

REPORT TO: EQUALITY ACTION COMMITTEE – 13 AUGUST 2001

**REPORT ON: SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE REVIEW OF FUNDING FOR BLACK AND
MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN
SCOTLAND**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT

REPORT NO: 459-2001

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To summarise the findings of the above Review and to remit the document to the Race Equality Working Group for consideration.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 the City Council welcomes the Review document.
- 2.2 the Council's recommendations are remitted to the Scottish Executive and the Race Equality Working Group
- 2.3 the Race Equality Working Group is asked to return to the Committee with proposals for action and a note on the related financial implications.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Any costs arising from the implementation of the recommendations will be included in any subsequent Report to Committee.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The content of this Review relates to a key theme which refers to access to opportunities which will enable everyone to play a full part in society.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The recommendations relate in the main to the equality theme of equal access for all to goods facilities services and resources.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The Review presents the findings of research which was carried out for the Voluntary Issues Unit of the Scottish Executive between October 2000 and January 2001. The overall purpose of the work was to review the funding arrangements for black and minority ethnic voluntary sector organisations in Scotland, and to use the information gathered in the study to inform a strategic review of Scottish Executive funding for the wider voluntary sector.

7.0 BARRIERS TO FUNDING

- 7.1 In terms of barriers to funding, the following conclusions can be drawn:
- The study identified a number of specific barriers to funding for black and minority ethnic groups in the voluntary sector which appear to constrain their access to support.

- The process of securing funding is often complex, involving a wide range of funding sources with differing requirements.
- It may be difficult, in the first instance, to identify appropriate and relevant sources of funding, particularly given the range of funding sources, and groups point to the lack of knowledge of these as a major barrier.
- Information may not be provided and sources of funding may not be publicised in a way which is relevant and accessible to black and minority ethnic groups, with a tendency to focus upon mainstream routes for dissemination of information and little proactive work (with a few exceptions) to make information available to black and minority ethnic groups.
- There is little evidence (again with a few exceptions) of translated material relating to funding being made available.
- Those organisations which provide support with access to funding may not currently always be considered to be relevant and accessible to black and minority ethnic groups.
- The process of identification of, and application to, an individual funding source may be complex, and this may be compounded by the need to apply to a number of different sources, which may vary in their provision of assistance and ease of application process, may require different documentation (even across departments of the same authority) and may apply different conditions to receipt.
- There may be language barriers to the completion of application forms and participation in the application process.
- Some small sources of funding may apply conditions which are seen to be disproportionate to the level of provisions.
- Some of the criteria which are applied, along with the interpretation of criteria, may serve to exclude some black and minority ethnic groups. Specific examples include the exclusion of religious groups from some funding, the interpretation of “political” activity, the need for work to be “open to all” and the demand for innovation.
- Many black and minority ethnic groups do not have the time, resources nor “track record” to participate in this process, nor to compete on an equal basis with well-resourced groups.
- There is limited support available to black and minority ethnic groups to enable them to seek funding and complete funding applications and some of the key potential sources of funding to black and minority ethnic organisations (such as NLCB) are unable to provide this.
- There is seen to be a lack of cultural awareness amongst some funding providers which is seen to limit the types of work which are funded.

8.0 REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 On the basis of these conclusions, a number of recommendations are suggested, as follows:

- There is a need for a strategic overview of funding, as is currently taking place, using the findings of this study to help to ensure that funding is made to black and minority ethnic groups with a range of needs at a range of stages in their development.

- There is a need for a coherent national and local structure for funding to black and minority ethnic voluntary organisations, with the Scottish Executive providing funding for national organisations and the development of infrastructure work (consistent with their focus and priorities).
- There appears to be a need for the development of black and minority ethnic voluntary sector infrastructure and networking. In order to take the strategic developments forward and to provide advice and support to organisations at all stages, although it is recognised that the diversity of black and minority ethnic groups makes this difficult.
- There is a need to provide an appropriate “mix” of funding of a range of types, including long term funding and a variety of forms of developmental funding, both to recognise the importance of sustaining existing provision for which there is an identifiable long term need as well as encouraging the development of new work and the provision of support to one-off projects.
- Although there is a clear need for “mainstreaming” and for access to mainstream funding, there is also a need to recognise that this is not inconsistent with the need for positive action with black and minority ethnic groups. The Scottish Executive should provide clarification to funders of the nature and implications of mainstreaming, in terms of the issues raised for different types of application, in order to consistent with the Scottish Executive’s equality strategy.
- There is a need to ensure that funders do not apply or interpret conditions in ways which can exclude black and minority ethnic groups, such as the blanket exclusion of religious groups, “political” groups and projects focusing on anti-racist work or on the needs of individual groups. Similarly the constraints of the imposition of a requirement for innovation should be recognised and addressed.
- There is a need for specific funding provision to continue to address the needs of black and minority ethnic groups, at least until there is evidence that mainstreaming is becoming a reality in their access to funding.
- Local authorities and other local public organisations should examine their current support to organisations undertaking key local work and should ensure that they identify and support, through the provision of secure funding arrangements, those organisations providing the key services which are required by black and minority ethnic communities. This work can form a part of their overall response to the Race Relations Amendment Act and their work to combat exclusion, and should accord with the good practice guidance identified by COSLA.
- Local authorities and other sources of funding (such as charitable sources) should fund specific projects and new developments and should ensure that there are small, easily accessible funds available to new groups.
- Funders and those responsible for mainstream grants and service level agreements should undertake “equality proofing” of their provision, should recognise the needs of black and minority ethnic groups and should recognise the relevance of these needs to their work, rather than expect organisations to fit with their priorities.
- Service providers should address the needs of black and minority ethnic groups as part of their mainstream provision, and part of broader work relating to “modernising government”. There should be a recognition of the relevance of black and minority ethnic groups to key areas of local authority policy and practice, such as community safety, social inclusion and specific service provision.

