RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

CYNLLUN CYDRADDOLDEB HIL

2005/2008

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1. FOREWORD

The tragic death of Stephen Lawrence in 1993 brought about the first major change to Britain's Race Relations Legislation for nearly 25 years. Home Secretary, Jack Straw set up a Public Inquiry in 1999 chaired by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny whose findings led to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

This legislation outlaws Racial Discrimination and places a duty on public bodies to be proactive in their approach to Race Equality and to find practical ways to move the agenda forward.

Blaenau Gwent is a predominantly white area with relatively low numbers of minority ethnic people (approximately 600 in the 2001 Census). Although it has a low population of minority ethnic people, the council must still ensure that their needs are known and taken seriously – low numbers must not lead to complacency and the mistaken belief that problems do not exist!

This document is a revision of our first Race Equality Scheme, which was published in May of 2002. This scheme will run for a further 3 years and will be monitored to measure the impact and progress made.

Statement

We will do all we can to provide quality services to the people of Blaenau Gwent regardless of Race or Cultural background.

Councillor John Hopkins
Leader
Blaenau Gwent County
Borough Council

Robin Morrison
Chief Executive
Blaenau Gwent County
Borough Council

This Scheme and its associated Action Plans were agreed by Council on Thursday 30th June 2003

2. DEFINITIONS OF DISCRIMINATION

The following definitions of discrimination are drawn from the Race Relations, Disability Discrimination and Sex Discrimination Acts.

1. Direct Discrimination

This occurs where a person or organisation treats a person or people less favourably than others simply because of their race, gender or disability.

2. Indirect Discrimination

This occurs when a requirement, provision or practice which cannot be justified on grounds other than sex and race is equally applied but has the effect, in practice, of disadvantaging a considerably higher proportion of one group than the other.

3. Institutional Racism

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) defined Institutional Racism as:

"The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people".

(The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report Paragraph 46.25.P321).

3. Population Breakdown: (Race)

Blaenau Gwent has a very homogenous, predominantly Welsh, White population of approximately 69,000.

99.2% of the Blaenau Gwent population were born in the United Kingdom (92% of whom were born in Wales), compared to a Welsh average of 97.9%, and an England and Wales average of 91.1%.

Non-white minority ethnic groups make up less than 1% of the population in Blaenau Gwent (just under 600 people, largely Asian or Mixed origin, with some Chinese and Black families) compared to a Wales average of over 2%.

3.1 Blaenau Gwent Population by Ethnic Group (Census 2001)

ALL PEOPLE	**70,064**	**%**
White	**69,483**	**99.2%**
British	68,813	98.2%
Irish	173	0.2%
Other White	497	0.7%
Mixed	**184**	0.3%
White and Black Caribbean	70	0.1%
White and Black African	24	0.0% *
White and Asian	59	0.1%
Other Mixed	31	0.0% *
Asian or Asian British	**222**	**0.3%**
Indian	105	0.1%
Pakistani	72	0.1%
Bangladeshi	24	0.0%
Other Asian	21	0.0% *
Black or Black British	**56**	**0.1%**
Caribbean	12	0.0%
African	41	0.1%
Other Black	3	0.0%
Chinese or other ethnic group	**116**	**0.2%**
Chinese	83	0.1%
Other ethnic groups	33	0.0% *
People identifying themselves as Welsh	**8,417**	12.0%

* *Percentage below 0.049%*

4. Population Breakdown (Welsh Language)

Some 9.5% or 6,421 of the population are Welsh Speaking and 8,417 or 12% identified themselves as Welsh according to the Census of 2001. The Authority has produced a Welsh Language Scheme under the Welsh Language Act of 1993 that sets out how it will treat the Welsh and English Languages on the basis of Equality and how the public can receive services in the language of their choice.

4.1 WELSH LANGUAGE STATISTICS FROM THE CENSUS OF 2001

The table below shows the number of percentage of the population aged 3 and over that are able to speak Welsh by electoral ward.

		Number			Percent
Official Name of the Electoral Division	**Age Group**	**All People**	**Able to Speak Welsh**	**Not Able to Speak Welsh**	**Able to Speak Welsh**
Abertillery	3 and over	4358	456	3902	10.5
Badminton	3 and over	3095	276	2819	8.9
Beaufort	3 and over	3751	440	3311	11.7
Blaina	3 and over	4679	483	4196	10.3
Brynmawr	3 and over	5420	511	4909	9.4
Cwm	3 and over	4188	407	3781	9.7
Cwmtillery	3 and over	4595	442	4153	9.6
Ebbw Vale North	3 and over	4588	376	4212	8.2
Ebbw Vale South	3 and over	4065	346	3719	8.5
Georgetown	3 and over	3377	329	3048	9.7
Llanhilleth	3 and over	4602	407	4195	8.8
Nantyglo	3 and over	4127	396	3731	9.6
Rassau	3 and over	3190	281	2909	8.8
Sirhowy	3 and over	5348	518	4830	9.7
Six Bells	3 and over	2562	239	2323	9.3
Tredegar Central and West	3 and over	5854	514	5340	8.8
Blaenau Gwent	**3 and over**	**67799**	**6421**	**61378**	**9.50**

Source; - Office of National Statistics – Census 2001

This table shows a significant increase in the number of Welsh speakers since the last census figures were published in 1991 when the percentage for those aged 3 and over speaking Welsh was only 2.4% (between 1991 and 2001 the number of Welsh speakers has risen by 302.3%). Also of significance is that Blaenau Gwent has the lowest inward and outward migration figures of any of the other 21 local authorities in Wales.

