

Item No.	Classification	Date	MEETING NAME
6	OPEN	19.5.05	Cross Party Working Group – Ouseley Review Implementation
Report Title		Lord Ouseley Review: Implementing all remaining recommendations	
Ward (s) or groups affected		All	
From:		Chief Executive	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Working Group note and comment on the range of actions already in place across the Council that contribute to implementing Lord Ouseley's recommendations.

Theme: Member decision-making

2. That the Working Group agree that discussions be held with the Party Group nominees who are leading on Member development about an appropriate programme of equality and diversity training, and on possible arrangements for keeping all Members advised of community issues.
3. That the Working Group recommends that the Executive receive a half-yearly report on the progress of and outcomes from the annual programme of Equality Impact Assessments and that Chief Officers involve the relevant Executive Portfolio holder in Equality Impact Assessments that come within their portfolio of responsibilities.

Theme: Managers and staff competence and training

4. That the Working Group receives a report from the Head of Organisational Development on progress on equality and diversity training and staff development at the September Working Group meeting.

Theme: Knowledge of and user feedback from diverse communities

5. That the Working Group agrees, subject to the involvement of other partners, to commission a survey of Southwark's diverse communities, with a focus on building a better picture of who is living in the borough.
6. That the Working Group receives reports in November on the arrangements for ethnic monitoring and for provision of interpretation, translation and support for those with visual and hearing impairments, following the first period of the operation of the Customer Service Centre.

Theme: Consultation, outreach and community cohesion

7. That the Working Group receives a report from the Director of Children's Services at the July meeting on the arrangements for identifying and dealing with any potential inter-ethnic youth conflict.

8. That the Working Group notes the existing wide-ranging programme of work around community involvement, area-based approaches and community cohesion and agrees to focus on these issues at its October meeting, including:
 - holding a discussion with the Strategic Reference Group about how the Council's work on these issues can be improved, including setting cohesion targets
 - considering the implications for the Council of the Active Citizens Delivery Plan of the Safer and Stronger Communities LAA
 - reviewing the learning from the Community Cohesion Pathfinder and follow-up actions, and opportunities for member involvement

Theme: Business Development

9. That the Working Group note the progress on the Council's procurement market development activities and considers an update report in December.
10. That the Working Group consider the planned report on Business Support at the next meeting in June, prior to the Executive.

BACKGROUND

11. At its meeting on 4th April, the Cross Party Working Group agreed a number of immediate actions. Report back on all these are elsewhere on this agenda.
12. The Working Group also agreed that a report be presented to the next Working Party meeting on the issues and options for taking forward all the remaining recommendations.
13. To assist the Council to take a strategic approach to these recommendations, they have been grouped under key themes. The Progress Report elsewhere on the agenda indicates which recommendations are already being actioned. This report deals with the outstanding recommendations theme by theme.
14. This report identifies for each theme, actions that are already taking place in respect of each recommendation. In some instances, these actions are extensive and will take time to impact. The report also identifies where there may be further specific actions that could be taken. Given the proposed role of the Strategic Reference Group in assisting and advising on implementation, their input will be important before finalising some of these proposals. As a consequence, it is proposed that the Working Group schedule report-backs on a number of themes over the period to December 2005, so that more in-depth and strategic consideration can be given to each.

FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.

Theme: Member decision-making in relation to Equality and Diversity

LOR 16.1 Review the training and coaching in equality and diversity available for all elected Members.

LOR 16.5 Improve equality and diversity information available to elected Members so as to generate greater interface with diverse communities, and provide meaningful feedback to communities and service users, as well as promoting better relations between different cultural communities

LOR.16.33 E & D profiling, representation and considerations must be integral to all decision-making on planning matters at Community Council

LOR 16.34 Composition of Committees must in future reflect the borough's diversity or seek to redress imbalances with measures aimed at achieving equality and diversity outcomes.

15. These recommendations are aimed at ensuring the Council is assisting Members to oversee the delivery of our statutory duties, to be confident that equality and diversity issues are being fully addressed in decision-making, and that they are provided with the information and support to fully engage with Southwark's diverse communities.

