

## **RACE ADVISORY FORUM**

**4<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2005 AT 7.00PM**

**PRESENT:** Mr A R Malik – Pakistan Muslim Association  
Ms R Davis – African Caribbean Arena  
Mrs J Matthew – EQFA Recruitment Solutions  
Mr T S Rumpal – Guru Nanak Gurudwara  
Luton  
Mr M Qureshi – Khidmat  
Mrs J Bullock – Luton & District St Vincent &  
and the Grenadines Assoc  
Ms L Rees – Luton Community Housing  
Mrs N Kellett – Luton Irish Forum  
Dr N Khanum – Luton Multi-Cultural Women's  
Coalition  
Mr A R Khan – Co-opted Member  
Mr M K Anwar – Co-opted Member

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Val Grant – Head of Equalities  
Raj Nayer – Equalities  
Maria Silver – Housing & Social Services  
Dianne Walsh – Housing & Social Services  
Mrs R Dublin and Mrs Artman – Luton &  
District St Vincent & the Grenadines Assoc  
Ann Loeffler – Democratic & Member Services

### **7 ELECTION OF CHAIR (REF: 1)**

**Resolved:** (i) That Mr A R Malik of the Pakistan Muslim Association be elected Chair of the Race Advisory Forum until the next Annual General meeting.

(ii) That Mrs J Bullock be elected Vice-Chair of the Race Advisory Forum until the next Annual General meeting.

### **8 MINUTES (REF: 3)**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2005 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **9 ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005 (REF: 5)**

The Chair advised that the past year had been important in terms of equality and town wide initiatives and that the Forum's ongoing involvement with the Council, particularly in education issues went from strength to strength. The Forum had also continued to be involved in such issues as parking outside of religious places of worship and the dress code for ethnic school children.

The Chair extended his thanks on behalf of the Forum to the three political groups on the Council.

## **10 NEW CARERS POLICY - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (REF: 6.1)**

The Director of Housing and Social Services advised of the new Carers Policy and informed the Forum on the recent equality impact assessment action plan and recommendations.

The Forum were advised that the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 would be implemented from April 2005 and the main implications of this were detailed. The aim of the policy was to recognise and support the work done by unpaid carers and the objectives were to identify, assess and support carers in specific areas, and especially to assessment within their own right.

The Carers Policy had been through an initial equalities impact consideration and certain areas identified in relation to racial equality. Such areas included the identification of hidden carers in all communities including the Asian and African and Caribbean communities, the support of hidden carers and enabling them to have a break.

The Forum were also informed that advice would continue to be sought through the Council Equality fora and that it would be helpful to involve the PCT in this regard.

**Resolved:** That the Director of Housing and Social Services liaise with the PCT with regard to the above issues and report back to the meeting of the Forum to be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2005.

## **11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS (REF:7.1)**

**Resolved:** That future meetings of the Forum be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> June, 8<sup>th</sup> August, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and 6<sup>th</sup> February and 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2006, commencing at 7.00pm at the Town Hall, Luton.

## **12 REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE (REF: 8.1)**

The Forum considered the terms of reference of the Forum.

**Resolved** (i) That the amendments made to the terms of reference and in **bold** as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes be approved.

(ii) That Mr A.R. Khan be made a proper member of the Forum rather than a co-opted one.

## **13 CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (REF: 8.2)**

The Head of Equalities reported on the five broad objectives outlined in the draft corporate equality action plan and covered and addressed the key issues of employment and training, service delivery, consultation, communication and monitoring.

The Forum was also advised that consultation on the structure and content of the Equalities Plan had been carried out with a range of stakeholder groups both internal and external to the Council.

**Resolved:**(i) That the key areas in the draft Equality Action Plan detailed above be noted.

(ii) That the specific service delivery issues be noted.

## **14 EQUALITY AGENCY – FEASIBILITY REPORT (REF: 8.3)**

The Head of Equalities reported on the progress of the feasibility study which had been funded by the Commission for Racial Equality into whether Luton needed an equalities agency, and if so, whether it should address all discrimination issues.

A summary of the report findings had indicated that the overwhelming view was in favour of Luton benefiting from an equalities agency and the casework and strategic support of other agencies, lobbying and raising awareness.

The Forum were further advised that the feasibility report had subsequently been approved by the Equality Steering Group. The CRE had however rejected the request for the three project areas but had indicated its willingness to consider the establishment of a race equality agency.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

**(Note:**The meeting ended at 9.22pm.)