5. Where is Blaenau Gwent

It is located at the Heads of the Valleys in South Wales, covers over 109 square hectares and Abertillery, Brynmawr, Ebbw Vale, Nantyglo and Blaina and Tredegar are its major towns.

Formerly a major Steel making and Coal mining community, the decline of those industries has seen the Council take over the role of being the main employer in the area with approximately 3900 staff carrying out its many and varied functions.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council was established on the 1st April 1996 as a result of Local Government Re-organisation.

5.1 The Political Process

The Council has 42 democratically elected members to serve the people of Blaenau Gwent.

It has an Executive that consists of 9 councillors and is the decision making body of the Council with each Executive Member having a specific portfolio area of responsibility.

There are 5 Scrutiny committees with twenty-one councillors on each overseeing and playing a vital role in scrutinising the Council's decision-making process.

A serving councillor has been selected as an Equalities Champion to assist the process of mainstreaming the Equalities agenda throughout the Council.

6. Blaenau Gwent and Equalities Legislation

Blaenau Gwent has for many years worked towards the principle of Equality of Opportunity for both its employees and the public that it serves. It is committed to providing high quality services to all, consulting with the people of Blaenau Gwent to seek their views, needs and opinions.

It also works closely with the private, voluntary and direct service providers and encourages equality of opportunity in all of its dealings.

In discharging its functions to the public and ensuring that it treats its employees fairly the Council takes into account the following legislation: -

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 +1986.
Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.
Disability Discrimination Act 1995
Welsh Language Act 1993
Human Rights Act 1998
Equal Pay Act 1970
Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Crime & Disorder Act 1998
Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1981
Data Protection Act 1998
Protection from Harassment Act 1997
Employment Act 2002

7. Organisational Plans and Policies

The Council has a number of aims and strategies, intended to improve the performance of the Authority over time. It is important to demonstrate how this scheme fits together with the rest of the Council's strategic priorities.

7.1 Community Plan

This plan, produced in consultation with local community provides the vision for improving the equality of life for all who live, work and visit Blaenau Gwent. It is intended to guide the strategic direction of the authority and other significant organisations in Blaenau Gwent.

7.2 Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan sets out the Council's vision and priorities over the next three years. It incorporates what we believe we should do to build a better, stronger Council; which will in turn make Blaenau Gwent a better place for its residents and visitors.

7.3 Corporate Equality Policy

The Council recognises the importance of equality issues, and has set a strategic overarching strategy that addresses equalities. The aim is to improve equalities practice at both Corporate and Directorate level and to demonstrate its commitment to anti-discriminatory practice across the equalities agenda.

7.4 Welsh Language Scheme

The statutory scheme sets out how the council will treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality, by providing services to an equally high standard in both languages. Welsh people are recognised as a racial group on the basis of nationality, which makes them relevant both to the Race Relations Act, and the Race Equality scheme.

7.5 Linguistic Skills Strategy

As a part of our revised Welsh Language Scheme (which will be published in the near future) we have proposed to carry out a Linguistic Skills audit of the workforce. It will be done by means of a questionnaire to all staff asking for their language skills, experience and qualifications and will cover all languages – Welsh, Spanish, French etc including British Sign Language. The inclusion of language within the Equalities agenda recognises that as a basic Human right people should not be discriminated against due to their language and that no-one should be disadvantaged by being unable to use their first language.

The aims and objectives of the linguistic strategy are to:

- Ensure that residents of the County Borough are given the services they need in their chosen language.
- Ensure that the Council's customers are treated equally whatever their language needs and however they interface with the Council.
- Ensure that the Council staff have the proper training so that they are able to deal effectively with customers whatever their language needs.
- Ensure that Recruitment and Selection practices within the Council reflect the need to provide the above.
- Ensure that a team of staff is developed to enhance the work outlined above to demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment.

- Ensure that monitoring is undertaken to provide meaningful information to highlight areas of good practice within the Council and to note areas where further development is needed.

7.6 Black Minority Ethnic (B.M.E.) Housing Strategy

The Council has drafted a Black Minority Ethnic Housing strategy, which will reflect the local situation and the priorities of the Communities it serves. It will demonstrate how local B.M.E. housing issues and opportunities to promote race equality in housing will be achieved and should be sufficiently flexible to adopt to the changing needs of the local B.M.E. population.

7.7 THE GENERIC EQUALITY STANDARD

In October of 2002, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council formally adopted the Welsh Assembly Government's Generic Equality Standard for Local Government in Wales as a tool to facilitate improvement in Equality performance. The Standard has been produced to provide a common approach for dealing with Equality for the following elements:

Race, Welsh Language, Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Religious Belief (and Age in 2006).

- The Standard ensures that Local Government can address its legal obligations under anti-discrimination law and provides a systematic framework for mainstreaming equalities into the every day functions of a local authority.
- Integrates equalities policies and objectives with the Wales Programme for Improvement and the Council's Improvement Plan.
- Encourages the development of anti-discriminatory practice.
- Provides a basis for tackling all forms of institutionalised discrimination.
- Provides a framework for improving performance over time.

In April 2003 the Authority's Welsh Language Adviser was re-designated as the Equalities officer with the remit of raising the profile of the Equalities Agenda, offering advice and guidance to officers and members alike on how to follow the framework of The Standard to enable compliance with its various levels. The adoption of the Standard led to the creation of an Overarching Equalities group (known as the Overarching Network) which co-ordinates a number of Cross Departmental Equality Networks: -

- Welsh Language Network
- Race Equality Network (including Religion and Belief)
- Disability Network
- Equal Interest Network (Gender Group including Sexual Orientation)

The Overarching Group acts as the channel of communication through to the Corporate Management Team and the Executive. To further mainstream Equalities throughout the council, the Chief Public Protection Officer has been elected as Chair of the Overarching Network and is therefore the council's lead officer on Equalities. Also a Councillor has been selected as the Equalities Champion.

