

AGENDA ITEM

COMMITTEE: RACE ADVISORY FORUM

DATE: 5TH DECEMBER 2005

SUBJECT: LUTON EQUALITY AGENCY

REPORT BY: HEAD OF EQUALITIES

CONTACT OFFICER: RAJ NAYER

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL		COMMUNITY SAFETY	✓
EQUALITIES	✓	ENVIRONMENT	
FINANCIAL		CONSULTATIONS	
STAFFING		OTHER	

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE

1. To appraise members on the progress made in applying to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) for funding under the 'Getting Results' Programme in 2006/7 and also to advise on a recent similar complimentary bid to the Home Office by the Luton Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. **Race Advisory Forum is recommended to note this report**

BACKGROUND

3. As reported at the September meeting of the Race Advisory Forum it was proposed to apply to the CRE for future funding for the establishment of

a Luton Equality Agency as per the recommendations of the recently completed Luton Equality Feasibility Report .The purpose of this bid is to develop a limited programme of work related to assisting victims of racial harassment and discrimination under part 3(c)of the 'Getting Results Programme' for 2006/7.

REPORT

4. Following discussions with the Chairs of the Luton Forum and the Luton Assembly it was decided that the Luton Assembly should be the lead organisation for the bid and that another complimentary bid for funding should also be made to the Home Office under the current' Connecting Communities' initiative for next year.
5. The thinking behind the bids is that we should follow the recommendations in the Luton Equality Feasibility Report to establish a Luton Equality rather than a Race Equality Agency at the outset.
6. The CRE is only empowered to grant money for race initiatives and hence if simultaneous funding could be forthcoming from the Home Office, it will allow the new agency to provide services across most of the other equality dimensions including race, gender, disability ,age ,sexual orientation etc. from the start. This will avoid the possible, though unwarranted, perception that the formation of a race agency had been given unjustifiable priority contrary to the recommendations of the Luton Equality Agency Feasibility Report.
7. Copies of the funding application to the CRE will be made available for information/inspection at the meeting.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8. The central role of any future town-wide Luton Equality Agency will be to tackle all forms of discrimination covered by U.K legislation.

COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9. Some of the Equality Agency's work will be aimed at dealing with hate crime and this has clear implications for community safety.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D**

10. Committee report ref: RAF/12/04/9.1