Actions in place

16. Issues of equality and diversity are integral to all the different roles that Members play in relation to the Executive, Scrutiny and as Ward Members. All of these provide Members with access to and engagement with Southwark's diverse communities, and means that within the Member body as a whole there is an existing wealth of knowledge that provides a valuable foundation for further action.

17. To further strengthen knowledge and capacity, Members have already agreed to:

- lead on the roll-out of the RRAA E-learning programme, and the arrangements have been made for this to take place by 31st May
- consider elsewhere on this agenda establishing a Strategic Reference Group to provide a high level community forum of engagement, information sharing and challenge
- consider elsewhere on this agenda proposals for an independent audit function to provide additional quality assurance in respect of decision-making.

- require officers to address equality and diversity impact explicitly in all reports presented to the Executive, Scrutiny and Community Councils; arrangements are underway to implement this through provision of guidance to report authors and, given lead-in times, full compliance is expected for all reports from September 2005.

Further proposals

18. To further address the underlying issues related to this package of recommendations, further actions may be appropriate. Across the range of issues, Members may wish to consider further the objectives and priorities for their own leadership roles at both borough-wide and local level in promoting equality, diversity and building cohesion.
19. A draft specification for a wider programme of Members equality and diversity training has been drawn up – this needs to be discussed with a cross-section of Members to check that the content, format, and delivery arrangements are appropriate to their needs so as to maximise both relevance and participation. There is a wide range of knowledge and skill development that could be considered, for example, covering equalities legislation (beyond the RRAA), cultural and faith awareness, community relations and cohesion, and tools for dealing with racism and homophobia. Given that Members have already established through the Party Group system nominees with a role for Member development, it is proposed that officers hold discussions with them in the first instance about finalising an appropriate programme.
20. In terms of keeping Members informed and updated on community issues, again it may be helpful to have further discussions with Members about what would be most useful and in what formats. It might be appropriate to consider a 'Community News' section of the Members Bulletin. Additionally or alternatively, Members may prefer briefings as part of their Community Council role, utilising for example, the area renewal manager and community development staff attached to their community council to co-ordinate information and provide a regular briefing session. Once the Strategic Reference Group is established, there may also be ways in which engagement and information sharing within that group can be made available to all Members. As above, it is suggested that this issue is addressed as part of the discussions about Member development.
21. Currently, the Executive receives an annual summary report on the programme of Equality Impact Assessments once they have been completed. As a key element of the Council's performance and drive for improvement, it may be appropriate for those reports to be half-yearly. This will provide the Executive with greater opportunity to oversee progress, assess that effective user engagement is taking place in line with Lord Ouseley's recommendation, and ensure that any policy issues arising are fully addressed as part of the annual business and resource planning. In addition, Chief Officers will ensure that Executive Portfolio holders are kept fully informed of Equality Impact Assessments within their remit.

Theme: Managers and staff competence and training in Equality and Diversity

LOR 16.2 Equality and Diversity competence must be an essential requirement for all staff, and should be an essential requirement of all person specifications for job vacancies, promotion and as part of performance appraisal arrangements.

LOR 16.27 Cultural awareness training needs to be further extended for all staff across all areas of the Environment and Leisure department and its activities in order to make the department more E & D competent.

LOR 16.32 An explicit training programme for planners, incorporating learning to facilitate E & D competence is an urgent requirement.

Actions in place

22. A number of issues raised by Lord Ouseley's recommendations are already been addressed in part or in full.

- All Council job descriptions and person specification require equality and diversity criteria relevant to the nature of the post, and there is an expectation that these will be assessed as part of the recruitment process.
- The RRAA E-learning module has been piloted, and rollout commenced with Chief Officers and Divisional Services Managers, all of whom should have completed this module by 20th May. Take-up will be monitored and reported on a departmental basis. The next phase of the rollout is scheduled for Business Managers by the end of July. A revised programme will be made available to all staff shortly after that.
- As a result of Equality Impact Assessments, the need to review, refresh and systematise the Council's approach to equality and diversity training was highlighted. The Working Group decision to identify a specific role in the Organisational Development Unit will increase the Council's capacity to undertake this work. While training on equalities and diversity is well-established in a number of areas, we would anticipate that a corporate framework to underpin and quality assure all of the Council's diversity training would be in place by September 2005. This will include arrangements to address cultural and faith issues for staff across the Council, including Environment and Leisure.
- The initial Equality and Diversity training for planners will have been completed by the date of the Working Group. This training has involved input from the Council's Social Policy Manager. The Regeneration department have also commissioned Willowbrook Centre to undertake outreach on planning matters with BME communities. They anticipate that feedback and learning from that will be available later in the year, and contribute to a wider programme of training and staff development for planners and other staff.
- Linked to the Community Cohesion Pathfinder programme, there has been a programme of interdepartmental and inter-agency training for front line staff on tools for dealing with racism – this programme will be incorporated into the Council's revised core equalities training programme.

