

**A NEW APPROACH TO RACE EQUALITY
IN WARWICKSHIRE**

**Research Project
prepared for Warwickshire Race Equality Steering Group
and commissioning partners**

by

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A New Approach to Race Equality in Warwickshire

Executive Summary

Contents of report

- ES1 This report describes existing race equality services in Warwickshire and how they compare with arrangements elsewhere in the West Midlands region. The major external factors affecting contemporary race equality work are presented, together with observations as to how they might impact on developments in the county. Views on local race equality work of Warwickshire's community associations, black and minority ethnic community groups, voluntary sector agencies and public authorities have been systematically gathered and these are recorded in detail.
- ES2 The criteria for undertaking successful local race equality work are also set out and used to evaluate four possible models for delivering race equality work across the whole of the county. A set of recommendations is made to commissioning partners and stakeholders.

Ethnic minorities in Warwickshire

- ES3 The county of Warwickshire has an ethnic minority population of 22,359 or 4.42% of the total population, with the greatest concentrations in Warwick District (8,916), Nuneaton and Bedworth (5,861), and Rugby (5,273). There is a growing awareness of the problems faced by visible minorities living in the isolated rural parts of North Warwickshire and Stratford-on-Avon, and by travellers and gypsies.

Existing race equality councils in Warwickshire

- ES4 There are two race equality councils (RECs) in Warwickshire. Rugby Race Equality Council serves the area in the east of the county administered by Rugby Council. Warwick District Race Equality Council serves the south central area administered by Warwick District Council. The districts of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, and Stratford-on-Avon do not have an independent local race equality service.
- ES5 With the exception of Coventry, Walsall and Wolverhampton (all of which are engaged in a process of reviewing their local race equality service provision), the only areas of the West Midlands not currently served by a local race equality agency are North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Stratford-on-Avon, and Solihull.
- ES6 In regard to services, Rugby REC focuses on policy development, while Warwick summarised its services as complainant aid, racial harassment

casework, training on race equality, capacity building black and minority ethnic groups and community development.

- ES7 Across the region, four main race equality service types can be identified: (1) bureau for complainants of racial discrimination or victims of racial harassment, (2) consultancy or training service for public authorities or voluntary agencies, (3) community development agency empowering or capacity building communities and (4) a public awareness and education service. Currently, both Rugby and Warwick District try to be multi-purpose, but Rugby tends towards (2) and (4) and Warwick to (1) and (3), implying that each council is providing a different kind of local service.
- ES8 Rugby REC reported its income in 2003-04 to be £64,000 (given by the CRE, the County Council, and Rugby Borough Council), whereas Warwick REC reported an income of £330,000 (given by the CRE, the County Council, Warwick District Council, the Community Fund, and SRB). Rugby's income is well below the regional average, while Warwick's is marginally above. West Midlands figures show that the largest single source of funding for RECs/REPs is the Community Fund, at nearly a third, followed by regeneration grants, at a quarter.
- ES9 In regard to staffing, as at July 2003, Rugby REC employed two staff, while Warwick REC employed ten. Two thirds of the county's REC staff were on fixed-term contracts. Neither of the REC chief officers believed that the current remuneration or staff conditions were sufficient to attract and retain good staff.
- ES10 Both RECs were limited by their constitutions to working for their existing geographical areas of benefit from which their members and executive committee were largely drawn. Expansion of RECs' coverage to other areas of Warwickshire would necessitate constitutional changes in regard to areas of benefit and executive committee composition.
- ES11 Both RECs rent their accommodation. The office in Rugby is let by the church to the REC at a peppercorn rent. Warwick's office in Leamington costs £10,000 per year.
- ES12 In regard to strategy, Rugby REC felt the need to strengthen its partnership with the local council, the statutory and voluntary sectors and to move forward to becoming a single equality body. Warwick REC wanted to remain a race equality council with an executive committee, but to extend its area of benefit to cover the whole of South Warwickshire.

External factors affecting race equality work

- ES13 Factors that are having a significant impact on local race equality work and need to be taken into account in any future development are:

The MacPherson report and institutional racism

- ES14 RECs have augmented their work programmes in the light of the MacPherson report to focus on policy development with public sector bodies, including the police, launching a series of joint initiatives to deal with racial harassment and racially-motivated crime.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

- ES15 Local race equality organisations have an important role to play in making more effective the measures adopted by public authorities in meeting their specific duties under the Act. They can offer advice, guidance and constructive criticism to public authorities and should be consulted on the impact of functions and policies.

Proposed Equality and Human Rights Commission

- ES16 It is not easy to see the implications for local race equality organisation of the government's intention to create a single integrated equality commission. But the difficulties of attempting to create local equality, rather than race equality, councils are apparent.

Local Strategic Partnerships

- ES17 The government has established local strategic partnerships to develop integrated approaches to local service delivery. LSPs are cross-sectoral, cross-cutting umbrella partnerships aimed at improving the quality of life and governance in a locality by bringing together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to provide an overarching coordination framework. There is a strong argument for positioning local race equality provision within, or in close proximity to, a local strategic partnership.

Other factors

- ES18 Other important factors relating directly to race equality work are the electoral success of the racist far right; reaction to refugees and asylum seekers; community cohesion policy; events following the 11 September attack on the World Trade Centre, the war on terrorism and in Iraq; the growing awareness of ethnic community needs in rural areas, the 2001 census data; and the growth of a substantial mixed-race population.

Perception of the need for local race equality work in Warwickshire and how it should be organised

- ES19 The opinions of Warwickshire community associations, black and minority ethnic community groups, voluntary sector agencies and public sector agencies and public authorities were sought in order to arrive at a better understanding of the need for local race equality work in Warwickshire and how it might best be provided.

Community groups

- ES20 Community groups in Nuneaton and Bedworth were very dissatisfied with the lack of race equality provision. In Leamington and Warwick opinion was divided over its quality, while in Rugby there was some sense of satisfaction. Community groups felt that local race equality activity should prioritise raising public awareness about race equality and providing support for victims of harassment.
- ES21 Three quarters of respondents were unequivocally in favour of race equality organisations taking on a broader equality remit. Community groups in Nuneaton and Bedworth wanted race equality services in Nuneaton as well as Bedworth, groups in Rugby wanted them in Rugby and, groups in Warwick and Leamington wanted them in Warwick and Leamington.
- ES22 Among community groups as a whole, the preference was for three smaller race equality organisation to serve respectively Nuneaton and Bedworth, (and possible North Warwickshire), Rugby, and Warwick and Stafford. Public consultation, overall, generated little enthusiasm for any other solution.
- ES23 In regard to funding, most community groups expect the County and District authorities to fund local authority work. Governance of race equality organisation is seen very much as a matter for representatives of local communities, although representation from funding bodies and voluntary sector agencies would be also considered.

Voluntary sector agencies

- ES24 Among voluntary sector agencies, a third said that they supported the development of local race equality service, while the rest were neither for nor against, or did not complete the question. The voluntary sector prioritised support for victims of racial harassment, raising public awareness about race equality and casework and complainant aid.
- ES25 A majority thought that race equality work in Warwickshire should broaden its remit to embrace other dimensions of inequality. CVSs and CABs, in particular, understood the need to provide local services at all essential locations across the county, possibly through outreach or peripatetic work.
- ES26 A majority was in favour of a single larger county-wide race equality organisation with local outreach facilities or offices. Recommendations for inclusion on the executive committee or board of a race equality council were broadly in line with those of community groups except that the voluntary sector agreed unanimously that local voluntary agencies should be represented.

Public authorities

- ES27 Three quarters of public authority respondents prioritised the need to meet the specific race equality duties under the Race Relations Act as the most important issue their organisation faced in relation to race and other inequalities, although a second choice was the improvement of public services to make them more relevant and sensitive. A third of respondents said it would consider contacting a local race equality council for specialist race equality knowledge, skills and expertise.
- ES28 Two local councils (excluding the County Council) were currently providing funds to race equality councils in Warwickshire.
- ES29 Public authorities expected help from local race equality organisations with their race equality duties and prioritised this function, although they also recognised the need for support for victims of harassment and for raising public awareness.
- ES30 All public authorities, without exception, agreed that race equality work should take on a broader equality remit. Generally public authorities based in a particular district wanted race equality services to be provided in their locality. (Thus a public authority based in Stratford wanted race equality services in Stratford District.) Various suggestions, however, were made as to how, given the geographical spread of the county, local race equality services might be organised and delivered to ensure maximum community access.
- ES31 In regard to how local race equality work in Warwickshire should be organised, public authorities opted unanimously for a single county-wide organisation with local outreach facilities.
- ES32 A third of public authorities passed no comment on questions about how race equality work should be funded and by which agency. No public authority committed itself to providing funding and at least two made clear it was highly unlikely that they would provide funding to the new body.
- ES33 Most public authorities recognised the importance of local communities being involved in the governance of local race equality work, but also saw their own organisations as playing a central role.
- ES34 When asked about the role of the Local Strategic Partnership, a quarter of public authorities thought it should be represented but most, while agreeing there should be practical cooperation and joined-up working with the LSP, did not think it should be directly involved.
- ES35 Face-to-face interviews were held with Councillor Martin Brassington from the County Council, officers of North Warwickshire Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Warwick District Council, and North Warwickshire Primary Care Trust. Responses varied but there was an inclination towards embracing a broader equality remit and a county-wide solution.

