

STEPHEN LAWRENCE INQUIRY

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To bring to the attention of the Policy and Resources Committee the findings of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry and the Home Office response.
- 1.2 To consider the draft action plan produced in response to the inquiry recommendations which was discussed at a special meeting of the Crime and Community Safety Partnership on 2 July 1999.
- 1.3 To consider how the Council can contribute to the development of a final action plan.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The attached documents summarise the main recommendations of the *Stephen Lawrence Inquiry* in respect of local councils and the response of the Home Office to these recommendations.
- 2.2 The Home Office has recommended that the multi-agency implications of the inquiry report should be overseen by local crime reduction partnerships. The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, *Solace*, has made an additional recommendation that the partnerships should convene a special meeting, to be attended by the local Director of Racial Equality, in order to devise an appropriate response to the inquiry recommendations. A special meeting was held on 2 July to consider a draft action plan to implement the findings.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to consider the draft action plan and require officers to:
 - (a) bring the draft action plan before appropriate Council Committees for discussion;
 - (b) co-ordinate the production of a final plan which identified responsible agencies or groups of agencies and a timetable for its implementation and associated costs; and
 - (c) bring the final plan back to the Policy and Resources Committee for approval and to

receive subsequent monitoring reports.

4. **Background**

- 4.1 The Home Office has recommended that the multi-agency implications of the inquiry report should be overseen by local crime reduction partnerships. The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (*Solace*) has made an additional recommendation that the partnerships should convene a special meeting, to be attended by the local Director of Racial Equality, in order to devise an appropriate response to the inquiry recommendations. A special meeting was held on 2 July to consider a draft action plan to implement the findings.
- 4.2 Three documents are attached to this report:
- (a) a copy of the recommendations made by the inquiry by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny into the death of Stephen Lawrence (**Annex A**);
 - (b) an analytic summary of the report, its recommendations and the Home Office Action Plan (**Annex B**); and
 - (c) a draft Action Plan produced in association with the Milton Keynes Racial Equality Council for discussion at a special meeting of the Crime and Community Partnership held on 2 July 1999 (**Annex C**).
- 4.3 An oral report of the meeting held on 2 July 1999 will be given at this meeting. The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to consider the draft Action Plan.

5. **Issues and Choices**

- 5.1 There are a number of recommendations in the inquiry report that can be tackled effectively only by a co-ordinated multi-agency response. These recommendations are summarised below and are examined in more detail in the attached report.
- 5.2 Recommendations 12 to 17 concern the reporting of racist incidents and crimes. They envisage the creation of “...*a comprehensive system of reporting and recording of all racist incidents and crimes*”. They also propose a radical extension of reporting centres, to include schools and other facilities used by the public.
- 5.3 Recommendations 48 to 54 concern the establishment of universal training for the police service in racism awareness and valuing cultural diversity. They suggest that local councils and police should consider setting up joint training in these areas.
- 5.4 Recommendations 67 to 69 set out the implications for schools, and advocate a pro-active approach by local authorities and school governors to combat, prevent and address racism.
- 5.5 Other relevant recommendations concern the recruitment and retention of staff from minority ethnic communities, the need to ensure and update first aid training for front line staff and the promotion of community initiatives aimed at promoting cultural diversity and addressing racism.
- 5.6 The Committee is asked to consider the draft action plan and require officers to:

- (a) bring the draft action plan before appropriate Council Committees for discussion;

- (b) co-ordinate the production of a final plan which identified responsible agencies or groups of agencies and a timetable for its implementation and associated costs; and
- (c) bring the final plan back to the Policy and Resources Committee for approval and to receive subsequent monitoring reports.

5.7 The production of the final plan will need to be co-ordinated with the process for developing a response to the recently completed Equalities Audit, a report on which is to be found on this Committee's Agenda.

6. **Implications**

6.1 Environmental

None.

6.2 Equalities

Substantial.

6.3 Financial

There will be considerable costs involved in implementing all aspects of the inquiry recommendations. In the short term, the training costs alone are likely to be significant, although there may be some economies of scale if joint training is to be considered as a viable option.

6.4 Legal

Home Office guidance is expected to require Councils to comply with their recommendations.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

There are implications for staff training which are outlined in the report.

7. **Conclusions**

7.1 Any action plan devised by the Council in response to the *Stephen Lawrence Inquiry* should address the recommendations listed above in the light of the Home Office response. The main issues are summarised and discussed in the attached report.

Background Papers: The Stephen Lawrence Report (February 1999)
The Home Office Action Plan (April 1999)