minority population comprises 924 residents, 0.7% of the total population of 135,800 within North Ayrshire. This compares to the national average figure for Scotland of 2%. The predominant ethnic group within North Ayrshire is the Chinese community, with the next largest being the Indian community.

The Census statistics have been further broken down to give the numbers and percentage of the ethnic minority communities within the three main areas of North Ayrshire:

- the Garnock Valley, North Coast, Arran and Cumbrae;
- the Three Towns Area of Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston; and
- the Irvine, Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside area.

Ethnic Minority Population in North Ayrshire by Geographic Area (2001)

Ethnic Group (Number)	Garnock Valley, North Coast, Arran & Cumbrae		Three Towns		Irvine, Kilwinning, Dreghorn & Springside		North Ayrshire	
	%	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos
ALL PEOPLE	100	47625	100	31901	100	56291	100	135817
White Scottish	89.3	42522	94.8	30227	93.9	52850	92.5	125599
Other White British	8.0	3821	3.1	999	3.9	2184	5.2	7004
White Irish	0.7	356	1.0	319	0.7	383	0.8	1058
Other White	1.4	683	0.6	178	0.6	359	0.9	1220
Indian	0.1	48	0.2	37	0.2	139	0.2	224
Pakistani	0.1	36	0.1	23	0.1	35	0.1	94
Bangladeshi	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Other South Asian	0.0	12	0.1	8	0.1	31	0.0	51
Chinese	0.1	36	0.3	35	0.3	172	0.2	243
Caribbean	0.0	5	0.0	3	0.0	9	0.0	17
African	0.0	16	0.0	5	0.0	10	0.0	31
Black Scottish or Other Black	0.0	5	0.0	4	0.0	6	0.0	15
Any Mixed Background	0.1	59	0.1	44	0.1	82	0.1	185
Other Ethnic Group	0.1	26	0.1	19	0.1	31	0.1	76

From the above table it can be seen that the predominant ethnic groups tend to reside largely in the Irvine area of North Ayrshire, with much smaller populations in the other two areas.

The Council has two Travelling People sites, one at Redburn in Irvine which has pitches for 16 families and one with 8 pitches on the Isle of Arran.

The Council's Black and Ethnic Minority Development Worker works with the local ethnic minority and the travelling community to promote equality of access to Social, Educational, Housing and Health Board Services.

This work incorporates:-

- promoting and raising awareness of current and proposed legislation as it affects black and ethnic minorities;
- raising awareness and assisting agencies in the provision of anti discriminatory training;
- representing the Council at appropriate black and ethnic forums;
- assisting in the development of advocacy services for the black and ethnic minority community;
- promoting and developing interpreting services;
- promoting health issues which will improve the lifestyles of black and ethnic minority citizens;
- promoting the development of services for travelling people as an ethnic group.

Based in the Social Services Community Development Team, the worker has responsibility for the Council's interpreting and translation services. His work has allowed the Council to forge closer links in recent years with the ethnic minority and travelling people's communities.

It has involved work to support individuals and the three main minority communities in North Ayrshire (the Chinese, Indian and Pakistani communities), primarily through assistance offered to local groups. Work is also underway with the Thai community, the Filipino community, the Black African community and the travelling community. This includes funding support for specific projects, as well as practical support and advice.

Kat O Chinese Community Group

The group continues to develop a specific service to the Chinese community with the support of a member of the community development team. A capacity building programme has been delivered to members of the Chinese community in management skills training. It is also actively recruiting members to support its development.

The Chinese community's information and advice centre in Irvine has acquired charitable status which will widen their access to funding sources. Social Services grant aid is helping to support the Centre. A steady increase in the numbers of users to the centre for advice and information, in particular on welfare rights, has been reported. The welfare rights officer works closely with interpreters to provide benefits checks. The library service provides an outreach library service in the centre where books in Cantonese and Mandarin, as well as Chinese newspapers, are being stocked for easy access by the community.

Chinese Elders Services

A community development worker involved in older people services will support the community in examining an appropriate strategy to develop specific Chinese elderly services, including culturally sensitive lunch club facilities, as the ageing population in the community is increasing. The current provision to the Chinese elders needs further development.

Kat O Chinese traditional lion dance group

This group was established in 2004 with an aim of raising awareness of Chinese culture and of using Chinese martial art as a vehicle to promote better health and community relations. It has received social service grants to support its development.

Oi Kwan Chinese Womens group

The group has been actively involved in the promotion of the social welfare of Chinese women and children. It is at present keen to develop a telephone helpline to the Chinese community in Ayrshire and a quarterly newsletter.

Ayrshire Sikh community group

The development with this group has been slow due to the many demands on members of the committee. A regular contact is being maintained. The group has recently expressed interest in organising Divali, a festival in the Sikh calendar.

Pakistani community

The Islamic cultural centre and women's group in East Ayrshire are involved with the worker in identifying development opportunities in North Ayrshire.

Black African and Caribbean community

Work is continuing to encourage members of these communities to meet and to take forward the idea of establishing a representative group in North Ayrshire. A member of the community has recently participated in the meeting of the local Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring Group.

Filipino/Scot Trust and Thai community

These communities continue to operate in providing mutual support to their members and to meet informally.