Criteria for successful local race equality work

- ES36 Common reasons for the failure of local race equality organisations have been political or communal factionalism within the executive or between race equality council members, poor leadership and management, poor staff performance, and lack of strategic direction or awareness.
- ES37 Conversely, successful race equality organisations show a unity of purpose, strong leadership and management, demonstrate a high level of achievement and play a strategic role in local affairs. A successful local race equality organisation has to have sufficient internal resources and competences to operate in a constantly changing social, political, economic, legal and technical environment. Some of those resources and competences will be particular to race equality organisations. Others, however, will be common requirements for most voluntary sector service providers.
- ES38 Eleven factors critical to the success of local race equality work are: clarity of vision, strategic involvement, community embeddedness, autonomy, service range, local presence and provision, critical mass, skill sufficiency, financial viability, management expertise, and attractive staff conditions.
- ES39 A local REC must set out clearly its aims and objects. RECs founder because their staff are uncertain about what they are supposed to be doing, which tasks have to be prioritised, and for what purpose.
- ES40 A local REC has to be aware of the changing external, social, political, economic, legal and technical environment that is likely to affect its local operation and future development. RECs that fail to understand the power structures in which they operate or the changing social climate, rapidly become isolated and irrelevant.
- ES41 A REC must have close links with the communities it has been set up to serve. These communities should not be vaguely stated but sharply defined and targeted in line with the need for clarity of organisational vision. The support of communities is difficult to achieve and sustain, and the success of both Rugby REC and Warwick District REC in surviving on the basis of their respective communities' support over many years should not be underestimated or undermined.
- ES42 Race equality organisations need to have sufficient freedom, autonomy and critical space to speak out against what they may judge to be unfairness in the operation of the public services. Autonomy of this kind and the perception of its existence must remain at the heart of local race equality work.
- ES43 RECs may have difficulty in providing a sufficient range of services to satisfy local demands, but failure to do so may jeopardise service level agreements and funding. Local communities want race equality councils to provide complainant aid and support. Local authorities expect help with their race equality schemes.

- ES44 In recognition that three of the local authorities of Warwickshire have no local race equality service, the need for local service provision and a local race equality presence is apparent. New channels of delivery to dispersed populations may have to be explored in rural areas.
- ES45 RECs have to be of a sufficient size to be able to undertake the jobs expected of them. It has long been realised that the old singleton REC, where one race equality officer was expected to do everything, is not a viable option. The achievement of critical mass is essential to a REC's success, and that in turn is dependent on income sufficient to pay for a larger complement of suitably-qualified staff.
- ES46 RECs need to achieve financial viability and stability. In this uncertain financial climate, a REC will be strongest when it attracts funding from a multiplicity of sources.
- ES47 Staffing competences are necessary to deliver the diverse range of REC services. The fewer the staff, the greater the range of expertise required of them and the fewer the chances of finding any one sufficiently multi-skilled. Staff must operate in a social context in which public policy development and community regeneration are becoming increasingly specialised and sophisticated.
- ES48 Finally, RECs have to employ competent managers with skills of entrepreneurship and financial management, human resource management, project management and diversity management. To attract able staff, RECs must offer attractive staff conditions, not least in a context in which conditions of service have deteriorated in recent years.

Models for local race equality work in Warwickshire and their evaluation

- ES49 Research and fieldwork led early on to the emergence of four possible models for developing county-wide race equality work, which have since proved useful in framing subsequent consultation. The four models are set out in brief below but should be examined in the light of the fuller description in the text of the report.

Model 1: Extension of existing local organisations

- ES50 Rugby REC would continue to operate in Rugby but would extend its services to North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth. Warwick District REC would continue to operate in Warwick District but extend its services to Stratford-on-Avon.
- ES51 The strength of the existing RECs is their community embeddedness, the loyalty of their existing members and the continuity of tradition they represent. Unfortunately, these very strengths make it more difficult for them convincingly to operate services elsewhere in the county, as they are identified closely with the communities they currently serve. While it is envisaged that

the existing RECs would attract more resources if their services were extended to cover other areas, it is still unlikely that they would be able in any meaningful sense to specialise, undertake research, or engage in innovative development projects. They are unlikely to develop critical mass and the synergy that can accompany it.

Model 2: Three-fold decentralised federation

ES52 Rugby REC would retain its operation in Rugby Borough. Warwickshire District REC would continue to operate in Warwick District but extend its services to Stratford-on-Avon District. A new REC would be set up for Nuneaton and Bedworth, and North Warwickshire. A county-wide strategic equality promotion coordinating committee would ensure a joint approach.

ES53 The strength of this model (except perhaps in regard to Stratford-on-Avon) is that it retains existing levels of community involvement in Rugby and Leamington, and attempts to emulate them for North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth. The proposal avoids the parochial opposition that might be generated by the Rugby REC or Warwickshire District REC ‘take-over’ implied by Model 1. The issues of critical mass and financial viability are not addressed and, indeed, are probably made worse by the three-fold model. Small organisations of the kind envisaged here cannot afford the salaries that are likely to attract or retain high-calibre managers or staff.

Model 3: Bipolar north/south division

ES54 Two separate autonomous bodies, one for the north (North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, and Rugby) and one for the south (Warwick District and Stratford-on-Avon) would be set up, each registered as a charity and company.

ES55 These would be new autonomous bodies allowing organisational aims and objects to be considered afresh. The new organisations would have boards of directors drawn two thirds from local communities and one third from public authorities, thus ensuring effective strategic involvement and positioning. It would be possible to retain existing RECs as advisory bodies but the new structures are likely to render them obsolete. There would be greater critical mass and financial viability allowing more possibilities for specialisation and the attraction and retention of management and staffing expertise.

Model 4: Single all-Warwickshire body

ES56 Existing RECs would lose their status as employees, but remain as advisory bodies. New equality forums would be created in these boroughs currently without local race equality services, and a new single independent county-wide organisation set-up, employing staff and liaising closely with race equality and equality forums.

ES57 The new organisation would have a board of directors, drawn from across the county, two thirds from local communities, and one third from public

authorities. A county-wide selection process should enable the new organisation to gain a grip on the strategic context and to position itself to maximum effect. To strengthen community involvement, the old RECs would continue as advisory bodies and, in other areas, race equality or equality committees would be set up with the same purpose. Employees of the new body would devote some of their time to developing and sustaining the four or five autonomous race equality, or equality, councils or forums. Larger size should permit the organisation to offer a wider service range, achieve critical mass and financial viability, enable skill specialisation and attract new management and staff expertise.

ES58 The four models describe different ways in which local race equality services might be delivered across the county as a whole. They indicate different possible means of delivery but leave unanswered the question of how the model that is eventually chosen is to be practically installed.

Recommendations

ES59 Twenty recommendations are provided, including that of considering the proposed models for race equality work in Warwickshire and assessing their respective strengths and weaknesses against the eleven critical success factors (explained above). It is important for stakeholders to define very clearly and agree what exactly they expect any new local race equality structure to deliver.

Introduction: the project brief

The research underpinning this report was instigated by Warwickshire County Council and other Commissioning Partners as a result of concern about the current level of race equality provision in the county of Warwickshire. Black and minority ethnic communities in areas of the county currently without local race equality facilities, together with key public service providers, sought to explore ways of improving access to existing and potential services. The TMP project was required to develop proposals for a race equality structure that would:

- improve the services offered to meet black and minority ethnic community need.
- assist public authorities in discharging their race equality duties under the Race relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- support local authorities in achieving the Generic Equalities standard.
- link with other strategic initiatives across the county, in particular the Local Strategic Partnerships.

The report, therefore, fulfils the Commissioning Partners' specifications by:

- setting out the response of the black and minority ethnic communities in Warwickshire to a consultation exercise on access to race quality services, community capacity and support for victims of discrimination.
- presenting the views of public authorities in the county on the support they need to meet their race equality duties and the equality standard, and on their preferred approach to local race equality services and structures.
- producing and evaluating options for re-engineering race equality activities to improve services to black and minority ethnic communities and public authorities.

In addition to the requirements of the specification, the report provides a detailed account of current local race equality arrangements in the county and comparatively across the region, an analysis of the internal resources and competences required by a modern locally-based race equality organisation, and a list of the main external environmental factors which such an organisation would need to take into account if it were to perform successfully.

Chapter one

Current race equality arrangements in Warwickshire and how they compare with the rest of the West Midlands: internal resources

Local race equality service coverage in Warwickshire

- 1.1 The County of Warwickshire is divided into five districts: North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick. North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth in the north are joined by the borough of Rugby in the east to Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon in the south. At the centre and to the west, separating north from south Warwickshire, are the City of Coventry and the Borough of Solihull. Warwickshire county is bounded to the north by Staffordshire and Leicestershire, to the east by Northamptonshire, to the south by Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire, and to the west by Birmingham, Solihull, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.
- 1.2 The black and minority ethnic population of the region is concentrated in the urban areas and is distributed across the county as shown in Table 1. Figures for Coventry and Solihull are given to provide the more complete demographic picture on which the political boundaries are superimposed.

TABLE 1					
Location	Total	White		Minority ethnic	
		No.	No.	%	No.
Warwickshire (county of)	505,860	483,501	95.58	22,359	4.42
Districts of Warwickshire:					
North Warwickshire	61,859	61,018	98.64	841	1.36
Nuneaton and Bedworth	119,132	113,270	95.08	5,861	4.92
Rugby	87,454	82,181	93.97	5,273	6.03
Stratford-on-Avon	111,484	110,035	98.70	1,449	1.30
Warwick	125,931	117,015	92.92	8,916	7.08
Coventry	300,848	252,652	83.98	48,196	16.02
Solihull	199,517	188,723	94.59	10,794	5.41

Source: Census 2001

- 1.3 The size of the visible minority ethnic population is only one of the issues bearing on the need for local race equality work. There is a growing

awareness of the existence in small towns and rural villages of rural racism and of the increased vulnerability of minorities living in isolation.