The remit of the Overarching Network is to look at the specific Equalities areas, to research issues, problem solve and report on good practice. Also it facilitates the cascading of information to each department in order to raise awareness of the Equalities Agenda thereby improving levels of communications.

The Standard has 5 levels of achievement and the Authority aims to reach level 2 by April 2006.

The adoption of the Standard should be seen as a very strong commitment by the Authority towards the promotion of equality and elimination of discrimination in all of its daily functions.

8. Blaenau Gwent and Race Equality

- This document sets out the arrangements that the Council are putting into place to meet the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote race equality and improve public services for everyone. It is accepted that the Council has a long way to go towards achieving the hopes and aspirations of the scheme, but that a proportionate and realistic action plan can go a long way towards a successful implementation.

- The principles of the scheme are included in the Community Plan and will be added to all Council policies in order to mainstream race equality throughout the council. When working in partnership with public or private bodies, race equality as well as all of the other equalities dimensions will be key themes of those partnerships.

- Two years ago a Race Equality Network was set up which had representatives from all departments to cascade information regarding Race issues throughout the Council. This group is monitored by the Overarching Network to which all of our Equalities Networks are answerable.

- The council subscribes annually to an International Language Line, which will upon request act as interpreter in whichever language is requested by a service user to communicate with the Council. The Council currently has 24 fluent Welsh speaking staff of which approximately 15 have agreed to act as third party contacts if members of the public wish to deal with the council through the medium of Welsh.

- We will consult with the appropriate Racial Equalities bodies to assist us in the development of the plan.

8.1 TRAVELLERS

1. Blaenau Gwent has a permanent Travellers site in Cwmcrachen, Nantyglo. Originally it was an area used by travellers in the 1920's and 1930's and was properly established in late 1950's by Gwent County Council with shared common facilities. In 1995 it was re-developed with the aid of a Welsh office grant.

2. The site consists of 17 permanent bases with individual water, electric and toilet facilities, and 7 transit bases (with the same facilities) for those who may be passing through. The site is regarded as a great success and reveals the Council's commitment towards providing a quality service to the Traveller Community.

3. It employs a warden to look after the site, who exercises a range of pastoral duties and assists families where children attend local schools – this initiative being part of the duties within the Lifelong Learning Department.

4. The warden also acts as a conduit to a full range of services provided by the Council e.g. school services, as well as to external bodies such as the Benefits Agency

5. The Adult Key and Basic Skills Team are working in partnership with the Sure Start Team teaching a small group of female travellers to read. It is hoped that with a build up of trust that the numbers will shortly increase and it is hoped to offer a Driving Theory course to some of the male travellers in the near future.

6. Close links have also been forged with the Health Service e.g. a Community Mobile Dental Unit regularly visits the site.

8.2 SAFER BLAENAU GWENT AND THE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

An informal partnership involving Gwent Police and relevant Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council officers met to discuss crime and disorder issues from 1996, when the unitary authority was created, until 1998, when the Crime and Disorder Act was introduced.

The Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Partnership was established in 1998. The original membership consisted of representatives of the statutory partners named in the Act (police and council) and representatives of Gwent Health Authority and Gwent Probation.

Membership of the partnership was later widened to include representation from organisations such as South Wales Fire Service, the Youth Offending Team, elected members and the South East Wales Race Equality Council. Partnership meetings were bi-monthly and were primarily strategic, with no formal implementation structure to support strategic decisions.

In the early part of 2003 the partnership was rebranded as Safer Blaenau Gwent and restructured to include an Action Group and a Substance Misuse Action Team, reporting to a smaller leadership group consisting of the 'responsible authority' representatives, together with Probation and Youth Offending Team and the chairs of the Action Group and SMAT.

A third tier of thematic sub groups (e.g. CCTV, licensing, arson reduction, vehicle crime, treatment) was added in the later part of 2003, widening the links with statutory, voluntary and business groups within the community.

THE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

The Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Strategy 2002 – 2005 was developed by the Safer Blaenau Gwent Leadership Group following a local audit of crime and disorder in the county borough and extensive consultation with residents, businesses, voluntary groups and statutory agencies.

The priorities identified for action until April 2005 are:

- **Drugs and alcohol misuse;**
- **Anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood disorder;**
- **Youth disaffection and offending;**
- **Burglary and car crime;**
- **Violent and hate crime;**
- **Fire and related death, injury, damage and false alarm calls.**

The strategy sets out a number of key objectives for each of the seven strategic aims, and describes the range of partnership approaches to tackling these problems and how success will be measured.

The table below provide the Hate Crime Statistics as provided by Heddlu Gwent Police.

These relate to year 2004 – 2005

	Hate Crime Statistics 2004/2005				
	Qtr 1	**Qtr 2**	**Qtr 3**	**Qtr 4**	**Sum:**
ABERTILLERY	2	9	1	1	13
BRYNMAWR	4	6	4	3	17
EBBW VALE	2	2	4	2	10
TREDEGAR	1	0	1	1	3
Blaenau Gwent Total:	**9**	**17**	**10**	**7**	**43**

9. Requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RR(A)A) 2000

The Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 gives the Authority a general duty under the Act to promote race equality and good race relations in all aspects of its work and to publish a Race Equality Scheme setting out how it intends to meet its obligations under the general duty and other specific duties, which have been set relevant to the Act.