Travellers/gypsies community

The Redburn gypsy/travellers' site is located at Kilwinning Road, Irvine. It was constructed in 1989 on an earlier site traditionally use by gypsy/travellers as an area for unauthorised encampments and comprises 16 pitches. The Redburn site has traditionally enjoyed a high, and stable, occupancy level.

On site is an office to house a full-time site manager who is able to provide services to travellers, including the allocation of vacant pitches, to deal with tenancy issues and to provide a range of advice and assistance, including access to benefits and welfare services.

The Redburn Community Project Working Group has been established and has included some attendance by gypsy/travellers. The group has its own action plan and is working through the actions to implement the plan. This includes proposals to:-

- Provide classroom/community facilities on Redburn Site
- Hold a multi-agency open week to promote services to gypsy/travellers
- Identify gypsy/travellers needs for services
- Compile & maintain a database of gypsy travellers in North Ayrshire
- Raise awareness of the Redburn project among all gypsies/travellers in North Ayrshire
- Encourage gypsy/travellers representatives to join the Redburn Community Project Working group
- Review & develop allocation policy and procedures for the Redburn site

The Council has been successful in securing funding of £117,000 in 2005/06 from the Scottish Executive to upgrade the facilities and develop services at the site.

A temporary provision of a port-a-cabin has been made on site and has allowed the provision of community and welfare services to progress. This includes Adult Literacy services where a part-time worker has been employed through grant aided funding. It has been identified that there is a need as a first priority to build on this temporary provision with a permanent community provision and to develop play opportunities for young gypsy/travellers.

2.2 Strategic Links

The Race Equality Scheme links to a number of key strategic documents which also reflect the Council's commitment to promoting race equality.

North Ayrshire Community Plan

The key strategic document guiding the Council and its partners' activities is the North Ayrshire Community Plan 2000-2010 which is currently under review. The Plan includes as a strategic aim a commitment to Equal Opportunities:-

To uphold the principle of equality of opportunity and promote measures to reduce inequalities.

Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision, mission and values to achieve a socially inclusive community where individuals have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. This Plan is also currently under review and a consultation exercise is under way on a renamed draft "Council Plan".

The existing Corporate Plan makes explicit the set of values governing the actions of Councillors and employees. Included within these and underpinning the Council's activities as a fundamental belief and a community aim is Equality. The Plan confirms the Council's commitment to seek equality in all areas of influence to enable disadvantaged sections of the community to enjoy equality of opportunity. This commitment is retained in the draft Council Plan.

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy was revised and approved in 2005. This policy built on the previous Equal Opportunities and Service Provision and Equal Opportunities and Employment Policies adopted by the Council. It updates and integrates these into one coherent equality policy for all of the Council's activities. The Policy makes a clear reference to the Race Equality Scheme which links to the Policy and to its arrangements to promote race equality in North Ayrshire. The Policy stresses that the Race Equality Scheme should be read in conjunction with it.

Race Equality Statement

North Ayrshire Council has approved a Race Equality Statement which links to the new Equal Opportunities Policy. The Statement reaffirms:-

North Ayrshire is committed to promoting equality and to tackling discrimination on the basis of the person's colour, racial group, ethnic or national origin, marital status, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, employment status, trade union activity, political or religious belief.

The Council aims to provide its services to meet the varied needs and expectations of all its communities and is committed to ensuring race equality in all areas of its work.

As an employer, the Council seeks to ensure fairness in its employment practices and to achieve and maintain a workforce which broadly reflects the diversity of its communities. When contracting to provide services the Council will ensure that its contractors share its commitment to these values.

In order to realise the Council's commitment to race equality, it will take all necessary steps to:-

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

Race Equality Policy: Educational Services

The Council's Educational Services Committee has approved a Race Equality Policy and this has been developed in conjunction with the Scheme. The Policy sets out Educational Services' arrangements to meet the specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. A detailed action plan has been approved in conjunction with the Policy and covers the following issues:-

- appropriate training in different sections of Educational Services, including curriculum and resources;
- the purchase and distribution of resources;
- the development of individual policies for schools.

Licensing Board Race Equality Scheme

The North Ayrshire Licensing Board has also approved a Race Equality Scheme which links to the Council's Scheme and sets out the Board's arrangements to meet the general and specific duties of the Act.

Mainstreaming

The Council is committed to the mainstreaming of equality issues into all of its activities, ensuring that race equality is systematically integrated into its everyday work.

The Council assesses its service improvements annually through its Service Planning process. Equality considerations must be taken into account by services when reviewing their service provision as part of this process. This is done to ensure that services and policies are fully sensitive to the diverse needs and experiences of the community.

The Council's Service Planning guidance requires that the key principles of its equal opportunities policies be integrated into all Service Plans and it stresses the importance of mainstreaming as a means of achieving better policy making and of involving groups and individuals who experience inequality and discrimination.

Procurement

The Council is also involved in contracting with a wide range of private companies and other organisations in delivering its services. It will ensure through its corporate governance procedures that it will meet the general and specific duties when any of the Council's functions or services are carried out by a private company or voluntary organisation under a contract or other agreement to it.

The Council's Standing Orders for Contracts require that when tendering and contracting with third parties, the Council will confirm with all potential suppliers that they comply with current legislation relating to equal opportunity.

The Council is developing its procurement strategy and equality considerations, including race equality, will form an important part of this strategy.