- Local authorities should provide culturally sensitive services and should tackle the broader issues of social exclusion and institutional racism. This, in turn, should thus reduce the need for direct service provision by black and minority ethnic groups.
- Funding providers should undertake training in race equality and anti-racist work.
- Providers of mainstream and specific funding, including central and local government and other providers, should monitor, using appropriate, meaningful and consistent categories and methods, the disbursement of grants to voluntary sector organisations (disaggregated to include black and minority ethnic groups) and should provide this information on an annual basis to the Scottish Executive.
- The Scottish Executive should review annually the spend on racial equality work and should prepare a report identifying the level of funding and trends in the provision of support of different types.
- There is a need for funders to undertake work in partnership, not only with black and minority ethnic voluntary sector organisations, but with each other, to identify gaps and avoid duplication. There is a need for increased dialogue and the identification of common goals. A joint group, comprising representatives of central and local government and other key providers should be developed and should meet regularly to oversee these issues and report back to their own networks.
- There is a need for good, simple, application processes, avoid jargon.
- The Scottish Executive should provide guidance to other agencies (based on the experiences of black and minority ethnic groups) in relation to the provision of funding to black and minority ethnic groups and the development of good practice.
- Practice should be consistent with good practice in the Compact and in the COSLA guidance to local authorities, including the following:
 - Well-publicised funding using a range of media and networks and the review of publicity to ensure there is not discrimination against socially excluded groups.
 - Information on the range of grants provided should recognise the diversity of the voluntary sector.
 - Organisations should be able to find out easily what council priorities are and how to apply for funding or to be included on lists, as well as how applications will be processed and the timescales.
 - Appropriate conditions should be attached to funding, which are achievable by organisations of the type which it is expected will apply.
 - Criteria should be clear and transparent.
 - Standardised forms should be used, if possible.
 - Deadlines and arrangements should be specified clearly.
 - There should be feedback provided for unsuccessful applications, and explanation of the reasons, as well as explanation of any appeals process.
 - Monitoring should be agreed at the start and should not become a burden.
 - There should be transparent and consistent review.

- In addition, the decision making process should be clear and transparent, with the involvement of decision makers with the appropriate expertise.
- Organisations should consider the translation of material.
- Funders should consider their publicity and information and disseminate this through media which will reach black and minority ethnic groups.
- Those taking funding decisions should, as far as possible, reflect the diversity of communities.
- There is also a need for organisations currently providing information, advice and support at a national, regional and local (such as local CVS, LVDAs and local authorities) to identify and address the needs of black and minority ethnic voluntary sector organisations.
- Local authority community development staff should recognise the issues outlined in this report and should undertake capacity building and empowerment in a way which reflects and recognises the priorities and needs of black and minority ethnic groups themselves. This should begin with an assumption of existing relevant skills and should allow black and minority ethnic groups to identify their own development needs. There should be identifiable staff with a remit for this work.
- Organisations should adopt a proactive approach (based on the notion of equal partnership working) to the development of work with black and minority ethnic groups.
 - Pre application support should be provided, as required, in order to develop good funding applications and to enable more equal competition.
 - All of those providing advice should ensure that they are aware of other sources of funding provision to which they can refer groups, as required.
 - Consideration should be given to the development of specific information (e.g. in the form of an information booklet or directory) directed to black and minority ethnic groups in relation to funding and detailing sources of support and their procedures, as well as providing more general advice and information.
 - There should be proactive dissemination of funding information to black and minority ethnic groups (including events throughout the country and the provision of resources to allow organisations to travel to centralised events).
 - Providers of mainstream funding should recognise and address the needs of black and minority ethnic groups.
 - Funding providers should identify means of providing follow up support to organisations after the receipt of funding, to assist in compliance with the requirements of the provision and should develop a continuing relationship with these groups.
 - Staff training should be undertaken with those providing support, information and advice.

- In the medium term there should be a requirement for funders to monitor the disbursement of funding and report back to the group on an annual basis. Progress, new developments and good practice should be highlighted and a report prepared and disseminated. The Scottish Executive should assume responsibility for the national infrastructure provision and reconsider its objectives in the light of these findings.
- In the longer term, there is a need to develop a coherent national structure for black and minority ethnic organisations and to continue to monitor developments in funding and report back to the Scottish Executive. Up to date information in relation to black and minority ethnic organisations will need to be collected and maintained and further recommendations and actions should continue to be identified as areas of need are identified.

9.0 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The Chief Executive and the Council's Management Team were consulted on the content of this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 The following background paper as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 was relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report:
- "Review of Funding for Black and Minority Ethnic Group in the Voluntary Sector in Scotland" Scottish Executive 2001.

Director Neighbourhood Resources and Development

Date