

APPENDIX 8

Southwark Human Rights, Race and Equalities Bureau

Review by Sean Baine

Final Report – November 2008

Terms of reference

1. This review of SHRREB has been jointly commissioned by SHRREB and Southwark Council. The terms of reference of the review are:
 - To review the work of SHRREB
 - To establish the need for such work, and any additional work
 - To make recommendations as to the best way in which such work should be carried out
2. There is an initial assumption that SHRREB should continue in existence to carry out the proposed work but recommendations can also be made on alternative means of delivering the proposed work if SB comes to the conclusion that SHRREB is not a viable organisation in terms of carrying out the proposed work.
3. In considering the viability and future of SHRREB SB will look, in broad terms, at the governance arrangements and funding of SHRREB and will make recommendations about these areas as appropriate.

Methodology

4. I have had individual meetings with all 7 trustees.
5. All the members of SHRREB have been circulated with information about the review and invited to submit comments or to have a telephone conversation with myself. No one contacted me as a result of this circulation.
6. I have had individual meetings with 3 members of staff. I have provided informal supervision to Vivienne Lamaro on an on-going basis.
7. I attended the first consultation meeting for the SHRREB Human Rights Policy Forum.

8. I circulated the members of the Southwark Infrastructure Group inviting comments. I received comments back from 4 organisations.
9. I have had meetings with the following individuals/agencies to discuss SHRREB:

Julie Timbrell LBS CIDU Co-ordinator Pensioners and Disabilities Forums
Nuala Conlan LBS CIDU Manager
Dax Ashworth LBS CIDU LGBT Development Worker
Jenny Heron LBS Social Inclusion – lead on equalities and diversity
Jonathan Toy and Tim Calver LBS Community Safety
Christine Mcinnes and Kerry Crichlow LBS Assistant Directors Children’s Service
Mohammed Abdullahi LBS Community Cohesion Co-ordinator

Mee Ling Ng Chair Southwark PCT
Hajinder Bahra Southwark PCT Equalities and Diversity

Malcolm Tillyer and Victor Olisa Metropolitan Police

Chris Skidmore Bede House Domestic Violence and Hate Crimes Projects
Elahay Mahsoori Southwark Refugee Communities Forum

Theo Gavrielides Acting Chief Executive Race on the Agenda (London wide body)
Georgina English Equality and Human Rights Commission London Office

10. I produced an interim report and then a draft final report both of which were considered by SHRREB trustees and the Council.
11. It was initially thought that it would be useful to interview a number of advice agencies given the immigration advice service run by SHRREB. However in discussion with Andy Matheson we agreed that this would not be a good use of my time. The immigration service is funded through a Legal Services Commission contract which is currently performing satisfactorily – indeed it can be argued that its reputation has increased recently and there seems to be good networking with other agencies and a continuing stream of referrals. There are arguments for keeping the service within SHRREB as it provides information from its casework to inform the SHRREB policy process. In addition it is advantageous to have a human rights lawyer employed in the organisation to assist with interpretation of the legal framework covering the six equality strands. Clearly if it was recommended that SHRREB overall was not viable then further work would have to be done to ascertain the best

alternative home for this service but, given the overall presumption that SHRREB has a future, then it seemed wasteful of resources to interview the other advice agencies in Southwark.