- 1.4 High levels of antipathy are also shown towards gypsies and travellers. Table 2 shows the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister count for Warwickshire of gypsy caravans and Table 3, the count of gypsy families. There were just over 300 gypsy caravans located in Warwickshire in July 2003 and an estimated 174 families. A third was camped on unauthorised sites. Few, if any, race equality councils in the West Midlands have expertise in relation to gypsies and travellers, or provide services for them, or for agencies dealing with them.

TABLE 2					
Count of gypsy caravans on 16 July 2003: last five counts					
Location	Date	Total	Unauthorised encampments	Authorised sites: council	Authorised sites: private
Warwickshire (county of)	Jul-03	305	101	76	128
	Jan-03	298	120	88	90
	Jul-02	280	85	90	105
	Jan-02	303	90	94	119
	Jul-01	273	69	88	116
North Warwickshire	Jul-03	12	0	12	0
	Jan-03	12	0	12	0
	Jul-02	13	0	13	0
	Jan-02	18	0	18	0
	Jul-01	13	0	13	0
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Jul-03	74	40	32	2
	Jan-03	99	5	42	2
	Jul-02	88	51	33	4
	Jan-02	86	49	34	3
	Jul-01	69	35	31	3
Rugby	Jul-03	125	35	0	90
	Jan-03	97	9	0	88
	Jul-02	67	2	0	65
	Jan-02	105	19	0	86
	Jul-01	78	1	0	77
Stratford-on-Avon	Jul-03	90	22	32	36
	Jan-03	90	56	34	0
	Jul-02	112	32	44	36
	Jan-02	94	22	42	30
	Jul-01	112	32	44	36
Warwick	Jul-03	4	4	0	0
	Jan-03	0	0	0	0
	Jul-02	0	0	0	0
	Jan-02	0	0	0	0
	Jul-01	1	1	0	0
Coventry	Jul-03	20	5	0	16
	Jan-03	24	9	0	15
	Jul-02	18	2	0	16
	Jan-02	20	4	0	16
	Jul-01	11	0	0	11
Solihull	Jul-03	24	6	0	18
	Jan-03	36	4	0	32
	Jul-02	43	6	0	37
	Jan-02	50	11	0	39
	Jul-01	53	11	0	42

Source: ODPM

TABLE 3					
Count of gypsy families on 16 July 2003: last five counts					
Location	Date	Total	Unauthorised encampments	Authorised sites: council	Authorised sites: private
Warwickshire (county of)	Jul-03	174	48	55	71
	Jan-03	149	49	60	40
	Jul-02	148	37	54	57
	Jan-02	134	26	60	48
	Jul-01	159	41	54	64
North Warwickshire	Jul-03	12	0	12	0
	Jan-03	12	0	12	0
	Jul-02	13	0	13	0
	Jan-02	15	0	15	0
	Jul-01	10	0	10	0
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Jul-03	41	22	18	1
	Jan-03	46	24	21	1
	Jul-02	31	15	14	2
	Jan-02	20	0	16	2
	Jul-01	38	19	17	2
Rugby	Jul-03	55	10	0	45
	Jan-03	41	2	0	39
	Jul-02	36	2	0	34
	Jan-02	51	14	0	37
	Jul-01	42	1	0	41
Stratford-on-Avon	Jul-03	62	12	25	25
	Jan-03	50	23	27	0
	Jul-02	68	20	27	21
	Jan-02	48	12	27	9
	Jul-01	68	20	27	21
Warwick	Jul-03	4	4	0	0
	Jan-03	0	0	0	0
	Jul-02	0	0	0	0
	Jan-02	0	0	0	0
	Jul-01	1	1	0	0
Coventry	Jul-03	18	4	0	16
	Jan-03	16	8	0	15
	Jul-02	12	2	0	16
	Jan-02	13	3	0	16
	Jul-01	7	0	0	11
Solihull	Jul-03	20	2	0	18
	Jan-03	1	1	0	0
	Jul-02	30	2	0	28
	Jan-02	24	2	0	22
	Jul-01	24	2	0	22

Source: ODPM

- 1.5 In Warwickshire, the areas with the greatest numbers of people from ethnic minorities are Warwick and Leamington Spa with 8,916 (7%), Nuneaton and Bedworth with 5,861 (5%) and Rugby with 5,273 (6%). By way of contrast, only 1.4% of the people of North Warwickshire and 1.3% of Stratford-on-Avon are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 1.6 There are currently two race equality councils (RECs) in Warwickshire. Rugby Race Equality Council has its office in Rugby and serves the area in the east of the county administered by Rugby Council. Warwick District Race Equality Council has its office in Leamington Spa and serves the south central area, administered by Warwick District Council. The Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, with a larger minority ethnic population than Rugby, has no local race equality council, nor does the neighbouring borough of North Warwickshire. Neither is there a local race equality service in Stratford-on-Avon in the south.
- 1.7 When this report was drafted in March 2004, the race equality council in Coventry had closed. Individual complainants from North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth could no longer seek advice and guidance from this quarter as had occasionally occurred in the past.
- 1.8 Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council on Warwickshire's western flank has never supported a race equality council, despite having a minority ethnic population larger numerically (10,794) than Telford and Wrekin (8,926) and larger proportionately (5.41%) than Stoke-on-Trent (5.21%) and Worcestershire (2.45%) that do (support a race equality council).
- 1.9 Apart from the race equality services provided in Warwickshire by the race equality councils in Rugby and Leamington Spa, the County and four District Councils (excluding Rugby) also support two full-time posts, originally entitled 'racial harassment posts', now referred to as 'race equality support workers'. The worker in the north splits his time evenly between North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth and the worker in the south between Warwick District and Stratford-on-Avon.
- 1.10 The County and Districts also employ, in-house, various policy and equalities officers, with responsibility for aspects of equality work within the public services and local Warwickshire communities.
- 1.11 With the exception of Coventry, Walsall and Wolverhampton (all of which are engaged in a process of reviewing their local race equality provision following the closure, for a variety of reasons, of previous voluntary and community sector race equality organisations), the only areas of the West Midlands not currently served by a local race equality agency are North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. There are, however, other districts of the West Midlands, all in predominantly rural areas, which make no financial contribution to county-wide provision. As a consequence, race equality services in those areas are often rudimentary or non-existent.

- 1.12 It should also be pointed out that not all local race equality organisations receive financial support from the CRE which, since its adoption of a new funding methodology ('Getting Results'), funds councils annually on the basis of an application to deliver a set of outcomes that support CRE national priorities. On the basis of the quality of their applications, some RECs stand to gain financially, others to lose their grants in whole or in part. This particular funding methodology introduces a greater degree of instability into the funding process and, when the 2004-5 grant-making process is completed, may further undermine the established regional network of local race equality services. Currently, in the West Midlands region, Herefordshire Race Equality Partnership is wholly funded by Herefordshire Unitary Authority and receives no grant aid from the CRE.
- 1.13 Since 1998, the region's race equality councils and partnerships have met as a West Midlands Race Equality Forum. Both Rugby Race Equality Council and Warwick District Race Equality Council were founding members of the regional forum and have actively participated in its work ever since.
- 1.14 With money from the Community Fund, the Forum set up a development arm, employing three workers, to build the capacity of race equality services in the West Midlands. The regional organisation, still largely funded by the Community Fund, but now also receiving a small CRE grant, is known as Race Equality West Midlands (REWM). One of its aims is to help plug the gaps in the region-wide service.
- 1.15 REWM also has plans, subject to the availability of funding, to develop a region-wide employment tribunal representation service for complainants of racial discrimination. Local race equality councils currently have difficulty in finding an expert agency to which to refer on complainants who approach them.

The range of REC/REP services on offer in Warwickshire

- 1.16 RECs are increasingly classified as organisations whose primary purpose is to provide a service, in their case, a race equality service. They are seen as forming part of the voluntary sector which, together with the statutory public services, provide a wide range of facilities to the general public, usually free and on the basis of need, rather than on the ability to pay.
- 1.17 There is, nevertheless, a sense in which RECs have been forced to emphasise their role as service providers, partly to secure funding and charitable status, and partly because another historically significant function that they perform is taken for granted, ignored, or seen as troublesome.
- 1.18 RECs were never originally conceived as direct providers of services, but as community-expressive forums to enable spokespersons for newly arrived minority ethnic groups, and those progressive elements in the population who were concerned to ensure such groups were fairly treated, to articulate, aggregate and advance the collective community interest. The aim was to

improve the treatment of ethnic minorities by informing and educating the general public and bringing political pressure to bear on firms and public service providers which discriminated or contributed to the disadvantage of minority individuals.