This is the second Race Equality Scheme developed by the organisation, and along with its associated Action Plan sets out how the Authority will respond to its duties in all aspects of its work as the major employer and provider of services in Blaenau Gwent.

9.1 The General Duty

The General Duty as set out in the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended 2000) section 71(1) applies to all public authorities listed in 1(A) of the Act, this includes Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Every body or other person specified in Schedule A or a description falling within that schedule shall, in carrying out its functions, have due regard to the need to:

1. "Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination"
2. "Promote equality of opportunity"
3. "Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

The aim is to ensure equality is considered as an integral part of the way public authorities should provide service delivery, regulation, enforcement and employment practice. It should be firmly part of the authority's current and future policies and recognised as part of its everyday activities. Where race equality is relevant to a policy or service, the statutory duty will apply.

10. The Specific Duties

The General Duty is underpinned by a set of specific duties. These duties help set out the stages, methods or arrangements public authorities must embrace to help them meet the General Duty.

Under the Specific Duty public authorities must prepare and publish a revised Race Equality scheme by the 31st May 2005 that should impinge on all of its policies as set out below:

1. The scheme must identify its strategic arrangements for managing this Race Equality Scheme.

2. Identify its functions and policies that are relevant to meeting the General Duty to promote race equality and set out the arrangements for meeting this duty by;

3. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of it's proposed policies on the promotion of race equality.

4. Monitoring it's policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality;

5. Publishing the results of such assessments and consultation and monitoring;

6. Ensuring public access to information and the services that it provides;

7. Training staff in connection with the duties imposed by section 71 (1) of the Race Relations Act 1976.

8. Meeting the specific duties for employers; monitoring employment.

10.1 Strategic Arrangements for Managing this Race Equality Scheme

The Overall responsibility for managing the Race Equality Scheme lies with the Chief Executive through the Corporate Director of Governance, though all elected members and officers of the authority have a key role to play in the success of the scheme. Political accountability rests with the portfolio holder for Corporate Governance and the day to day running is within the auspices of the Head of Human Resources and administered by the Equalities Officer .

In order to ensure that this revised Race Equality Scheme remains an effective and living document an action plan has been developed which will specify certain activities, timescales and allocate responsibility for completion to individuals or groups.

The scheme and its accompanying action plan will be monitored by the Race Equality and Overarching Networks on a regular basis and will be reviewed annually by Corporate Management Team to ensure that targets are being met.

We will continue to work in conjunction with partner organisations to share good practice and problem solve

- Commission for Racial Equality
- Appropriate Racial Equality Council's
- WLGA Equalities Unit
- WLGA Equalities Network
- Blaenau Gwent Race Equality Network
- Safer Blaenau Gwent Partnership
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board

10.2 IDENTIFYING RELEVANT POLICIES AND FUNCTIONS

Blaenau Gwent has an array of policies and functions that relate to its many and varied activities and duties. All of these policies and functions will need to be assessed according to their relevance to the General Duty. Due regard will be given to the relevance and proportionality of each policy or function, according to the three main points of the General Duty.

The definition of relevance as defined by the C.R.E. statutory code of practice on the Duty to promote Race Equality is: -

'How much a function affects people, as members of the public or employees of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council'.

The definition of proportionality as defined by the code of practice indicates that it be considered: -

'The weight given to race equality should be proportionate to its relevance to a particular function'.

All major policies have or will have been examined to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. This will be an ongoing process.

Each policy and function needs to be assessed to see whether they leave themselves to open discrimination and then need to be prioritised and assigned to a relevant category. The relevant categories are low, medium or high risk of discrimination arising in the first instance with the remainder being incorporated into an ongoing programme over the course of this scheme.

Consultation with the public and other stakeholders continues to be an essential part of the overall process. Robust mechanisms need to be established to ensure that appropriate individuals and organisations are consulted.

10.2.1 Procurement and Partnership

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council regularly invites tenders and employs contractors to carry out services or supply goods on its behalf.

It has recently drafted an Equality in Procurement policy, which will give the Council's full commitment to all strands of Equality when exercising its procurement duties. (This document will be agreed by the Council in the very near future).

Also in the draft policy is found a standard contract clause and a standard questionnaire, which asks specific equality questions of prospective tenderers and forms part of the tender documentation.

10.3 ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING AND CONSULTING ON THE LIKELY IMPACT OF NEW POLICIES AND FUNCTIONS

10.3.1 Assessing

New and amended policies and functions will be subjected to an impact assessment process to ascertain how they impact on the promotion of race equality. A Policy Template will be applied to each new or amended policy or function as follows (full impact assessments may not need to be carried out in every case):

10.3.2 **- Initial Screening –** this is based on the data already available within the Council and produces estimates or signs of unequal impact. A Policy Template will be completed for all new and amended policies and functions and this process will enable the initial screening process to be undertaken. If there is any data available which estimates or signals signs of unequal impact, then the policy will be subject to a Partial Impact Assessment.

10.3.3 **- Partial Impact Assessment –** this will build upon the initial screening process and will outline risks and benefits, and will include advice from experts and other interested groups. If there is any data available which estimates or signals further signs of unequal impact then the policy or function will be subject to a Full Impact Assessment.

10.3.4 **- Full Impact Assessment –** this will include the results of external consultation, a final recommendation and arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the policy and it's impact in practice.

