

Purpose

1 This report has been prepared in line with the decision taken at ALA Labour Group meeting on 19.11.85. It argues the need for a Race Equality Unit to be established to provide advice and support to the ALA Boroughs in London in line with their duties under the Race Relations Act 1976.

Background

2 As early as the late XV century early XVI century there were sizeable ethnic minority communities in London including Irish, Jews, refugees, gypsies. Edicts were issued to limit the numbers of Irish and black people living in London. At present about one in three London inhabitants is of ethnic minority origin. About half of all Britain's Afro-Caribbean inhabitants live in the capital city as do over 40% of those originating from the Indian Sub-Continent. Whilst these are two of the major ethnic minority communities, a recent ILEA survey found that well over 100 different first languages were spoken in inner London alone. There are about 1 million Irish and about a quarter of a million migrants from Europe and third world countries. There are also other smaller communities such as refugees from all over the world and Travellers. All these groups face particular hardships living in London and all suffer from one kind or another of discrimination.

3 Although London has long enjoyed the benefits of being a multi-racial city and has a reputation for tolerance and liberty recent evidence shows that racial discrimination is still widespread. Racism in London has a long history. This discrimination continues to be widespread. Many communities continue to be subject to racist legislation. The Policy Studies Institute report, 'Black and White Britain' (1984) concluded that in many respects the position of Britain's ethnic minority population had gone back towards that of the 1960's compared to what it was in the early 1970's.

4 Some examples of the continuing extent of racism and discrimination include:

Employment: the unemployment rate for London's ethnic minority population is almost twice that of the white population. The Policy Studies Institute estimates that at least one third of all employers still discriminate (1985) and evidence from Lewisham and Brixton shows that the position for black youth is three times as bad as white youth. Although some monitoring has been done in relation to the Afro-Caribbean & Asian communities very little monitoring has been done about the situation of Irish people in London and the whole experience of Migrant communities in the labour market remains to be researched. There are however, strong indications that these groups suffer discrimination of all kinds. Discrimination in employment has resulted in a much higher rate of unemployment for ethnic minorities and a pattern of employment in low paid, low status jobs.

Housing: the recent formal investigation by the CRE into the London Borough of Hackney showed that discrimination is still widespread even though Hackney had already introduced several equal opportunities initiatives. Similar patterns have been found by the GLC, Lewisham, Liverpool, Nottingham, Lambeth and Wandsworth over the past decade. Overcrowding, insecure tenures, lack of amenities, affect all ethnic minorities to a disproportionately high level. More than one third of London's Traveller families do not have a legal place to live.

Attacks: The 1981 Home Office report, 'Racial Attacks' estimated that if you were of Asian origin you were 50 times more likely to be attacked than if you were white and if you were of Afro-Caribbean origin you were 36 times more likely to be attacked. The recent spate of Asian attacks in London demonstrates that despite apparent public concern things are getting worse not better. Most ethnic minority groups, including the well established ones are still vulnerable to racist attacks and racist abuse.

Racist Laws: the Immigration laws, the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Caravans Sites Act discriminate against ethnic minority communities. Members of these communities frequently face harassment from the police in the implementation of these laws.

Political Representation: although nearly 20% of Londoners are of black ethnic minority origin fewer than 100 out of over 1,900 borough councillors are black. There are no black MPs and even the GLC has only one black councillor. Migrants and refugees cannot vote nor stand for elections, not even in local elections. This inspite of the fact that they are tax and rate payers and the great majority of migrants have been established in this city for over a decade or two.

