

# South Yorkshire Probation Area Race Equality Policy

## Policy Statement

The South Yorkshire Probation Board values the ethnic and cultural diversity of the communities it serves and commits itself to the active promotion of positive race relations, race equality in its own membership, in the make-up of its workforce and in all aspects of its work. The service and its staff will treat everyone with respect and dignity, and endeavour to ensure that the opportunity to fulfil their potential is afforded to all its staff and service users.

## 1 Definition

The definitions of racism are those introduced in the MacPherson report into the murder of Stephen Lawrence:

*“Racism” in general terms consists of conduct or words or practices which advantage or disadvantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In its more subtle form it is as damaging as in its overt form. A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.*

*“Institutional Racism” consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage black and minority ethnic people.*

## 2 Context

This policy is amended in the light of prevailing legislation in particular The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the European Race Directives in respect of Racial Discrimination and Discrimination on the grounds of Religion or Belief 2003. The vision of fairness and equality informed by the results of thematic inspections into service performance will be guiding principles within the transition to the National Offender Management Service which seeks to provide seamless offender management between institutions and the community.

The Probation Service in South Yorkshire is committed to promoting positive race relations and race equality. This policy will therefore reaffirm the service’s position and provide clear direction for all staff as to how such issues will be managed in the future.

## 3 Principles

The following principles underpin the service’s commitment to race equality:

- Equality of opportunity forms an integral part of every aspect of the service's leadership, structures, policies and practices;
- The service values the ethnic and cultural diversity of its staff and of the communities which it serves and is committed to establishing closer and more meaningful channels of communication and dialogue with them. It will strive to reflect that diversity in its systems of governance, its management and its staff.

## **4 Aims**

- The aim of this policy is to ensure that South Yorkshire Probation Area promotes positive race relations and race equality;
- The policy will articulate for both staff and service users how the service will deal with issues of racism and race equality.

## **5 Strategy**

### **South Yorkshire Probation Area**

#### **5.1 Probation Board**

- The service will ensure that the membership of the Probation Board for South Yorkshire reflects as far as possible the black and minority ethnic groups in South Yorkshire;
- The Probation Board views the establishment and maintenance of strong and vibrant links with the black and minority ethnic communities as an integral part of the implementation of this policy. Through the Board itself, Divisional and County Diversity Management Committees we will seek to establish links with black and minority ethnic groups.

#### **5.2 South Yorkshire Workforce**

- Achievement of the targets set by the Government will not reduce the commitment of the Board to seek to continue to recruit black and minority ethnic staff and their distribution across all grades within the organisation;
- The Yorkshire and Humberside Training Consortium (of which South Yorkshire is a member) must ensure that Trainee Probation Officer recruitment strives to reflect the ethnic diversity of local communities. Recruitment and training processes must be culturally sensitive and must not impose barriers, which discriminate against black and minority ethnic applicants being successfully recruited as TPOs;
- The service must ensure equality of opportunity for its entire staff. Staff development and effective supervision will be key objectives across the organisation;
- The service is committed to the provision of a safe working environment for all staff. However, we will give full consideration to the work related needs, interests and concerns of black and minority ethnic staff;

- The service will ensure that wherever staff encounter racism and racist attitudes they receive appropriate support and the invoking of formal procedures where necessary, in challenging such attitudes and behaviour;
- Consultancy and support will be made available where appropriate to assist all staff in meeting their obligations under this policy;
- South Yorkshire Probation Area supports the Black Workers' Support Group (BWSG), membership and attendance wherever possible of black and minority ethnic staff.

### **5.3 Service delivery**

- South Yorkshire Probation Area will ensure that all offenders have equality of access to its services, and that all its services are sensitive and responsive to ethnic and cultural differences. It will promote positive race relations and race equality.

5.3.1 The service's policy on Racially Motivated Offenders (RMO) is as follows:

- Systems which identify Racially Motivated Offenders within the Criminal Justice System will be maintained;
- Racist incidents and attitudes will be dealt with promptly and with recourse to breach action where necessary;
- Assessments will endeavour to identify, at an early stage, those offenders whose offences may have a racial dimension;
- Where black minority staff agree to supervise racially motivated offenders appropriate safeguards will be provided;
- Appropriate training will be provided for all relevant staff.

5.3.2 Services for black and minority ethnic offenders – the service is committed to ensuring as wide a range of provision for black and minority ethnic offenders as possible and specific attention will be paid to the following areas:

- PSRs – we will ensure that high quality PSRs are prepared in all cases and that they comply with National Standards. They will be free from discrimination and will have a clear proposal;
- Accredited Programmes – South Yorkshire Probation Area will undertake a full assessment which involves the offender before placing a sole black or minority ethnic offender on a programme or Community Punishment Order;
- To improve provision for black and minority ethnic offenders in to Approved Premises (hostels)
  - promoting responsiveness of the overall provision;
  - developing good practice guidelines for staff in working with black and minority ethnic offenders within the hostel setting;
  - provide a safe living environment for black and minority ethnic residents.

5.3.3. Services to Victims - the service will be sensitive to the needs and experiences of black and minority ethnic victims.

## **6 Monitoring**

The annual Action Plan will be implemented within the Diversity Committee structure. An Annual Report will be presented to the Board.

## **7 Staff Development and Training**

The Annual Action Plan will inform the Development and Training Plan.

## **8 Implementation Structure**

The implementation of this strategy will be the responsibility of all managers under the leadership and direction of the Chief Officer, who will adopt the overall policy lead. However, the ACO (Human Resources) will have 'lead' responsibilities within the policy itself and will report to the Senior Management Team and the Probation Board.

## **9 Costs and Resources**

This is an integral and essential part of the Service's values and responsibilities. However there is currently an additional commitment in respect of:

- The allocation of the training budget will be planned to take account of any additional training and development requirements under this strategy;
- Attendance of staff at meetings of BWSG, ABPO and NAAPS will be facilitated subject to service delivery requirements and considerations.

## **10 Cross Referencing**

Whilst this strategy refers specifically to race issues, the following current policies and procedures cross reference:

- Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Racially Motivated Offenders;
- Services for Women Offenders;
- Effective Practice Strategy;
- Recruitment and Mobility Procedure;
- Victims Policy and Procedures;
- Public Protection and Management of Risk;
- Court Work Policy and Procedures;
- PSR Policy and Procedures;
- Single Placement;
- Code of Conduct;
- Protocol for Dealing with Racist Behaviour.

**Rosemary Brown**  
**Assistant Chief Officer (Human Resources)**  
**August 2004**