Appropriate staff will conduct Initial Screening, Partial and Full Impact assessments as necessary. This will take into account all of the information that is readily available and/or relevant to the new policy or function. For example, information already available, research findings, population data (including census findings), comparisons with similar policies in other authorities, survey results, ethnic data collected at different stages of a process (e.g. when people apply for a service), on-off data gathering exercises, historical experience and specially-commissioned research.

Results of these Initial Screening, Partial and Full Impact assessments will be used to inform reviews and subsequent amendments to new policies and functions. Changes will be made to mitigate any adverse impact they may have, thus improving the promotion of race equality.

10.3.5 CONSULTING

The Council has consulted with a range of groups, organisations and individuals by means of a questionnaire (Appendix B), which has asked for specific issues or areas of concern people may wish to discuss. The questionnaire was drawn up in conjunction with the Local Health Board to try and elicit a response from our small minority ethnic population.

The questionnaire was and is being distributed to the following: -

- Travellers site in Cwmcrachen, Nantyglo
- all restaurants and fast food outlets in Blaenau Gwent
- all Doctors and Dental Surgeries in Blaenau Gwent for staff and the public.
- local Churches
- all Libraries in Blaenau Gwent
- E Mail to all staff and family
- Covering letter and questionnaire to 37 B.M.E. organisations in South Wales
- It has been put on the Council's Internet and Intranet site.
- 35,500 copies are being sent with the August edition of Blaenau Gwent Council's Valleys Voice Newspaper

Despite a fairly rigorous process and effort to prompt engagement with minority ethnic people, the response has been very disappointing. We have had 2 returned forms (anonymous) from Chinese people not wishing to attend a forum but indicating non-specific concern regarding Health, Social Services, transport, Policing and anti social behaviour.

We have also received 17 returned forms (anonymous) from the Travellers in Cwmcrachen not wishing to attend a forum but indicating non-specific concerns over all of the categories listed on the form.

Recently we have managed to make contact with some Portugese speaking Brazilians, (meat factory workers), and have had some forms returned with positive responses towards some sort of engagement. The meat factory is in a neighbouring Local Authority, but some of the Brazilians are resident in Blaenau Gwent. Consultation is taking place between the Council, the neighbouring Authority's Equalities Officer, a local midwife (dealing with a couple of the families) and the Adult Key and Basic Skills Team in order to make contact and find out any specific needs the families may have. Funding has been made available to run some E.S.O.L. (English Second Language) courses if that is requested.

This authority **is totally committed** to engage with the small local B.M.E. population in order to affect change in areas highlighted as areas of concern and will do this in conjunction with the Partner organisations listed in section 1 (Page 14).

10.3.6 MONITORING ITS POLICIES AND SERVICES FOR ADVERSE IMPACT

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) 2000 Act, the Council has a specific duty to make arrangements to monitor the affect that policies and services delivered to the public have on race relations.

Any policies that are identified as having an adverse impact on race equality are revealed through this monitoring and consultation process and the relevant action(s) to address the adverse impact issues are taken.

Monitoring will be carried out during the life of the scheme for those services or policies that are identified as being relevant. We will incorporate monitoring by racial groups in the following areas: -

- How and when services are accessed
- Satisfaction surveys regarding Council services etc
- Public consultation meetings
- Complaints received by the public – including the nature of the complaint
- Details on Hate Crime
- Racial incidents in school – the nature of the incidents
- Application for vacancies within the Council.
- Meetings, forums or focus groups

Some of this information will already be documented for the others, systems and processes for collection and analysis will need to be established.

10.3.7 REPORTING PROCESS

Reports will be made to Corporate Management Team as part of the overall Equalities agenda and also to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. The Race Equality Network will monitor progress on an operational basis.

11. PUBLISHING ASSESSMENT, CONSULTATION AND MONITORING REPORTS

The Council will make summaries of the results of any impact assessments, monitoring and consultation work undertaken publicly available upon request in the language/format requested.

The context of the summary will be: -

a. An explanation of what has been indicated and why
b. A summary of the conclusions from the exercise
c. What does the Council propose to do as a result (what are the options)

Summaries will also include the outcomes of impact assessments

d. Results of public consultation with regard to policies and
e. Functions that are relevant to the General Duty
f. All data relating to ethnic monitoring in relation to the employment duty and in respect of policies and functions.

The Council will publish this information through the following mediums: -

g. Internet/Intranet
h. Valleys Voice
i. Libraries, District Offices, Leisure Centres
j. Notice Boards within Council Buildings

12. ENSURING PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE SERVICES IT PROVIDES

The Council must ensure that **all** people regardless of Race: -

a. Know about the services we provide
b. Are able to confidently use them
c. Are not met with barriers when trying to access them

It is fair to say that this is an area in which the Council needs to look at in greater detail in order to achieve equality of access to the information and services it provides.

- Currently it provides an Internet site that provides vast amounts of information on the services provided.

- As previously stated the Council subscribes to a Language Line Service, which aims to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged through lack of language skills when trying to access Council services.

- There are also 15 dedicated fluent Welsh speakers in the Council who have agreed to act as third parties if a member of the public wishes to exercise their right to have a service through the medium of Welsh (as per the Welsh Language Act 1993).

13. ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING STAFF

DIVERSITY TRAINING

- In September of 2004 the Training Division in conjunction with the Equalities Officer prepared an Equalities Awareness Quiz that covered all of the Equality strands. This Quiz has been incorporated into the Induction and Customer Care Courses that all new staff are required to undertake. The quiz gives an opportunity to discuss all of the equality strands, always generates vigorous discussion and feedback has shown that the sessions are very popular.

- An awareness session has also been carried out for Human Resources Division at their request.