2.3 Partnerships

Partnership working with external agencies on race equality has helped to promote significant achievements such as the recent needs assessment survey. Internally, joint working between services has also provided useful benefits in information-sharing and in the development of corporate proposals e.g. for interpretation and translation services.

North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board

The Council is the lead partner on the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board. The Board considers issues relating to race equality and receives information on implementation of the Race Equality Scheme and associated matters.

Ayrshire Race Equality Partnership

There has been joint work across Ayrshire involving the three Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Boards. This has been co-ordinated through the Ayrshire Race Equality Partnership (AREP) which is made up of representatives from: -

- the three Ayrshire Councils;
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran;
- Strathclyde Police; and
- the Procurator Fiscal's Office.

AREP's main role is to develop a planning framework across the three Ayrshire authorities for the development of future services and delivery models to support the ethnic minority community. The key role of the Partnership is to provide a strategic, multi-agency approach to race equality work across Ayrshire.

Race Equality Officers Group

The Council's Race Equality Officers Group is responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of the Race Equality Scheme throughout the Council.

Corporate Policy Committee

The Council's Corporate Policy Committee, which is chaired by the Leader of the Council, has the key responsibility for all equality issues and has approved the Race Equality Scheme. The Committee receives reports on progress, including the Annual Report on implementation of the Race Equality Scheme and on monitoring information.

Safer Communities Thematic Group

There are a number of Thematic Groups under the auspices of the Community Planning Partnership Board, including a newly established Thematic Group on “Safer Communities”. The work of this Group incorporates racial harassment and reports are to be made to the Group on this issue by the North Ayrshire Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring Group (MARIM).

Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring Group (MARIM)

The primary responsibilities of the North Ayrshire MARIM Group are to: -

- examine all reports of racist incidents in a strategic, multi-agency manner;
- increase the level of confidence and reassurance in victims and potential victims of racist incidents;
- establish effective monitoring and reporting procedures of racist incidents;
- promote the anti-racist philosophy of all MARIM member agencies;
- involve all local agencies in combating racism;
- research local race issues to assess the needs of the minority ethnic communities;
- act in a co-ordinated manner to provide appropriate support to victims of racist incidents and, in particular, to provide immediate support in urgent circumstances.

There is also an Ayrshire MARIM Group. The links between this Group, the local MARIM Group and AREP are to be reviewed.

3. Needs Assessment Survey of Ethnic Minority Residents of Ayrshire

A needs assessment survey was carried out in 2004/05 to identify the service needs of ethnic minority communities across Ayrshire. The results of this survey have been used to inform this Scheme and a major launch event has been held to ensure a broader awareness of the survey's findings. These have also been reported to the three Community Planning Partnership Boards in Ayrshire, together with other organisations.

The survey was carried out through face to face interviews, issuing a standard questionnaire form and involved six sessional workers from the local ethnic minority community.

The survey found that:-

- The overwhelming service requirement for the Chinese community across the three local authorities is for interpreters and the provision of information in minority languages, particularly Cantonese;
- The main requirement for the Muslim community is essentially appropriate facilities, such as single sex swimming and gyms, access to community centres, and grants to support religious events;
- In terms of community safety, most ethnic minority people are primarily concerned about young people hanging around neighbourhoods and the misuse of drugs and alcohol. For the whole of Ayrshire 48 per cent of people stated that young people hanging around was a major concern, while 41 per cent listed drugs and alcohol as a key concern;
- Thirty per cent of ethnic minority people in Ayrshire are concerned about racism and 21 per cent state that they are concerned about harassment. Racism and harassment rank below vandalism, however, as an issue of concern;
- Thirty six per cent of all those surveyed state that they have suffered from discrimination at one time, mainly in the form of verbal racial abuse;
- Use of public services appears to be lower among ethnic minority people than the rest of the community, although there must be some question whether respondents mentioned the full range of public services that they accessed;
- One in four of those who responded to this study are not registered with a dentist;
- Six per cent of all respondents said that they had made a complaint about a public service and 14 per cent stated that they wished to make a complaint, but had been unsure how to do so;
- Broadly speaking, the ethnic minority communities are positive about considering a career in public services.

From the findings of the survey the Council will consider:-

- the development of improved interpreting and translation services;
- the development of culturally appropriate facilities; means of improving access to community centres; and grants to support cultural and religious events;
- additional measures to tackle racial harassment and discrimination through the “Safer Communities” Thematic Group;
- heightening awareness of the Council’s Customer Comments and Complaints procedures;
- better promotion of Council services to the ethnic minority community;
- the promotion of careers opportunities within the Council.

One of the most significant lessons learned from the survey was the very low response rate and the difficulties of engaging with ethnic minority residents throughout Ayrshire. Despite significant effort, there were only 147 questionnaires completed (representing just over 8% of the adult ethnic minority community in Ayrshire).

The report suggests that in Ayrshire the issues of engaging ethnic minority communities and community development are closely related and should be addressed together. It recommends that developing effective engagement may depend on establishing better communications and on building trust and capacity within ethnic minority communities. This is one of the most significant challenges facing the Council in this field.

4. Progress

Since the first Race Equality Scheme 2002/05 was published there has been significant progress in taking forward service developments to promote race equality:-

Black and Ethnic Minority Development Worker

The post of Black and Ethnic Minority Development Worker has been filled. This has made a significant impact in developing closer links with the local ethnic minority community and in improving the Council's understanding of issues for this community.

