

Working with Minority Ethnic Communities

Models of Good Practice

Harrington Young
Training & Development Consultants



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
for England and Wales

Enforcement, rehabilitation and public protection

Message

From Head of Diversity, National Probation Directorate

It gives me pleasure to introduce this report, which is the second in our series aimed at disseminating good practice on diversity throughout the National Probation Service. We set out to be a learning organisation and this is one of the Strategic Priority Issues at the heart of the Diversity Strategy for the National Probation Service for England and Wales:

The NPS must be competent, confident and visibly committed to diversity. This requires developing a genuine understanding of working with and managing difference, statutory responsibilities and ability to respond to emerging national and local developments and staff support needs.

In keeping with this perspective we must share information on lessons learned, and what was done as a consequence of lessons learned, by the different probation areas widely through the National Probation Service.

Areas may recognise some of their own initiatives as being similar to those covered in this document, and since this report was commissioned in April 2002, there will be mature initiatives that we could include in future reports on best practice.

Your interaction with this series through writing back to the Diversity Team at NPD will be welcomed as will your suggestions for initiatives, programmes and projects that can be discussed and reported back on.

Diane Baderin

Foreword

For all aspects of diversity the establishment of good practice requires a journey of commitment, sharing and learning. This report seeks to contribute further to this journey by drawing on material from a range of probation areas and presenting this in a way that can promote future developments. At the outset we drew no boundaries to the range of work that might be considered and requested material from all probation areas that related to their work with minority ethnic communities that had relevance to policy, community projects, Crime and Disorder Partnerships, areas of practice or initiatives with an element of reconciliation or creative use of religious or culture-specific approaches. This report builds on the 'Best Practice on Diversity' (2000) published by NPD and future publications to guide and identify good practice on diversity will follow.

We thank all areas that responded to the initial request for examples of good practice and are particularly grateful to the five areas whose work is described in this report. Their responsiveness to requests for meetings and consideration of draft material demonstrated a strong commitment and purposefulness. The selection of probation areas for inclusion in this report was informed by members of the steering group and I am grateful for the contribution they have given throughout. Each, from their own experience and perspective, gave invaluable advice and support without which this report could not have been completed. Steering Group members were:

Pat Edwards, Inspector HMIP
Roger Hill, Chief Officer Lincolnshire
Charles Jordan, Chair West Midlands
Haseena Lockhat, Board Member West Mercia
Raana Sheikh, Diversity Unit NPD

Finally I wish to express my appreciation to Kerry Young for the way in which she has worked with the Steering Group and staff from probation areas to produce this report. She listened to and understood our hopes and anxieties. She also brought considerable perceptiveness and insights to the issues.

Stuart McPhillips
Regional Manager North East

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Summary of Work in Areas

The purpose of this project was to examine examples of effective practice in probation work with minority ethnic communities in order to identify the lessons to be learned, and their implications for practice across the National Probation Service – particularly as informed by the principles of the European Excellence Model (EEM).

In the process, work in five specific Probation Areas was considered. These Areas were Hampshire, Merseyside, Staffordshire, Suffolk and West Yorkshire.

The material presented below covers a range from developmental to relatively mature initiatives. For each Area, details are offered relating to:

- Background
- The Experience
- Outcomes (within the framework of the EEM)
- Next Steps

The lessons learned from these examples of practice form the basis of a set of questions, which you can use in your Area to:

- Review progress; and
- Support the development of policy and practice towards effective probation work with minority ethnic communities.

Hampshire

Hampshire Probation Area's commitment to diversity is underpinned strategically and structurally. This involves a broad range of initiatives including:

- The 'Diversity Forum' – a sub-group of the Probation Board with a remit to advise the Board on employment and operational policies; and with race equality as its first priority.
- The Diversity Strategy Group – a multi-grade, multi-disciplinary staff group that acts as a consultation group to advise the Chief Officer and is also responsible for implementing the Diversity Statement through developing, by 2003, the strategic implementation plan for each function of the service.
- A 'roadshow' to all teams throughout the service to promote the new Race Equality Scheme and encourage a positive approach to the issue.
- Development of practice guidelines for translating diversity principles into practice.
- A three-pronged approach to work with community projects developed by the Community Service team to enhance community resources through targeted community service projects with minority ethnic community organisations.

Merseyside

Strategic partnerships are a central aspect of Merseyside Probation Area's approach to diversity. This includes membership of:

- The Race Issues Advisory Group (a sub-group of the Merseyside Area Criminal Justice Strategy Committee); and
- The Liverpool Action Group Against Racial Attacks and Harassment (a multi-agency group with membership from Merseyside Police, Victim Support, Community Safety, CPS and other statutory and community based organisations).

Pending the provision of a nationally accredited programme, the Area has developed its own local programme for racially motivated offenders. Based on cognitive principles the programme, entitled 'Against Human Dignity', is available as a condition of a Community Sentence or a condition in a prison licence and requires the offender to undertake fifteen one-to-one weekly sessions (of 1-2 hours) with a programme tutor.

Staffordshire

The population of Staffordshire is predominantly white with less than 2% of the population from minority ethnic backgrounds. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Area's experience of addressing issues of racial diversity has involved struggling with individuals' awareness of the prevalence of racial disadvantage and discrimination, and their readiness to combat racism.

Central initiatives include:

- Service level agreements with local Racial Equality Councils to provide interpreters; consultancy on religious, cultural and community issues; and advice and support on recruitment policy and procedure.
- Liaison and consultation with community groups and organisations.
- Partnership initiatives (local and regional) to tackle racially motivated incidents and attacks, establish support systems for minority ethnic staff, and develop recruitment campaigns.

Suffolk

Suffolk Probation Area does not have a consistent proactive history of working with diversity. Most of the county's minority ethnic communities are concentrated in Ipswich. But in the rural areas the level of racism and racial prejudice can be relatively high.

Recently, the Area developed two policies:

- Working With Minority Ethnic Offenders: Policy and Practice
- Working With Racist And Racially Motivated Offenders

West Yorkshire

West Yorkshire Probation Area is deeply committed to partnerships. Partner projects focusing on work with minority ethnic communities includes:

- 'Recruitment fairs' developed in partnership with PATH (Yorkshire) Limited – a community organisation promoting positive action training for Black and minority ethnic people.
- The West Yorkshire Approved Premises (Hostels) Black and Asian Initiative – funded by the West Yorkshire Probation Board and designed to provide a high quality service to Black and Asian residents in all six (Probation Board and voluntary sector) Approved Premises across the Board area.
- Ummid Project – a partnership initiative with a local community organisation designed to improve the skills and confidence of probation officers working with Asian offenders.

Examples of Practice

Hampshire

Background

Hampshire Probation Area has been actively involved in addressing aspects of race and racism since its first racism awareness training programme in 1985. Since then the service has supported developments in anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice through its Equal Opportunities Policy (formulated in 1992), the work of its equal opportunities committee and a dedicated service-wide training programme. More recently, the Area appointed a Diversity Development Officer to take responsibility for formulating a framework, policy and plan for integrating and sustaining diversity developments across the service.

In addition, the Area's commitment to pursuing the recommendations of the **Macpherson Report** (1999) and the Thematic Inspection Report '**Towards Race Equality**' (2000) has resulted in the development of an 'Equal Opportunities and Race Equality Action Plan' (based on the recommendations of the Thematic Inspection Report) and a Diversity Statement which states that:

All people coming into contact with this service can expect to be treated with equality and fairness. We recognise and value diversity, we will ensure that our workforce is representative and our services are suitable for people from different minority ethnic groups, religions, gender, ages, differing physical and mental ability and sexuality.

However, recognising the inadequacies of simply stating its intentions, Hampshire Probation Area has been further developing its commitment to diversity in a number of strategic and structured ways. This includes:

- The establishment of the Diversity Forum as a sub-group of the Probation Board with a remit to advise the Board on employment and operational policies; and with race equality as its first priority.
- The establishment of the Diversity Strategy Group – a multi-grade, multi-disciplinary staff group that acts as a consultation group to advise the Chief Officer. The Group is also responsible for implementing the Diversity Statement through developing, by 2003, the strategic implementation plan for each function of the service.
- Establishment of a Black Staff Support Group to:
 - Provide mutual support for Black staff;
 - Enable development, training and progression of Black staff into management; and
 - Contribute to policy development and implementation.
- A 'roadshow' to all teams throughout the service to promote the new Race Equality Scheme and encourage a positive approach to the issue.
- Re-writing the existing Equal Opportunities Policy to become the Diversity Policy & Strategy
- Development of practice guidelines, which help staff to translate diversity principles into practice.

The Experience

In January 2002 a Community Service Officer took a group of offenders to work in a cemetery and learned a lesson that was to completely transform his entire team's approach to work with minority ethnic communities. This is how Roger Andrews remembers it.