Background

12. In 2002 Southwark Council for Community Relations changed its name to Southwark Race and Equalities Council. A refocusing of the work took place from 2005 onwards with the aim of refocusing services away from generic casework towards an increasing emphasis on policy work and the establishment of SREC as a valued and valuable critical friend to the council and other public bodies. However, following difficulties, a consultant was employed in 2007 to review the workings of SREC and produce a Business Plan. This work stabilised the organisation constitutionally and financially. In particular a proposal was accepted that SREC should become Southwark Human Rights, Race and Equalities Bureau to reflect changes taking place nationally with the establishment of the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
13. The aim of the new organisation was to refocus service delivery within three main programme areas – advice, policy and community engagement. The resulting Business Plan had 13 Priority Actions, including the recruitment of an Executive Director, the appointment of two Policy Officers for Regeneration and Health Inequalities, finding funding for two Community Engagement Officers and continuing work around the Racial Incidents Forum and the Race Equalities Education Forum. These activities were to be backed up by adopting quality standards and developing funding and communications strategies.
14. A new Chief Executive was appointed and started work in January 2008. However this appointment did not work out and she left a few months after appointment. Around the same time the Head of the Legal Team returned from maternity leave and she refocused the immigration case work programme to the satisfaction of the funder – the Legal Services Commission. However since the resignation of the Chief Executive the work of running the organisation and developing policy initiatives has fallen entirely on the Assistant Chief Executive – she has recruited new trustees, developed relationships with key stakeholders and moved forward on consultations to establish new areas of work across all the equalities strands.
15. This history of stop and start and one crisis following another has taken its toll in terms of the reputation of the organisation. SHRREB's history (and SREC's before it) weighs heavily with most people.

“We have had little contact with SHRREB over the last few years – they have not contacted us and we have not recognised how they might support our work and so we have not contacted them.”

“Maybe SHRREB have been too self contained.”

“I’ve worked in Southwark for about 6 years and found throughout that time SHRREB, (or SREC as it was) has been permanently in a cloud of mismanagement, in-fighting and personal agendas. Often seemingly bogged down with the kind of issues that it ought to be championing against.....the mistrust and poor reputation of the organisation will take a long time to get over. I think they’ve also struggled to make clear what their remit was, I’ve certainly never been sure who we could refer there.”

“Views often expressed are that age discrimination is taken a lot less seriously than discrimination on grounds of race, gender and sexuality and this view is rather enforced by SHRREB’s title.”

“There is a role for SHRREB but everyone has got their fingers burnt. It has lost faith. People have got to feel confidence.”

“People don’t really know of them.”

“Badly led and managed with no coherent strategy. People working in the dark. Cynicism and disillusionment. Should be thriving but travesty that it is not flourishing.”

16. However, in spite of this negativity, the great majority of those people talked to saw an important role for SHRREB in Southwark, taking up a range of equalities and human rights issues and working closely, but critically, with statutory authorities. It is this underlying good will that can be built on. However it will all fade away again to nothing if SHRREB cannot develop a positive reputation in the borough, a reputation based on solid work and core organisational competence.

The wider context

Nationally

17. Reference has already been made to the establishment nationally of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The aim of the Commission is to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people and promote and protect human rights. The Commission’s four priorities are:

- To analyse, define and target key equality and human rights challenges
 - To change policy and organisational practice to provide better public services alongside an efficient and dynamic economy
 - To engage, involve and empower the public, especially people from disadvantaged communities and areas
 - To anticipate social change, develop new narratives, and reach new audiences in ways that strengthen equality and human rights
18. Thinking about these priorities is useful when considered priorities for SHRREB in Southwark.
19. Of particular importance in the next year will be the proposed new Equality Bill. A substantial body of equality legislation has been introduced in the previous 40 years but, according to the government paper introducing the Bill, “the legislation has become complex and hard to understand. This Bill will de-clutter and strengthen the law.” In particular there are the following proposals:
- There will be a new Equality Duty on public authorities which will bring together the three existing public sector equality duties around race, disability and gender and extended to gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.
 - Age discrimination will be ended in a number of areas
 - Public bodies will be obliged to report on gender pay, ethnic minority employment and disability employment
 - Public bodies will be required to tackle discrimination and promote equality through their purchasing functions
 - There will be increased transparency in the private sector
 - Positive action will be extended
 - Enforcement will be strengthened

The aim will be to introduce the Bill in the next Parliamentary session.

20. The passage of the Bill will give an important role to bodies such as SHRREB in terms of explanation of the contents of the new Act and promotion of the use of its powers.

Southwark

21. Harriet Harman, in her introduction to the paper introducing the framework for the new Equalities Bill, outlines some of the key facts about continuing

discrimination which will apply in Southwark as much as any other part of the country.