Why a Strategic Body Is Necessary

5 While several institutions have taken some positive steps to combat racial discrimination, notably some of the ALA Boroughs, it is also vital that these issues are tackled on a strategic level. Amongst the reasons for this are:

- (i) The uneven distribution of the ethnic minority population within London. In 5 boroughs 25% or over of the population is of New Commonwealth or Pakistan origin whereas in 6 boroughs the figure is fewer than 5%. Concentrations of black and ethnic minority communities can be seen to lie outside the city centre in an arch of middle distance boroughs north of the Thames - Ealing, Brent, Haringey and the North London Inner Boroughs areas of Islington North, Hackney North, Paddington and Hammersmith North and South of the Thames - Tooting, Norwood, Lambeth Central and Deptford.
- (ii) The cross borough distribution of ethnic minority groups. Some ethnic minority groups which are numerically small but whose needs are acute are spread across several Boroughs. Examples include Travellers and the migrant and refugee communities. Only strategic action can tackle the needs arising out of this wide distribution.
- (iii) The variable response to racial discrimination and disadvantage. A few bodies in London, particularly some of the Boroughs have adopted positive action programmes in the race equality field. The majority, alas have not, and thus the need exists to demonstrate at the strategic level what needs to be done.

6 The overall role of the proposed ALA REU would be to provide advice and guidance about race equality matters on a strategic and co-ordinating basis. In particular, the focus of attention would be the duties the ALA boroughs have under the Race Relations Act, notably section 71. This states that '.....it shall be the duty of every local authority when carrying out its function to make appropriate arrangements with a view to -

(a) eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, and

(b) promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups'.

7 To achieve this role the proposed REU should have a structure of three main divisions, namely a Policy Development and Training Division; an Outreach and Consultations Division and an Administrative and Translation Division. A Principal Race Equality Adviser should have overall responsibility for the REU assisted by three Divisional Co-ordinators.

8 The main functions and staffing requirements of the three main divisions would be as follows:

(i) Policy Development and Training Division

(a) Policy Advice and Positive Action

In order that the ALA boroughs fully meet their obligations under the Race Relations Act 1976 it is vital that their existing policies and related practices are thoroughly reviewed. A strategic REU would be able to develop policies and advise on their implementation, building on the best practice which has grown up over the past few years from a variety of sources supplementing the work of individual boroughs. Particular emphasis would be placed on the role of positive action policies because it is generally recognised that one of the prime ways to redress past imbalances and bring about equality of opportunity is to employ more black and other ethnic minority staff, for example through second chance and apprentice schemes.

The proposed REU would provide policy advice for each of the main functional areas of the ALA boroughs work, i.e., Personnel (including Recruitment and Selection), Economic Development Education, Environmental Health, Housing, Leisure, Social Services and Town Planning. Immigration and nationality advice would also be provided, particularly in the light of the immigration legislation affects local authority work. In addition advisers would take into account the specific needs of young people, women, gay men and lesbians and people with disabilities. This would require 8 staff.

(b) Training

There is already considerable demand from the ALA boroughs and the voluntary sector for anti racist training. Such training is necessary so that staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Race Relations Act 1976, the equal opportunities policies adopted by their employers and how this relates to their specific job. The proposed REU would advise on training aims and methods evaluate courses as well as providing some direct training itself. The training team would also liaise on behalf of the borough with bodies such as the Local Government Training Board and professional organisations like the Royal Town Planning Institute to bring about changes to increase the number of black and other ethnic minority people in the main local authority professions. This would require 5

(c) Information and Research

The ALA boroughs and the voluntary sector require detailed facts and figures about the effects of racism and the position of London's ethnic minority population. For example, a borough plan should include a section about the housing tenure, household structure and employment position of its local ethnic minority community. The proposed REU could assist the ALA boroughs by providing information and carrying out research on a strategic basis particularly where issues cut across overall boroughs such as the position of Bengali homeless families in Finsbury Park. It would also be able to build up a research library and answer the many inquiries received about race equality issues in London. Regular digests could also be provided. This would require 4 staff.

(d) In addition to the Divisional Co-ordinator, the Policy Development and Training Division would require 5 clerical and administrative staff. Thus the total staff for the Division would be 23.