- Linked to the Campaign Against Hate Crime, there has been inter-departmental and inter-agency training around assisted reporting of hate crime and domestic violence.
- As part of the Council's preparation of seeking the Investors in People Award, Chief Officers are reviewing their Departmental Learning and Development Plans. Learning needs of staff in relation to equality and diversity are part of this.

Further proposals

23. The actions set out above go some way to meeting the recommendations set out by Lord Ouseley. The new Head of Organisational Development, who came into post in mid-April, has as a priority the development of a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to equality and diversity within an overall Council Organisational Development Strategy. Maintaining a corporate standard for training and development relating to equality and diversity issues has been agreed as a key Organisational Objective. Training in recruitment, supervisory and managerial skills, and specific training related to individual professions and work contexts have been identified as requiring further development.
24. It is proposed that the Head of Organisational Development provide a report to the Working Group in September on overall progress on these issues. There may be merit, before the Working Group considers that report, for it to be discussed with the Strategic Reference Group, in order to get feedback that the priorities and approaches identified reflect community concerns.

Theme: Council's knowledge of and user feedback from diverse communities

LOR 16.4 The Equality Impact Assessments should include both quantitative data as well as qualitative information, especially customer, client and service user feedback as part of the EIA process, and for consideration by the Equality and Diversity Panel.

LOR 16.23 Action is needed in Housing to address the shortfall in data and information about tenants feedback, user views and detailed analysis of complaints, to include trends, diversity profiles and satisfaction levels on responses.

LOR 16.24 The reasons why there are high levels of dissatisfaction with housing services from BME residents need to be better understood and action taken to address known concerns.

LOR 16.25 Social Services feedback and user surveys are essential as part of EIAs and for management purposes, and meaningful consultation with BME and new communities are necessary in determining needs and sharing information.

LOR 16.26 In Environment and Leisure, better communications and more information sharing is required to ensure all sections of the community have increased awareness of the services available, and to engage with the diverse communities in a meaningful way

LOR 16.28 Monitoring data, especially complaints, client and service user feedback as part of effective EIA process is inadequate and needs to be addressed urgently.

25. These recommendations relate to both how the Council as a whole proactively seeks information from users from diverse communities about the impact of policy decisions and the delivery of its services and how it ensures that it feeds back those decisions and findings. It also raises specific user issues for particular services.
26. Part of the challenge of implementing these recommendations is the scale and complexity of the Council's business. There are many ways in which the Council both seeks user views and feeds back information. An implication of the report is that these may not be as successful as we may wish in reaching out to all our communities or providing them with useful feedback. Actions related to this theme therefore also relate to the theme about outreach and engagement.

Actions in place

27. The following actions are in place or underway:

- The revised template for Equality Impact Assessments requires evidence of what user feedback has been undertaken, and what those findings were. The intention is to present this evidence in full to the Equality and Diversity Panel, so they can give a view on whether that engagement has been adequate.
- Linked to the above, guidance is being prepared for service managers on who and how to engage. Communities rightly object to being over-consulted, or to being consulted when the issue is not one of specific concern to them. Managers therefore have to apply judgements of appropriateness and proportionality in planning user involvement.
- The revised ethnic monitoring arrangements are being embedded across all departments, and linked to the new Customer Relations Management system as part of the CSC. Over the next twelve months therefore, the Council should be better placed to know who its users are, including issues of diversity. The monitoring requirements are based on proportionality. If someone makes a quick telephone inquiry, ethnicity will not be recorded although language need may be. If people seek a particular service, their ethnicity will be recorded. This will be at two levels. One is the categorisation used in the Census, (e.g. White, Black or Black British), which is broadly based. The second level is more detailed, and more appropriate where a personal service is involved (e.g. Turkish, Traveller of Irish Heritage, Somali, Sierra Leonian). The Working Group may wish to receive a report on these arrangements in November to provide reassurance that the new arrangements are fully in place.
- In the context of the Customer Service Centre, the Council has re-organised its arrangements for securing translation, interpretation, and support for users with visual and hearing impairment. Once the CSC is fully established, there will need to be a 'health check' with communities about ease of access. It is suggested that the Working Group might consider a report on this in November.