- 1.19 Councils for Racial Harmony or Community Relations Councils were *councils*, in the sense that they deliberated about, and spoke out in support of improving ethnic and race relations, and formed a kind of alternative local parliament on behalf of what were then the most politically-marginalised sections of the community. In the context of the Race Relations Act 1976 and the growing reliance on government and local authority funding sources, RECs have increasingly asserted their functions as service providers while downplaying their community-expressive political role.
- 1.20 The organisational shape of RECs, however, continues to reflect their historical and continuing community-expressive dimension. There is a diverse membership of organisations, predominantly local minority ethnic associations. An executive committee, from 18 to 25 strong, provides governance for much smaller numbers of paid staff. REC directors spend a great deal of their time arranging and servicing council executive and sub-committee meeting, as well as managing service delivery. Often, under the heading of raising public awareness of racial issues, the REC executive continues to involve itself with local (non-party) political issues, such as condemning and opposing an MP's racial innuendo or a march by a racist party.
- 1.21 While this community-expressive dimension is crucial to an understanding of RECs' structure and work, it plays little part in the current official assessment of the usefulness of their contribution to local race relations and the community. Rightly or wrongly, RECs are judged on the services they provide, not on the contribution they make to participatory politics. With this in mind, the rest of this section focuses on Warwickshire RECs' contribution to local service provision.
- 1.22 The information in this section is drawn from an audit of race equality provision undertaken in the summer of 2003. Although much of the audit is highly pertinent to this research project, a few details may be out of date.
- 1.23 All race equality councils and partnerships relate in some way the description of their service to the typology originally set out in the 1990 CRE model constitution. All organisations are engaged with some aspect, or some interpretation, of complainant aid, community development, policy development, or public awareness raising.
- 1.24 In 2003, Rugby Race Equality Council focussed on policy development, claiming to provide advice and support to agencies such as the police and Primary Care Trust. The officer participated in seminars held, for example, for headteachers. The REC undertook local monitoring of race relations and service provision and was currently assessing public authority race equality schemes. It also provided a local drop-in centre. The Rugby REC believed it

should also be undertaking discrimination casework and expanding its training programme in race awareness for schools, but currently had not the resources to do so.

- 1.25 Warwick District Race Equality Council provided the following summary of its services: complainant aid work, racial harassment casework, training and consultancy on race equality, capacity-building black and minority ethnic groups, community development, involvement in regeneration work, campaigning, information and advice, and a website database. It aspired to offering a more comprehensive complainant aid service and to employing specialist dedicated trainers and researchers. It also wanted to appoint an officer to work specifically with women and young people.
- 1.26 It was evident that the RECs had no shortage of ideas as to what local race equality services were needed. From their point of view, the service range was truncated merely by the limited resources available to do the job. This feeling of perpetually having to battle against the (funding) odds to provide a very necessary service for the ultimate benefit of the most vulnerable sections of the community permeates the thinking of many race equality council employees.
- 1.27 Across the region as a whole, the constraints on available resources have led to a degree of specialisation in the services RECs provided, or wished to prioritise or develop. It is possible to distinguish four main service types, styles or approaches, namely:
- Type 1: Professional support bureau for complainants of racial discrimination or victims of racial harassment and violence.
 - Type 2: Consultancy and training service for public authorities or voluntary agencies on race equality and equality of opportunity policy. (Alternatively, pressure group for improving services to black and minority ethnic communities.)
 - Type 3: Community development agency seeking to empower and/or build the capacity of local black and minority ethnic groups and communities.
 - Type 4: Public awareness and education service (often delivered in partnership with local schools, colleges, or youth service). (In practice, Type 4 is not found separately but in combination with any of the other three.)
- 1.28 The two RECs in Warwickshire cannot be aptly described by one of these types: they both try, or aspire, to be multi-purpose. But it is clear from the description above that Rugby REC tends towards Type 2, a consultancy and training service for public authorities and Type 4, a public awareness and education service, whereas Warwick REC aspires to a combination of Type 1, a professional support bureau for complainants of racial discrimination or victims of racial harassment with Type 3, a community development agency dedicated to empowering black and minority ethnic communities. It is worth

noting, therefore, that this divergence of approach implies that the people of Rugby are probably receiving a different kind of race equality service than the people in Warwick.

- 1.29 There was unanimity in the RECs as to how their services might be improved. Both thought it essential to establish a more secure, sustainable and long-term funding base (which also involved receiving core funding). They also felt the need to employ a more specialist, professional and highly-trained staff and/or to spend more on staff development of existing staff.

Performance monitoring of race equality work

- 1.30 Recurring complaints levelled at existing race equality councils are that the services they offer are poor, inadequate or inconsistent, or that they do not give value for money. In responding to this kind of criticism without prejudice as to its legitimacy, the CRE in partnership with local RECs has over the last three years introduced a system of quality assurance known as 'the core standards'. Both Rugby and Warwick RECs have achieved full compliance with the CRE core standards, which is a condition of receiving CRE grant aid. In addition, Warwick REC has gained the Community Legal Service quality mark standard for giving general legal advice and assistance.
- 1.31 In addition to the core standards, which comprehensively cover issues such as human resource procedures, financial regulations, health and safety, insurance and other legal requirements, most RECs also have systems in place to monitor their performance. Rugby and Warwick RECs, for example, work to agreed annual work programmes, both for the organisation as a whole and for individual employees. They also conduct an annual work review.
- 1.32 The review of organisational achievement of intended outcomes is not yet firmly linked to staff appraisal, but this approach is in the process of being put into place. Both RECs have a business plan which attempts to link race equality outcomes with financial management, although this is seen to be a difficult exercise as much of funding is offered only on an annual basis.

Race equality council financial resources

- 1.33 Rugby REC reported that its income for the financial year 2003-04 amounted to £64,000, consisting of £30,000 from the CRE, £28,000 from Warwickshire County Council and £6,000 from Rugby Borough Council. It was also supported by the Church of England by means of a peppercorn rent for office accommodation.
- 1.34 Warwick District REC reported that its income for the financial year 2003-04 amounted to £330,000, consisting of £32,000 from the CRE, £32,000 from

Warwickshire County Council, £18,000 from Warwick District Council, £113,000 from the Community Fund, and a £135,000 SRB5 grant. (This figure excludes CRE pension payments but includes payment in kind for rent and administrative support.)

- 1.35 Audited figures may be a little different as the figures above are rounded and take no account of funding allocated in the financial year remaining after these estimates were made. More exact figures can be established after publication of the annual audited accounts.
- 1.36 The figures, for both Rugby REC and Warwick District REC can be compared with REWM baseline data for West Midlands region RECs/REPs as a whole. The average annual income for RECs in the West Midlands stands at £300,000, putting Rugby REC at £64,000, well below the average, and Warwick District REC at £330,000, marginally above.
- 1.37 The funding for West Midlands RECs/REPs in 2003-04 came from seven sources: the Commission for Racial Equality, local councils, other public authorities, government regeneration initiatives, government regeneration initiatives, the Community Fund, RECs/REPs' own income generation (lettings, sales of services, such as training) and other. The proportion of income obtained from these sources by Warwickshire RECs can be compared with the averages for the region as a whole as set out in Table 4.

TABLE 4				
Sources of REC income 2003-04: West Midlands average compared with Warwickshire RECs				
Income source	West Midlands average	Rugby REC	Warwick REC	Warwickshire average
Commission for Racial Equality	11%	47%	10%	16%
local councils	22%	53%	15%	21%
other public authorities	7%	-	-	-
government regeneration initiatives (eg. SRB, NRF, NSF)	25%	-	41%	34%
Community Fund	30%	-	34%	29%
RECs/REPs own income generation	1%	-	-	-
other	4%	-	-	-
	100%	100%	100%	100%

- 1.38 West Midlands figures show that the largest single source of funding for RECs/REPs is the Community Fund at 30% (nearly a third) of total income, followed by government regeneration grants at 25% (a quarter). A further third of REC/REP income was provided by the traditional funding partnership understanding between the Commission for Racial Equality and the local authority (in a ratio CRE to LA of 1:2).
- 1.39 Warwick District REC, in 2003-04 receiving income from the CRE, local councils, SRB5, and the Community Fund, shares a funding source pattern in common with other RECs/REPs in the region. Rugby REC, however, has a much older profile of dependency on the original CRE and local authority funding partners, having failed to tap regeneration or community funds.
- 1.40 Partly as a result of the relative success in funding terms of Warwick District REC, Warwickshire as a whole has a similar local race equality funding source profile to that of the rest of the region. This, however, is unusual for largely rural counties which have difficulty in tapping into major government regeneration funds, such as NRF.
- 1.41 The other problem encountered by RECs, currently in receipt of Community Fund grants, is that the grants are time-limited to three years, with the possibility of extension for a further three. Some RECs (although not Warwick) are already drawing on their second three-year tranche, with little possibility of further funding from this source.
- 1.42 The proportion of CRE funding has steadily declined over recent years, and it is quite likely that this trend will continue. Besides, the average for Warwickshire RECs is above that for the region as a whole. The core funding made available through the local authorities is crucial to the survival and success of local race equality work. The actual amount available from this quarter could increase if non-contributing authorities could be persuaded to buy into a local service.
- 1.43 RECs/REPs have to spend more and more of their time on the search for funding. Nearly all successful RECs/REPs (Warwick included) have grown as a result of the exercise of entrepreneurial skills by their directors. But the question of the sustainability of the income thus generated still gives great cause for concern. If directors do not possess these elementary business skills, the REC and its services run the danger of collapse.
- 1.44 REC directors and their governing boards find themselves torn between the traditional ethos of a charitable public service responding to need and the recognition that they must begin to operate as a surplus-generating business venture, undertaking only economically-viable projects and causes. For example, directors have long recognised the demand for a complainant aid service provided free for victims of discrimination, but cannot see how such a resource-hungry service can be afforded.
- 1.45 In drawing up any new business plan for race equality work in Warwickshire, it will be essential to decide on what local services should be offered, on how

they should be paid for, and on what basis. Would any new body, for example, be expected to tender along with others for contracts to deliver services?

