

| Item No. | Classification | Date | Committee |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 4 | Open | 14.12.05 | Cross Party Working Group |
| Report Title | | Implementation of Lord Ouseley Report recommendations – next steps | |
| Ward (s) or groups affected | | All | |
| From | | Chief Executive | |

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Working Group note that the initial phase of implementation of the recommendations in Lord Ouseley's report has been completed.

1.2 That the Audit Commission review on the Council's framework for implementation will be available in January 2006, and that this will be reported to the Executive.

1.3 That the Working Group agree that as phase 1 of implementation is now completed, that ongoing oversight and scrutiny of longer-term actions should be mainstreamed into the formal Executive and Scrutiny processes as from 1st January 2006.

1.4 That the Working Group agree that the five themes set out in paragraph 3.6 should be the basis of the mainstreaming strategy.

1.5 That related to the five themes, the Chief Executive and Chief Officers be required to develop medium-term action plans, with milestones and targets, to address the longer-term nature of achieving measurable change in equality and diversity outcomes.

1.6 That the Council continue to strengthen communication and promote dialogue across the range of equality and diversity forums and with the wider community about its policies and practices in respect of equality and diversity generally, incorporating the issues addressed in Lord Ouseley's report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council commissioned Lord Ouseley in September 2004 to review its framework for the delivery of its statutory responsibilities in respect of equality and diversity. Lord Ouseley's report was published and considered by the Executive in March 2005.

2.2 The report identified that the Council's overall equality and diversity policy framework was sound and there was evidence of good practice in implementation. At the same time it highlighted gaps and areas where further improvement should be made. These were set out in the 35 recommendations in the report.

2.3 The Council adopted the recommendations in full. To oversee implementation, a Cross Party Working Group was established in April 2005. The Working Group has met six times to consider the range of issues addressed in the report.

2.4 At the meeting on 21st November, the Working Group considered a progress report on all 35 recommendations. The monitoring schedule presented to that meeting is attached to this report for background information.

3. FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 As well as overseeing implementation of all the individual recommendations, the Working Group has considered detailed reports that relate to the key issues in the report. The reports considered by the Working Group are listed below:

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| 4 th April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of Lord Ouseley review recommendations and oversight of outstanding complaints |
| 31 st May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overview and progress report on Lord Ouseley review recommendations ▪ Proposals regarding independent audit function ▪ Proposals regarding strategic reference group ▪ Investigation and resolution of outstanding complaints ▪ Employment and workforce issues ▪ Lord Ouseley review: implementing all remaining recommendations |
| 28 th June | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education themed report ▪ Regeneration policies and the impact on SME/BME business: implementation plan ▪ Investigation and resolution of outstanding complaints ▪ Equality scheme update ▪ Report back from strategic reference group meeting June 22 2005 |
| 25 th July | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Southwark's draft equalities scheme ▪ Workforce report ▪ Implementation of Lord Ouseley's recommendation on the Southwark Race and Equalities Council ▪ Assessment of the current potential for youth conflict based upon ethnic, racial or cultural difference |
| 21 st November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on implementation of Lord Ouseley review recommendations ▪ Learning and development report ▪ Final report on investigation and resolution of outstanding complaints and lessons learned ▪ Final (closed) report on investigation and resolution of outstanding complaints - final reports and completed investigations |
| 14 th December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of Lord Ouseley review recommendations on community cohesion ▪ Implementation of Lord Ouseley review recommendations on community engagement ▪ Implementation of Lord Ouseley review recommendations |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal advice in relation to the council's proposed accelerated development initiative |
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3.2 These reports set out the immediate actions required to implement the recommendations, and have enabled the Working Group to monitor progress.

3.3 One aspect of implementation is the appointment of the Audit Commission to undertake an independent review of the Council's arrangements, in response to recommendation 35 of Lord Ouseley's report. The first phase of this review is due to report in the New Year.

3.4 The Council's target of December 2005 for addressing the immediate actions in respect of the recommendations has been met. However, the nature of many of the recommendations, and in particular the longer-term effectiveness of actions to deliver positive impact on outcomes for different communities, will require sustained intervention over a considerable period.

3.5 It is proposed therefore, that the next phase of implementation should be incorporated into the Council's mainstream business planning and performance management framework. From January 2006, it is proposed that reporting progress against the recommendations should be incorporated into the normal performance monitoring process to the Executive, and that oversight and challenge should be promoted through the role of Scrutiny.

3.6 To assist mainstreaming, the ongoing areas for targeted equality and diversity improvement have been grouped into five themes linked to Lord Ouseley's recommendations:

- Member development and decision-making on equality and diversity, particularly in respect of planning and regeneration.
- Strengthening community relations- incorporating community involvement, building cohesion, user feedback and effective communication of the Council's policies and strategies on equality and diversity
- Improving the educational outcomes of BME and other under-achieving groups
- Promoting economic prosperity of BME and other excluded groups, through tackling worklessness and promoting the development of BME and SME businesses
- Addressing the imbalances in the gender, ethnicity and disability profile of Council staff, and ensuring effective staff development for all staff in equality and diversity issues

3.7 In adopting these themes as the ongoing framework for implementing Lord Ouseley's recommendations, it is recognised that there will also be considerable additional mainstream equality and diversity activity over the next year associated with

the full range of equality and diversity legislation. This includes the enhanced requirements on local authorities in respect of disabilities, age and faith.

3.8 To assist the Council to deliver and the Executive to monitor that the longer-term interventions around these five themes are demonstrably contributing to equality and diversity outcomes, it is proposed that the Chief Executive and Chief Officers draw up medium term action plans for each theme as part of the 2006/9 business plan cycle. These should include appropriate diversity outcome targets for measuring success, and key milestones against which to measure progress. Where Equality Impact Assessments are in progress for 2005/6 that relate to these themes, then the EqIA action plan and the post-LO action plan should be integrated to form a single Equality and Diversity Plan for that theme.

3.9 Draft E & D action plans would be considered by the Executive in March, with final plans in place by June 2006. This timescale will provide the opportunity to secure community feedback on the draft plans through the Equality and Diversity Panel and relevant community of interest forums. These action plans will also inform the revised Corporate Equality Action Plan being prepared for 2006- 2010.

3.10 Notwithstanding the development of these medium-term action plans, the existing activity to implement the recommendations in Lord Ouseley's report will continue.

4. RESOURCING

4.1 The delivery of equality and diversity outcomes, and the processes and services associated with this are core to the Council's business, and resourced through mainstream budgets.

5. COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

5.1 The initial phase of implementing the recommendations in Lord Ouseley's report has been about putting the appropriate mechanisms and improvement plans in place. It is too early to have evidence that these are delivering improved outcomes to Southwark's diverse community and in respect of the Council's workforce.

5.2 The proposal to adopt medium term action plans, with measurable milestones and targets will provide a transparent benchmark for measuring impact. In addition, many of the relevant policies and functions will be subject to Equality Impact Assessments over the next 18 months, that will provide a further opportunity to assess impact.

5.3 The second phase of the Audit Commission review is also scheduled for 2006/7, and will provide an independent assessment of further progress.

| 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

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