Needs Assessment Survey

The Council has supported, through the Ayrshire Race Equality Partnership, a needs assessment survey of the ethnic minority community in Ayrshire. Six sessional workers were recruited from the local ethnic minority community to carry out the survey and several useful lessons have been learned on consultation methods as a result of this exercise.

Educational Services

Community Learning and Development has provided various courses specifically for the ethnic minority community.

Travelling People's Site

There has been work with travelling people in connection with the literacy project at the Redburn Travellers site and investment in new facilities at this site.

Annual Reports

Monitoring information has been collated annually and incorporated into the annual report on the implementation of the Race Equality Scheme.

Partnership Support

Support has been offered to various partnerships in addressing issues relating to the ethnic minority community, for example, in relation to domestic abuse, housing issues and the consumer support network.

Impact Assessment

Various equality impact assessment toolkits have been tested and work to develop this process for the Council is ongoing.

Bridges Project

The Council has supported the Bridges Project which offers work shadowing opportunities to asylum seekers within both Educational Services and Personnel.

New Sikh Community Group

The Council assisted in hosting the launch of the Ayrshire Sikh Community group in November 2003.

Interpreting Service

The Interpretation Service has offered support to the Chinese community through its two part-time Cantonese interpreters.

5. Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

5.1 General and Specific Duties

The Race Relations Act 1976 has been amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and places a general duty on the Council when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need: -

- to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and harassment;
- to promote equality of opportunities; and
- to promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

The purpose of the new duty is to make race equality a central part of the Council's work by putting it at the core of all policy making, service delivery, regulation, and employment practice. The Council is committed to building these responsibilities into its existing activities.

The Council is required to publish a Race Equality Scheme which should:

- include a list of its functions and policies which have been assessed as being relevant to the general duty to promote race equality; and
- must set out its arrangements for
 - assessing and consulting on the likely impact of its proposed policies on the promotion of race equality;
 - monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality;
 - publishing the results of its assessments, consultation and monitoring;
 - making sure that the public has access to information and services which the Council provides; and
 - the training of staff on the general duty and the specific duties.

In addition, there are specific duties for the Council as an employer in relation to the monitoring of staff in post and applicants for jobs, promotion and training. The Council as an Education Authority also has specific duties which come under the Act.

This Race Equality Scheme sets out the Council's functions which have been identified as relevant to the new duty and describes the arrangements being made within North Ayrshire to comply with the general and specific duties set out in the Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Order 2002.

5.2 Relevant Functions and Policies

Since the publication of its first Race Equality Scheme, the Council has reviewed its functions and policies in terms of their relevance to the general duty to promote race equality.

This was carried out by each service of the Council using the CRE guidance and an assessment grid based on the CRE model was developed to assess the relevance of services' functions and policies to the general duty.

The grid was designed to ensure that services consider:-

- whether, and how, each of the three parts of the general duty – eliminating discrimination, promoting quality of opportunity and promoting good race relations – apply;
- whether there is evidence that racial groups could be differently affected;
- whether there is evidence, for example, from consultation research, complaints and monitoring, of relevance;
- whether there is any public concern about the function or policy in relation to race equality; and
- on this basis of this analysis, whether the function or policy had high, medium or low relevance.

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

ASSESSING FUNCTIONS AND POLICIES

How relevant are they to the general duty?

Questions to ask when assessing a function or policy

Is it relevant to the general duty?	How relevant is it?
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Function or Policy	Which of the three parts of the duty is it relevant to (if any)?	Is there evidence or reason to believe that some racial groups could be differently affected? (For example, higher or lower uptake of services.)	How much evidence do you have from, for example, consultation research, complaints and monitoring?	Is there any public concern about the function or policy in relation to race equality?	Priority (High, Medium or Low)
	1. Eliminating discrimination 2. Promoting equal opportunities 3. Promoting good race relations	0 No 1 Yes	0 None 1 A little 2 Some 3 A lot	0 None 1 A little 2 Some 3 A lot	

The information was then reviewed by the Council's Race Equality Officers Group and services produced action plans detailing their proposals and prioritised actions to address the functions regarded as having high relevance.

This review of functions and policies took account of the need to ensure that they were broken down into manageable elements of each service's activities. The feedback from the needs assessment survey was also of considerable value as part of this assessment process.

The assessment also took account of corporate policies of the Council and functions affecting a number of services.

Relevant Functions and Policies

Details of the functions and policies assessed as relevant and prioritised in terms of their relevance are attached at **Appendix 1** to the Scheme.

The relevance of these functions and policies will be reviewed every three years.

Race Equality Scheme Action Plan 2006-08

The action points developed from this Scheme detailing how it will be implemented is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Service Action Plans

Action plans have been developed by services to address those functions and policies identified as being highly relevant. Further plans will be produced over the next two years for those functions and policies considered to be of medium or low relevance.

5.3 Assessing and Consulting on Proposed Policies

The Council will assess and consult on the likely impact of its proposed policies on promoting race equality. In doing this is, it will seek to ensure that its policies will promote equal opportunities and good race relations. It will consult taking into account the principles of relevance and proportionality to ensure that its services are appropriately developed and that all necessary views are taken into account.