- There are a number of umbrella organisations and ‘standing forums’ which provide networks for accessing user feedback, including the Strategic Ethnic Alliance, Disabilities Forum, Anti-Homophobic Forum, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Network, Multi-faith Forum, Pensioners Forum, Somali Advisory Forum, Southwark Refugee Forum, and Southwark Community Care Forum. In a number of cases the Council provides direct officer support to these bodies, in other cases the support is through grant funding. It is proposed that many of these bodies would comprise the proposed Strategic Reference Group, and it will be useful to have further discussion with them about mechanisms for user feedback.
- The Community Councils are evolving as a key mechanism through which the Council engages with service users and residents more generally. The emphasis for 2005/6 is to increase participation and to encourage a more diverse attendance. This may mean taking a more flexible approach to meeting formats and agendas. Some innovative approaches, such as the young people’s presentation to Bermondsey Community Council about the Poland trip, the Peckham Community Council event for Africa 05, and the work of Dulwich Community Council’s work around the skateboard park are all examples of effective engagement with diverse users.
- Individual service departments also have a range of user group arrangements – e.g. Housing tenant liaison, social services user groups including children’s participation, resident forums related to regeneration and renewal, friends of parks, etc. Over the next six months, the intention is to identify the extent to which these are effective in providing user input across our diverse communities.
- The Council is a partner to and the Accountable Body for the new Safer and Stronger Communities Local Area Agreement. A key strand of this is to strengthen active citizenship and community / user engagement with public services. The Delivery Plan for this is almost completed, and membership of the Stronger Communities Steering Group of Southwark Alliance is being revised. There may be merit in a future Working Group meeting having a presentation about the LAA, and the Council’s contribution to its delivery.
- The Housing department has put in place arrangements to improve its data capture of tenants. Due to the complexity of collecting such personal data from tenants, this is being rolled out over a two-year period. On the issue of BME dis-satisfaction with housing services, since Lord Ouseley’s report, further work has been done on this. A statistically significant link has been identified between satisfaction of BME tenants and their area of residence within the borough. Reasons for this are now being explored in conjunction with the new Area Forums.

- Within Environment and Leisure, communications capacity is being increased to support improved communications with all residents. Information on key services such as libraries and leisure centres is already available in community languages where there is an identified need. We have also put in place community outreach workers in parks who have a specific brief to increase usage of under-represented groups. We are holding special briefing sessions for faith and community groups who do not normally attend Community Councils about the Cleaner, Greener Safer Fund. To ensure consistency of approach, the department is participating in the corporate and inter-agency Community Engagement Officers Working Group.

Further proposals

28. The core of implementing the LO recommendations will be to build on and evaluate the developments sets out above. However, one key challenge is the constantly changing nature of Southwark's population. Until and unless almost all Council residents seek a service where their ethnicity is recorded, we are dependent on the 10-year census for a picture of the diversity of our community, backed up by softer information from front-line staff and community organisations.
29. We are aware that to fill the gap, London authorities in particular are recognising there may be a need to commission in-depth surveys that particular focus on identifying and building knowledge of the ethnic diversity of our newer communities. These studies draw on census, local authority, school, primary care trust, employment and other data sources, backed up by some sample surveying, to build an ethnicity profile of a borough.
30. Given that we have a number of smaller, more 'hidden' communities, including Latin Americans, Somalis, Francophone Africans, Easter Europeans, there may be merit in commissioning such a study for Southwark. To be successful, it would need to be done with key partners. This study could also be an opportunity to get wider feedback from local communities, so complementing the over-view offered via the proposed Strategic Reference Group. It could also be an opportunity to develop our initial Action Research approach, in which local community members are trained in appropriate methodologies to undertake surveys and focus groups within their communities.

