

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Equal Opportunities Forum</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>15 March 2011</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Corporate Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Diversity Monitoring Group Remit</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the Forum on the changing remit of the Multi Agency Racist Monitoring group (MARIM) to the Diversity Monitoring Group

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

## 3. Background

3.1. Multi Agency Racist Incident Monitoring (MARIM) groups have been in existence in Scotland for nearly 20 years and have both a strategic and tactical role. In March 2006 a report was submitted to the Forum advising of the outcome of a review of the structure and operation of the MARIM in South Lanarkshire. There were various drivers for the review including recognition of the need to improve the operation of the MARIM, particularly with regard to information sharing among partners and clarifying the role of the MARIM in relation to other initiatives such as the local problem solving groups and the Community Safety Partnership.

3.2. In January 2009, a sub group of the MARIM was established to investigate the further expansion of the group remit due to the changes in equality legislation and a proposed change to the Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Act. It had been noted that there have been moves by some MARIM groups in Scotland to broaden their remits to cover all equality strands.

3.3. The Equality Act 2010 came into force in October 2010 and The Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Bill received Royal Assent on 8 July 2010. This has extended hate crime legislation to cover not only aggravations relating to race or religion, but also disability, sexual orientation and transgender identity.

## 4. Revised Remit of MARIM

4.1. A review of the amended legislation and the activities of other MARIM groups nationally, led to the development of a new remit for the group and the revised title of Diversity Monitoring Group.

#### 4.2. The Group objectives are now as follows:-

- ◆ to bring the public/voluntary sectors together to promote and improve the reporting, recording, monitoring and analysis of hate crime/incidents within the South Lanarkshire area to develop an appropriate and co-ordinated strategic response
- ◆ to increase the level of confidence and re-assurance in victims and potential victims of hate crimes in order to increase the level of incident reporting
- ◆ to improve the collection, collation and sharing of information on hate crimes/incidents among, and within, partner agencies in the DMG to enable:-
  - ◆ an effective and co-ordinated response to specific incidents
  - ◆ improved analysis of underlying causes and the development of effective interagency strategies to tackle and reduce them

#### 4.3. The operation and reporting lines of the Group will be as follows:-

- ◆ the DMG will take a strategic overview to ensure a co-ordinated approach to information gathering, information sharing and response to hate crimes/incidents. As such, the following practices will be implemented in a phased approach in response to the changing legislative context:-
  - ◆ commitment to information sharing of incidents/crimes in advance of meetings to enable collated data to be analysed and appropriate actions identified by member partners. Reports to be submitted 2 weeks prior to each quarterly meeting
  - ◆ to “map” any gaps in data available and make relevant changes
  - ◆ all incidents reported to be fully investigated by appropriate partners and an agreed response/outcome provided
  - ◆ to expand reports to include incidents related to homophobic harassment and other diversity strands
  - ◆ to develop trend analysis opportunities to ensure all relevant information is available to the group
  - ◆ expand core membership of DMG to ensure suitable partnership representation with appropriate attendance at meetings by community group representatives
- ◆ DMG to provide regular governance reports to Community Safety Partnership Lead Officers Group to allow the activities of the Group to be included within the South Lanarkshire Antisocial Behaviour Strategy and Single Outcome Agreement
- ◆ the timing and frequency of meetings will remain on a quarterly basis. Aspects of the DMG meeting may require being restricted to statutory partners to allow the sharing of information which is bound by formal information sharing protocols
- ◆ DMG to maintain the ability to convene at short notice for the purpose of an emergency case conference meeting. Attendance at such meetings will be as per information sharing protocols

### **5. Employee Implications**

5.1. None

### **6. Financial Implications**

6.1. None

## **7. Other Implications**

- 7.1. The risk to the Council is that if it does not have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty it may lead to non-compliance with equalities legislation. This can carry an unlimited financial penalty.
- 7.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained within this report.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 8.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 8.2. Consultation regarding the development of the new remit was undertaken with partner organisations and with community representatives.

**Robert McIlwain**  
**Executive Director (Corporate Resources)**

15 November 2010

### **Link(s) to Council Objectives**

- ◆ Fair and open
- ◆ Accountable effective and efficient
- ◆ Committed to tackling disadvantage and deprivation
- ◆ Determined to act in a responsible and sustainable way

### **Previous References**

Equal Opportunities Forum - 17 March 2009

### **List of Background Papers**

None

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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