"The day afterwards we got into the minibus and this young man asked me 'where are we going today Roger?' I told him. And he said 'so we're not going back to the graveyard then?' And I said 'no' to which he replied 'good because when I got home last night I had to have all my clothes burnt and my mom had to bathe me in holy water'. That's when I realised we'd made a huge mistake asking those guys to work in the graveyard. We never even thought of asking them. So obviously we needed to get something sorted out. But actually, that was just one thing and we realised that there must be loads of other things that we've been completely oblivious to for years."

This experience is now an integral part of the team's folklore. As a result the team has become deeply committed to changing its practice, increasing its knowledge and positively developing its relationships with minority ethnic communities in the locality. The developing approach has three strands.

1. A positive and deliberate plan to enhance community resources through targeted community service projects. Such initiatives include general gardening, carpentry and (internal and external) painting and decorating at projects such as the Underground, the African Caribbean Centre, Swaythling Community Centre, Newtown Youth Club and Newtown Adventure Playground all located in the heart of Southampton's minority ethnic communities. According to Tony Broomes (Development Officer at the African Caribbean Centre) such work has:

"Saved the centre money we didn't have and made a really big difference in the neighbourhood – showing off the centre and community in a better light. Without Community Service this work would probably never have been done and the place would be messy."

2. The team has also invited local community representatives to make presentations and engage in discussion with them at their team meetings. This has included discussions about the cultural and religious activities, beliefs and festivals pertinent to Sikhism and Islam. The team has also participated in a presentation by the Asian Christian Fellowship.

This has led to further networking, for example, the establishment of new contacts and the participation of the service's Diversity Development Officer on the Wheatsheaf Trust's 'Multi-Cultural Awareness Day'. It has also supported the development of partnership work between the Probation Area's Employment and Training Team and the Wheatsheaf Trust.

3. The third strand involves the team in an outreach programme aimed at making links with local minority ethnic groups and networks. The main purpose of this is to encourage a probation input and improve the profile of the service locally. Indeed, Coreen Forbes (Newtown Adventure Playground) has observed that the increase in

community service work within the minority ethnic community over the past two years is itself the result of 'snowballing and networking'. Coreen also believes that community service involvement has enabled individuals to engage with, learn about and better understand the local community.

This strategy is seen as a kind of template, currently being spearheaded by Community Service (South West), to be replicated in other areas across Hampshire. Yet, this is not to suggest an absence of initiative elsewhere. Indeed, CSOs in the North area are pro-active in establishing contact with the local Traveller community in order to better understand cultural issues and thereby design placements with a high likelihood of success. Positive work with Travellers is also taking place in the New Forest. And in Southampton and Portsmouth (which are designated dispersal areas) there are a growing number of refugees and asylum seekers who are increasingly becoming involved with the service.

Outcomes

Leadership & modelling

Senior and operational managers are pro-active in their support for the approaches being developed. This has given team members a sense that their contribution is valued and respected.

Policy and strategy

The initiative represents a change in philosophy to take account of the diversity of individuals and the impact of this on their ability to successfully complete their order. It addresses objectives identified in the service's Race Equality Plan.

Continuous learning & improvement

Members of the Community Service Team have increased their knowledge of different religions, cultures and customs. They have also increased their commitment to teamwork and their sense of achievement of organisational goals. Greater contact and improved relationships with the local community have also been achieved.

Partnership development

The process has led to partnership work with community organisations and enhanced resources in the minority ethnic community locally.

Management by processes & facts

The initiative has helped to build a positive working climate in the team. Issues of diversity are now included in team plans and appraisals. The approach is to be replicated in other area teams.

Customer focus

The initiative has provided for a more transparent service clearly committed to the NPS equality and diversity objectives. It has also improved the profile of the Probation Service within the local community.

People, development & involvement Increase in staff confidence. Staff more aware, creative and motivated.

Public responsibility The initiative has provided additional resource for the local community and improved the effectiveness of work with minority ethnic offenders based on greater knowledge and understanding. Better relationships between the Probation Service and local community.

Results orientation In accordance with '**A New Choreography**', Hampshire Probation Area has committed itself to, over the next three years, becoming "a more determined, confident and knowledgeable contributor to the improvement of diversity." (Annual Business Plan 2002-2003). This initiative supports that aspiration and contributes to Community Service's current performance in achieving and exceeding organisational targets in relation to, for example:

- Initial appointments
- Initial interviews
- Work placements offered.

Next Steps

The initiative described above has made a significant contribution to Hampshire Probation Area's 'cultural sensitivity'. However, some within the service are conscious of the difference between 'culturally sensitive' and anti-racist practice. For whilst culturally sensitive practice involves 'familiarity with different customs/norms, religious mores and festivals, language needs and communication issues, the nature of familial relationships and so forth' anti-racist practice:

Refers to an approach that recognises that members of minority ethnic communities have systematically confronted institutional racism alongside varying degrees of personal racial prejudice and abuse, and actively attempts to challenge these processes... In order to be operating an anti-racist approach therefore, practice has to both engage with the impact that racism has had on people's lives and aim to empower those who have experienced it. (Bahaj 2002:6/7)

A key feature of future development is, therefore, training and staff development. Accordingly, Hampshire Probation Area is currently undertaking a major training needs analysis across the entire service in which diversity is central.

In addition, the Area recognises the need to develop three crucial factors.

- A holistic approach.

"We have to approach the various diversity issues together so that we can demonstrate to all staff that they are important and valued. Otherwise resentments about

opportunities offered to different groups will continue to dog us.” (Jack Holland, Assistant Chief Officer)

- A clear sense of purpose and direction.

“We need to change from what we shouldn’t be doing to what we should be doing.” (Julia Bahaj, Diversity Development Officer)

- Leadership

“I’m also diving in the deep end. But the important thing is that we don’t adopt a ‘no action’ attitude. That we are brave enough to make mistakes and then come back and think what have we learned, and make another decision and do the next bit. We need to have a more exploratory way of thinking about things. Learn how to understand and become enriched by the experience.” (John Davies, Community Service Manager)

For the journey, Hampshire Probation Area has three great strengths.

- A dedicated Diversity Development Officer charged with responsibility for formulating a framework, policy and plan for integrating and sustaining diversity developments across the service.
- A Community Service team at the leading edge of innovation within the service, who have a great sense of achievement and who are *“motivated to want to do something”* (Brian Leigh, Community Service Unit Manager)
- A perspective that:

“Diversity is not an issue. It’s about understanding and communication. It’s about what the issues are for you as a woman or a Black person or someone who is gay or lesbian. It’s about what it means to you and what it means about how we live together.” (John Davies)

Merseyside

Background

Liverpool has a long historical relationship with Black people which dates back to the Atlantic Slave Trade. Yet, despite the passing of time and the enduring presence of Black people, Liverpool remains a racialised city, with the vast majority of its Black population concentrated in Liverpool 8 – Toxteth.

In the midst of this, and through the Toxteth riots, Merseyside Probation continues to be seen as a ‘neutral or fair’ organisation able to act as an intermediary. Indeed, its staffing profile suggests that it is an organisation graced with a positive public image within the Black community, given that whilst the minority ethnic population of Merseyside is 1.9%, the percentage of minority ethnic staff in the organisation is 5%. Statistics from the Area’s Race Equality Scheme also show that the turnover of minority ethnic staff is considerably lower (0.15%) than that of white staff (8.39%).

Concerned about the issue of racially motivated attacks, and in the absence of a nationally accredited What Works programme, the Area decided to develop its own local programme for racially motivated offenders as an interim measure.

The Experience

“In 2000 we got together a working group to draw up the programme. That group worked together for about six months to produce the first draft, which was sent to the Black staff group, amongst others, for comment and feedback. In fact, I met with them to discuss the draft and also issues about the training of practitioners to deliver the programme. We did have quite a hold up because of training issues, but in September 2001 we ran our first training course with a second in November and our last one in May of this year. So far, 20 case managers and PSR writers have been trained to deliver the programme.” (Andy Stelman, Assistant Chief Officer)

The programme, entitled ‘Against Human Dignity’, is available as a condition of a Community Sentence or a condition in a prison licence. It is based on cognitive principles, and consists of a variety of material. It involves fifteen one-to-one weekly sessions (of 1-2 hours) with a programme tutor.

A ‘Programme Diary’ completed by each participant at the end of every session requires him/her to reflect on his/her participation, learning and the possible impact on his/her offending behaviour.

An assessment at commencement and an evaluation on completion provides participants with opportunities to examine their own history of racial harassment/violence and attitudes towards it; and review their progress in relation to increased knowledge and changes in attitude.

“The programme is very educational which is important because many offenders have had very poor educational opportunities. Just sharing information is really valued by them. But I think central to the programme is the need to establish a relationship with

the offender. This is more what probation work ought to be about. Its been squeezed out of probation activity of late but I think its really essential, not in a sappy way but in an adult to adult way.” (Jean Atkinson, Programme Tutor)

Outcomes

Leadership & modelling

The programme is strongly supported by the Chief Officer and senior managers who are committed to developing a local programme that is relevant to RMOs, supported by sentencers and deliverable by practitioners.

