

COMMITTEE: RACE ADVISORY FORUM

DATE: 6TH DECEMBER,2004

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

REPORT BY: HEAD OF EQUALITIES

CONTACT OFFICER: RAJ NAYER 01582 547147

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL		COMMUNITY SAFETY	
EQUALITIES	✓	ENVIRONMENT	
FINANCIAL		CONSULTATIONS	✓
STAFFING		OTHER	

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1.PURPOSE

To advise members of the Race Advisory Forum the results of a further three departmental Impact Assessments carried out recently: These were:

- ☐ Affordable warmth
- ☐ Social Inclusion Strategy
- ☐ Communications Strategy

2.RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Race Advisory Forum is recommended to note and comment as appropriate, on the assessments and action plans outlined below.

3.BACKGROUND

The Council has a duty under the Race Relations(Amendment Act)2000 to subject all Council services and policies to a rigorous process of impact assessment and remedial action planning with the overall objective of seeking a continuous improvement in the delivery of our services. An estimated fifty impact assessments are planned for the year to April 2004 and the forum has received regular reports on those completed earlier this year.

4. REPORT

4.1 AFFORDABLE WARMTH

4.1.1 Impact Assessment Findings

Qualitative information gained from surveys ,best value reviews ,complaints received etc;identified gaps in service provision particularly to households that either have no central heating ,or suffer a breakdown in the heating system and need assistance with repairs. The main reason for difficulties in this area is that there is no locally available funding to pay for this work.

4.1.2 Remedial action proposed

To base future action plans on research outcomes in order to improve services for vulnerable households.(Please also see Appendix **A** at the end of this report)

5. SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICY (SIP)

5.1 The SIP primarily aims to :

- ☐ Maximise income
- ☐ Promote and ensure equality for all
- ☐ Increase access to services
- ☐ Tackle inequalities in health
- ☐ Promote sustainability and cohesion within communities and the environment

5.2 Impact Assessment- Findings

The main groups at risk of missing out on the benefits of the SIP are travellers and asylum seekers who are difficult to contact as they tend to be the most mobile. Older people (over75)of both white and black minority ethnic communities ,those on low incomes and those with language difficulties may equally suffer exclusion.

5.3 Remedial action proposed

(i)Develop a much greater awareness within employees of the Council at all levels about issues of social inclusion.

(ii)Establish a clearer framework for social inclusion initiatives and arrange publicity on the Councils website. (for more detail on action plans please refer to appendix **B** at the end of this report)

6. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY(CS)

6.1 Impact Assessment Findings

The communications strategy is a new document which sets out the Councils approach to communications and is the result of wide ranging recent Council initiatives including work on social/community cohesion, employee surveys, focus groups etc. One of the central objectives of this strategy is to enable the Council to communicate more

comprehensively and effectively with all sections of the community including hard to reach groups.

6.2 Proposed Action to deliver the Communications Strategy

Planned action to deliver the strategy includes staff training through the GOLD programme, availability of translated versions into other languages when requested, and regular reviews of the strategy . (For more detail on action plans please refer to appendix **C** at the end of this report.)

APPENDICES:

Action Plans Appendices A,B,C