(ii) Outreach and Consultation Division

(a) Outreach and Development Work

As paragraph 5 above outlined, London's black and other ethnic minority population is not evenly spread throughout every borough. Some communities are collectively quite large but their needs are overlooked because they are few in number in individual boroughs. In addition, for a variety of reasons, the needs of other even large communities have not received the recognition they deserve. A strategic REU would be in a position to take into account such communities which include Travellers, Refugees, Migrants, Irish, Chinese and Vietnamese. Outreach work with the main Afro Caribbean and Asian Communities is also necessary. The ALA boroughs have also recognised the importance of black and other ethnic minority groups taking direct action themselves. Over the past years many organisations have been formed with a wide range of aims and functions. Considerable development work is still required, particularly with organisations whose aim is to tackle issues which affect several boroughs. Assistance is often required to help such organisations constitute themselves, apply for grant aid and establish management structures. The proposed REU would be able to perform this much needed task. Assistance would also be given to those needing individual assistance, either directly or by referring them to relevant local agencies. This would require 14 staff.

(b) Consultations

Many of the race equality issues facing the ALA boroughs are ones several have in common. It is also vital that the views of the black and other ethnic minority people directly affected are known and taken into account in policy formulation and implementation. A strategic REU would be able to carry out this function by organising meetings, convening conferences, and disseminating information to the ALA boroughs and locally based groups. This would require 5 staff. The REU would be able to mount conferences on Londonwide matters like racial harassment but also assist individual, hard pressed ALA boroughs locally.

(c) In addition to the Divisional Co-Ordinator the Outreach and Consultation Division would require 5 clerical and administrative staff. Thus the total staff for the Division would be 25.

(iii) Administrative and Translations Division

(a) Administration Team

The proposed REU would require an administrative team to ensure its effective functioning. The team would be responsible for office management, the REU's budget, servicing the ALA Race Committee, internal monitoring of the REU's performance and legal advice to the REU. This would require a staff of 4.

(b) Translation Unit

It is important that the ALA boroughs translate relevant material into the appropriate ethnic minority languages to help fulfil their duties under the Race Relations Act 1976. Whilst some of the boroughs have established translation facilities these are generally unable to cope fully with the demand either in terms of quantity or range of languages generated. The proposed REU would be able to supplement the work of the boroughs by providing a range of languages itself and by maintaining a directory of translation signs and interpreters covering the main Asian languages, Greek, Turkish, Spanish and Portuguese.. It would also be able to provide economies of scale by translating material used by several boroughs. This would require 5 staff.

(c) Resource Centre

A strategic REU could take over the running of the Rhani of Jhansi Centre which houses ten major Londonwide anti racist or ethnic minority organisation including the West Indian Standing Conference and the Confederation of Indian Organisations. The centre is also equipped as a small training centre and has a range of reprographic equipment for use by voluntary groups. This would require 8 staff.

(d) In addition to the Divisional Co-ordinator, the Administrative and Translation Unit would require 5 clerical and administrative staff. Thus the total staff for the Division would be 23.

- 9 The Principal Race Equality Adviser, assisted by her/his Personal Assistant would be responsible for the overall management and performance of the REU. In addition s/he would act as Principal adviser to the ALA's Race Committee and be responsible for preparing responses to central government initiatives such as draft legislation. The PREA would also liaise regularly with the ALA role advisers and other specialist workers.

Relationship with the Individual ALA Boroughs

10 Most of the ALA boroughs have already established their own race equality units or have appointed departmental race equality advisers. Thus the relationship between the proposed strategic R.E.U. and the individual boroughs needs further careful consideration. The REU would have a co-ordinating role, working jointly with the borough advisers supplementing their work and acting as a resource base.

11 The proposed R.E.U. would be directly responsible to the A.L.A's Race Committee, whose position would need to be formalised S.101 of the Local Government Act 1972 which allows a group of boroughs to come together to tackle a matter of common concern.