Race equality council staffing resources and conditions

- 1.46 As at July 2003, Rugby REC employed two staff, while Warwick District REC employed ten, roughly what might have been expected given their respective budgets, most of which are spent on staff salaries. The mean staffing complement for West Midland RECs at the time was just in excess of eight, with 80% of RECs employing between seven and fifteen staff. (This calculation was arrived at by omitting North Staffordshire REC, which is exceptional, having 48 persons in post). Rugby REC is one of the few remaining 'singleton' race equality councils, with an allocation of just one dedicated race equality officer.
- 1.47 Of the 12 staff employed by Warwickshire RECs, eight, or two thirds, were on fixed-term contracts of three years or less. This reflects the regional pattern, where two thirds of REC staff are working to fixed term contracts. A majority of staff across the region is engaged in community projects mounted on the basis of time-limited regeneration or Community Fund grants. But the situation has been exacerbated by the CRE's decision to award grants on an annual basis for specific outcomes, with no guarantee of maintaining levels year on year.
- 1.48 Neither race equality council chief officer believed that the current remuneration or staff conditions were sufficient to attract and retain competent, high calibre staff. Particularly in relation to the short-term nature of the contract, they thought that job insecurity hindered commitment and team work and resulted in high turnover, with staff leaving before they could acquire the training and skills to become effective on the job. The inability to attract, retain and train staff not only affected REC/REP competence and achievement but also undermined the perception and reputation of local race equality work and organisations generally.
- 1.49 In regard to staff remuneration across the region as a whole, directors' pay ranges from £25,000 to £35,000 (with the director's post for Race Equality Sandwell recently advertised at £35,000 - £45,000). This figure will vary according to the size or income of the REC/REP and/or the number of projects managed.
- 1.50 Most race equality officers and project workers appear to be paid from £19,000 to £24,000 for a 37 hour week. Pay and conditions for clerical grades correspond closely with similar grades in local authorities.
- 1.51 In addition to job insecurity, the conditions of staff working for RECs/REPs have recently deteriorated in respect of pensions. The CRE/REC pension scheme to which the CRE contributed and REC directors and race equality officers belonged, ceased to admit new members in 2002 and is awaiting a

decision as to whether it is to be frozen or wound up. By 2003, only 4.5% of REC/REP employees in the West Midlands were members of the CRE/REC pension scheme, just one in Warwickshire. Some REC/REP employees have managed to access the Local Authority Pension Scheme, but there are many instances where their requests for admission have been rejected. Across the region, most REC/REP employees are in personal pension schemes, with the employer contribution varying between 5% and 10%, the mode at 5%.

- 1.52 In any new proposal for race equality organisation in Warwickshire, consideration will have to be given to staff conditions, particularly in regard to security of employment and pension arrangements. The present multiplicity of arrangements across the sector and region is not in the best interests of staff or the services on offer.

The governance of Warwickshire race equality councils

- 1.53 At the time of audit, Rugby REC was registered as a charity but not as a company. Warwick District REC was both a registered charity and a registered company. The constitutions of both organisations had been recently updated, apparently to enable them to meet registration requirements.
- 1.54 The governance of both organisations is still largely based on the 1990 CRE model constitution for race equality councils, which envisaged them as membership organisations largely of voluntary associations drawn from the area of benefit, coming together to elect an executive committee with honorary officers, to which any paid senior member of staff answers for themselves and their staff. Rugby REC was considering making changes to its constitution to enable it to accommodate the broader equality agenda. Warwick District REC wanted to explore ways of increasing representation and participation in decision-making of young people.
- 1.55 In regard to offering a Warwickshire county-wide service, both existing RECs were limited by their constitution to working for their existing geographical areas of benefit from which their members and executive committee were largely drawn (although there was some scope for cooptation from elsewhere). While short-term interim arrangements could probably be made, in the longer term, any expansion of RECs' coverage to other districts of Warwickshire would necessitate constitutional change in regard to their areas of benefit and the composition of, and eligibility for, their executive committees.
- 1.56 Governance of the two RECs remains in keeping with the 1990 CRE model constitution for RECs. They are membership organisations, to which voluntary associations and individuals can subscribe, providing they share the organisation's objects. Most RECs in the West Midlands continue to follow this model, although in metropolitan areas, where RECs have closed, as in Birmingham, Sandwell and Walsall, they have been replaced with organisations based on 'partnership'.
- 1.57 The partnership model of local race equality work is an attempt to relate public authority service improvement for black and ethnic minorities to community

regeneration, development and empowerment initiatives. The race equality partnership is aimed at forming an inclusive bridge between service providers and users, assisting or strengthening other government initiatives with similar aims such as the Local Strategic Partnership or the Community Empowerment Network.

- 1.58 Whereas traditional REC governance is undertaken largely by representatives of community associations, partnerships have been self-consciously set up to give proportionate representation to public authorities and voluntary agencies, as well as local community groups. Recent developments include efforts to include representation from the private sector, but it is too soon to know whether these initiatives will be successful.
- 1.59 Traditionalists stress the importance of a race equality council's community-expressive base and critical independence from public authorities that are meant to respond to local communities' needs, rather than to determine them. Advocates of partnership claim that we all share an interest in improved services and that a race equality partnership is the best way of achieving this goal.
- 1.60 The focus on public service improvement, however, may lead to a neglect of casework with individuals, victim support, and critical community involvement with and advocacy for neglected groups (who may be highly critical of public authority partners). A more detailed account of West Midlands partnership arrangements can be found at appendix A.

Warwickshire race equality councils: accommodation

- 1.61 Both Warwickshire RECs rent their accommodation. The office in Rugby is let by the church to the REC at a peppercorn rent. Warwick District REC's office at Hamilton Terrace, Leamington Spa, costs £10,000 a year, paid by way of a grant to the REC.
- 1.62 In the case of Rugby and of Warwick, the offices are in an appropriate central location. In relation to other parts of Warwickshire, however, such as Atherstone, Nuneaton, Bedworth, and Stratford-on-Avon, or remoter places, such as Shipston or Alcester, they would scarcely be considered as accessible. This is to state the obvious, but must be a consideration in relation to Warwickshire-wide service accessibility.
- 1.63 If RECs took on a broader equality brief for issues of disability and gender, further thought would have to be given to access for people with mobility difficulties. The Hamilton Terrace Office, for example, has no lift and is only accessible by two flights of stairs. Appointments for people with mobility difficulties have to be pre-planned and special arrangement made to conduct business on the ground floor or at home.

- 1.64 Neither the office in Rugby, nor the office in Leamington ideally meets the requirements of a modern equality service, and indeed both RECs describe their accommodation as average, rather than as good.

Warwickshire race equality councils on strategy

- 1.65 What do the Warwickshire RECs see to be their future approach to, and structure for, race equality work? When asked this question in July 2003, they gave the following answers.
- 1.66 Rugby REC felt the need to strengthen its partnership with the local council, the statutory and voluntary sectors and to move forward steadily to becoming a single equality body.
- 1.67 Warwick REC wanted to continue in its current form as a race equality council with an executive committee, but to extend its area of benefit to cover the whole of South Warwickshire. Given its present level of resources, it did not believe it had the capacity to cover more equality issues and would not want to do things unsuccessfully 'on the cheap'. It preferred an approach to generic equality through forming coalitions and empowering others in the community.
- 1.68 Subsequently, Arun Kang, Corporate Policy Advisor (Race Equality) at Warwickshire County Council, met with Mr Shera, Chair of Rugby REC, and Mr Dhesi, Chair of Warwick REC (with Anita Kumari, Director of Warwick) to discuss the future of race equality organisation in Warwickshire.
- 1.69 Both chairs preferred a north/south arrangement, believing that a county-wide arrangement would become more distant from local communities and would lead to a reduction in the amount of funding (with only one body making applications, and existing funders taking the opportunity the single body offered to reduce their current commitments).
- 1.70 To provide a service to the county as a whole, both Rugby and Warwick would have to alter their areas of benefit. Rugby REC could offer a local service in both Nuneaton and Bedworth, but any proposal would need to avoid the problems and perceptions that had occurred when attempts had been made to extend Rugby's remit in the past. Warwick REC would need to establish an outpost in Stratford.
- 1.71 The chairs saw the need to take into account CRE priorities in deciding what local services the north and south Warwickshire initiatives would offer. In the context of rural Warwickshire, it would also be sensible, in line with CRE thinking, to develop expertise in relation to traveller and gypsy communities.
- 1.72 Subsequently, Rugby REC provided written comments on the four models suggested for local race equality work in Warwickshire, endorsing model 1, the extension of existing local organisations. It believed that this approach, recognising and building on the existing well-established community structure, would guarantee continuity of service, and utilise existing experience and

resources. Other models might lead to major upheaval, disrupting and jeopardising services.

West Midland race equality directors on strategy

1.73 Across the West Midlands as a whole, West Midland race equality directors expressed a variety of views on future approaches to and structures to deliver race equality work in their localities:

- Structural arrangements do not deliver equality: people and actions do.
- Partnership working will be the key.
- Partnerships with public authorities and the voluntary sector, but especially the local council, need to be strengthened.
- The organisation must provide the bridge between local communities and public authorities (particularly in successful implementation of the Race Relations Act).
- There should be greater support for black and minority ethnic groups, but also involvement with disadvantaged white communities.
- The community cohesion agenda and insight involves a generic equalities approach and working across communities (to include poor white neighbourhoods).
- The REC should embrace generic equalities: specialists should be employed for each equality, starting with gender issues.
- There must be a shift from race equality to providing generic equalities, and to inventing local structures suitable for delivering generic equalities.
- The organisation's area of benefit should be expanded to provide a service for areas not yet covered.

1.74 There appeared to be significant consensus over the need to work across communities with both white and black groups, as well as to think creatively about how to go about generic equalities work. The role that RECs/REPs might play in improving public services to black and minority ethnic groups was also well recognised. RECs in Warwickshire shared this view.

1.75 When asked specifically whether their REC should now become an equality council (rather than just a race equality council), a clear majority in the region was in favour.

1.76 West Midlands directors were asked to list in order of priority the outcomes they considered were most essential to their organisation's long-term survival.