- The gender pay gap, though down from 17.4% in 1997, still means that a women's full time pay is on average 12.6% less per hour than a mans. Women working part time are paid around 40% less per hour.
- The rate of employment of disabled people has risen from 38% ten years ago to 48% today, but if you are disabled, you are still two and a half times more likely to be out of work than a non-disabled person
- If you are from an ethnic minority in 1997 you were 17.9% less likely to find work than if you are white. The difference is still 15.5%
- 62% of over-fifties feel they are turned down for a job because they are considered too old compared with 5% of people in their thirties
- 6 out of 10 lesbian and gay schoolchildren experience homophobic bullying and half of those contemplate killing themselves as a result.

22. Southwark is a borough with great ethnic, religious and social diversity as is demonstrated in the following paragraphs.

23. The ethnicity of the Southwark population is:

White	63% (including 3.1% White Irish)
Black or Black British	25.9% (including 8.0% Black Caribbean and 16.1% Black African)
Asian or Asian British	4.1%
Chinese or other ethnic group	3.3%
Mixed	3.7%

These are the figures from the 2001 census but, as might be expected things have changed since then e.g. it has been projected that in 2005 the Black ethnic group had risen to 28%. These figures also hide a number of particular smaller communities such as the Latin American, Francophone, Sierra Leonean, Somali, Eritrean and Eastern European communities.

24. The 2001 census gives the religion of Southwark people as:

Christian	61.6%
No religion	18.5%
Muslim	6.9%
Hindu	1.1%
Buddhist	1.1%
Jewish	0.4%

Sikh	0.2%
Other	0.4%
Religion not stated	9.9%

25. According to the 2007 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for Southwark applying national figures would suggest that there are about 27,000 people with moderate or severe disability in Southwark. There are estimated to be 607 to 809 adults with moderate/severe learning disabilities and 5,287 adults with mild learning disabilities. The estimated number of people in Southwark with neurotic disorders is 13,565 men (13.5%) and 20,065 women (19.4%).
26. It is estimated nationally that 6% of the population identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
27. According to the 2001 census 9.4% of the population of Southwark are over 65 and it is projected that the percentage of those between 60 and 64 and 65 and 69 will increase over the next 20 years although the percentage of those over 69 are projected to stay about the same.
28. And, of course, women make up about half of the population (in fact, in Southwark, according to the 2001 census, slightly less than half).
29. It is this core underlying diversity and accompanying discrimination and lack of equality that justifies the existence of a body such as SHRREB.

Models of working

30. A report in June 2007 on the future of local race equality work in London (Gauging, Engaging and Balancing by John Eversley and Patrick Vernon for Race on the Agenda) identified four models of working for local race equality bodies. In my view these models are equally applicable to bodies that have changed themselves into equalities bodies that are concerned with all the equality strands. The four models are:

The Weather Station. The idea here is of gauging the environment using a range of instruments. The kind of activities implied by the model are:

- Monitoring demographic change
- Monitoring employment and service delivery trends and practice
- Profiling communities
- Intelligence about attitudes, awareness and knowledge
- Evaluating what works or does not work

The Greenhouse. The idea here is an agency that cultivates and nurtures other individuals and organisations. Their role may include:

- Capacity building
- Supporting the development of bridging and bonding capital
- Support for contracting work from commissioners

The Forum. This is about bringing people together to discuss issues and network. Although this model is often criticised as creating “talking shops” the positive functions can be:

- Interaction to exchange and explore commonalities and differences
- Community engagement
- Brokerage
- Creating a culture of human rights
- Challenging myths, stereotypes, ignorance and prejudice
- Creating bridging social capital

The Sanctuary. This covers advocacy and campaigning roles. While this may not be controversial when done on behalf of individuals (e.g. through the immigration case work service currently carried out by SHRREB) it can be more controversial where it means criticising other agencies and institutions.