Policy and strategy

The programme contributes to community safety and supports other local strategies – e.g. Merseyside Police: Community Safety Strategy (to address racial harassment and racially motivated crime); Liverpool Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy (to reduce incidents of hate crime).

Continuous learning & improvement

Programme tutors are specifically trained Probation staff. Support is offered through quarterly practitioner meetings as well as regular contact with the ACO responsible for the programme.

Partnership development

Initially, Maritime Museum (Slave Trade Exhibition) provided resources in the form of audio and video tapes, information, photographs etc. There are also links with the RMO programme being developed by London Probation. Both are part of a National Practitioners Network for work with racially motivated offenders.

Management by processes & facts

The programme was developed collaboratively within the organisation by white and Black staff. A team of Black and white trainers undertook the training of the programme’s tutors. Merseyside Probation Research Unit will undertake an evaluation of the programme. The ACO is developing a management information system to provide accessible data on programme participants, courts making orders, prisons including programmes in licence, and so on.

Customer focus

The programme has only recently become available to courts. The responsible ACO has urged sentencers to use the programme as a condition of Community Rehabilitation or Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order when it is clear that an offender has committed a racially motivated or racially aggravated offence. The ACO is also working with CPS to inform them of the programme.

**People,
development &
involvement**

Tutors are committed to and excited by their involvement. They value the opportunity for their own learning.

**Public
responsibility**

The programme contributes to community safety for members of minority ethnic communities.

**Results
orientation**

This local RMO programme was developed in response to the recommendation contained in the HMIP Thematic Inspection Report that Probation Committees and CPOs produce revised policy and guidance to ensure the effective supervision of racially motivated offenders.

The initiative also contributes to Merseyside Probation's commitment to the national priority of addressing service delivery issues in respect of minority ethnic victims. (Race Equality Scheme, 2002)

Next Steps

'Against Human Dignity' is not a nationally accredited What Works programme. It is a programme developed at local level to address local need. It is an interim measure pending the development and launch of a nationally accredited programme for RMOs.

The Area's intention is not, therefore, to develop the programme further, but to locate it within an extended framework of action. It is in this way that the Area envisages the RMO programme will have most impact.

In pursuing this objective, Merseyside Probation is an active member of two key networks concerned with racism and racial incidents in Liverpool. These are the Race Issues Advisory Group (a sub-group of the Merseyside Area Criminal Justice Strategy Committee), and the Liverpool Action Group Against Racial Attacks and Harassment (LAGRAH).

"Merseyside Police take hate crime very seriously. That includes racial, homophobic and crimes against refugees and asylum seekers. So as well as having our own strategy for reducing hate crime we also support local action groups like LAGRAH and the Gay & Lesbian Forum. This kind of networking is really important because we need allies out there who think this issue is as important as we do. Who appreciate the seriousness and the importance of early intervention – dealing with low-level incidents and protecting victims. We want to stem things early. Deal with the small things before they escalate into physical assault or arson or whatever. LAGRAH is a group of people who understand that getting the graffiti off the wall is going to stop something else from happening." (Inspector Maria Martin, Merseyside Police)

In addition, the Merseyside Probation Area Business Plan (2001-2002) commits the organisation to: 'Promote and champion work on diversity as an employer, service

provider and within communities. The specific related initiatives identified in the Area Plan, and included in Merseyside Probation Area's Race Equality Scheme (May 2002), are to:

- Revitalise work of Merseyside Probation Area's Equal Opportunities Standing Group with a bias towards action
- Promote the recently developed mentoring schemes for Black offenders
- Ensure that all partnership arrangements (including Crime and Disorder partnerships) give appropriate attention to diversity issues
- Fulfil its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and, in particular, publish and implement a Race Equality Scheme as required by the Act
- Make full use of the National Probation Directorate's Diversity Checklist in developing and implementing improvement projects

The Area also continues to pursue a range of initiatives addressing the recruitment and retention of minority ethnic staff (including use of assessment centres, staff support groups, training and development to enable individuals to achieve their potential). Its on-going training programme, 'Fit for Difference', is designed to enable participants to challenge themselves and examine their attitudes to a range of diversity issues.

Staffordshire

Background

Staffordshire resides at the heart of the geographical and industrial heartland of Britain with a population of more than 800,000 people less than 2% of whom are from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is not, however, a case of absence; there are significant African Caribbean and Asian communities particularly in Burton and Stoke-on-Trent. But, according to the Chief Officer

“Race problems don’t seem to come at you in Staffordshire, the way they do in some other places. You have to pick on things somehow to create a bit of movement. You have to try to keep people motivated and mobilised if they see an issue as not particularly prevalent. So we’ve probably been quite opportunistic in a way. Keeping things under review and being alert to opportunities.” (David Walton, Chief Officer)

The Experience

The approach in Staffordshire has been, therefore, to develop a mosaic of local and regional initiatives designed to address different aspects of work with minority ethnic communities.

Local initiatives include:

- Service level agreements with local Racial Equality Councils (in East Staffs and Stafford District) to provide a range of services particularly in relation to:
 - Providing interpreters for offenders from minority ethnic communities
 - Consultancy, advice and guidance (to Probation Trainees and Officers) on religious, cultural, community, harassment and equality issues
 - Advice and support on recruitment, policy reviews and team meetings dealing with equal opportunities issues.
- Involvement in local partnerships – e.g. the Newcastle-under-Lyme Safer Communities Partnership which has instigated diversity and racial awareness training, and a cross-agency group (Town Centre Violence Sub-Committee) to tackle increasing levels of violent crime in Newcastle town centre.

“The numerous pubs and clubs in the town centre attract a lot of people from the surrounding area. So there is often a lot of drunkenness and with that an increasing number of unprovoked violent attacks. The thing is even though many of these clearly have some element of being racially motivated they are not always identified as such. So part of the task has been to educate the police to ask themselves whether or not a particular incident or attack was actually racially motivated. And we are gradually seeing incidents coming through now from the CPS. But it’s really a case of working with the police, CPS, borough councillors and so on to keep on flagging it up as an issue.” (Steve Stockall, Probation Officer)

- Direct work in the community – e.g. Throughout February 2002 workers of the Newcastle Western Urban Villages Community Advice Bus (funded under Western

Urban Villages SRB) ran a series of workshops with young people (aged 6-16) in six local schools as a lead into their participation in the New Vic Theatre production 'Its Not as Simple as Black & White' – a play aimed at engaging young people in examining how racism affects them and their community.

- Community liaison – in the form of support for local events such as the 'One World Week', luncheon sessions with the Chairs of voluntary and community groups across Staffordshire, and 'open days/evenings' to promote job opportunities in the service. Yet, as Rob Mandley (Assistant Chief Officer) points out:

"Consulting with communities sounds good but it is very difficult because you are consulting with organisations who don't necessarily have the resources to respond. They are operating on a shoestring and just about every agency is asking them to read huge policy documents and action plans and the like and respond. They can't do it. So the challenge is to discover how we can sustain our relationships in the long-term. How we can create synergy that is effective and time efficient."

Regional initiatives include:

- Membership of the Regional Race Issues Group, which provides a forum for the exchange of information and the development of collaborative initiatives for common policies and training.
- Contributing to the 'Positive on Diversity' campaign, which involved the Midlands Training Consortium and ten Probation Areas across the East and West Midlands. This produced a 12' x 7' exhibition board for each Area, posters, postcards and recruitment packs available from a freephone number – all with the same stylist presentation showing positive images of people from different ethnic backgrounds and the words 'People like you... work in **Probation**'.

Outcomes

Leadership & modelling

Senior management has a long established commitment to issues of diversity and equality. The actions described above form a mosaic of initiatives that demonstrate an increasing clarity and unity of purpose.

Policy and strategy

These developments fall within the objectives identified by the Regional Race Issues Group, and support the organisation's policies in relation to partnership arrangements and links with the local community.

Continuous learning & improvement

These initiatives demonstrate the Area's commitment to providing staff with information and support through:

- REC consultancy services
- Diversity training
- Participation in community and recruitment events
- Specific support systems e.g. training for white managers managing Black staff

Partnership development

Formal partnership arrangements (e.g. RECs; Newcastle Safer Communities Partnership) In addition, all contracts with external agencies (e.g. drug and alcohol services, employment services, Citizens Advice Bureau) require them to have explicit anti-discriminatory policies and procedures in place.

Management by processes & facts

Liaison with local voluntary and community groups (e.g. luncheon, open day/evening) and SPA involvement in community events ensure that service management and development take account of the needs and expectations of local minority ethnic communities.

Customer focus

- Better understanding of and increased action on racially motivated incidents
- Educational outcomes (e.g. anti-racist work with young people in schools)
- Clear contractual partnership arrangements with external organisations
- Improved understanding of religious and cultural issues in work with minority ethnic offenders.