12 In addition, it is suggested that the R.E.U. should work closely with the existing borough units and advisers, in order to complement their initiatives. Regular meetings exist between the borough advisers. These could continue and thus provide a steering group through which the broad work of the R.E.U. could be channeled monitored to relate to the needs of the boroughs more directly. Some discussions along these lines have already taken place between the existing GLC E.M.U. and the borough advisers.

Costings

13 The ALA Labour Group decision on 19.11.85 asked for a series of costings with a maximum of £2,906m. This figure represents the current 85/6 costings of the GLC's Ethnic Minorities Unit minus its grant aid budget.

13 A range of five options has been generated, namely 100%, 75%, 50%, 25% and 10% options. For each different option are listed the staff costs the runnings costs and additional expenses of the proposed ALA REU. The cost per borough has been arrived at by dividing each option by fourteen, the current number of ALA member boroughs. All figures are in £000s. No allowance is made for any money which might be available from central government under S.11 of the Local Options. Government Act 1966 which covers 75% of staff costs.

15 100% Option

	£
Staff costs	1,000
Running costs	375
Additional costs	<u>1,531</u>
Total	2,906
Cost per borough	208

The 100% would allow the proposed ALA REU to carry out the full range of functions identified above. Notably it would be able to mount major campaigns on an ALA wide basis, developing further the GLC's anti racist programme initiated in 1984.

16 75% Option

	£
Staff costs	1,000
Running costs	375
Additional costs	<u>825</u>
Total	2,200
Cost per borough	157

The 75% option would allow the proposed ALA REU to carry out most of the functions identified above but with some noticeable reductions. The major cuts would be:

- No Londonwide anti racist campaign work
- reduction in the slope and range of information and research work
- reduction in the scope and range of consultation work.

17 50% Option

	£
Staff costs	930
Running costs	345
Additional costs	<u>200</u>
Total	1,500
Cost per borough	107

The 50% option would allow the proposed ALA REU to carry out the majority of the functions identified above but with some major reductions. The major cuts would be:

- cease running the resource centre which would then refer to the LRB of Southwark
- No Londonwide anti racist campaign work.
- Major reduction in the scope and range of information and research work.
- major reduction in the scope and range of consultation work.
- reduced level of information dissemination and publication of booklets, guidance notes, etc.
- cut back on direct training work.

18 25% Option

	£
Staff costs	500
Running costs	1,875
Additional costs	625
Total	<u>750</u>
Cost per borough	54

The 25% option would allow the proposed ALA REU to fulfil only a very limited part of the functions set out above. Either whole areas of work would have to be abandoned e.g., all training and consultation work or a very reduced service would be available from each of the areas identified e.g., only 4 policy advisers rather than the 8 necessary. The major cut would be:

- cease running the resource centre
- No Londonwide anti racist campaign work
- very little information or research work
- very little consultation work
- very little information dissemination and publication of booklets, guidance notes, etc.
- no direct training
- no translation service
- reduced outreach and development work
- reduced policy advice work

10 10% Option

	£
Staff costs	200
Running costs	75
Additional costs	25
Total	<u>300</u>
Cost per borough	21

The 10% option would allow the proposed ALA REU to fulfil practically none of the function identified above. It would be able to do little more than service the ALA race committee, convene meetings of borough advisers and provide minimal advice and information. All other work would be cut. At this level the proposed RE ALA REU is not thought viable.

Appendix: Staffing and Structure of the REU

Principal Race Equality Adviser	1
Personal Assistant	1
Policy Development and Training Division	
Division Co-ordinator	1
Policy Advisers	8
Training Advisers	5
Information and Research	4
Administrative Support	<u>5</u>
	23
Outreach and Consultations Division	
Division Co-ordinator	1
Consultation Team	5
Outreach Development Team	14
Administrative Support	<u>5</u>
	25
Administrative Division	
Division Co-ordinator	1
Administrative officers	4
Resource Centre	8
Translation Unit	5
Administrative Support	<u>5</u>
	23
Total staff	<u>73</u>