31. My view, expressed in my Interim Report, is that SHRREB should combine elements of the Weather Station, Forum and Sanctuary models but should not see the Greenhouse model as a priority for work. This is because the work of SHRREB is likely to be limited by resources available and there is already considerable capacity building resource in Southwark provided through the members of the Southwark Infrastructure Group. However a key element of the work of SHRREB in this situation would be to maintain good relationships with these other agencies and to ensure that their work does reflect the different equalities strands.

The work of SHRREB

32. In broad terms the outcomes that SHRREB needs to set for itself should follow those of the national Equality and Human Rights Commission:
- Reducing inequality within Southwark
 - Eliminating discrimination of all sorts within Southwark
 - Strengthening good relations between all people in Southwark
 - Promoting and protecting human rights in Southwark

33. The existing and potential work of SHRREB can be divided into the following areas:
- Core monitoring, networking and representation
 - Case work
 - Servicing RIF and REEF
 - Human rights development work

Core monitoring, networking and representation

34. SHRREB has a core role to play in monitoring equality issues in Southwark and in proposing policy actions. The monitoring aspect of this will involve keeping up to date with equality statistics e.g. the figures monitoring employment by ethnicity, age, sexuality, disability and gender in different sectors alongside statistics on service delivery around the same equality issues.
35. Keeping up to date with national and regional developments will also be important. I have already mentioned the new Equalities Bill and SHRREB has to be in a position to publicise the Bill when it becomes an act and to look towards its implementation in Southwark.
36. There also has to be a capacity to respond quickly to developments as they happen e.g. around major incidents within or between communities and involving work with different statutory services.
37. Of importance will be attendance at a number of forums consistently putting forward an equalities perspective on items being discussed. Examples of such forums are Southwark Alliance (where SHRREB is the substitute representative of Southwark Infrastructure Group), Stronger Communities Partnership, Safer Southwark Partnership and sub groups, PCT Equality and Diversity Steering Group, Southwark Infrastructure Group and the Voluntary Sector Forum. In addition at any one time there will be a number of one off initiatives or working groups that SHRREB will be invited to join.
38. Of particular importance is the Council's Equalities and Diversity Panel. This meets every month and considers Equalities Impact Assessments from different council services. Topics that will be covered in the coming months include planning policies, grants commissioning, early years service, the registrars service, the communications function, private lettings, road safety plan, housing strategy, cleaner, greener, safer capital investment programme, repairs service and the Safer Southwark Partnership action plan. For each

topic covered by the Panel there are usually extensive reports which need to be read and digested before each meeting. Ideally SHRREB might do some consultation work with affected members before each meeting – and this would be helped if as much notice as possible was given of forthcoming reports. All of this is a significant time commitment.

39. The work described in these paragraphs is the bread and butter of an organisation such as SHRREB but often gets overlooked when considering larger identified projects. However it is often this sort of work that establishes the reputation of an organisation – being present at meetings, having a perspective and consistently arguing for consideration of equalities issues. The perspectives argued for have to be based on evidence, including the views of member organisations and of particular communities – and time has to be allowed for this evidence to be collected, partly through ongoing monitoring and partly through continuous contact with individuals and groups.

Case work

40. As explained in paragraph 10 above I have not carried out a detailed review of the immigration case work service. However the monthly new start figures show an upward trend:

Oct 07	0
Nov 07	4
Dec 07	0
Jan 08	0
Feb 08	1
Mar 08	8
Apr 08	15
May 08	17
Jun 08	17
Jul 08	12
Aug 08	17
Sep 08	23

41. These figures mean that the targets from the Legal Services Commission are now being met (with the accompanying meeting of income targets). There is also potential for discussions on extending the legal casework service. At present SHRREB is authorised for a half time employment contract but this does not allow for representation at tribunals or in courts and discussions are taking place about the possibility of changing this to a housing contract. The LSC immigration work contract might also be extended.

42. Besides the individual casework it is valuable for SHRREB to have a human rights lawyer as part of its operation given that much of the equalities work that SHRREB carries out is legislation based – having a lawyer as part of the staff team means that expertise on equalities legislation is readily available.