People, development & involvement

Initiatives have helped to increase the general motivation of staff who believe that the organisation:

- is committed to continuous learning and development
- consistently values people's knowledge, experience, skills and expertise
- has a culture of shared values and trust
- is flexible in meeting the needs of diverse groups
- properly integrates and manages diversity issues.

Public responsibility

Initiatives have encouraged:

- Closer relationships with local minority ethnic communities
- Better understanding of minority ethnic issues (including cultural and religious issues/beliefs/customs)
- Opportunities for minority ethnic communities to influence service policy and developments
- Positive image for SPA among local minority ethnic communities.

Results orientation

Initiatives have contributed to:

- Increased profile of the Probation Service as a potential employer
- Regional recruitment and retention targets
- The regional race equality action plan and the objectives of the Area's Race Equality Scheme.

Next Steps

Staffordshire Probation Area is:

- Strong in its links with minority ethnic communities.
- 'Reasonable' in the area of recruitment and retention of minority ethnic staff
- Weak in monitoring service delivery to minority ethnic offenders (including PSR proposals; and the needs of the large number of those resident in the seven prisons located across the county)

The Area's Race Equality Scheme, therefore, commits it to the following strategic aims.

- To develop effective management systems which demonstrate a clear commitment to racial equality.
- To recruit from the widest possible pool, regardless of ethnic origin.
- To encourage ethnic minority applicants in areas of the organisation where they are under-represented.
- To ensure that the organisation's employment policies and practices meet best practice.
- To provide quality services, products and functions equal to all sections of the community.
- To communicate the organisation's racial equality policy to all employees and to make sure they are able to promote them effectively to others.
- To be sensitive and responsive to the different cultural attitudes and needs of different communities. (Staffordshire Probation Area 'Scheme To Promote Race Equality, 2002-2003)

In addition, a comprehensive training plan (designed in relation to European Excellence Model objectives) includes programmes on 'Working with Difference and Diversity', 'Working with Racially Motivated Offenders', and equal opportunities 'affirmation training' for Black staff.

Other specific support for Black staff also includes the establishment of:

- The 'Visible Minority Ethnic Staff Group' with a remit to offer "the opportunity for visible minority ethnic employees of Staffordshire Probation Area to meet in a safe and supported environment to address and advise on issues that affect minority staff within the organisation with particular regard to policies, practices and procedures that impact on staff and offenders." (Minutes of the meeting of the 'Visible Minority Staff' group with representative of the Anti-Discriminatory Advisory and Promotional Team, December 2001)
- A formal 'Mentoring for Equality and Diversity Scheme', initially for minority ethnic staff, but to be developed into an informal scheme for all employees.

Suffolk

Background

“Suffolk Probation does not have a very consistent proactive history of working with diversity. Some years ago we undertook a major training exercise on equal opportunities, but the impetus to develop this more widely did not materialise until we started to consider the Stephen Lawrence report. There’s a general misconception that because the percentage of minority ethnic people is so low across the county it’s not an issue. And particularly since the vast majority of minority ethnic communities are concentrated in Ipswich. But in the rural areas the level of racism can be quite high – mostly through ignorance and lack of contact, but also because of good old-fashioned racial prejudice. In the offenders we supervise we need to improve the identification and tackling of racially motivated offending.” (Robin Merriam, Assistant Chief Officer)

In fact, it was a Board member, Subhash Modasia, who generated the initial energy to get issues of race specifically on the organisation’s agenda through the establishment of RESAG (Race Equality Strategy Advisory Group), a specific short-term group that considered issues of race from an employer’s perspective and responsibilities. RESAG operated from 2000 to the summer of 2001. At the beginning of 2002, the Diversity Strategy Group was established (with the Chief Officer as Chair) to bring together the work of RESAG and the Equal Opportunities Advisory Group, and to act as a strategic umbrella for work on specific diversity issues, initially:

- Developing Effective Practice for Women Offenders; and
- Working with Racially Motivated and Minority Ethnic Offenders.

“The decision of the Board was that the work on race should be taken forward within a broader diversity framework – creating a new direction whilst not diluting the issues in terms of effective practice or policies.” (John Budd, Chief Officer)

The working groups on women offenders and racially motivated and minority ethnic offenders are now effectively sub-groups of the Diversity Strategy Group.

The Experience

‘Working With Minority Ethnic Offenders: Policy and Practice’ (Approved by Suffolk Probation Board in May 2002) was created over a period of two years. First of all from investigating work in other services and also consulting with Tuklo Orenda Associates who produced the ‘Making a Difference’ guide. Each member of the Minority Ethnic and Racially Motivated Offenders Working Group then took responsibility for drafting the sections relevant to their own area of expertise. After that the working group made amendments and then circulated the draft to teams and management groups for discussion and feedback.

Feedback from the consultation exercise informed further changes and amendments. Indeed, the policy underwent several drafts because of the working group’s commitment to producing not merely a policy, but a very practical document.

“The great strength of these policies is that they are practical. They are focused very much on practical steps and encourage staff to consider whatever they might do or say from the perspective of the offender. So they help to raise self-awareness and direct staff towards identifying and addressing any unconscious prejudices that they might have as well as giving guidance on the many specific issues they need to consider.”
(Barry Walker, Board Member)

The policy provides guidance and practical suggestions for practice in areas such as community supervision, court work, pre-sentence reports, community punishment and work with young minority ethnic offenders. However, four key philosophical principles underpin the policy.

1. Practitioners’ own thinking and values are crucial to the development of effective anti-racist practice.

“This strategy is based on the belief that there are no easy answers in relation to working with minority ethnic offenders, and that effective practice depends on workers’ ability to think for themselves, drawing on their knowledge, values, skills and experience. That is what needs to be developed if anti-racist practice is to become a reality. It can only be achieved if the thinking and values dimension is prioritised rather than taken for granted or relegated to second place.” (2002:3)

2. People are a dynamic blend of multiple roles and identities.

“People are not merely representatives of a single group, e.g. African, Caribbean or Asian. We are all members of a variety of groups, each overlapping in a blend that is unique to each of us... Apart from ethnic background, other key factors contributing to diversity include class, age, sexuality, gender, disability, religion, etc.” (2002:3)

3. Practitioners need to be aware of their own cultural values and attitudes and the impact of these on their practice.

“As workers we need to acquire and maintain awareness of our own cultural biases, values, feelings and attitudes and be prepared to continually review and challenge these. We need to check ourselves for conscious and unconscious prejudice and stereotyping to ensure this does not distort our practice.” (2002:3)

4. Practitioners need to acknowledge and understand the power they have as probation staff, and, if they are white, the power they have as members of the dominant racial and cultural group in Britain.

“We need to develop our knowledge regarding the nature and impact of racism and oppression through reading, consulting research findings and, above all, listening to the minority ethnic offenders we supervise. (2002:3)... [Practitioners also need to] recognise that offenders may not be aware that they are subject to discrimination or may understand it only one-dimensionally.” (2002:4)

The overriding message of the policy, therefore, is that “anti-racist practice is good practice, you can’t have one without the other.” (2002:4)

Suffolk Probation Area's '**Working With Racist And Racially Motivated Offenders**' policy draws on similar work within London Probation Area and explicitly commits Suffolk Probation Area and its staff to:

- Work closely with Criminal Justice and other agencies to improve the effectiveness of work in addressing issues of race and racist and racially motivated offending
- Engage with racist and racially motivated offenders to confront their behaviour and reduce the risk of further offending
- Work with the victims of racially motivated crimes, where the offence is of a serious, violent or sexual nature and the offender is sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment or longer.

With regard to definitions, the draft policy notes that the Stephen Lawrence Report proffered the definition of a racist incident as 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person', and also that the HMIP Thematic Report 'Towards Race Equality' further encouraged Probation Areas to adopt this definition. Yet in reflecting on this definition, the Suffolk draft policy comments:

"This definition quite appropriately strengthens the victim perception of what is a racist incident and Suffolk Probation Area is broadly committed to using this definition in this policy...

Suffolk Probation Area believes racist behaviour in the UK is primarily (and almost always has been historically) perpetuated by white people against black people and not the other way round. Successive definitions of racism prior to the Stephen Lawrence Report support this view. With this in mind, the majority of this policy and guidelines applies to the Area's work with white racist and racially motivated offenders." (2002:2)

In addressing the Macpherson Report's definition of 'institutional racism', the draft policy includes the following observation.

"It is important, however, not to be diverted by complex discussions of definitions. There is always a danger that any definition reflects a particular moment in time and is, therefore, unhelpful in responding to a dynamic situation. In addition, over-emphasis on definitions may encourage a legalistic rather than an open approach. It is our staff's abilities to discuss and understand behaviours, meanings, motivations and actions in this field of practice which really matter." (2002:2)

Outcomes

Leadership & modelling

There is visible and demonstrated commitment from Board members and managers. The Chief Officer is Chair of the Diversity Strategy Group giving it drive and authority.