In this way, the Council seeks to build race equality into its policy-making processes and to ensure that its policies are open and transparent to all.

Having tested a number of toolkits designed to assist with impact assessment, the Council has now developed its own procedures for assessing how a policy may affect people from different racial groups. It will examine the potential impact of a policy on the promotion of race equality, together with other equality strands, and whether it may lead to any impact by undertaking an initial screening exercise using a template which is to be piloted initially within specific services.

This initial screening will draw on census data, research surveys, audit and inspection reports and any other information available on the policy issue. If there is evidence to suggest that the proposed policy could have an adverse impact on race equality, a full equality impact assessment will be carried out.

This will be done by:

- Identifying the aims of the policy and how it will work
- Examining relevant data
- Assessing the likely impact on race equality
- Considering other ways of achieving the same policy goals
- Consulting
- Decision-making
- Monitoring and review
- Publishing the results of the assessment

The initial screening (or rapid impact assessment) of a policy or function will be undertaken using a template which is currently being piloted. This is to be fully tested and adjusted as necessary. A full impact assessment will then be carried out where appropriate.

Guidance is being prepared for use by staff to assist in following this process.

If an adverse impact is identified as a result of the equality impact assessment process, the Council will consider adjustments or alternatives to the policy or delivery of the function to address this adverse impact.

5.4 Monitoring Arrangements

This section relates to the monitoring arrangements to identify any adverse impact the Council's policies may have on the promotion of race equality.

Monitoring is vital to any policy to ensure its effective implementation. It should also demonstrate that the policies, procedures and organisational culture within the Council are not discriminating against any racial groups. Without ethnic monitoring data there is no reliable way of knowing whether discrimination may be taking place or whether policies to prevent or tackle it are working. Monitoring can also help in finding out why and how discrimination takes place.

Within North Ayrshire there has been monitoring of various functions and services and this is being developed in conjunction with the equality impact assessment process.

Consultation with the ethnic minority community is a key element in achieving best value and ensures that the Council is meeting the needs of its communities.

The recent research into the needs of the ethnic minority community highlighted useful areas for further work and the development of services, particularly in relation to interpreting and translation services. The development of close links to the ethnic community by a range of services is continuing to improve the Council's understanding of its needs and the way in which it can respond to these effectively.

Consultation must be targeted on the particular interest group likely to be affected to ensure that it is relevant and meaningful e.g. ethnic minority tenants would be consulted on issues to do with the Council's rent collection service.

Consultation can take various forms. It can include:

- Liaison with established community groups and organisations
- Public meetings
- Focus Groups
- Individual interviews
- Questionnaire surveys
- Formal written consultations

The method adopted will depend on the most effective means of gaining views effectively and will depend on the issues involved. Language and cultural issues will be taken into account in undertaking any consultation. Special consideration will be given to the timing of a consultation to ensure that the views expressed influence the policy development process. Appropriate arrangements also will be made for interpretation and translation.

There is a proposal to establish a Forum of the various groups representing the ethnic minority community which could assist in providing advice on consultations regarding Council functions and policies and would be a useful mechanism for obtaining views on proposed developments.

This Forum would consider means of improving communication with the ethnic minority communities and provide an opportunity to share common issues and engage cross culturally. It is intended to be informal initially and that representatives would work together to develop this network, with support from the community development team. This network would also provide a useful opportunity for significant dialogue between ethnic minority communities and the Council

Through the Community Planning Partnership and the Ayrshire Race Equality Partnership, the Council will seek to work with its partners to co-ordinate consultation exercises where possible and to minimise consultation fatigue within ethnic minority communities. This is a particular concern give the relatively low number of residents in the area and the difficulties experienced in obtaining co-operation in the recent survey.

The results of consultation will be published and made available. If the consultation highlights a concern over a possible adverse impact on a racial group, the Council will seek to modify the proposed policy or will consider alternatives to it.

The Race Equality Scheme will be monitored by the Corporate Equality Officers Group and progress in implementing the scheme will be incorporated into an Annual Report.

A comprehensive review of the Race Equality Scheme will be carried out every three years and this will include a review of the relevance of functions and policies at that time.

5.5 Publishing Results

In order to make sure that the Council's monitoring, assessment and consultation activities and their results are clear to the public, the Council will publish results of its monitoring:-

- in its community newspaper which is delivered to all households in North Ayrshire;
- on its website and in paper form;
- in its annual report on the Race Equality Scheme; and
- in reports to the Corporate Policy Committee of the Council.

5.6 Access to Information on Services

The Council will ensure that people are able to find out how it works and the services it provides. This is the main focus of its Communications Strategy which is currently being reviewed and will explicitly indicate its arrangements for ensuring public access to such information. This includes information published as letters, notices, leaflets, signs, posters and on the internet, as well as information provided orally by members of staff. The appropriate distribution of such information is vital so that it reaches the communities for which it is intended.

One of the main findings of the recent needs assessment survey was the need for more information on services to be provided in minority languages. Respondents advised of difficulties in accessing information about public services and were not clear about where to find it or where it was located.

The Council currently provides information on certain of its services in minority languages but this requires to be further developed in conjunction with the development of its interpreting and translation services.

The Council's Race Equality Officer Group is undertaking a review of the current provision of interpreting and translation services with a view of developing a more integrated system across the Council and to ensure that the service provided meets the needs of the ethnic minority communities. This will include an audit of its information function and will also address how well the information published is reaching members of different racial groups. This review will be incorporated into the current revision of the Council's Communications Strategy and will form an integral part of this strategy.