Theme: Co-ordination of consultation and improved outreach to vulnerable and hard to reach groups

LOR 16.3 Action Plan required for wide-scale involvement of stakeholders in the Race Equality Scheme consultations

LOR 16.30 Effective co-ordination is needed of resources and formats for reaching and engaging all sections of the diverse community in neighbourhoods where regeneration, investments and developments are proposed, with team-based activities such as CIDU-led outreach should be the focus of community consultations.

LOR 16.31 Regeneration areas would best be served by each having its own Town Centre style management group with a one-stop shop type facility leading on contacts, advice, information and consultation, harnessing all existing community based activities to achieve best utilisation of resources for awareness raising and outreach to all vulnerable groups of people.

31. These recommendations link to those in the section above, with the focus of these being on the proactive engagement with hard to reach and vulnerable groups. It also picks up on the area dimension to working with excluded communities.

Actions in place

32. The actions in place include:

- Consultation on the Council's draft Equality Scheme is underway through Community Councils, with hard to reach groups and with staff. It is proposed that the June Working Group meeting consider the draft scheme in more detail prior to it being finalised for the Executive in July.
- CIDU is co-ordinating across all departments the lead officers who have a community engagement and outreach role. They are developing a set of consistent standards and working methodologies, particularly in respect of engaging with hard to reach and vulnerable groups. These will underpin the work through Community Councils, and in terms of regeneration and renewal programmes.
- Through CIDU and the Social Policy Unit, the Council is continuing to develop mechanisms for engaging with vulnerable and excluded communities. The recently formed Southwark Somali Advisory Forum is one example, which has already resulted in improved dialogue between that community and the education service. Other groups where support and engagement continues to be targeted include the Bengali community, Traveller community, Pensioners and people with disabilities. A consistent community development approach, while slower at the outset, is perceived to have more long-term benefit for engaging these communities than one-off consultations.
- The infrastructure for developing the Town Centre type area approach is in place through the Area Renewal Manager structure. While covering all eight Community Councils, this provides a focus that links with the main 'centres' of the Elephant and Castle, Peckham, Camberwell and The Blue/Surrey Quays and with the most deprived neighbourhoods.

Consideration is being given to transferring existing community development staff to the areas to strengthen capacity for engagement with both Community Councils and the range of public sector services.

- Within each of the areas and their associated neighbourhoods, there are resident involvement and engagement structures that are at different stages of evolution, and focus on issues specific to that area. The aim is to grow structures from the 'bottom up' so there is ownership by local people. This involves building social capital and active citizenship at local level through supporting new communities and others to develop their leadership skills and knowledge of the public policy agenda. The existing structures in part focus on issues to do directly with Town Centres and traders (e.g. Peckham Town Centre Management Group, Elephant and Castle Traders), and in part on resident participation, (e.g. Nunhead Community Forum, South Bermondsey resident network, Canada Water Campaign). This process will continue within the partnership umbrella framework of the recently adopted Safer and Stronger Communities Agreement with the Government Office for London.
- Chief Officers have reviewed how to strengthen interdepartmental co-ordination, problem-solving and links with residents at Community Council level, building on the Area Renewal Managers and their teams as hubs for managing community engagement and co-ordinating intelligence and feedback. In terms of Liveability and Community Safety, joint local action teams are in place. The Communities of Schools structure is enabling a dialogue between schools and wider services, and over time should strengthen the link between schools and their local communities. Schools and GPs are two key routes for accessing hard to reach and vulnerable communities.
- An evaluation of the NRF-funded neighbourhood renewal programme for both the priority neighbourhoods and the community development and involvement activity is currently being commissioned. By December 05 this will provide a benchmark for determining what next steps may be appropriate to further strengthen engagement at area and neighbourhood level.

Further proposals

33. Building and sustaining effective involvement of hard to reach communities needs to be a guiding principle that underpins everything that the Council does. While there is much in place that needs to be consolidated and evaluated, there may be merit in the Working Group focusing on this issue at its October meeting, and in its discussions with the Strategic Reference Group. This could co-incide, for example, with a presentation on the Safer and Stronger Communities Active Citizens Delivery Plan and on the work around Community Cohesion (see below).