Policy and strategy

These two policies address the needs of:

- Offenders (racially motivated; and minority ethnic)
- Staff (by providing practical guidance and a planned programme of training and development to be rolled out as a part of the implementation strategy)
- The organisation (increasing the skills and confidence of staff; and improving the organisation's profile in these areas of work).

Continuous learning & improvement

The Action Plan for implementing the 'Effective Working with Minority Ethnic Offenders' policy includes:

- Awareness training for all staff and Board members
- Team workshops on specific areas of practice (e.g. field, prison, approved premises)
- Anti-discriminatory practice to be included in the annual Performance Development Review process
- Establishment of new monitoring and evaluation systems for practice.

Partnership development

- Designated resources are committed to the Action Plan
- Action Plan includes commitment to ensuring that partner agencies have complementary policies
- Suffolk Probation Area is a member of the Regional Criminal Justice Strategy Committee (Sub-Committee on Race Issues); and the Suffolk-wide Multi-Agency Forum Against Racial Harassment.

Management by processes & facts

The Diversity Strategy Group works within the Area's business planning structure and its remit is informed by the EEM self-assessment completed in 2001. Membership of the Group is multi-grade and includes the Staff Development and Training Manager and the HR Manager.

Customer focus

The policies encourage and support:

- Improvement in practice with minority ethnic offenders
- Improvement in practice with racially motivated offenders.

People, development & involvement

These initiatives provide visible demonstration of the organisation's commitment to diversity issues and supports staff engaged in related work. The planned training programme, linked to the implementation of the policies, will offer direct support to all staff and especially to teams.

Public responsibility

Increased and demonstrable commitment to addressing the needs of minority ethnic offenders and challenging racism across Suffolk.

Results orientation

The development of these policies is an integral part of the Area's Business Plan (2002-2003) and contributes to the organisation's commitment to eliminate racial discrimination, achieve race equality and promote good race relations as identified in the organisation's Race Equality Scheme (May 2002).

Next Steps

"In a sense, developing the policies was the easy part. The challenge now is about implementation. Not just because of the time and resource implications of the planned training programme that will probably take three years or so to complete, but because of overcoming some of the anxieties of staff in tackling these issues. There is quite a lot of concern around for staff working in the public sector. Some people are worried that they will be exposed for not doing their job properly. Others are concerned of being seen as racist." (Robin Merriam)

Effective implementation of the policies also requires the working group to develop mechanisms for 'measuring' the impact on practice. This may include critical analysis of PSRs or examination of concordance data between PSR proposals and sentences for Black and white offenders across different community orders. The working group is determined, however, that such mechanisms should not result in 'another layer of bureaucracy'.

In addition, the Chief Officer has identified ten organisational features that contribute towards creating a supportive environment for the implementation of the policies, the planned training programme and Suffolk Probation's further work in the area of diversity. The first of these is:

1. Conviction and passion for equality

"My father was in the forces and I grew up in Hong Kong where my best friend was a Gurkha. And since the age of seven it has always struck me as curious that wherever the British were, even if they were in the minority, they always had the power. I also had the experience of being the one that was different – like going to Kowloon shopping with my mother and everyone else being Chinese. But I realised that passion and conviction, important as they are, are not enough. They only take you so far. Because what you also need is an ability to see the wider picture and an acute awareness that

you have to work in partnership with others to achieve significant and sustained change.” (John Budd)

The other nine features are as follows:

2. Understanding of the legislative requirements
3. Resources – not merely financial but also intellectual and professional expertise
4. Leadership – visible, demonstrated, committed (not just at senior level but also at middle management and team level)
5. Board commitment
6. A culture – including policies, strategies and organisational processes that demonstrate that race, and diversity in general, is a priority area
7. A staff profile that reflects the minority ethnic community – across all grades
8. Investment in work with other criminal justice agencies, and other organisations
9. Recognition of the importance of our connection with and responsibilities to the National Probation Service – paying attention and contributing to developments outside of Suffolk Probation
10. Links with local minority ethnic communities.

Suffolk Probation Area’s work on diversity will also be underpinned by two documents. The organisation’s **Diversity Strategy** which focuses on, amongst other things:

- Policy development
- Staff recruitment, retention and progression
- Supporting ‘minority’ staff (i.e. gay and lesbian, women, minority ethnic, or disabled)
- Data collection to meet profiling requirements
- Development and implementation of appropriate staff training
- Involvement with inter-agency networks

And the Area’s **Race Equality Scheme**, which focuses on three areas of the organisation’s activities:

- Service delivery
- Employment practice, and
- Links with local communities.

West Yorkshire

Background

West Yorkshire Probation Area has had twelve years of consistent commitment to diversity issues pioneered by the previous Chief Officer, Anne Mace, and continued by the current Chief Officer over the past three years.

“If you are going to be successful in any organisation, in this case in relation to race and racism, you don’t do it quickly. Change that is going to be sustainable and effective takes time.

In relative terms I think we are well placed and we are doing many of the right things. I’m proud of where we are. But I know we’re not at the end of the journey. We’re on the right journey but we have to continue to invest time and resources, so that everyone knows we are serious about this.” (Paul Wilson, Chief Officer)

That journey involved the recruitment, in early 1990, of a number of Black and Asian trainees. This not only provided opportunities for individuals but also began the process of boosting the recruitment of minority ethnic staff across the service and, according to Paul Wilson *“helped to change the general culture and mind set of the organisation”*.

More recently, the Area has become deeply committed to the development of partnership initiatives. Specifically, this includes development of:

- A number of ‘recruitment fairs’ with PATH (Yorkshire) Limited – a community organisation promoting positive action training for Black and minority ethnic people.
- The West Yorkshire Approved Premises (Hostels) Black and Asian Initiative – funded by the West Yorkshire Probation Board and designed to provide a high quality service to Black and Asian residents in all six (Probation Board and voluntary sector) Approved Premises across the Board area.
- Ummid Project – a partnership initiative with the Himmat Project (a local community organisation) designed to improve the skills and confidence of probation officers working with Asian offenders. This project enables probation officers and Ummid workers to co-work (meeting the offender together) in order for the Ummid worker to ‘interpret’ not just language but the meaning or significance of particular religious, cultural or family issues. Through this co-working process, probation officers gradually develop the skills and confidence in their work with Asian offenders to address the pertinent issues (i.e. the specifics of the offence) in a rational way (i.e. devoid of cultural ignorance or racist misconceptions).

The Experience

The ‘recruitment fairs’ are an initiative of the West Yorkshire Race Issues Advisory Group (WYRIAG) - a multi agency group consisting of West Yorkshire Probation, Police, Court Service, Crown Prosecution Service, Prison Service and the Witness Service – all of whom are committed to increasing the number of Black and Asian staff employed within criminal justice agencies in West Yorkshire.

The role of PATH (Yorkshire) Ltd is to organise and publicise 'recruitment fairs' in each district of West Yorkshire so as to promote the aims and objectives of each agency to members of Black and Asian communities. In addition, PATH (Yorkshire) Ltd has also developed a database which provides each participating criminal justice agency with the names of individuals who have attended the 'recruitment fairs' and who wish to receive direct information/advertisements for jobs as they arise.

"Actually, West Yorkshire Probation currently exceeds its target for minority ethnic staff. Our target is 5.1% but our actual performance is 10.4% We do recognise though that there is generally a lack of knowledge about criminal justice agencies within the Black community and that we need some way of breaking down some of the stigma attached - for example with the Police. So this is a useful way to portray the service in a positive light and to help people to understand that we employ IT people and clerical staff as well, not just probation officers. In fact, the service's staff profile reflects the community we serve in all areas except the admin grades." (Rob Voakes, Assistant Chief Officer)

Yet, whilst the feedback from partner agencies and participants has been very positive, WYRIAG recognises that the 'novelty' appeal of the 'recruitment fairs' will not last. What is needed now is *"inspiration about an alternative way"*. (Rob Voakes)

The West Yorkshire Approved Premises (Hostels) Black and Asian Initiative is designed to provide a high quality service to Black and Asian residents in all the six Approved Premises across the Board area. Operational since 2000/2001, the Initiative is funded by the West Yorkshire Probation Board and co-ordinated across the six hostels by a full-time worker. Providing high quality services is achieved by:

- Undertaking 'cultural assessments' with each new resident within seven days of admission to identify their particular cultural/religious needs (e.g. dietary requirements)
- Providing personal support to residents
- Supporting hostel staff to work effectively with Black and Asian residents
- Networking with colleagues (e.g. Bail Information, Throughcare, Case managers, prison staff) to encourage them to keep hostels in mind particularly in the case of Black and Asian offenders.

"Our service is inherently institutionally racist. In fact, a Bail Information Officer once said to me 'When I see a Black or brown face I don't see a hostel. I see prison. And that I suppose was her being honest about her practice.'" (Jim Bryan, Hostel Manager)

Therefore, the initiative is not merely an attempt to address the institutional racism within the hostel setting – e.g. insufficient numbers of minority ethnic residents seen as justification for lack of diverse service delivery. It also seeks to counter the racism inherent in the referral process. Central to this is the process of helping white workers to learn about and understand different Black and Asian religious and cultural issues.