There will be close consultation with the ethnic minority community on the information to be translated into minority languages to ensure that it is relevant and meets their needs.

5.7 Training

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its staff have the skills and knowledge to ensure that there is no unlawful racial discrimination, and to promote equal opportunities and good race relations. Staff require to have these skills to make sure that the local authority meets both its general duty and its specific duties. In order to do this they require a thorough understanding of race equality issues and of the Council's role and responsibilities. Training is therefore an important element of this Race Equality Scheme.

Within the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy the responsibilities for the implementation of the policy are made clear.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Personnel) implements, maintains, monitors and reviews the policy in relation to equal opportunities in employment. He also has responsibility for training and guidance on the effective operation of the policy in this regard.

The Corporate Directors, Assistant Chief Executives and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring equality of opportunity is applied and practised within their service. They are responsible for ensuring that their employees are aware of the implications of the Policy, their obligations under the law, and that their managers, supervisors and staff are given the relevant training.

Employees have a duty to comply with the Policy, to deliver Council services in a fair and equitable way and to assist in making the working environment free from discrimination.

The Council has been involved in various training initiatives for staff on race equality involving senior managers and frontline staff. This has included training on Race and Equity Issues to enable staff to:

- consider the implications, for them and their work, of recent changes to the equality legislation;
- recognise stereotypes and how they can influence behaviour;
- understand how power inequalities in society lead to the systematic discriminatory treatment of members of less powerful groups;
- understand how discriminatory treatment can lead to negative behaviours which re-inforce prejudice against members of less powerful groups;
- understand the importance of their role in implementing policy to eliminate discrimination and create a safe environment for themselves, their colleagues and service users;
- consider good practice issues (including in relation to different communication styles, naming systems and language);
- begin to explore and develop strategies to promote good practice and challenge racism and all discriminatory treatment

The Council provides induction training, which incorporates equality training, for all of its new staff and they are made aware of their responsibilities in terms of the Equal Opportunity Policy when starting work with the Council. There is also an element of training on equality issues incorporated into a range of other training delivered to staff, ensuring that consideration of equality issues becomes mainstreamed into all areas of the Council's work.

Each service has its specific arrangements for race equality training. This can be built into courses on equalities issues and can form a particular aspect of that course, e.g. in Social Services, or it can be in the form of dedicated sessions, e.g. on the curriculum for schools.

In 2005 the Council approved an Equality Awareness Programme which incorporates training on race equality.

The Programme is designed to ensure a strategic level awareness for Directors and Heads of Service. Senior management are also receiving training in the management of Equal Opportunities, which incorporates a briefing on their role as an employer and as a service provider. It addresses the operational aspects of discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

All frontline staff are being trained in Equal Opportunity Awareness which incorporates race equality training. In addition, services are undertaking specific race equality training for staff at various levels throughout the Council. Booklets and other information are being produced to heighten awareness on equality issues.

5.8 Employment

The Council is committed to the principle and practice of equality of opportunity in employment and has policies and procedures in place to support its delivery. The Council also seeks to have a workforce that broadly reflects the composition and diversity of the community it serves.

The policies and procedures relating to the employment duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act are as noted below.

Recruitment and Selection

The Council recruits permanent, temporary, fixed term, part-time employees and casual/sessional workers. The Council is currently engaged in a comprehensive review of its recruitment and selection policies and procedures and specific attention will be given to ensure the procedures continue to comply with all statutory and organisational requirements on equalities. One other area to be reviewed will be the Council's ability to engage the ethnic community in seeking employment with the Council. This will draw on the research and knowledge gained through the Ayrshire Race Equality Partnership's needs assessment survey.

Within each appointment letter, there is a clear statement that the Council will not tolerate discriminatory behaviour by its employees and that any such instances will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected from employees, which includes a requirement to treat all employees and the public equitably and fairly in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Disciplinary Procedures

The Council has procedures for dealing with staff where there are allegations of misconduct. This procedure is based on the principles of fairness and equity.

Grievance Procedures

The Council has a grievance procedure through which employees can raise grievances against any alleged discriminatory practice.

Harassment at Work

The Council has a policy that allows employees who consider that they have been harassed to raise the matter in accordance with the harassment procedures. This procedure will be replaced in the near future with a policy on Dignity and Respect at Work which will cover harassment, bullying, victimisation or any other types of demeaning behaviour.

Aggression and Violence at Work

The Council has reviewed its Aggression and Violence at Work policy which sets out the Council's commitment to identifying and managing workplace aggression and violence.

Employee Development

The Council encourages employees to develop their abilities through various means. Induction training is given to all new entrants and this includes information with regard to the Council's equal opportunities policy. Other skills training is available to staff who can either be nominated to attend or ask to attend training courses run by the Council, including equality training. Records are kept of applicants and attendance at all courses.

Redeployment

Policies and procedures are in place to facilitate the redeployment of staff. In seeking redeployment, all staff are treated equally and in accordance with the Council's obligations.

Reviewing Policies and Procedures

The Council reviews its policies and procedures on a regular basis. It assesses these against legislative enactment, best practice, emerging case law and where appropriate, will create new or amend existing policies and procedures. In writing new or in amending existing policies and procedures, the Council will consult with the Trade Unions.