- In November the Welsh Local Government Association training officer, in conjunction with the Equalities officer carried out an Awareness session on Diversity for Elected Members.

- The Diversity awareness sessions have been written into specific training courses in order to embed the duty to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity.

- The Equalities Officer, Head Of Human Resources, Training Manager and WLGA Training Manager are currently looking to develop some more specific duties in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

- Welsh Language training (WLPAN and Dosbarth Nos) has been running since 1997 and at least 250 members have undergone this training (both voluntarily or nominated by department) in this time. Over the last 4 years the authority has sent front line staff on Welsh language awareness training which gives basic guidance on how to deal courteously and efficiently with the Welsh speaking public – the training is run by Coleg Gwent and is run in conjunction with the Greater Gwent Welsh Language Group (Grŵp Deddf) and the feedback on the course is excellent.

- The Equalities Officer at the request of social services meets with trainee social workers for awareness sessions regarding the equalities dimensions.

14. MEETING THE SPECIFIC DUTIES FOR EMPLOYERS: MONITORING EMPLOYMENT

We have a duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to monitor employees by reference to the racial group to which they belong, the numbers of: -

i. Staff in post
ii. Applicants for employment, training and promotion, from each such group
iii. Employees that receive training
iv. Employees that benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures
v. Employees that are involved in grievance procedures
vi. Employees that cease employment with the Council
vii. Employees that are the subject of disciplinary procedures
viii. Publish annually the results of this monitoring

- Currently all application forms are accompanied by an Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form which are collated and recorded by the Human Resources Division.

- This form enables us to collate information regarding employment statistics in relations to people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

  (The relevant statistics are in appendices D and E)

15. SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTION TO DATE (Following publication of the 2002 Scheme)

- An Equalities Officer has been appointed to mainstream equalities throughout the council.

- A Member Equalities champion has been elected, with equalities also included within the portfolio of an Executive Member.

- Race, Welsh Language, Disability and Gender Networks have been established that are interdepartmental and chaired by Senior Officers.

- An Overarching Equalities Network has also been established to oversee the work of the other networks, is attended by Senior Officers across all departments and is chaired by a chief officer.

  This group is answerable to Corporate Management Team.

- Regular monitoring reports on Equalities are considered by the Overarching Network and Corporate Management Team.

- The Race Equality Scheme 2002-2005 has been published on the Council's internet and intranet sites.

- The monitoring of racial incidents process is in place within the Council and in conjunction with the Police.

- A review of equalities related Personnel Policies has been carried out.

- An Equalities in Procurement Strategy has been drafted and is awaiting agreement and publication.

- A revised Welsh Language Scheme has been agreed by Council and is awaiting agreement by the Welsh Language Board.

- A Corporate Equality Policy has been published that gives the Council's commitment to all the Equalities strands.

- The development of a Linguistic Skills Strategy has been agreed as part of the Council's Welsh Language Scheme.

- The Council has committed in its policy agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government that by April 2006 it will reach Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government in Wales.

- Equalities awareness training for members has been held in conjunction with the W.L.G.A.

- Chief Officer Development training equalities modules are being organised.

- Equalities training is now an integral part of the Induction and Customer Care programme for all new employees.

- A Translation and Interpreting service for all languages has been subscribed to – Language Line.

16. COMPLAINTS

If a member of the public believes that they have been directly affected by a failure of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to comply with the statutory requirements of this scheme they should write to:

Corporate Governance Directorate
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Civic Centre
Ebbw Vale
NP23 6XB

Or phone: 01495 355087

Fax: 01495 301255

Or E Mail: audra.Williams@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Blaenau Gwent aims to deal with complaints as quickly as possible and all complaints must be acknowledged in 7 days. A full explanation will be sent to the complainant within 28 days of the complaint being received.

17. ROLE OF THE COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

According to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) has a responsibility to report annually to the Home Secretary. It is under a duty to work with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, assisting us to meet our general and specific duties. The Act provides the Commission with powers to enforce compliance against a statutory body if they fail to meet the responsibilities under both the general and specific duties.

The Commission and individuals are given the right by the Act to take legal action against public authorities for unlawful racial discrimination. Where a public authority has not met the general duty, the Commission or a person with an interest in the matter can challenge their actions by applying for a judicial review. Powers to conduct formal investigations, and to serve 'compliance notices' on public authorities that are not complying with their specific duties are also invested in the Commission.

In the event of any investigation the Council undertakes to co-operate fully and provide access to any and all relevant documentation as may be requested by the Commission.

Written complaints and requests for copies of the Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Equality should be made to the Commission for Racial Equality at the addresses given below:

Commission for Racial Equality
Capital Tower
Greyfriars Road
Cardiff
CF10 3AG

Tel: 02920 729200
Fax: 02920 729220

Commission for Racial Equality (Head Office)
St Dunstan's House
201 – 211 Borough High Street
London
SE1 1GZ

Tel: 0207 9390000
Fax: 0207 9390001
Minicom: 0207 9390100
Website: www.cre.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN 2005 – 2007

A – THE RACE EQUALITY SCHEME				
To ensure compliance with the General Duty of the Race Relations (Amendment) 2000 i.e. to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between people of different racial groups by ensuring that race equality is mainstreamed into all policies, functions and procedures of the Council.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To implement The Race Equality Scheme.	Each service to undertake an equality impact assessment of all their policies (that are relevant to the General Duty) and prepare an action plan which outlines their programme for reviewing functions, policies and procedures, and all other elements of the Scheme.	All Heads of Service	50% of Council Policies assessed by Oct. 2005	Action plans for each service received by the Equalities Working Group.
To ensure the Scheme is being implemented and is workable within each Service.	Action Plan is reviewed by Overarching Network and progress reported to Corporate Management Team and Executive.	Overarching Network	Ongoing	The Scheme is revised if necessary.
To monitor the implementation of the Scheme.	Annual report to the Executive.	Overarching Network	Ongoing	Members are satisfied with progress made. Amendments made to the Scheme where necessary.
To monitor Equality targets as part of the Performance management process.	Each service to ensure that it has equality targets in its Service Improvement Plan.	All Heads of Service	April 2006	All services regularly meet the targets in their Service improvement Plans.