From the list provided, directors selected and prioritised the options as follows:

- 1st stable long-term funding. (Warwick's 1st)
- 2nd increased budget. (Rugby's 1st)
- 3rd working to empower black and minority ethnic groups.
- 4th extension of complainant aid and local services.
- 5th a dynamic, informed and participative executive.
- 6th a clear and recognised function and purpose.

1.77 There was widespread recognition that the lack of adequate stable long-term funding was adversely affecting the delivery of local race equality services, such as complainant aid. There was also an awareness that RECs/REPs had to clarify their purpose and redouble their efforts, with the support of dynamic executives.

Chapter Two

The changing face of local race equality: external factors

- 2.1 Chapter One dealt with some of the resources internal to Warwickshire RECs that might be used to deliver local race equality services to the county. Chapter Two examines some of the major external factors affecting contemporary race equality work and how they might need to be taken into account in any solution for Warwickshire. It is, of course, impossible to list the many different social phenomena that could by chance impact on race relations in the county, but the following are likely to be significant.

The MacPherson report and institutional racism

- 2.2 The MacPherson report (Home Office, February 1999) provided a definition of institutional racism with which to evaluate the evidence it had gathered in relation to the conduct of the police in the Stephen Lawrence case. The definition had a much wider application. Institutional racism was “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 amounts to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people”.
- 2.3 The inquiry accepted the CRE’s submission that institutional racism existed not only in the Metropolitan Police Service and other police services but in other organisations, as well. It urged institutions to examine their policies and outcomes to prevent them disadvantaging communities. Institutional racism needed to be first accepted and then addressed in partnership with members of the ethnic minorities.
- 2.4 The MacPherson report echoed and reinforced what most RECs had been saying for a long time, namely, that written equal opportunity policies are only a first step and need to be put into practice throughout an organisation, through clear line-management structures, proper supervision and appraisal, training for all staff, and effective disciplinary procedures.
- 2.5 The report not only prepared the ground for the subsequent Race Relations (Amendment) Act, but led to an increased willingness on the part of local authorities, the police and other public bodies to work with RECs and ethnic minority organisations on race equality policy matters, generally, and on racially-motivated crime, racial harassment and racist incidents, specifically.
- 2.6 RECs have augmented their work programmes in the light of the MacPherson report to focus on policy development with public sector bodies, including the police. West Midland RECs have, with the co-operation of the police, launched a number of initiatives to deal with racial harassment and racially-motivated crime.

- 2.7 But the persistence of racism within organisational sub-cultures, often in direct opposition to the official policy of a public authority, is a powerful argument for retaining autonomous external scrutiny by members of community or user groups, channelling their collective voice through a local agency, such as a REC.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

- 2.8 The Act has placed new general and specific duties on public authorities to promote race equality. It requires listed public authorities, such as the Warwickshire County Council, the district councils, primary care trusts, and the police, to promote race equality in relation to their policy, service delivery and employment policies, by fulfilling general and specific duties. The general duty is to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- 2.9 Specific duties require many authorities to make special arrangements to help them meet their general duty. Public authorities must identify which functions are relevant to the duty, set priorities based on the relevance to race equality of the functions, assess how the relevant functions affect race equality and consider how policies might be changed where necessary, to meet the general duty.
- 2.10 Many public authorities are required to produce a Race Equality Scheme (RES) which must set out:
- the functions, policies and proposals that are relevant to the performance of their general duty to promote race equality.
 - their arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely adverse impact of their proposed policies.
 - their arrangements for monitoring their policies for any adverse impact on race equality.
 - their arrangements for publishing the results of any assessments, and the consultation and monitoring that they do to identify any adverse impact on race equality.
 - their arrangements for making sure that the public has access to the information and services they provide.
- 2.11 Most public authorities must also meet specific duties in relation to employment. They must monitor by racial group the number of staff in post and applications for employment, training and promotion. Where more than 150 full-time staff are employed, training, performance assessment procedures, and cases of grievance, discipline, and of staff leaving employment, must also be monitored. Monitoring outcomes have to be published on an annual basis.

- 2.12 The Commission for Racial Equality has the legal responsibility for enforcing the specific duty. Local race equality organisations have an important role to play in making the procedures effective. They can offer advice, guidance and constructive criticism to public authorities. They should expect to be consulted on the impact of authorities' functions and policies. They have a role in scrutinising and monitoring race equality schemes for any adverse impact on race equality.
- 2.13 They should not, however, be expected to write, legitimise, or blindly endorse a scheme for a local authority or to be castigated for publicly criticising its inadequacy. Local authorities, in particular, are increasingly turning to their local race equality councils as 'critical friends' to assist them with their race equality schemes, particularly in respect of consultation on likely adverse impact and the dissemination to communities of information on service access and improvement. Race equality council staff are also involved in public authority staff race equality training programmes.

The Crime and Disorder Act

- 2.14 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created a new offence of racially aggravated crime, occurring when, at the time of committing an offence, an offender demonstrates towards the victim of the offence hostility based on the victim's membership of a racial group. The introduction of these acts has encouraged RECs/REPs to develop new services for the victims of racial harassment, often in close partnership with the local police and other relevant agencies.

Proposed Equality and Human Rights Commission

- 2.15 Anti-discrimination legislation now regulates service provision and employment in relation to race, gender and disability. The Sex Discrimination Act, together with the Equal Pay Act, came into force in 1975, a year before the Race Relations Amendment Act, and both acts provided the model for the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, although it differs from them in three important respects. It allows a general defence of justification of direct discrimination, a positive duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people, and does not employ the concept of indirect discrimination.
- 2.16 Each act, however, brought into being a separate commission: the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission, and the Disability Rights Commission. Differences exist between all three acts and between the powers of the three commissions. Only the CRE has supported the development of a national network of voluntary local race equality councils to assist in its work.
- 2.17 In Northern Ireland the government took the decision to merge three separate commissions dealing with religion, race and sex into a single equality commission (ECNI), which also assumed responsibility for disability

discrimination. ECNI, nevertheless, continues to work under four separate legislative regimes for religion, race, sex and disability.

- 2.18 Developments in Northern Ireland have inevitably raised questions about the fragmented pattern of legislation in Great Britain and its emphasis on negative prohibition, rather than positive promotion. The situation is further exacerbated by constitutional changes towards devolution, allowing Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland greater scope to develop their own policies on equality of opportunity.
- 2.19 European Union law is also affecting the situation in the United Kingdom, with a right for women and men to equal pay for equal work and a series of directives, including the Equal Treatment Directive, implementing the principle of equal treatment in relation to access to employment, vocational training, promotion, working conditions, and employment termination. The dynamic relationship between UK and European sex discrimination law and subsequent developments have widened the gap between sex and other forms of anti-discrimination law.
- 2.20 The Treaty of Amsterdam has led to the insertion of a new Article 13 into the EC treaty, which empowers the Council of Europe to 'take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation'. Subsequently, various directives have come into force, in particular, the Race Directive, both expanding the scope of the law. The Employment Directive extends protection to employees against discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation.
- 2.21 The similarities and inconsistencies between Sex Discrimination, Race Relations and Disability Discrimination Acts, the prospect of further areas of discrimination law coming on stream, and the resource implications of it all, have led to the government proposing that a single Equality and Human Rights Commission be set up, incorporating the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunity Commission, and the Disability Rights Commission.
- 2.22 This proposal has resulted in speculation about the organisational options for race equality work at both national and local level. What will happen to local race equality organisations when the Commission for Racial Equality is absorbed into the proposed Equality and Human Rights Commission? At a recent national conference of the British Federation of Racial Equality Councils, race equality officers were much preoccupied with the strategic direction that local race equality organisation should take and whether they would continue to be funded by any new body that replaced the Commission for Racial Equality.
- 2.23 Some race equality councils, Rugby, for example, appear to be exploring the possibility of becoming equality councils. Others doubt that the legal rationale for drawing the national commissions into one overarching equality body transfers automatically to a local context in which small single-equality bodies deliver specialist community and policy development projects.

- 2.24 Attempts to extend the work of local race equality organisations, in the first instance, to gender and disability issues, might not seem problematic in relation to legal complainant aid work. While continuing to specialise in race cases, they could with little difficulty extend their remit, resources permitting, to sex and disability discrimination.
- 2.25 But it is when attention is switched to the possibility of expanding the membership of a local race equality council and its executive committee to accommodate representatives of women's organisations and user groups of the disabled and chronically ill that the difficulties implicit in transforming the existing model of governance become apparent. At local level, women's and user groups of the disabled and chronically ill (with the exception of mental health) tend to be organised on single issue lines.
- 2.26 Currently, it is not easy to see the implications for local race equality organisation of the government's intention to create a single integrated equality commission. But the difficulties and questionable benefits of attempting at this juncture to create local equality councils are already apparent.
- 2.27 In the context of local strategic partnership working, however, there may be sufficient flexibility to assemble partnerships and forums suited to the needs of all equality interests. A relationship with the local strategic partnership could give any proposed new race equality body far greater scope for developing joined-up working on the other dimensions of equality (see below).