Theme: Proactive approach to building community cohesion

LOR 16.7 The Equalities Action Plan should highlight and prioritise targets explicitly aimed at promoting good race relations in the borough, which is a statutory requirement.

LOR 16.18 The promotion of good relations between people of different backgrounds must be a priority for all schools, through learning and the curriculum, so that all children and young people have knowledge and understanding of different groups of people and the opportunity to learn with and from each other.

LOR 16.22 The Council will wish to be reassured that existing arrangements for assessing and responding to the potential for inter-ethnic youth conflict are adequate and effective.

34. The Council has been proactive in both leading and facilitating activities aimed at building greater community cohesion and mutual understanding across ethnic groups, faiths, age groups and geographical areas. Cohesion cannot be imposed from above, and is most successful where partnership approaches are encouraged at grass roots level. At the same time, the Council has a key role in having effective infrastructure in place and in being able to assess and analyse community intelligence on potential tensions and conflicts.

Actions in Place

35. The actions in place include:

- Southwark has been fortunate that it has not experienced many of the issues that affected northern towns in 2000, and which led to greater emphasis being placed on the statutory duty of local authorities to promote good community relations. Nevertheless, in response to the recommendation the Director of Children's Services has been charged by the Chief Executive with reporting on the arrangements for assessing and responding to potential inter-ethnic youth conflict. That report will be available for the July Working Group meeting, so that Members can be satisfied that arrangements are robust prior to the start of the school holidays.
- The Community Cohesion Pathfinder programme from February 2003 to September 2004, and the subsequent NRF funded follow-up programme has raised the profile of this area of work, and provided valuable experience on what works. The focus has been on up-skilling practitioners in the statutory, voluntary and faith sectors to build cohesion principles and practice into their work. The training and development programme is continuing with the appointment for 2005/6 of a Cohesion Co-ordinator based in the Social Policy Unit, and a Youth Cohesion worker in the Youth Service.

- The publication of two booklets – ‘A Sense of Belonging’ and ‘A Mark of Faith’ has been followed this April with the publication of a *How To* booklet. This sets out practical ideas that can be used by schools, youth clubs, tenants associations, faith groups and others to improve contact between diverse communities and different age groups. This is being distributed in conjunction with workshop sessions.
- The Council’s Equalities Events programme has been mainstreamed as a result of the 2005/6 budget decisions. These and other events offer a major opportunity to show-case Southwark’s diversity and to bring people of different backgrounds together. Lead responsibility for delivery has been placed with the Director of Environment and Leisure, working with a cross departmental team involving both CIDU and the Social Policy Unit. The Executive Member for Sports, Culture and Equalities is providing policy input to planning this year’s events. In addition Southwark will be hosting the Mayor of London’s RISE festival (was known as RESPECT), in Burgess Park on 16th July this year.
- During 2004, primary schools in South Bermondsey and North Livesey worked together on a cohesion initiative, bringing families together from different backgrounds through Family Learning Trips. These were successful and they are aiming to repeat the programme. In addition, the Director of Education has commissioned work from the consultants engaged to support the secondary strategy. Their report will cover the contribution of schools, particularly schools with specialist status, to the social cohesion agenda, including the potential desirable outcomes of specialist status in terms of social cohesion.
- The South Bermondsey Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, which arose from the original cohesion programme, continues to have a focus on building community cohesion as one of its priorities. It is working with the Registered Social Landlords, local voluntary sector organisations, youth and resident groups to strengthen inter-generational, inter-racial and inter-estate understanding. This learning is being shared with other neighbourhoods.
- The Safer Southwark Partnership, of which the Council is a lead partner, has completed a new Hate Crime and Domestic Violence Strategy. This is due to be agreed by the Council’s Executive on 17th May. This aims to improve prevention and reduce incidents from happening, as well as to improve services for those who are victims, and to tackle the behaviour of perpetrators.