To raise public awareness of the revised Race Equality Scheme.	Issue information to local press. Place information on council website. Copies placed at public access points.	Communications Manager	June 2005	Increased awareness of the Authority's commitment to eliminate discrimination.
To raise staff awareness of the Scheme.	Scheme will be placed on the intranet. Information circulated to staff via email.	Communications Manager	August 2005	Increased awareness amongst staff of the Scheme and legal requirements of the Act.
B – FUNCTIONS AND POLICIES				
Purpose of the Duty: to give appropriate priority to the promotion of race equality when carrying out functions. The weight given to race equality should be in proportion to the relevance of the function to the General Duty.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To comply with the General Duty of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.	Ensure that an up to date list of all policies of the Authority (according to the Code of Practice on the duty to promote race equality) is maintained.	All Heads of Service	Ongoing	100% of all functions and policies are reviewed as per the Code of Practice.
C – MONITORING				
Purpose of Duty: To determine how functions, policies and procedures are affecting different racial groups (in service delivery and employment) and whether they are having an adverse impact on some groups.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To ensure that arrangements are made to monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality.	A corporate monitoring procedure has been produced and adopted, having regard to the guidance in the Code of Practice.	Communications Group	Ongoing	Data is monitored in a consistent manner throughout the Council.
	Standardised questions are used in conjunction with any applications to the Council for a service, job vacancy and in customer satisfaction surveys.	Communications Group, Human Resources	Ongoing	Service delivery is more able to meet the needs of the service users and will identify possible areas of concern.

Continue to monitor the number of racist incidents reported (i.e. any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person).	Continue to work in partnership with Gwent Police, SEWREC, Lifelong Learning Division and Community Safety Partnership.		Ongoing	Monitor location and type of incident and develop appropriate strategies with partners.
Review delivery of services to ensure that race equality issues are being considered in all aspects of service delivery.	Undertake annual equality audit of all services to establish progress each service has made.	Equalities Officer, Overarching Equalities Network	December 2005	Race equality issues are considered in all services as part of normal service delivery.
D – CONSULTATION (ASSESSING & CONSULTING ON PROPOSED POLICIES)				
Purpose of the Duty: To build race equality into the policy making process and to make that process clear, open and inclusive.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To ensure that equality issues are considered in all reports on new or amended policies.	Develop a mechanism to ensure that the Council's Scrutiny process considers the inclusion of equality issues in all reports on new or amended policies.	Scrutiny Coordinator	December 2005	Race equality is included in all new or amended policies.
E – PUBLISHING THE RESULTS				
Purpose of the Duty: To make sure that monitoring, assessment and consultation activities and their results are clear and plain to the public.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To identify arrangements for publishing results of assessments, consultations and monitoring	Results are published using a variety of media and formats: Newsline, internet, intranet, special reports; Annual Reports etc.	Communications Manager	September 2005	Publicly available record of progress.

F – ACCESS TO INFORMATION & SERVICES				
Purpose of the Duty: To ensure that people from ethnic minorities know about particular services; encourage people to use services; remove the barriers to accessing services so that services are equally available to everyone in the community.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To identify service needs of ethnic minority people, and barriers to accessing services.	Use consultation and monitoring arrangements and other available means to identify need.	All Services	Ongoing	Increased satisfaction levels amongst relevant groups.
To provide information in accessible format	Ensure all staff that deal with the public are aware of procedures to accommodate people with ethnic minority language needs.	All Services	Ongoing	Future consultation reveals a greater take up of service or satisfaction with the service provided.
To Develop a realistic profile of the ethnic communities of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Collection of information held by BGCBC and partner organisations and carry out further consultation with local communities.		September 2005	Greater awareness of the local community.
To ensure that equality targets are embedded in the Council's Performance Management Framework.	Ensure that all Council Service Improvement Plans contain race equality targets.	Performance Management Team Overarching Equality Group.	September 2005	Race equality issues are a fundamental part of all service delivery.

G – TRAINING STAFF				
Purpose of the Duty: To ensure that employees working in this area have the skills they need to ensure that public authorities meet their general duty to promote race equality.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To incorporate the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme into current training programmes	Ensure trainers (external and internal) include where appropriate Race Awareness training. Review training programmes.	**Training**	September 2005	Staff gain an understanding of the detailed requirements the Race Equality.
To ensure that an awareness of the Race Equality Scheme is incorporated into induction and customer care training.	Ensure trainers (external and internal) include where appropriate Race Awareness training. Review Induction and customer care training programmes.	**Training**	September 2005	All staff gain an understanding of the requirements of Race Equality.
To ensure that the Executive, Directors and Senior Managers are aware of the Race Equality Scheme.	Training programme for senior managers being arranged. Review training programme to ensure that needs are being met. Seminar for Members on raising awareness of race equality issues will be arranged.	Training	September 2005	Directors and senior managers are aware of the requirements of the Scheme. Members have a greater awareness of the requirements of the Scheme.
To ensure that employees have the relevant knowledge of the Race Equality Scheme commensurate	Senior Managers to cascade information and arrange appropriate training.	All Heads of Service	September 2005	Staff in all service areas have an understanding of the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme.