Local Strategic Partnerships

- 2.28 The government seeks to marshal the contribution of the public, private and voluntary sectors and of the communities themselves to tackle the most challenging social problems of health, crime, education, transport, housing and the local environment.
- 2.29 The government has pledged itself to establish effective local strategic partnerships as the key element in developing integrated approaches to local service delivery and tackling policy priorities in a joined-up way. The government saw the local councils as the prime movers in instigating LSPs where they did not already exist, but once established, the partnership would decide who led.
- 2.30 The local strategic partnership (LSP) is a cross-sectoral, cross-cutting umbrella partnership aimed at improving the quality of life and governance in a particular locality. It brings together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to provide an overarching coordination framework within which other more specific local partnerships can operate. It is intended to improve local public services by bringing those who deliver or commission different services together with these for whom services are provided. The aim is to exercise a broad strategic oversight across service providers and

other partnerships in an area, to ensure activities are compatible and mutually supportive. Within the overarching framework of the LSP, other pre-existing and new partnerships may be situated. LSPs are expected to build a clear working relationship with the following kinds of partnership:

- Regeneration Partnership
- Early Years Development and Childcare Provision
- Learning Partnerships
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- Local Agenda 21
- Health Action Zones
- Sure Start
- Community Legal Service Partnerships

- 2.31 LSPs are also expected to forge links and involve organisations and partnerships that operate at a regional and sub-regional level such as the Regional Assembly, the Regional Development Agency, Learning and Skills Council, Connexions, the Benefits Agency, the Employment Service, the police and fire services. Two traditionally-recognised dimensions of local race equality work, policy development and community development, are brought together under the umbrella of the local strategic partnership in the shape of public authorities' policy in relation to race equality and initiatives to increase local voluntary and community sector representation.
- 2.32 One role of the local strategic partnership is to improve local public services by bringing those who deliver or commission different services together with those for whom the services are provided. Represented on the LSPs, public service providers are required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to assess their functions and policies for their impact on race equality and to consult with service users and members of the public, ensuring that they have access to information and the services provided.
- 2.33 The LSP, then, is conceived as the bridge between public authorities and service users and appears to provide an appropriate arena for the promotion of race equality in the general context of the drive for service improvement.
- 2.34 The race equality promotion now statutorily required of the public sector forms an integral part of the drive for service improvement. The race equality scheme approach set out in the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice is often referred to as 'the service improvement model'. There is a strong case for strategically positioning the location of race equality promotion within, or in close proximity to, the local strategic partnership. Marrying public authorities' statutory duty to promote race equality in a context of improving services for all, with community cohesion programmes involving voluntary and community groups, and the local neighbourhood communities themselves, has exciting possibilities and remains to be fully explored.
- 2.35 Local Strategic Partnerships might also have an interest and an important part to play in the governance of local race equality provision, but see different views expressed in Chapter 3.

Other important factors

Other important factors relating directly to race equality work are:

Electoral success of the extreme right

- 2.36 The activity and electoral success of the extreme right-wing racist political parties, often capitalising on the imaginary menace from asylum seekers/refugees, poses a major threat to race equality and places increased responsibility on RECs to find ways of preventing them gain influence in local communities.

Refugees and asylum seekers

- 2.37 Local RECs are expected to respond to new minority groups from the Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq, or Kosovo, etc., and to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, who are sometimes regarded with suspicion by local residents, alerted by sensational stories in the press.

Community cohesion policy

- 2.38 Following the disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in 2001 community cohesion thinking, policy and pathfinders have been developed. In the West Midlands, Sandwell and Stoke-on-Trent have been designated community cohesion pathfinders.

The government is increasingly concerned with the fragmentation of neighbourhoods, the development of separate communities, and the evidence of racial segregation. It is acutely aware of the need to champion social cohesion and civic renewal. RECs have a major role to play in the coordination of effective renewal programmes to redress these disturbing trends, although government policies promoting choice in education and housing may have reduced the scope for intervention.

Events following the 11 September attack on the World Trade Centre

- 2.39 The implications for British race relations of events on 11th September 2001, the British government's support for the USA's war of intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the pursuit of Osama Bin Laden and his al Qaida network, cannot yet be fully assessed. Attacks on mosques, Muslims, and more generally, people of Asian appearance, prove a reminder of the fragility of race relations and the ease with which they can become ideologically polarised.
- 2.40 The government passed emergency anti-terrorism legislation involving internment of terrorist suspects (requiring the suspension of article 3 of the European Convention on human rights and the creation of a new crime of incitement to religious hatred). Compulsory language and citizen classes were proposed for asylum seekers and new immigrants. RECs have a crucial role to play in helping to diffuse racial and religious tension.

Growing awareness of ethnic minority needs in rural areas

- 2.41 The needs of ethnic minorities living in rural areas are increasingly recognised. Families in small towns and villages may feel isolated, vulnerable and susceptible to racist attack, yet be unable to elicit recognition of their plight from local services unused to dealing with them or their situation.
- 2.42 RECs operating in rural areas, such as Warwickshire, have also been confronted with the phenomenon of discrimination against gypsies and travellers and the dilemma of whether to include active opposition to such deep-seated traditional hostility as a significant element of their work. In Warwickshire, the remit of local race equality councils needs to be extended to include work with gypsies and travellers and/or partnership work with the agencies that liaise with them.

Census 2001

- 2.43 Up-to-date Census 2001 data on ethnicity and religious ethnicity by local authority and ward helps to pinpoint local race equality issues.

Growth of the mixed-race population

- 2.44 The growth in the number of trans-racial partnerships and people of mixed-race in another dimension of the changing pattern of ethnic relations in Britain. Half of British-born Caribbean men with a partner and a third of British-born Caribbean women with a partner live with a white person. Mixed partnerships are on the increase, and far more common than among African-Americans in the USA. Although mixed marriages are less common among South Asians than among Caribbeans, about one in five British-born men of Indian or African Asian origin has a white partner and the equivalent figure for women is one in ten, although very few Bangladeshis and Pakistanis have entered mixed relationships.
- 2.45 People of mixed-race constitute a rapidly growing minority, unrecognised in much of the literature on 'ethnicity' in Britain and in developments of race relations policy. In the 1991 census, a person descended from more than one ethnic or racial group was advised to tick one of the eight other boxes provided (eg. White, Black Caribbean, Indian, etc) or to enter a description under 'any other group'. By 2001, however, in recognition of the growing significance of this category of people, the census included a choice of four boxes under the generic heading 'mixed'. The significance of the growth of the mixed-race population for race relations in Britain and for the work of RECs has yet to be fully assessed, but poses interesting questions about national identity and the nature and pursuit of multi-cultural objectives. Areas abutting multi-racial metropolitan areas, such as Coventry, frequently have a higher proportion of mixed-race people.

Chapter Three

Perceptions of the need for local race equality work in Warwickshire and of how it should be organised

- 3.1 The opinions of community and voluntary groups and public authorities were sought in order to arrive at a better understanding of the need for local race equality work in Warwickshire. Further details of the survey and fieldwork are provided in appendix B on methodology.
- 3.2 The data obtained from the returns has been analysed according to three respondent categories, each of which reveals a different perception and interest in relation to local race equality provision. The three categories of respondent are:
- community associations, mostly black and minority ethnic community groups.
 - voluntary sector agencies.
 - public authorities (including Connexions).
- 3.3 An account is provided of interviews with key stakeholders: public authority officers and a county councillor with lead responsibility for equality. Chapter Three also presents the main findings of the consultation exercise. It concludes with a section drawing comparisons and conclusions from the responses.

Opinions of community groups and associations, mostly black and minority ethnic groups

- 3.4 Responses to the TMP questionnaire were received from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups and community associations in Nuneaton and Bedworth (7), Leamington Spa and Warwick (5) and Rugby (5). Some of the groups operating in Nuneaton and Bedworth claimed to have members in North Warwickshire. Most, however, drew the majority of their members from, and organised activities, offered facilities, and held meetings in, the areas in which they were based, or had their postal address. A few, however, said they had a county-wide membership and brief.

Race equality referrals

- 3.5 Nearly half of the groups claimed to have referred on to other agencies members who had suffered racial harassment. In Nuneaton and Bedworth, referrals had been made to both Rugby REC and Warwick District REC. In Leamington, two organisations had referred cases to the Warwick District REC, and one directly to the police. In Rugby, referrals had been made to the Racial Harassment Monitoring Unit (as part of the REC), the Warwickshire

Education Department and Rugby Borough Council. One group commented that it tried not to refer complaints but to deal with them directly itself.

Use of REC services and membership

3.6 The groups were asked whether they operated in an area served by a local race equality council. Not surprisingly, groups in Nuneaton and Bedworth said they did not, whereas groups in Leamington Spa, Warwick and Rugby said they did. One group in Nuneaton and Bedworth had membership of Rugby REC and declined to answer the question of whether it was in favour of developing a local race equality service (presumably interpreting the question to mean a service separate from that of Rugby REC). Other groups in Nuneaton and Bedworth were strongly in support of developing a local service providing it was ‘independent’. They would definitely become members. Elsewhere in Warwickshire, three quarters of respondents claimed to belong to their local RECs.

Satisfaction with race equality services

3.7 How satisfied were local groups with the existing local race equality structures and patterns of race equality provision in Warwickshire? Given the small number of responses, it is difficult to draw conclusions. The lack of service in Nuneaton and Bedworth was a cause of great dissatisfaction. Elsewhere, there was a spread of reaction, with a majority appearing to have no strong feelings either way about existing structures or patterns. It may, of course, be that dissatisfied groups were more highly motivated to respond to the questionnaire.

TABLE 5				
Community group satisfaction with race equality service				
	Nuneaton and Bedworth (nos)	Leamington and Warwick (nos)	Rugby (nos)	Overall
very satisfied	-	-	-	-
satisfied	-	1	2	3
neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	-	2	2	4
dissatisfied	-	1	-	1
very dissatisfied	7	1	-	8

3.8 Those expressing dissatisfaction were invited to explain why. A response from Nuneaton and Bedworth was:

‘No provision, no consultation, political obstruction, and no funding for legal representation! No support whatsoever!’