Framework for Monitoring

The Council has a Computerised Information System (CHRIS) which records personal, staffing and training details of their employees and applicants for vacant positions. It also is used to record disciplinary actions taken against employees, records of interviews and actions taken under the procedure for dealing with incapability. In addition, data is kept of grievances raised by employees, including claims of harassment.

In order to meet the specific duty set in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000, the Council will monitor those affected by the undernoted activities by reference to their racial group, namely the numbers of:-

- Staff in post
- Applicants for employment
- Staff applying for training

- Staff applying for promotion
- Staff who receive training
- Staff who are involved in grievances
- Staff who are the subject of disciplinary procedures
- Staff who cease employment
- Staff who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of its performance assessment procedures (effective for Chief Officers only from 2005)

The Council obtains information on the racial group of applicants through the completion and return of a confidential equal opportunities questionnaire.

The Council also undertakes a bi-annual survey of all its staff which includes their racial group. The Council encourages all staff to participate in giving the necessary information in order to support the provision of all-inclusive and representative data. The next survey will be undertaken in Autumn 2006.

In its monitoring of applicants for positions and its workforce, the Council has adopted the ethnic classifications used in the Scottish Census of 2001.

Under the Act the Council also has a duty to monitor those who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures. Currently performance assessment is only applied to Chief Officers and monitoring is in place for this purpose. If a scheme is introduced for all employees, monitoring will be implemented to ensure there is no adverse impact on ethnic minority communities.

Results of Monitoring

The Council will publish the results arising out of the statutory monitoring and the voluntary monitoring of its staff in the Annual Report of the Race Equality Scheme. Details will also be published on the Council's web-site

The Council will analyse the results of the monitoring for-

- Patterns of inequality, and
- Non-disclosure patterns within the workforce survey

and will take whatever actions are deemed appropriate in the circumstances.

Copies of this document can be provided in ethnic minority languages and can be obtained from the Chief Executive's Office, Cunninghame House, Irvine, KA12 8EE.

The Scheme is also available on the Council's website
www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Relevant Functions and Policies

Functions and Policies assessed as relevant to the General Duty to promote Race Equality

Service Group	Service	Function/Policy	Relevance
Property Services	Housing	Housing Allocations	High
		Anti Social Behaviour Strategy	High
		Estates & Tenancy Management	Medium
		Homelessness	Medium
		Rent Collection	Low
		Tenant Participation	Low
		Local Housing Strategy	Low
	Building Services	Repairs & Maintenance	Medium
	Catering & Cleaning	Catering	Medium
		Janitorial Services	Medium
		Building Cleaning	Low
	Cleansing, Grounds Maintenance & Transport	Cemeteries	Medium
		Commercial Refuse Collection	Low
	Technical Services	Housing & Property Management & Maintenance	Medium
		Private Sector Housing Grants	Medium

Service Group	Service	Function/Policy	Relevance
Educational Services		Community Learning & Development	High
		Access to Sports and liaison with North Ayrshire Leisure Ltd	High
		Additional Support Needs (including English as an Additional Language)	High
		Educational Provision for Gypsies/Travellers' Children	High
		Library and Information Services	High
		Primary Education	High
		Secondary Education	High
		Pre-5 Education	High
		Anti Bullying Policy	High
		School Dress Code	High
		School Attendance and Exemptions	High
		Raising Educational Attainment	High
		Sexual Health Policy	High
		Arts and Culture	Medium
		Children's Services	Medium
		Parental Partnerships	Medium
		Outdoor Education	Medium
		Country Parks	Medium
Social Services		Translation and Interpretation Services	High
		Reception Services	High
		Home Care Services	High
		Residential and Day Care Services for Older People	High
		Adult Services (Disability, Mental Health & Addiction)	High

Service Group	Service	Function/Policy	Relevance
Social Services cont'd		Welfare Rights & Debt Advice Service	High
		Community Development Service	High
		Child Protection	High
		Contract and Commissioning Services	Medium
		Fostering and Adoption Services	Medium
		Occupational Therapy Service	Medium
		Community Based Support for Children and Families	Medium
		Criminal Justice Community Service Scheme	Low
		Care Planning for Children and Support to Families	Low
		Assessment and Care Management for Vulnerable People	Low
Legal & Protective	District Court/ Licensing	Licensing of Hot Food Shops	High
		District Court	Medium
		Taxi Licensing	Medium
		Licensing of HMOs	Medium
		Collection of Court Fines	Low
	Development Control	Planning	Medium
	Registration Services	Registration Services	Medium
	Building Standards	Building Standards	Medium

Service Group	Service	Function/Policy	Relevance
Legal & Protective cont'd	Legal Services	Unauthorised Encampments by Gypsies & Travelling People Policy	High
		Legal Services	Low
	Trading Standards	Consumer Support Network and Advice Service	High
		Product Safety	Medium
		Fair Trading	Medium
	Environmental Health	Food Safety Inspections	High
		Noise Complaints	High
		Food Complaints	Medium
Finance		Council Tax Benefits (Housing and Council Tax)	High
		Business Rates	High
		Debt Recovery	Medium
		Municipal Bank	Low
Personnel		Recruitment and Selection of Staff	High
		Employee Training and Development	High
		Equal Opportunities Policy	High
		Dignity & Respect at Work	High
		Special Leave	High
		Personal Development Review	High
		Local Office Services	Medium
		Contact Centre	Medium
		Discipline & Grievance	Medium