with their post.				
To ensure that all staff receive broad based equality awareness training, incorporating the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme and ensure consistency across all services/.	Develop appropriate equality awareness training programmes for all staff and corporately monitor the training provided.	Training	Ongoing	Annual statistics for race related training of staff by Service for Annual report.
To ensure that training remains relevant and of a high standard.	Inform all Heads of Service of the need to capture data necessary for long-term impact to be assessed and to develop a robust evaluation system.		Ongoing	Training continues to meet the needs of employees and remains of a high standard.
H- EMPLOYMENT				
Purpose of the Duty: Information from monitoring will be used to develop schemes (if required) to lead to a workforce that represents the profile of communities in Blaenau Gwent.				
Objective	**Action**	**Who By**	**Date**	**Outcome**
To eliminate any possible discrimination in the recruitment & selection process	Augment existing monitoring practices analysed by service to include: Selection success rates Success rates at each stage of selection Examine job advertising policy	Human Resources	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing June 2005	Results used to inform the recruitment and selection process. Publish staff profile annually Publish staff profile annually All jobs are advertised fairly. Both internally & externally.
To eliminate any possible discrimination in the workforce	Augment existing monitoring practices analysed by service to include: Training application rates	Human Resources	Monitoring to begin April 2005 April 2005	Improvement and further development of Statistical workforce profile information Publish statistics annually

	Training nomination rates Type of work Harassment & discrimination complaints Grievances Disciplinary proceedings & decisions made Exit interviews		April 2005 April 2005 April 2005 April 2005 April 2005 Nov 2005	Publish statistics annually Publish statistics annually Publish statistics annually Publish statistics annually Publish statistics annually Publish statistics annually
To identify barriers to access to employment and to work with other public sector agencies to attract people from ethnic minority groups into the recruitment process.		Human Resources	Ongoing	Levels of ethnic minority applicants and appointments increased to appropriate representative levels.

APPENDIX B

Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership Board

CONSIDERING THE NEEDS OF MINORITIES

The Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future Partnership Board would like to find out whether the needs of minority groups in Blaenau Gwent are being met. People who may be considered as being in a minority group are often from other countries, or have other religions or have specific difficulties. Therefore, in partnership with other relevant agencies, the Healthier Future Partnership Board wishes to consult with people from local minority groups, in order to consider their needs.

We want to find out what your needs are and would be grateful if you could fill in the attached form, which will help us understand the ways in which we may be able to help you. All responses will be treated confidentially. Please show any concerns or needs you have and whether you would be willing to attend an informal meeting to discuss them with officers of the Council, Local Health Board and other agencies.

Please could you fill in the attached form and return to: Alan Burkitt, Equalities Officer, Policy & Corporate Support Division, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale, NP23 6XB. If you have any queries please contact the person above on: 01495 355108.

We look forward to hearing from you.

NEEDS OF MINORITIES

A I would be willing to attend a meeting Yes ☐ No ☐

B My concerns are **[please tick the relevant box(es) below]**:

Comments

- **Health**

☐ _____

_____

- **Education**

☐ _____

_____

- **Social Services**

☐ _____

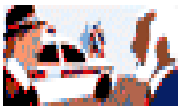
_____

- **Transport**

☐ _____

_____

- **Policing**



☐ _____

_____

- **Housing and homes** _____

☐ _____

- **Anti-social Behaviour** ☐ _____

_____

- **Welfare Benefits** and Support _____

_____

- **Any Other Areas** _____

☐ _____

In order to help us monitor your age, ethnicity and gender, please could you fill in the following details:

Age: Under 16 ☐ 16 – 25 ☐ 26 - 35 ☐

36 – 45 ☐ 46 – 55 ☐ 56 – 65 ☐

Over 65 ☐

Gender: (Male/Female) ……

Ethnic Origin:

White British	☐	White Irish	☐
White Other	☐	Indian	☐
Pakistani	☐	Bangladeshi	☐
Chinese	☐	Asian Other	☐
Black African	☐	Black Caribbean	☐
Black Other	☐	Other	☐

If you would like further information, or wish to attend a meeting, please give your contact details:

Name: …… Tel No: ……

Address: ……

APPENDIX C

BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ETHNIC MINORITYS STATISTICS – 01.04.04 – 31.03.05

MONITORING EMPLOYMENT

	Staff In Post	Number of applications from minority ethnic groups	Number of applications shortlisted from minority ethnic groups.	Number of applications appointed from minority ethnic groups.
No. of ethnic minority employees	6	18	5	2
Caribbean		1	1	
African				
Other Black				
White and black Caribbean	2	1	1	
White and Asian	1	1		
White and black African		1		
White European	1			
Irish	2			
Other Mixed	2			
Indian		5	1	1
Pakistani		3		
Bangladeshi				
Other Asian	1	3	1	1
Chinese		2	1	
Other		1		
Headcount	2194.5	2178	914	281
%	0.27%	0.8%	0.55%	0.71%

APPENDIX D

BLAENAU GWENT COUNCIL STAFF

TRAINING BY ETHNICITY 1/4/03 – 31/3/05

Training by Ethnicity		No. of Training Activities
American		1
British		5921
Canadian/Welsh		1
Canadian		29
English		7
European		1
French/Canadian		1
Irish		15
Italian		3
New Zealand		2
Scottish		2
Swedish		3
Welsh		465
White		85
White Other		4