



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
CABINET

11 April 2011

BME Workforce Task Group: Improving BME Senior Management Representation

Report of the Director of Human Resources

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report sets out the investigation and findings of the cross party BME Workforce Task Group into the issue of low BME Senior Management representation within the Council.
- 1.2 The report presents the Task Group's recommendations for action to be taken by the Council in seeking to improve BME Senior Management representation.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to support the following recommendations for action proposed by the BME Workforce Task Group:
 - (a) That the Director of Human Resources amend the Recruitment Procedure in regard to panel members for appointments to managerial and professional posts: from a minimum of 2 members to a minimum of 3 members, and that there should be balanced panels (in terms of representativeness of its members).
 - (b) That the Director of Human Resources revises the process for Member appointment panels to ensure that Members are involved at an early stage and receive the appropriate training.
 - (c) That the Black Workers Group conducts a follow up survey to their 2009 BME staff survey and that they receive organisational support in its delivery and analysis.
 - (d) That a Strategic Director be identified as a corporate equalities champion.
 - (e) That a new Standing Equalities Task Group be established to enable Members to have an inclusive overview of equalities practice across the Council's business processes.

3. Report

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The cross party Task Group was established to look into the issue of Black Minority Ethnic (BME) under-representation in senior management positions (non-schools), raised as an issue of concern at the 25 November 2011 Council meeting during discussion of the Corporate Equality Strategy.
- 3.1.2 The Chair of the Task Group is the Cabinet Lead for Community Cohesion and Human Resources, and the Task Group consists of six Members and four community representatives. Two representatives from the Black Workers Group were invited to join part way through its cycle of meetings. The Task Group has met since 10 January 2011 and has been supported by officers from Strategic Human Resources, the Employment Service Centre and Corporate Equalities.

3.2 Evidence considered

- 3.2.1 The Task Group received briefings and documentation on the Council's current recruitment policy and practice. This included the new Recruitment Policy and Procedure, a presentation on the new Recruitment website, the 2010 Employment Monitoring Report, and data on recent secondments and acting up opportunities. It also received briefings on Employment Service Centre support in the recruitment of senior management positions and practice followed in the most recent senior management appointments.
- 3.2.2 Briefings on proposals for the Workforce Plan and its talent management strategy were also provided.
- 3.2.3 Representatives from the Black Workers Group presented the findings of their 2009 BME Staff Survey in order to provide a staff perspective to the issue of senior management under-representation.

3.3 Discussion and findings

- 3.3.1 The Task Group considered the composition of recruitment panels as recommended in the Recruitment Procedure. They recommended that changes be made to recruitment panel representation to remove potential barriers for BME candidates and have a more robust process by increasing minimum panel numbers from 2 to 3 members for management and professional appointments, and that there be a balanced panel (in terms of representativeness of its members).
- 3.3.2 The Task Group also discussed Members' experience of their involvement in senior management recruitment panels. They agreed that improvements could be made to strengthen the role of Members in the recruitment process. This included involving Members in the recruitment process from the very beginning, enabling them to scope the recruitment search, as well as providing training for Members so that they knew their responsibilities throughout the process. The Task Group acknowledged the need to raise Member profile and importance of recruitment panels as compared to appeals panels.
- 3.3.3 The Task Group acknowledged that for now, the Council will have to search for external BME candidates to improve senior management representation. However,

their recommended longer term approach was to develop a BME talent pool for promotion as part of the Council's talent management strategy.

- 3.3.4 Members of the Task Group considered the evidence presented regarding recruitment trends and the data on secondments and acting up opportunities. Their view was that the evidence indicated a definite difference between the outcomes for BME and non-BME candidates, and that further analysis was required to unpack and better understand the reason for this difference. Suggestions for the Employment Monitoring Report to contain more detailed analysis of recruitment outcomes by gender as well as ethnicity were made to enable the Council to better track and understand the outcomes being achieved.
- 3.3.5 The Task Group supported the survey work undertaken by the Black Workers Group and recommended that the survey be carried out again as soon as possible for the Council to be able to continue to track and respond to BME staff perceptions over time. They agreed that the next survey should include BME staff working in schools. The Task Group discussed resourcing the next survey, and supported the Black Workers Group's request for organisational support in the delivery and analysis of the survey.
- 3.3.6 All members of the Task Group felt that the profile of equalities needed to be raised within the Council. They recommended that a Strategic Director be given responsibility as a corporate equalities champion. They also recommended that a new Standing Equality Task Group be established, responsible for taking an inclusive overview of equalities practice across the Council's business processes, taking on board equality issues that Members would wish to raise for their consideration. The membership of the new Task Group would need to be considered by Members in liaison with the Chief Executive and refreshed after the elections in May.
- 3.3.7 Cabinet are asked to support the following recommendations of the BME Workforce Task Group:
- (a) That the Director of Human Resources amend the Recruitment Procedure in regard to panel members for appointments to managerial and professional posts: from a minimum of 2 members to a minimum of 3 members, and that there should be balanced panels.
 - (b) That the Director of Human Resources revises the process for Member appointment panels to ensure that Members are involved at an earlier stage and receive the appropriate training.
 - (c) That the Black Workers Group conducts a follow up survey to their 2009 BME staff survey and that they receive organisational support in its delivery and analysis.
 - (d) That a Strategic Director be identified as a corporate equalities champion.
 - (e) That a Standing Equalities Task Group be established to enable Members to have an inclusive overview of equalities practice across the Council's business processes.

4. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Alison Greenhill, Interim Chief Accountant

4.2. Legal Implications

The Council must ensure that it acts within the parameters of the Equality Act 2010. This is particularly important in relation to the proposal to have a BME talent pool for promotion. The Council is legally required to appoint on merit.

There is no legal necessity for recruitment panels to be balanced in terms of representativeness.

Kate James, Solicitor

4.3 Climate Change Implications

This report does not contain any significant climate change implications and therefore should not have a detrimental effect on the Council's climate change targets.

Helen Lansdown, Senior Environmental Consultant - Sustainable Procurement

5. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/ NO	Paragraph/References within the report
Equal Opportunities	Yes	Throughout
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	No	
Corporate Parenting	No	
Health Inequalities Impact	No	

6. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Recruitment Policy and Procedure
2010 Employment Monitoring Report

Resourcelink data
15 February 2010 Cabinet Report: Black Workers Group Report 2009

7. Report Author

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Key Decision	No
Reason	N/A
Appeared in Forward Plan	N/A
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)