Servicing RIF and REEF

43. These two bodies are long standing obligations of SHRREB but both have not operated consistently in the last year. It is essential that both bodies, working with the key stakeholders, clearly define their terms of reference and ways of operating.

Racial Incidents Forum

44. The terms of reference of the Forum include the following:
- To gather together existing activity across Southwark on how race crime is being tackled
 - To consider the findings, identify best practice and share this information
 - To identify gaps in provision
 - Enhance service delivery of agencies by sharing best practice
45. The key stakeholders are LBS Community Safety, Metropolitan Police, Southwark Wardens, the Peckham Programme, Victim Support and SHRREB.
46. A key way of working has been to work with local groups who carry out surveys of their members about their actual experiences and perceptions of racial incidents. Coming out of this work a baseline report was produced in 2007 based on consultations carried out by the Strategic Ethnic Alliance, the Organisation for Blind Africans and Caribbeans, the West Indian Standing Conference and From Boyhood to Manhood. The recommendations of the report covered areas such as methods and places for reporting, housing policy, developing an information pack, raising awareness about the importance of reporting, media reporting and issues concerning disability. Currently groups are being consulted about carrying out another round of surveys.
47. One proposal has been that the Forum should have its terms of reference changed to enable it to cover all hate crimes although there are already developed forums in some areas e.g. domestic violence.

48. The Forum has not been operating consistently over the last year due to staffing constraints at SHRREB but my conversations with stakeholders show support for the continuation of the Forum, possibly with an expanded role covering all hate crimes. There needs to be a meeting of stakeholders (those given above with the possible addition of interests around gender, sexuality and disability) before any further action such as carrying out the 2008 surveys takes place. This meeting would agree to new terms of reference, to membership, to methods of reporting and monitoring (including the survey work) and to numbers of meetings. Following agreement at such a meeting a work programme for SHRREB and the Forum could be agreed.

Race and Equalities Education Forum

49. In previous terms of reference for the Forum there were two key items:
- Assess and advise on initiatives designed to enhance greater inclusion and educational achievement and reduce exclusions amongst vulnerable groups
 - Facilitate a strong collective voice to promote positive race relations in schools and education settings in Southwark
50. More recently the terms of reference have been changed so that the Forum's prime purpose is to advise the Children's Services Department on
- Where and how consultation should take place within Children's Services
 - The issues that are the subject of consultation
 - The feedback to communities on the outcomes of consultation
 - Improvements to consultation processes
51. These terms of reference seem rather reductionist i.e. they seem to deal only with consultation processes and not with substantive issues. As with the Racial Incidents Forum REEF has not been meeting consistently and needs to take stock. In particular it needs to look at how and whether it moves its remit from a purely race and education (i.e. mainly schools) focus to a consideration of all the services provided by the Children's Service. It could also consider if it should extend its remit to look at the complete range of equalities issues. In discussion with stakeholders there is support for extending the remit to all of Children's Services but less support for moving away from solely looking at race issues.
52. Again, as with RIF, there needs to be a meeting of stakeholders to look at the terms of reference and ways of operating. The stakeholders will include

different elements of the Children's Service, representatives of school governors and teachers, Black Parents Forum, Supplementary Schools and SHRREB.

Human Rights Development Work

53. The move from SREC to SHRREB meant that there had to be development of work across all the equalities strands and human rights more generally. To assist with this two consultation seminars were held attended by over 20 organisations. These seminars highlighted issues across the equalities spectrum. The results of the seminars were reported back to the SHRREB Board and four priorities for future work have been agreed. These are:
- Developing a gender perspective in Southwark – what issues are there affecting women and what should the organisational responses be?
 - Reviewing employment statistics in the statutory authorities for all equalities strands
 - Mental health and BMER communities
 - Homophobia – its prevalence and measures to combat it
54. Pursuing these issues will allow SHRREB to engage with all the equalities strands and with all the statutory authorities. However considerable work now needs to be done to define in greater detail what is involved in each piece of work i.e. terms of reference and methodologies. For each piece of work there is a need for a short report outlining the proposals and how it is proposed to proceed. (Suggestions as to how SHRREB should manage this work are contained in the section below on governance.)