Further proposals

36. Building more cohesive communities involves addressing the underlying factors that breed misunderstanding and prejudice – including educational underachievement, lack of employment, poor housing and health. It is also about tackling attitudes and behaviours. So the focus to date of the Council’s work has been on both addressing those causal factors, and on bottom-up approaches to ‘winning hearts and minds’ in order to pilot what works. The Working Group may wish to consider as part of the proposed October meeting the role and priorities for Members in engaging with the cohesion agenda.

37. LO recommendations also propose that the Council should set targets for determining whether and how the Council is meeting its statutory duty to promote good community relations. While there are some relatively straight forward measures that can give some way of assessing performance, such as the number of race hate incidents, these are limited, and not always appropriate. For example, our aim is to encourage reporting as there is at present likely to be significant under-reporting.
38. The 2004 MORI survey used the government's recommended indicators to ask about how well people got on with each other and with people from different backgrounds. The findings would offer some baseline. However, before using this for setting a target, we need to unravel the relationship between people's perception of others and deprivation and diversity. This is because the findings showed that the least ethnically diverse areas, which also were higher income areas appeared to be ones where people felt they got on better with other groups, than in more diverse, lower income areas.
39. We would propose that to progress with target setting on this issue, it could be valuable to have discussions with the Strategic Reference Group about what would be meaningful ways of measuring cohesion in Southwark, and well as to talk through with them their views about where attention should be focused.

Theme: Targeting business development opportunities

LOR 16.29 Specific attention should be given to promoting business development opportunities for people with disabilities, notwithstanding that the numbers are always likely to be small.

Actions in Place

40. The recommendation focuses on business development for people with disabilities and it is acknowledged that this has been a gap in the services that the Council commissions. The main focus of the Council's approach to business development has been on two strands that target small and medium sized businesses and BME-led businesses.
 - In terms of the Council's own procurement of goods and services, and Market Development Forum of officers and external business representatives has been set up. This is exploring various ideas designed to assist SME and BME businesses to be better able to compete for Council contracts. Activities relate to access to information, more user-friendly tendering documentation, and training/development seminars. Roadshows for local businesses are planned for June, and a Procurement website is being developed to make information more accessible. The Working Group may wish to consider a report on these initiatives later in December.
 - In terms of business support, the agencies commissioned by the Council are being requested to liaise with Southwark Community Care Forum to identify how best to target their services to people with disabilities.

- The Strategic Director of Regeneration is scheduled to report to the Executive shortly on the arrangements for Business Support and development within Southwark. This was originally commissioned by the Executive. The Working Group could decide to consider this report prior to forwarding it to the Executive.

Further proposals

41. The initiatives set out above include a forward plan for the next few months.

COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

42. This report identifies some of the existing mainstream arrangements for taking forward the recommendations in Lord Ouseley's report, and makes proposals for further action or review. Understandably, a number of the issues raised by Lord Ouseley need consistent and long-term embedding in the way the Council delivers its services and builds its relationships with local communities.
43. A key element of this is about listening and learning from communities and implementing best practice. The work of the proposed Strategic Reference Group and the Independent Audit function are therefore critical to the Council making further progress on all the recommendations set out above. The proposed schedule of themed meetings should enable the Working Group to undertake a more in-depth assessment of the recommendations relating to each key theme, and to have available as part of that the expertise of these other bodies. This will enable the community impact of each of these themes to be considered more fully.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

44. The majority of the actions set out in this report are already part of the Council's mainstream workplan and agreed budget. The additional item is the proposal to commission from a academic/research organisation the Diversity Survey in paragraph 3.16. It is estimated that this would cost in the region of £60,000.

CONSULTATION

45. Prior to the Working group meeting, a copy of this report will be sent to the named organisations and individuals who may comprise the Strategic Reference Group. It is anticipated that they will have full involvement in the issues brought forward in future reports.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Independent Review of the Council's Equality and Diversity Framework	Social Inclusion, Town Hall, Peckham Road, SE5 8UB	Nathalie Hadjifotiou 020 7525 7194

APPENDIX 1

Audit Trail

Lead Officer	Chief Executive	
Report Author	Nathalie Hadjifotiou, Head of Social Inclusion	
Version	Final	
Dated	11.5.05	
Key Decision		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS /DIRECTORATES /EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Borough Solicitor and Secretary		
Chief Finance Officer		
Chief Officers	YES	
Executive Member	YES	