To address this the project worker, Ranjit Mann, provides each hostel with:

- An information pack covering different religious and cultural traditions; and
- A 'best practice process guide', that addresses the needs of Black and Asian residents from hostel admission to departure.

She recognises, however, that:

"Successful change doesn't occur just through information packs and guidelines. You have to engage with people. You have to encourage and support people to become more aware and begin to deal with the issues themselves. They also need cultural awareness and racism training to help them learn how to pick up on issues and be aware and sensitive so that they can contribute towards helping the resident to make a successful period of residence." (Ranjit Mann, Project Worker)

"The whole thing is premised on the assumption that racism is alive and well. If we ever got the service right in the hostels it would be because we'd had a culture change. What I'd like to see is a move from a white liberal position where we accommodate difference to one where people's needs are met just as a normal expectation – where we really do celebrate diversity." (Paul Thurston, Assistant Chief Officer)

The Ummid Project, established in 1995 (initially in Bradford and later also in Keighley) aims to support the work of the Probation service through work in the following areas:

- Cautionary panels
- School work and mentoring
- Supervision of statutory clients
- Providing cultural/religious consultancy service to probation officers
- Supporting PSR writers.

"Initially, what happened was that probation staff just handed over Asian offenders to Ummid for them to work with. But in the months after the summer disturbances and 11 September 2001 I realised that we needed to change the focus of the contract. We needed to improve our own skills and confidence, to engage in more joint or shared work, really, to become part of the process. So we held discussions with Ummid and decided to start co-working, with a probation officer and an Ummid worker seeing the offender together. That new arrangement started in April 2002. Now, working together, Ummid workers are able to 'interpret' not just language but the meaning or significance of particular religious, cultural or family issues. And probation officers are being part of gathering the soft information. They're engaging with people talking about issues." (Mark Siddall, Assistant Chief Officer: Bradford)

The theory is that through this co-working process of observation and engagement probation officers will gradually develop the skills and confidence in their work with Asian offenders to address the pertinent issues (i.e. the specifics of the offence) in a rational way (i.e. devoid of cultural ignorance or racist misconceptions).

Outcomes

Leadership & modelling

These initiatives have the full support of the Chief Officer and the senior management team. The relevant Assistant Chief Officers have driven forward the vision (sometimes in the face of staff reluctance) and have demonstrated personal involvement and commitment to ensuring that diversity issues are integrated into the organisation's work.

Policy and strategy

Initiatives support central government and WYPB policy in relation to the recruitment of minority ethnic staff; more effective use of hostels (as an alternative to prison for Black and Asian offenders); and work with minority ethnic offenders and their families.

- The 'recruitment fairs' have informed the continuous development of innovative approaches by the agencies involved.
- The hostel initiative is underpinned by a clear action plan and is informed by stakeholder feedback from colleagues, hostel staff and residents.
- The Ummid project contributes to stakeholders' understanding of 'what works' in work with minority ethnic offenders.

Continuous learning & improvement

- Staff in each agency are involved in the delivery of the 'recruitment fairs' and discuss their participation/effectiveness with managers.
- The hostel project worker directly supports hostel staff.
- Co-working with Ummid workers is a deliberate attempt to develop staff skills and confidence.

Partnership development

All three initiatives are based on partnership relationships – i.e. with other criminal justice agencies, voluntary sector and community-based organisations. WYPB has designated resources to pursue developments in diversity related work. Other partners (e.g. CJ agencies) also contribute financial and other (e.g. staff time) resources.

Management by processes & facts

- A formal contract between PATH (Yorkshire) Ltd and WYRIAG for delivery of the 'recruitment fairs' and development of the database. The processes involved in the delivery of the initiative were reviewed regularly by WYRIAG and PATH (Yorkshire) Ltd at contract review meetings and improved as required. Feedback from participants was also a very important part of the assessment and review of the processes involved.
- Hostel initiative is subject to independent review by Huddersfield University researchers. Hostel managers and project worker meet monthly and quarterly with Assistant Chief Officer.
- Ummid Project performance results will inform improvements, priorities and targets across WYPB area.

Customer focus

- Feedback from 'recruitment fair' participants has been very positive. WYRIAG members believe this initiative to be valuable in helping to achieve recruitment objectives.
- Independent research shows that the hostel initiative is well received by staff and residents. Performance indicators (occupancy rates for Black and Asian residents, satisfaction with services and resident retention rates) show generally positive trends over time.
- Ummid – increase in case manager confidence, case completions and number of PSRs written with Ummid support.

People, development & involvement

Learning provided through all three initiatives has supported the development of staff skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence.

Public responsibility

Initiatives have:

- Informed and encouraged individuals from minority ethnic communities to consider employment in the criminal justice sector
- Increased the number of Black and Asian hostel residents and contributed to changing perceptions in local communities
- Enabled the local South Asian community to see the Probation Service as an organisation that understands its particular needs and takes account of these in its work with Asian offenders and the courts.

Results orientation

These initiatives were part of the Area's Race Equality Action Plans and contribute directly to the priorities for action identified in the Area's Race Equality Scheme.

Next Steps

Leadership is crucial.

"I am passionate about this. Over the past two and a half to three years that I have been Chief Officer here I have made it obvious in my behaviour that addressing racism is a priority. And if the Chief says and behaves as if something is important then, usually, people see it and accept it." (Paul Wilson)

Indeed, the organisation is deeply committed not only to race equality (being one of the four priorities of the Corporate Work Plan) but also to the continuous learning and development of its staff. To this end the Area Plan 2002-2003 states that:

"We will strive to develop an organisation and a culture in which staff and stakeholders can take pride; one in which staff want to work and feel supported by their management and the Board.

We aim for a staff profile that is representative of the communities it serves.

We will continue to improve communication and understanding between the Board, management and staff of all grades."

The way ahead is, therefore, underpinned by two people-focused initiatives.

- The establishment of employee groups for Black and Asian staff, lesbian, gay and bisexual staff, disabled staff, and women managers; and
- A training and development programme focusing on:
 - **Diversity and your job role** – to assist participants to understand the implications of diversity for their job role and develop their skills in delivering an effective and appropriate service to the diverse community within the West Yorkshire Area.
 - **Cultural understanding and awareness** – to give participants the cultural knowledge and understanding that they require in order to deliver an appropriate and effective service to members of different sections of the West Yorkshire community.
 - **Working with Interpreters** – to give participants the skills and understanding that they require to work effectively through an interpreter.
 - **Dealing with Harassment** – to include 'Introduction to the Anti-Harassment Policy'; 'Investigation of Harassment Complaints'; and 'Being a Support Officer'.

Primary responsibility for driving forward these commitments falls to the organisation's Diversity Adviser.

"It's important to have someone dedicated to diversity. You need someone to drive it, to have the time and the space to develop the knowledge and understanding. But the responsibility for progressing it shouldn't be taken away from managers. So there needs to be a clear understanding by senior managers that the person responsible for

promoting diversity in their area is them. I might have expertise in diversity issues but not necessarily in operational or policy work. So my aim is to get the relevant lead officer to take the initiative. I'm here to support and offer my expertise but if we are going to be successful then diversity is everyone's responsibility and I think that message is very clear in West Yorkshire Probation.

Most people understand the issues intellectually. What we have to do is to move from initiatives and ideas to embedding diversity perspectives into people's everyday work. So it's seen as part and parcel of doing the job. Not something additional. And what that means is that we have to approach equality as a culture change issue." (Rajinder Singh, Diversity Adviser)

Lessons Learned

From the examples of practice described above it is possible to identify ten basic elements of effective probation work with minority ethnic communities.

1. Staff at all levels must have a sense of ownership of and commitment to this area of work.
2. Staff need to have access to a basic level of information about the culture and customs of the different minority ethnic groups with whom they work.
3. Probation Areas need to make effective links with local minority ethnic community groups and organisations.
4. Work with minority ethnic communities needs to be underpinned by work that challenges racial discrimination and racism.
5. Services and provision need to be appropriate to the differing needs of minority ethnic offenders.
6. Staff from minority ethnic backgrounds need to be supported and developed in order to enable their maximum contribution to the organisation and its work.
7. Work with minority ethnic communities needs to be supported by a coherent staff training and development programme.
8. Working towards racial equality needs to be integral to, not additional to, the concept of effective practice.
9. Race equality needs to be approached from a holistic perspective.
10. It needs to be recognised that working towards race equality takes time.

In addition, and fundamental to the development of effective practice, Probation Areas also need to address a number of key issues.