Borough wide Forums of Interest

55. There are a number of borough wide forums of interest – Pensioners, Disability, LBGT, Multi-Faith, Refugee Communities, Travellers and Muslim. Some of these are already serviced independently but most are still serviced by staff in the Community Involvement and Development Unit in the Council. However they are being asked to look for an external host organisation.
56. While it is accepted that it will be up to the Forums themselves to decide on their future home much of their work relates very strongly to the work of SHRREB and Forums should be asked to least consider SHRREB as a possible host. (Suggestions about involving some of the Forums in SHRREB governance arrangements are discussed in para 61 below.)

The work of SHRREB – conclusions

57. Despite the poor reputation of SHRREB in recent months and years there is general agreement that a body such as SHRREB is needed in Southwark. In all my discussions and in the comments received there was only one view stated that it would be best if SHRREB wound up and alternative arrangements explored.
58. SHRREB has now started to define what a work programme should look like although staffing restrictions are holding back what can be done. The general monitoring, networking and policy work, the case work, reaffirming and then servicing RIF and REEF and the human rights development work adds up to a substantive and needed programme of work.
59. However consideration needs to be given to the ability of SHRREB as an organisation to deliver such a programme and this is covered in the following sections.

SHRREB – governance

Constitution

60. The agreed constitution that I have been provided with is still in the name of Southwark Race and Equalities Council. The last amendment to this constitution was agreed in January 2006 and allows for two categories of membership: full membership which is for groups and organisations and associate membership for individuals. Associate members can take part in meetings and will receive information but are not allowed to stand for office or to vote at general meetings. Within the constitution there are some provisions that are unusual e.g. a reference to remuneration of members of the Council of Management and what seems to be a presumption that if a member of the Council of Management retires then they are re-elected unless there is a specific vote against such re-election.
61. There is a need for a review of the constitution, at the very minimum to ensure that the name is changed to Southwark Human Rights, Race and Equalities Bureau.

Council of Management

62. Five new trustees have been recruited recently. However there is a need to do a comprehensive equalities, knowledge and skills audit to identify gaps in representation.
63. It is important that each of the equalities strands is represented on the Council of Management. One way of achieving this would be to invite a representative from each of the borough wide forums of interest – LGBT, Disability, Pensioners, Multi Faith and Refugees to nominate someone. This would probably require a change in the constitution but should be considered. In the meantime the Council of Management, after the audit, could identify particular areas for co-option and, where appropriate, approach the relevant forums of interest for a nomination.
64. Attention also has to be paid to the way in which the Council of Management operates. At present there are two longer standing members of the Council who bring experience from a number of areas and five newer members who bring a range of experiences. Care has to be taken to ensure that all members have the confidence to participate fully in the Board's proceedings. Once the skills etc audit has been undertaken and other new members have joined then it is recommended that the Council of Management have a facilitated away day or away session to decide on priorities and ways of working.

Sub committees

65. At present the only sub committee is the Human Rights and Equalities Forum which discussed the outcomes of the consultation on work areas before these were finally agreed by the Council of Management. This Forum is seen as consisting of representatives from SHRREB, Southwark Refugee Communities Forum, Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers, Community Action Southwark, Southwark Council and a regional and a national organisation. I am not convinced that there is value in having this Forum as separate from the Council of Management. If the Council of Management can be made into a body representative of all the equalities strands then it is the Council that should be deciding on future work streams, on policy positions that come out of those work streams and on matters of implementation. I would recommend that this Forum is not continued with and that, for each piece of agreed work, a working group is established, led by a member of the Council of Management with a time limited remit to establish and then see through the piece of work.
66. Each member of the Council of Management should consider being particularly involved with either one of these pieces of work (or RIP or REEF) or a theme across the organisation such as finance or communication.

