

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE AUTHORITY

Report to: Stakeholder Relations & Consultation Strategy

Date: 6th April 2009

Subject: Update on progress with Tripartite Equality Strategy for the Police Service

Sponsor: Committee Chair

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For: Information

1. PURPOSE OF PAPER

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on progress with the National Police Improvement Agency's (NPIA's) tripartite Equality Strategy for the police service and the Authority's engagement in the process.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current ACPO Race and Diversity strategy was published in 2003¹ and it is agreed that this document is now in need of review. The recent Policing Green Paper 'From the Neighbourhood to the National' specifically introduced the idea of a tripartite strategy for the police service. Consultation responses to the green paper suggested that all policing partners broadly supported development of such a document.
- 2.2 The NPIA was tasked with leading the development of the Strategy and the early consultation and drafting was carried out throughout the autumn of 2008.
- 2.3 The Strategy is intended to achieve the following;
- A clear statement of the vision, objectives and priorities for change and a framework for delivering improvement
 - To place equality and diversity at the heart of policing and to assist with meeting future operational requirements
 - To provide a robust business case for further equalities work particularly in achieving a more diverse and representative workforce
 - To support the service in meeting new duties arising from changes in legislation

¹ ACPO (2003) Business Area Race & Diversity Strategy.

3. RECENT ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 The project team from the NPIA has attended a range of events during the consultation period. Representatives from the BTPA Secretariat attended one of these, the NPIA's London & South East Equality & Diversity Network meeting in December 2008, where a general overview of progress and direction of travel was presented. The APA has also kept Authority Officers updated on progress via its communications to the Equality & Diversity Officers Network.
- 3.2 A first draft of the Strategy was presented to the APA's People Network at its meeting on 13th January for comment. Each of the APA's other networks were also asked to provide comments on the draft document at their meetings between January and March 2009².
- 3.3 The Strategy is likely to be focused on three main strategic themes;
- Operational Issues:
 - including taking action to identify and improve those services which disproportionately impact on diverse communities and improving access to all police services. Also ensuring the current government counter terrorism strategies promote community cohesion and have the confidence of diverse communities.
 - Organisational issues:
 - including diverse communities having confidence in the use of all police powers and legislation and best practice being used to promote equality and support delivery of quality services to all communities.
 - People issues:
 - including working to ensure that diverse communities (and staff) have confidence in the police code of conduct.

Clearly this committee has a potential contribution to make in delivering the forthcoming Strategy all three strategic areas.

- 3.3 In mid March the NPIA hosted two final consultation events in London and Durham which both BTPA and BTP attended; the Chair of this Committee attended the Durham event on behalf of BTPA. Attendees were asked to provide feedback on the proposals made under the thematic headings set out above. The Chair fed back that the main concerns raised at this workshop were that the Strategy and any action plans arising should be effectively led and easily managed/measured.

² The Citizen Focus Policy Network received a presentation and was asked for regional feedback at its February 24th meeting which was attended by the Chair of this Committee.

3.4 The Force has updated us that it has raised the following specific issues in relation to the draft Strategy;

- Assessment – HMIC will be responsible for assessing the effectiveness of the Strategy; will their assessment criteria be published?
- Support Groups - Has ACPO given any consideration to recommending that Support Groups within Forces should be merged to support the concept of the Strategy i.e. Forces to have one Support Group that is representative of all diversity strands? This would fit in with the concept of the single Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) i.e. this dissolved the Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission and Equal Opportunities Commission.

3.4 At the time of drafting this paper the completed Strategy was due to be presented to the National Policing Board in June for ratification. A final copy will be sent to all police authorities as soon as possible via the APA for comment. We will update Members on publication of the final Strategy in due course.

5. FOR INFORMATION

5.1 Members are asked to note this paper.