CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

To: Equalities Panel

Date: 16th May 2005

Report by: Head of Human Resources

Discussion Paper: Recruiting a Diverse Workforce – Barriers Preventing the Recruitment of Under-represented Groups.

---

1.   PURPOSE

1.1   To facilitate discussion amongst the Panel concerning the barriers faced by under-represented groups seeking employment with Cambridge City Council.

1.2   To seek assistance and support from the Panel to progress the identification and removal of barriers faced by under-represented groups.

2.   BACKGROUND

2.1   The HR diversity action plan seeks to encourage applications from all areas of the community to ensure a diverse workforce profile. It aims to achieve this by consulting with the local community groups to identify potential barriers to the recruitment of under-represented groups and develop appropriate actions.

3.   DIVERSITY TARGETS

3.1   As an equal opportunities employer the City Council continues to make efforts to promote diversity and to recruit a workforce that is representative of the community. Whilst the 2004/05 Corporate Health Performance Indicators (see table below) show improvements in some areas, they also demonstrate that there is still work to do to achieve this objective.

Ind Code	Indicator Description	03/04 Actual	04/05 Target	04/05 Actual	05/06 Target	
BV11a	Percentage of top 5% of earners that are women.	26 %	34% (2009-10)	31.75%	34% (2009-10)	☺
BV11b	Percentage of top 5% of earners that who are from an ethnic minority.	0.0%	4.3% (2009-10)	0.0%	4.3% (2009-10)	☺

BV11c (New for 2005/06)	Percentage of top 5% of earners with a disability.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	2% (2009-10)	-
BV16 a&b	a) Percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the disability definition compared with b) the percentage of economically active disabled people in the authority area.	1.06% 10.7% in the local area	2.0% (2009-10)	1.58% 10.7% in the local area.	2.0% (2009-10)	☺
BV17 a&b	a) Percentage of local authority employees from ethnic minority communities compared with b) the percentage of the economically active ethnic minority community population in the authority area.	3.68% 11.29% in the local area.	4.3% (2009-10)	4.94% 11.29% in the local area.	4.5% (2009-10)	☺

3.2   Statistical monitoring is a valuable tool by which to measure the Council's performance against achieving its diversity targets. However these targets are not going to be achieved overnight, success will come gradually through increased focus and effort on diversity issues, and by embedding good practice and raising awareness.

4.   Removing Barriers to Recruitment

4.1   To recruit a more representative workforce the Council needs to understand the barriers and perceived barriers that prevent people from under-represented groups entering our workforce and then address the issues that create these barriers. Removal of the barriers will not just help people from underrepresented groups but may also benefit the wider community.

4.2   Work to understand the barriers faced by under-represented groups has started with meetings attended by HR with the BME Staff group. Similar meetings are planned with the LGBT staff group and other staff groups as they are formed.

4.3   The Equalities Panel is in a good position to work with the Council to identify the barriers that currently exist for under-represented groups seeking employment and to help the Council represent itself as a good employer worthy of their application.

4.4   Section five and six of this report highlight possible barriers for recruitment for BME applicants and disabled applicants.

4.5 Section seven highlights possible positive action initiatives that could be considered by the Council.

5. Barriers to Recruitment – Ethnic Minority Applicants

5.1 In 1999 Community Development in conjunction with the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum completed a survey into Minority Ethnic Training and Employment. The survey gathered feedback from the Bangladeshi, Caribbean, Chinese and Vietnamese communities. It highlighted barriers faced by these communities in accessing employment and training.

5.2 The survey revealed that these barriers took two forms: -
- Practical barriers e.g. language, overseas qualifications not recognised and
- Attitudinal barriers e.g. discrimination, cultural norms and stereotyping.

Discussion Point

If this survey were repeated in 2005 would these barriers have changed?

What should the Council do to address these?

---

6. Barriers to Recruitment – Disabled Applicants

6.1 A recent MORI poll for the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) showed that almost a third of workers believe their employers would be unlikely to help them keep their jobs if they were to become disabled. This poll did not specifically cover Local Authorities who are better than many employers in redeploying individuals due to disability or ill health.

Discussion Point

How do disabled people view the City Council as an employer?

What more can the City Council do to re-deploy existing employees that become disabled?

6.2 In March 2005 the DRC launched the first phase of its campaign aimed at increasing confidence among employers on the benefits of retaining disabled staff. The DRC has highlighted the following as some of the barriers faced by disabled applicants: -
- Employers perceive that costs are attached to employing disabled people.
- Applications from disabled applicants are rejected on first impressions and assumptions.

Discussion Point
What can the City Council do to address these?

7. Positive Action

7.1 Positive action is the means by which employers can encourage change in their employment profile. Positive action initiatives can be used to target more diverse groups of people - for example

- Drafting advertisement that indicate that the employer is actively seeking applications from particular under-represented groups;
- Identifying the types of media/websites/local venues that prospective applicants are likely to access;
- Offering single-sex, race and disabled pre-recruitment open days that can show the work to the under-represented groups.
- Offering in house single-sex, race and disabled training courses to prepare people for promotion;
- Offering mentoring schemes to support people from under-represented groups both before they apply or during their employment;
- Offering or supporting single-sex, race and disabled external training opportunities that prepare people for work in areas where they are under-represented.
- Produce guidance to managers on supporting/coaching and training staff from under-represented groups.

Discussion Point
Should these initiatives be considered by the City Council?

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The panel is asked discuss this report and agree assistance the panel will provide to progress the work.

If you have a query on the report please contact:	Author: Karen Price
	Telephone 01223 458111
	Email: karen.price@cambridge.gov.uk

Report file: O:\person\kp\Equal Opps\Barriers to
                        Recruitment.doc
Date originated: 26th April 2005
Date of last version: 5th May 2005