Service Group	Service	Function/Policy	Relevance
Personnel cont'd		Absence Management	Medium
		Employee Relations	Low
		Procedure for dealing with Incapability	Low
		Health & Safety Policy	Low
Chief Executive's		Customer Comments and Complaints System	High
		Communications	High
		Community Planning	High
		Council Plan	High
		Elections	Medium
		Domestic Abuse Strategy	Medium
		Members' Services	Low
		Corporate & Democratic Support	Low
		Best Value	Low
Development & Promotion		Economic Development	High
		Estates	Medium
		Planning (Development Plans)	Low
IT		Service delivery through Website	High
		Acceptable Computer Usage Policy	Low

North Ayrshire Race Equality Scheme Action Plan 2006-08

Objective 1 - To develop effective partnership working to promote race equality in conjunction with the Council's Community Planning Partners

Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcome
Report on race equality developments to the Community Planning Partnership Board	Annual	Chief Executive	Annual Report sharing information on progress
To contribute to and support the Ayrshire Race Equality Partnership's work	Ongoing	Corporate Director (Social Services)	Improved joint working with other Ayrshire public authorities
To promote reporting links between the Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring Group and the newly formed Safer Communities Thematic Group, including regular reporting on racial incidents	April 2006	Chief Executive	Report to Thematic Group on MARIM's activities
Establish new senior level Corporate Equality Group, to incorporate the work of the Race Equality Officers Group and other equality strands	April 2006	Chief Executive	Corporate overview of race equality work at senior level of the Council

Objective 2 - To address the needs of the Ethnic Minority Community identified in the recent survey

Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcome
To undertake an audit of existing information provided by the Council in ethnic minority languages	December 2006	All Services	Information available in ethnic languages clarified and gaps identified
To identify the translation services offered by services and the demand for these services	December 2006	All Services	Better understanding of translation services needed
To arrange for the translation of the materials and publications identified by the ethnic minority community as being of interest to them	April 2007	Corporate Director (Social Services)	Improved access to information on Council services
To establish corporate guidelines for the Council on how to access translation and interpreting services by all services	December 2006	Chief Executive Corporate Director (Social Services)	Improved access to Council services
To explore in conjunction with North Ayrshire Leisure Limited means of developing further culturally appropriate sports facilities, single sex swimming sessions, etc	June 2006	Corporate Director (Educational Services)	Culturally appropriate facilities available
To investigate means of improving access to community centres and access to grant assistance for local events	December 2006	Corporate Director (Educational Services)	Access to community centres and grants improved
To review procedures for the monitoring of racial incidents across services and to establish a mechanism to respond to particular issues of racial harassment where this occurs	June 2007	All Services	Improved response to racial incidents

Objective 2 cont'd

Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcome
To improve awareness amongst the ethnic minority community of the Council's Listening and Learning scheme and procedures for making complaints	June 2007	Chief Executive's	More use made of Listening & Learning Scheme
To promote the Council's services more effectively to the ethnic minority community through the review of the Communications Strategy	December 2006	Chief Executive's	Communications Strategy reviewed and published
To develop information packs with details of Council services and functions for distribution at citizenship ceremonies, etc	June 2006	Corporate Director (Social Services)	Information packs available
To ensure that career opportunities within the Council are better promoted to the ethnic minority community	June 2006	Assistant Chief Executive (Personnel)	Increase in number of ethnic minority applicants

Objective 3 - To take action to address issues for ethnic minority communities for those functions and policies identified as being most relevant to the duty to promote race equality

Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcome
To develop action plans for the priorities identified as being of relevance	Ongoing	All Services	Improved, more accessible services
To undertake review of relevance to the general duty	July 2007	All Services	Race Equality Scheme reviewed

Objective 4 - To assess and consult on proposed policies and their impact on the duty to promote race equality

Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcome
To develop impact assessment guidance and training for services	June 2006	Chief Executive	Guidance and training provided
To pilot the templates for impact assessment on a proposed Council policy	February 2006	Chief Executive	Appropriate process tested and adjusted
To introduce impact assessment for all new Council policies	June 2006	Chief Executive	All new policies sensitive to needs of ethnic minority
To undertake a programme of impact assessment on existing policies and functions, commencing with those identified as being most highly relevant	June 2006	All Services	Policies and functions adapted as necessary to meet needs and results published

Objective 5 - To ensure effective monitoring of any adverse impact on race equality

Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcome
To establish a network of local representatives from the ethnic minority community to be used as a sounding board for consultation purposes and to improve communication on proposed Council developments	January 2006	Corporate Director (Social Services)	Better understanding of ethnic minorities' views and more accessible services
To publish all monitoring information gathered across Council services in an annual report	December 2006	Chief Executive	Annual report produced
To analyse monitoring information through the Corporate Equality Officers Group to be established	November 2006	All Services	Gaps in service identified

Objective 6 - To ensure staff have skills and knowledge to ensure no unlawful racial discrimination

Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcome
To promote race equality training to services	Ongoing	All Services	More sensitive and accessible services
To mainstream race equality training into induction and other training	Ongoing	All Services	Broader awareness of race equality issues