

The journey to race equality

Delivering improved services to local communities

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People from black and minority ethnic communities still experience multiple inequalities and discrimination. They have a right to expect improved access to better-quality services. Local agencies are on a journey to race equality and some are doing better than others.

Delivering race equality benefits the whole community.

- diverse black and minority ethnic communities have valuable views about how public services can improve
- the majority of the needs and aspirations of black and minority ethnic communities are no different to the rest of the population; accurately responding to them will improve everyone's quality of life

Local agencies need a clear vision of race equality, based on a good understanding of local issues and a clear description of how outcomes for black and minority ethnic communities will improve.

- key areas of inequality are widely recognised, yet many organisations cannot identify local race equality outcomes
- race equality is seen as a negative issue requiring extra work in addition to 'normal' mainstream business
- race equality potentially affects every aspect of public service, making it seem difficult to know where to start

The barriers and assumptions that prevent progress can contribute to institutional racism. They need to be recognised, and tackled.

- response to the needs and aspirations of black and minority ethnic communities should be proportionate to the level of need rather than size of population
- mainstreaming race equality means integrating work within existing objectives, budgets and systems. It does not mean allowing it to disappear
- engaging all parts of the community can be challenging and calls for creative approaches, but it is vital, helpful and rewarding

Delivering race equality requires significant change. The factors that will help local agencies to make progress along the journey are:

- committed leadership from staff at all levels, members and non-executive directors, where leaders model appropriate behaviours and make tough decisions about allocating resources
- a mature dialogue and exchange with all parts of the community
- regularly evaluating progress and engaging partners

Delivering race equality is a long-term programme. It is challenging, but it is achievable if:

- local agencies take ownership and integrate race equality into existing programmes
- national agencies motivate and support progress through providing a clear national aspiration for improvement and effective regulation and by sharing local learning