SHRREB – finance

67. The draft accounts for 2007/2008 show unrestricted balances of around £80,000. At present the reserves allow for about 4 months running costs.

68. The budgeted income for 2008/2009 shows three main sources of income:

LB Southwark	110,000 (reduced from 125,000 to allow for the costs of this consultancy)
Legal Services Commission	126,000 (projected based on increased case loads)
RIF (LB Southwark – Community Safety)	20,000
TOTAL	256,000

69. The projected expenditure for 2008/2009 is spilt into three main blocks:

Salaries	140,000 (4 members of staff and 2.5 months for CEO)
Consultants (to assist with human rights projects)	40,000
Office costs	66,000
TOTAL	246,000

70. Projected income and expenditure for 2009/10 is:

Income

LB Southwark	125,000 (assuming grant returned to full 08/09 level)
Legal Services Commission	126,000 (assuming existing levels of income)
RIF (LB Southwark – Community Safety)	20,000
TOTAL	271,000

Expenditure

Salaries	180,000 (assuming 5 members of staff and 2.5% salary increase)
Consultants (to assist with human rights projects)	20,000
Office costs	70,000 (allowing for inflation)
TOTAL	270,000

71. Therefore provided LB Southwark maintains its level of grant, and income levels from the Legal Services Commission continue at present levels, it is reasonable to agree a core staff compliment of CEO, ACEO, Head of Legal Services, Caseworker and Administrator. Once this core staff is established then it will be reasonable to consider additional sources of funding for projects. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has a programme of grant aid but the next round is not going to be launched until September 2009 to allow for adequate consultation. In fact this timetable could well suit SHRREB as it allows longer to get the core organisational competencies into place and to agree on priority projects. Other likely funding sources are the Big Lottery and charitable foundations such as City Bridge and City Parochial.

SHRREB – communication

72. Once work programmes are agreed good communication will be vital. It is important that different communities and organisations in Southwark are aware of what SHRREB will be trying to achieve – and that statutory organisations know that SHRREB can be approached as a critical friend. Part of this communication must be through one to one contacts and meetings and part will be through attendance at key meetings and networks.
73. The written word will also have its part to play and SHRREB should consider a leaflet outlining what it has to offer. In addition the arrangement with Community Action Southwark to take a regular page or pages in Cascade, their bi-monthly newsletter, should be revived.
74. A new website is being commissioned and will need to be kept up to date. It will probably also be necessary to institute an e-bulletin for quick access to SHRREB members and others.
75. All of these elements require staff time and need to be built into staff capacity.

SHRREB – staffing

76. SHRREB is currently in a difficult position. Ideas for a work programme and new projects are being developed but there is not the capacity in the organisation to deliver them. Yet unless this work can be delivered the reputation of SHRREB will continue to suffer.
77. In this report the following work areas have been outlined:
- Continuous monitoring of employment and service delivery
 - Keeping up with regional and national developments including the new Equalities Bill
 - Attendance at a number of key meetings and forums
 - Taking a more proactive role on the Council's Equality and Diversity Panel
 - Managing the casework service and its development
 - Convening a stakeholders meeting on RIF and agreeing terms of reference and work programme
 - Convening a stakeholders meeting on REEF and agreeing terms of reference and a work programme
 - Developing four briefs for the work on gender issues, employment monitoring, mental health and BMER communities and homophobia
 - Reviewing the constitution
 - Delivering on the communication issues
78. In addition there is the normal business of running a small organisation - supervising staff, making grant applications, servicing the Council of Management and so on.
79. At present all of this work (obviously with some assistance on the casework development side from the Head of the Legal Team) falls to the Assistant CEO. She has done terrific work in, for example, stabilising the organisation, recruiting new trustees, making sure the LSC income is coming in, attending meetings to improve profile and developing the new human rights projects. However it is not possible for one person to take on the complete list of tasks outlined in paras 75 and 76.
80. It is my view that, if the Council, as a main funder, accepts the arguments in this report and agrees that there is important work for SHRREB to do and, as a consequence, agrees funding at the same level as this year, then the Council of Management should agree to advertise the post of Chief Executive Officer. If the post was advertised in November or December then an appointment could be made before the end of January with a projected start date of the beginning of April 2009.