The impact of development initiatives on practice

Whilst the developments described in these examples of practice are commendable, concern was also expressed by staff in the Areas about the extent to which learning has 'worked its way through to practice and service delivery'. Indeed, PSRs are still reported as differential, with proposals for Black and Asian offenders tending towards custody, or alternatively, community punishment. (West Yorkshire)

Concern about the quality of PSRs and the impact and effectiveness of reports on minority ethnic offenders (particularly in relation to African/African Caribbean offenders) was also identified in the HMIP Report (2000) where it was suggested that 'the failure of the majority of services to collect data on race and ethnic origin and monitor their performance on reports written on minority ethnic

offenders contributed to inconsistent service delivery.’ (2000:15) The Report also commented that ‘the firm approach to racist behaviour on CS sites by many CS supervisors was commendable but was undermined by the lack of attention given to racist attitudes and behaviour during assessment.’ (2000:16)

This is a broad issue involving, amongst others, case managers, Throughcare teams, prison staff and Bail Information Officers whose preconceptions about minority ethnic offenders can be highly detrimental. Indeed, one Bail Information Officer openly admitted that ‘When I see a Black or brown face I don’t see a hostel. I see prison.’ (West Yorkshire)

Areas therefore need to develop a range of methods and measures for assessing the impact of development initiatives on practice.

Conceptual difference between cultural sensitivity and anti-racism

Whilst ethnically or culturally sensitive practice involves ‘familiarity with different customs/ norms, religious mores and festivals, language needs and communication issues, the nature of familial relationships and so forth’ anti-racist practice ‘refers to an approach that recognises that members of minority ethnic communities have systematically confronted institutional racism alongside varying degrees of personal racial prejudice and abuse, and actively attempts to challenge these processes.’ (Bahaj 2002:6/7)

“The problem is that people are often very happy to learn about other people’s culture and background. They’re not so happy to give up power.” (Julia Bahaj, Hampshire)

Perhaps predictably, research undertaken in Hampshire reveals that whilst “the majority of staff felt confident about the importance of recognising cultural difference... There was, however, less confidence around issues of race and racism.” (Bahaj. 2002:8)

The corporate approach to race equality to which the HMIP Thematic on Race Equality (2000) aspires requires not only a ‘significant change in the culture, management and performance of the service’ (HMIP 2000:22) but also, and crucially, a clear understanding of the difference between culturally sensitive practice and anti-racist practice, and a commitment to both.

Nature, extent and impact of racism within the National Probation Service

The National Probation Service acknowledges that institutionalised racism must not exist, or be allowed to exist, in any part, or aspect, of the organisation actually or potentially. Yet the experience of staff contributing to this project suggests that despite the Service’s concerted efforts and good intentions some racism continues to exist.

This has been described as including:

- Individuals who ‘shut off’ or who are “actively, though not publicly, against the policies” (Suffolk)
- “Guarded support of some line managers and lack of understanding from some colleagues who appear to resent the Black Staff Support Group” (Hampshire)

- Staff who do not understand ‘what all the fuss is about’ or who believe that targeted initiatives give Black offenders unwarranted ‘special treatment’. (West Yorkshire)
- Individuals who understand the issues intellectually and are aware that there are problems organisationally, but who do not believe they are ‘part of the problem’. (West Yorkshire)

Minority ethnic staff’s experience of racism can also be seen to relate to issues of recruitment, retention and progression. Indeed, whilst the report by Conroy Grizzle Associates (2001) makes it clear that recruitment is not necessarily the problem, retention and progression are identified as more critical with minority ethnic staff described as experiencing:

- Frustration
- Poor supervision
- Absence of appraisal
- Racism at work (from offenders and colleagues)
- Lack of support
- Isolation.

This confirms the observations in the Thematic Inspection Report (2000) that the experience of minority ethnic staff includes

- a feeling of isolation in their workplace
- poor quality supervision
- a perception of being excluded from informal networks
- [for minority ethnic managers] varying levels of support in their managerial roles

An understanding of racism is crucial to the development of effective probation work with minority ethnic communities. It is imperative, therefore, that Areas seek to discover the ways in which, and the extent to which, minority ethnic community members, offenders and staff could feel isolated, unsupported or discriminated against within the organisation.

The role of white staff

Clearly, white staff have a crucial role to play in the development of effective work with minority ethnic communities and anti-racist practice within probation work. Yet, in relation to work with minority ethnic offenders, research recently completed in Hampshire suggests that supervision procedures and lack of confidence militate against the development of effective practice. (Bahaj 2002) In addition, staff may be reluctant to tackle the issues due to fear of being *“exposed for not doing the job properly”* or *“being accused of being racist.”* (Suffolk)

The relationship between white managers and minority ethnic staff can also be the source of concern in the sense that *“white managers are often fearful of addressing a basic competence because of being called racist or not doing it right”*. (West Yorkshire)

All of this echoes the observations in the Thematic Inspection Report that:

- Many white staff were apprehensive of being regarded as racist and said that they avoided both the subject and the issues.
- The climate in many teams made the informal resolution of complaints about language and behaviour difficult to achieve.
- Few staff expressed confidence in their ability to address racist behaviour amongst staff or to deal with allegations of racial harassment. (2000:20)

White staff need to be encouraged and supported to understand their role and the positive contribution they can make to working towards racial equality and the development of work with minority ethnic communities.

The balance between procedures and personal involvement

As Suffolk Probation Area's 'Working With Minority Ethnic Offenders: Policy and Practice' points out, it is important to:

"Remember that what minority ethnic offenders often say they want is to be heard, believed and understood rather than formal bureaucratic remedies, although these will also be needed sometimes." (2002:4)

Indeed, the Thematic Inspection Report (2000) also commented that:

"A significant number of minority ethnic staff expressed little confidence in the application of the procedures, based on their lack of faith in the ability of some managers to deal effectively with allegations of racist behaviour, their fear of victimisation and the possible adverse consequences for their career." (2000:20)

Areas need to ensure that bureaucratic structures and procedures are not developed as the only or primary remedy to racial discrimination and racism. Working towards racial equality requires the involvement of individuals who have the knowledge, understanding, skills, confidence, commitment and motivation to want to make a difference.

The EFQM Excellence Model®

The philosophy behind the EFQM model provides a clear basis for identifying the key principles of excellence emerging from these examples of practice. This, as stated in 'A Guide to the use of the EFQM Excellence Model® in the National Probation Service' (2002) is as follows.

Leadership & modelling

The behaviour of an organisation's leaders creates a clarity and unity of purpose and an environment in which the organisation and its people can excel.

Policy and strategy

A successful organisation formulates policy and strategy in collaboration with its people and it is based on relevant, up to date and comprehensive information and research.

Continuous learning & improvement

Organisational performance is maximised when it is based on the management and sharing of knowledge within a culture of continuous learning innovation and improvement.

Partnership development

Mutually beneficial relationships, built on trust, sharing of knowledge and integration with partner organisations are a crucial resource to any effective organisation.

Management by processes and facts

Organisations perform more effectively when all inter-related activities are systematically managed and decisions about current operations and improvements are based on reliable information and stakeholder perceptions.

Customer focus

Quality of service and retention of market share are best achieved through a clear focus on the current potential needs of customers.

People development and involvement

The full potential of an organisation's people is best realised through shared values and a culture of trust and empowerment which involves everyone.

Public responsibility

The interests of the organisation and its people are best served by adopting an ethical approach and exceeding the expectations and regulations of the community at large.

Results orientation

Excellence depends on balancing and satisfying the needs of all relevant stakeholders including employees, customers, suppliers and society as well as the funding organisation.

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These principles are equally applicable to the examples of practice presented in this report. In addition, the work described in the five Probation Areas involved in the project provides some additional and useful insights.

Leadership & modelling

Leadership needs to be visible, demonstrated, committed. It needs to be based on conviction and passion for equality and it needs to be open and supportive so as to allow people to make mistakes and learn from them. (Suffolk, West Yorkshire, Hampshire)

Policy and strategy

'Collaboration' requires the organisation to provide not only the opportunity for participation (e.g. invitation to comment on draft policies) but also the mechanisms for developing and sustaining long-term relationships and creating synergy that is effective and time efficient. (Staffordshire)

Continuous learning & improvement

In relation to race equality issues, the continuous learning and improvement of staff requires that direct support for minority ethnic staff is combined with racism awareness training for white staff and Board members. It is in this way that the guarded support or negative reactions of white colleagues (Hampshire, Staffordshire) can be addressed in order to develop shared values and a culture of trust and empowerment.