81. When the Chief Executive Officer is appointed s/he should review the core staffing of the two management/policy posts and agree a split of responsibilities between the CEO and the ACEO (or whatever title is agreed for this post).
82. That would leave around 5 months with the current levels of staffing. It is important that during this period work is prioritised and I would recommend that the Board of trustees agree to the following broad work programme for this period:

Internal

- Review of constitution
- Skills and knowledge audit of trustees and recruitment of new trustees to fill identified gaps
- Recruitment to CEO, Caseworker and Administrator posts
- AGM in January 09
- Servicing and holding of three trustee meetings
- Develop systems for new Legal Services Commission funding regime
- Development of website and regular inserts in Cascade

Policy and networking

- Attendance at LB Southwark Equality and Diversity Panel (possible 3-4 meetings)
- Regular attendance at Stronger Communities Partnership, Southwark Infrastructure Group, Southwark Advice Forum and PCT meetings
- Agree terms of reference and work programme for RIP (November) and follow through on consultation and work programme
- Agree terms of reference and work programme for REEF (December) and follow through on work programme
- Agree brief and methodology for “Reviewing employment statistics” (January Board)
- Agree brief and methodology for “Developing a gender perspective in Southwark” (March Board)

This would leave the briefs and methodologies for “Mental health and BMER communities” and “Homophobia – its prevalence and measures to combat it” for future Board meetings.

83. The ACEO should have the ability to go to the Board to get authorisation for any temporary assistance she may require and which can be contained within the budget.

Conclusions and recommendations

84. This report has argued that there is important work for SHRREB to do in Southwark – and that SHRREB has started, in conjunction with key stakeholders, to define that work in more detail. Amongst other things
- the casework service can be developed further
 - the national Equalities Bill will need explanation and publicity
 - there should be an enhanced role on the Equality and Diversity Panel
 - both RIP and REEF need recasting and work programmes developed
 - the four human rights projects need definition and planning
 - further work needs to be done on governance
85. In developing this sort of agenda it is interesting to note that there does not seem to be any similar development in other London boroughs. In some cases Racial Equality Councils have been dissolved and their place taken by Race Equality Partnerships but I have not been able to find a situation similar to that of SHRREB with the move from a body purely focussed on race to one encompassing all the equalities strands and the broader human rights agenda.
86. The agenda outlined here is a substantial one which I believe can be delivered if the resources are there. With the continuation of the existing level of resources from the Council and the LSC both a CEO and an ACEO can be employed alongside the legal and casework staff and a real contribution made to improving the lives of the diverse communities of Southwark.

Recommendations for LB Southwark

87. That the Council reconfirm its support for SHRREB and for the work programme outlined in this report and agrees to continue to grant aid the organisation.
88. That relevant departments and sections agree to work with SHRREB on the development of different aspects of the work programme.

Recommendations for the SHRREB Board

89. That the SHRREB Board agrees:

- The broad outcomes outlined in para 32
- To the work programme outlined in paras 34-54
- To review the constitution (para 61)
- To carry out a comprehensive equalities, skills and knowledge audit of Board members (para 62)
- To co-opt members in order to ensure that all the equalities strands are represented on the Board (para 63)
- To have a facilitated away day (para 64)
- To discontinue the Human Rights and Equalities Forum (para 65)
- To consider individual Board members taking the lead on different aspects of the work (para 66)
- To a communications strategy (paras 72-75)
- To recruit a Chief Executive Officer (para 80)
- To review the staffing structure after the CEO is appointed and after receiving advice from the CEO (para 81)
- To the work programme for the period up to end March 2009 (para 81)
- To authorise any necessary temporary support that the ACEO may need (para 83)