Partnership development

Involvement in partnerships and networks can provide useful mechanisms for sharing information, developing joint projects, pursuing shared objectives. (Merseyside) However, it is also important to recognise that 'you have to work in partnership with others to achieve significant and sustained change'. (Suffolk)

Management by processes and facts

Diversity related initiatives (including working towards race equality) are best managed within the context of a broader framework or strategy that carries the authority of senior management and is subject to systematic monitoring, review and evaluation. (Staffordshire, Hampshire)

Customer focus

Diversity issues/concerns should be addressed within the context of broader initiatives – e.g. impact and customer satisfaction questionnaires. (Merseyside)

**People
development
and involvement**

Support mechanisms for minority ethnic staff should seek to provide not only a safe and supportive environment to address issues that affect them within the organisation, but also enable their contribution to policy development and implementation; and support their development and progression into management posts. (Hampshire, Staffordshire)

**Public
responsibility**

The Probation Service does not tend to enjoy a high profile or positive public image – particularly within minority ethnic communities. It is crucial, therefore, to make links with minority ethnic communities to build trust and rapport. In this way the service can become part of the community, encourage social inclusion and develop a dialogue with the community where it can explain what it does and why, and community members can put across their point of view. (Suffolk)

**Results
orientation**

In terms of addressing and balancing various stakeholder interests, it is important to have a dedicated senior officer responsible for driving forward the diversity policy and strategy. In other words, a Diversity Development Officer responsible for formulating a framework, policy and plan for integrating and sustaining diversity developments across the organisation. (West Yorkshire, Hampshire)

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Benchmarking Questions

In reviewing and developing your work with minority ethnic communities you may wish to explore the following questions.

LEADERSHIP

1. How do your organisation's leaders demonstrate their clarity and unity of purpose?
2. What more could your organisation's leaders do to further develop an environment in which the organisation and people can excel in developing work with minority ethnic communities?
3. How is leadership commitment to race equality made visible within your organisation?
4. What would make the culture in your organisation more open and supportive in enabling people to make mistakes and learn from them?

POLICY & STRATEGY

5. What evidence do you have to suggest that your organisation's policies and strategies are based on relevant, up to date and comprehensive information and research?
6. How inclusive and effective are your organisation's current arrangements for consulting staff about emerging policies and strategies? How could they be improved?
7. How could you improve the protocols used in your organisation for consulting with minority ethnic communities?
8. What initiatives would your organisation need to take in order to develop and sustain long-term relationships with minority ethnic community organisations in your area?

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT & INVOLVEMENT

9. To what extent are there shared values in your organisation that support development towards race equality?
10. How could your organisation further develop a culture of trust and empowerment that involves everyone?
11. To what extent do people in your organisation understand the difference between culturally sensitive practice and anti-racist practice?
12. What methods and measures are there in your organisation for assessing the impact of development initiatives on practice?

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

13. To what extent has your organisation developed mutually beneficial relationships with minority ethnic community groups and organisations in the area?

14. What evidence do you have to suggest that these relationships are built on trust, a sharing of knowledge, mutual respect and reciprocity?
15. What projects has your organisation recently undertaken in partnership with local minority ethnic groups and/or organisations?
16. How could partnership work with minority ethnic community organisations be further developed to achieve more significant and sustainable change?

MANAGEMENT BY PROCESSES AND FACTS

17. How effective is your organisation at ensuring that inter-related activities relating to work with minority ethnic communities are systematically managed?
18. To what extent are your organisation's decisions about current work and developments in work with minority ethnic communities based on reliable information?
19. What processes exist in your organisation for gathering stakeholder perceptions in relation to work with minority ethnic communities? (Including those of minority ethnic community groups, offenders, and staff)
20. Diversity related initiatives (including working towards race equality) are best managed within the context of a broader framework or strategy that carries the authority of senior management and is subject to systematic monitoring, review and evaluation. To what extent is this the case in your organisation?

CUSTOMER FOCUS

21. Does your organisation make information available in relevant languages for minority ethnic communities in your area?
22. How does your organisation gather information about the needs of minority ethnic victims or potential victims of crime?
23. How does your organisation gather information about the needs of minority ethnic offenders?
24. How is this information used to improve the capacity of the organisation to meet diverse needs?

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT & INVOLVEMENT

25. How could your organisation's recruitment and selection processes be improved to eliminate bias that unfairly discriminates against minority ethnic candidates?
26. How does your organisation ensure that support mechanisms for minority ethnic staff provide a safe and supportive environment to address issues that affect them within the organisation, and enables their contribution to the development of the organisation?
27. What mechanisms does your organisation have for developing and supporting minority ethnic staff into management posts?
28. What training and development is there for white staff and Board members that supports them to examine their role and contribution to the development of racial equality within the organisation and its work?

PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY

29. What mechanisms does your organisation use for raising the profile of the Probation Service within local minority ethnic communities?
30. How does your organisation ensure that the views of minority ethnic groups are represented in information gathered about perceptions of the Probation Service?
31. What mechanisms does your organisation have for 'engaging in dialogue' with minority ethnic communities locally?
32. What activities does your organisation undertake with particular regard for the benefit or betterment of local minority ethnic communities?

RESULTS ORIENTATION

33. How would you judge your organisation's success in achieving its planned objectives for work with minority ethnic communities?
34. What principles underpin your organisation's 'balancing' of the needs and interests of different stakeholders? (Including minority ethnic communities, victims and offenders; as well as staff, Board members, local community, etc.)
35. How are race equality developments contributing to your organisation's attainment of key performance targets? How could this be improved?
36. What other approaches/initiatives does your organisation need to develop in order to ensure that bureaucratic structures and procedures are not instituted as the only or primary method for achieving effective practice in probation work with minority ethnic communities?

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Project Participants

The following individuals were interviewed in the process of gathering the information on which this report is based.

Hampshire Probation

Community Service Officers:

Roger Andrews

Liz Crouch

Jean Ross

Pat Smith

Unit Managers:

Ray Glenn (North)

Brian Leigh (South West)

Alan Skinner (South East)

Black Staff Support Group:

Lauretta Dagogo (Chairperson)

John Gardner

Jo Holbrook

Aneel Sharma

Julia Bahaj – Diversity Development Officer

John Davies – Community Service Manager

Jack Holland – Assistant Chief Officer (Policy Development)

Community organisations

Zahir Ahmed, Southampton Mosque Trust

Tony Broomes, African Caribbean Centre

Coreen Forbes, Newtown Adventure Playground

Sukhdev Rathore, Newtown Youth Centre

David Singh-Roath, Wheatsheaf Trust

Merseyside Probation

Jean Atkinson	–	Probation Officer & Programme Tutor
Dave Dent	–	Probation Officer & Programme Tutor
John Stafford	–	Chief Officer
Andy Stelman	–	Assistant Chief Officer (Crime Courts: Community Safety: Services to Black Offenders)

Margaret McAdam	–	Merseyside Racial Harassment Prevention Unit.
Inspector Maria Martin	–	Community Relations (North Liverpool), Merseyside Police

Staffordshire Probation

Wendy Armour	–	Public Relations Officer
Rupinder Dehal	–	Probation Officer (PSR Team)

Peter Fieldhouse	–	Assistant Chief Officer (Partnerships)
Malcolm Large	–	Senior Probation Officer, HMP Dovegate
Rob Mandley	–	Assistant Chief Officer (Management Services)
Mohamed Parekh	–	IT System Officer
David Walton	–	Chief Officer
Sam Williams	–	Senior Probation Officer

Newcastle-under-Lyme Area Team

Geoff Harriman	–	Newcastle Western Urban Villages Community Advice Bus
Barb Rutter	–	Newcastle Western Urban Villages Community Advice Bus
Steve Stockal	–	Probation Officer
Heather Wellings	–	Probation Officer
Geoff Woolgar	–	SPO, Team Leader

Probation Board Members

Mohammed Jamil	–	Pakistani Community Centre
Amir Kabal	–	Director, East Staffordshire Racial Equality Council

Suffolk Probation

John Budd	–	Chief Officer
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Effective Practice with Minority Ethnic and Racially Motivated Offenders Working Group

David Brinkley	–	Seconded Probation Officer HMP Highpoint North (Female Prison)
Peter Fox	–	Training Manager, Suffolk Youth Offending Service
Shammi Jalota	–	Suffolk County Council Racial Harassment Officer
Robin Merriam	–	Assistant Chief Officer (Working With Offenders)
Kelley Parker	–	Staff Development & Training Manager

Probation Board Members

Sam Budu	–	Director, Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality
Subhash Modasia	–	Project Manager, British Telecom
Barry Walker	–	Retired HR Manager

West Yorkshire Probation

Peter Johnson	–	Contracts Adviser
Ranjit Mann	–	Black and Asian Support Worker (West Yorkshire Approved Premises Black and Asian Initiative)

- Graham Maud – Manager (Elm Bank Hostel)
- Mark Siddall – Assistant Chief Officer (Bradford)
- Rajinder Singh – Diversity Adviser
- Paul Thurston – Assistant Chief Officer (Accommodation Services)
- Rob Voakes – Assistant Chief Officer (Leeds)
- Paul Wilson – Chief Officer

Partner Agencies

- Mohammed Aslam – Director, Himmat Project
- Jim Bryan – Manager, Ripon House Hostel
- Jarnail Mudhar – Team Leader, PATH (Yorkshire) Limited
- Jackie Thornton – Personnel Manager, West Yorkshire Magistrates' Courts Service