3.9 From elsewhere in the county, comments read:

‘We don’t think the REC has achieved a great deal to bring about harmony between ethnic groups. It is unclear how people get appointed to REC posts and whether the selection process is fair. The REC’s working should be transparent.’

‘The local REC has been dysfunctional for a number of years ... Funding issues and non-availability of personnel have been given as reasons for ineffectiveness and the inability to make decisions.’

‘We don’t need the REC. We can deal with the issues ourselves.’

Race equality service expectations

3.10 What kind of activities did community groups think a local race equality organisation should engage in? Respondents were provided with a list from which they could select more than one option. The results are set out in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6		
Community groups’ view of local race equality activities		
Activities	Option choice	Priorities
casework and complainant aid	77%	38%
support for victims of racial harassment	92%	54%
raising public awareness about race equality	100%	54%
assisting public authorities with their race equality duties	69%	23%
promoting community cohesion	77%	15%
building the capacity of voluntary groups and communities	69%	8%
projects aimed at improving the quality of life for disadvantaged groups	77%	-
projects specially aimed at young people or women to increase their autonomy	46%	8%
rallying point for opposition to far-right racist activity	46%	-
other activities	23%	-

3.11 Other activities specifically mentioned that race equality councils might engage in were:

- human rights (and a broader equality remit).
- disability rights and diversity issues.
- training for employers on equality issues.

3.12 It can be inferred from the range of activities selected that community groups believe race equality organisations should engage in a broad range of activities. From the forced choice of priorities, however, it is possible to detect a clear focus on raising public awareness about race equality (with many first choices), support for victims of racial harassment, and casework and complainant aid. While providing assistance to public authorities remains on the agenda, it is not a leading priority for community groups.

Broader equality remit

3.13 Community groups were asked whether race equality work in Warwickshire should continue to focus on race alone or to broaden its remit to embrace other dimensions of inequality. Three quarters of respondents were unequivocally in favour of taking on a broader equality remit, with the remaining quarter arguing that it was essential to remain focussed on colour, race and ethnicity, because this was RECs' area of expertise and the work would become too diffused if gender and disability issues were added to the portfolio.

Location and access

3.14 Community groups in Nuneaton and Bedworth wanted race equality services in Nuneaton as well as Bedworth. One groups suggested the alternative of Coventry, if a service was not going to be provided in Nuneaton or Bedworth.

3.15 Community groups in Warwick and Leamington wanted services in Warwick and Leamington, but one group at least ticked all the boxes, indicating a recognition of the need for county-wide local service delivery, while another ticked additionally the box for Stratford-on-Avon. Likewise, Rugby community groups wanted a local service in Rugby, but could not see the need for facilities in neighbouring Nuneaton or Stratford-on-Avon in the south.

3.16 When asked how services should be organised and delivered to enable them to be accessed easily, respondents stressed the importance of visibility, local information, local decision-making, consultation, partnership, promotion in the media, remaining close to communities, using the local community centre, and having convenient opening hours. It was important that RECs were welcoming to all ethnic and religious groups and did not give the impression of being dominated by one section of the community.

Structure

- 3.17 Community groups were asked how race equality services might best be expanded or reorganised to serve all the communities in Warwickshire.
- 3.18 In Nuneaton and Bedworth, mention was made of the attempt by Rugby REC to extend its remit to cover the neighbouring borough and the opposition that this had generated at the time. The initiative had not been a good idea then and it still was not. Ideally, Nuneaton and Bedworth needed a service of its own.
- 3.19 In Leamington and Warwick, some wished to expand the work of the local REC to cover Stratford, while others mentioned a county-wide reorganisation retaining locally-accessible offices. Some groups in Rugby stressed the need to retain their existing REC and local autonomy, with small local race equality councils county-wide. Not all respondents took up the opportunity to answer the open-ended question, and the closed forced-option question on preferences probably gives a more rounded picture. Community groups opted as follows (Table 7):

TABLE 7				
Community groups' preferences for race equality models				
	Nuneaton and Bedworth (nos)	Leamington and Warwick (nos)	Rugby (nos)	Overall
A single larger county-wide race equality organisation with local outreach facilities or offices	-	2	1	3
Two medium-sized organisations for North Warwickshire and one for South Warwickshire.	-	1	1	2
Three smaller race equality organisations, one in the north (Nuneaton and Bedworth), one in the east (Rugby) and one in the south (Warwick and Stratford).	7	1	1	9
Keeping existing arrangements with organisations based in Leamington and Rugby.	-	-	2	2
A combination.	-	1	-	1

- 3.20 While the results suggest a distinct preference for smaller race equality organisation close to the communities and run by them, the questionnaires and interviews with community leaders indicate a degree of flexibility in their attitude to the eventual outcome. In Nuneaton and Bedworth, for example, although their ideal solution would be to have a local race equality council of their own, they are realistic enough to know that the resources to make it happen are unlikely to be forthcoming, and are quite willing to explore the single or north/south solutions in preference to being left with no service at all. Conversely, therefore, they are opposed to retaining existing arrangements and remember the previous attempt at a Rugby take-over (as they see it).
- 3.21 In Leamington and Warwick, there is a recognition that the service on offer is limited and should be expanded southwards to Stratford-on-Avon District. Opinion is split on how to do this. This accounts for the distribution of choice which, when interpreting the combination proposal, probably inclines towards the single county-wide solution.
- 3.22 Only in Rugby, is it clear that respondents would prefer to keep the status quo. However, the forced choice question does not allow local strategic thinking to show through. As the interview revealed, from Rugby REC's point of view, it would prefer to retain existing arrangements. Alternatively, it would like a north/south solution in which it would provide the nucleus for the new northern organisation. If it was not possible for it to develop in this way, it would be quite happy for a third REC to be set up in Nuneaton and Bedworth.

Finance

- 3.23 Community groups were asked how local race equality work in Warwickshire should be funded. They suggested the following sources. Percentages indicate the frequency of mention.

Commission for Racial Equality (or successor body)	46%
County Council	54%
District Councils	54%
Education Department	8%
European funding	8%
Government/Home Office	46%
National Lottery (Community Fund)	15%
Police	23%
Primary Care Trusts/NHS	15%
Social Services	8%

- 3.24 The proposals indicate a familiarity with traditional funding arrangements for local race equality work and a level of expectation that local authorities and the Commission for Racial Equality will continue to fund as in the past.

Governance

- 3.25 Community groups were asked who should be included on the executive committee or board of governors of any new voluntary sector organisation. They could select more than one option. Responses are set out in Table 8.

TABLE 8	
Community groups' preferences for memberships of race equality organisation executive committees/board of directors	
representatives of the funding bodies	69%
representatives of local communities (particularly black and minority ethnic communities)	100%
representatives of local voluntary groups	69%
local politicians	38%
county council and local district officers	38%
representatives of the Local Strategic Partnership(s)	54%
representatives of key public sector authorities	54%
students from local colleges of schools	38%
other (please specify)	15%

- 3.26 Suggestions as to 'others' were local police officers and members of the local Gurdwara committee.

- 3.27 When asked what role their group might play in the governance of a local race equality organisation, most respondents volunteered that they would be prepared to join the executive committee or board.

Connectivity

- 3.28 Asked what arrangements would ensure close and supportive relationships were maintained between a local race equality organisation and black and minority ethnic groups, community group respondents made the following suggestions:

- Ensure all organisations are treated equally and that communications are transparent.
 - Get black and minority ethnic groups involved in the governance of the race equality organisation.
 - Give adequate notice of meetings.
 - Encourage greater participation in community group activities.
 - Provide a proper service that empowers and is seen as a benefit.
 - Engage in regular networking, meetings and updating.
- 3.29 On relations with Local Strategic Partnerships and voluntary and community groups, such as Citizens' Advice Bureau and Voluntary Sector Councils, few opinions were expressed other than collaborative working or race equality council membership of their respective boards.
- 3.30 Finally, community groups were asked whether they were members of the County Council's three local area consultation groups. Three quarters of them said that they were members.

Opinions of voluntary sector agencies

- 3.31 Most voluntary sector agencies in this category were Voluntary Sector Councils, or Citizens' Advice Bureaux, although responses were also received from Mind, and Warwickshire Rural Community Council.

Race equality referral

- 3.32 Most agencies which responded were operating in an area served by a racial equality council but only one, a Citizens' Advice Bureau, had referred clients to a race equality council.
- 3.33 When asked how they dealt with requests relating to race equality which required specialist knowledge, skills and expertise, a third said they had never been faced with issues of this kind, a third said they turned to an internal equality or race equality adviser, and a third said that they would seek advice from a race equality council or from another appropriate external agency.

Support for and satisfaction with REC services

- 3.34 About a third of voluntary sector respondents said they would support the development of a local race equality service, while the rest were neither for nor against, or did not complete the question. Few organisations completed the question about their satisfaction with existing local race equality structures, although Mind said it was satisfied with the service it received from Warwick District REC.

Race equality service expectations

3.35 Answers to the question on the kind of activities in which a race equality organisation should engage, are summarised in Table 9.

TABLE 9		
Voluntary sector agencies' view of local race equality activities		
Activities	Option choice	Priorities
casework and complainant-aid	86%	71%
support for victims of racial harassment	86%	86%
raising public awareness about race equality	100%	86%
assisting public authorities with their race equality duties	14%	0%
promoting community cohesion	86%	43%
building the capacity of voluntary groups and communities	43%	0%
projects aimed at improving the quality of life of disadvantaged groups	29%	0%
projects specifically aimed at young people or women to increase their autonomy	29%	14%
rallying point for opposition to far right racist activity	43%	0%
other activities	0%	0%

3.36 The voluntary sector agencies see the need for an organisation that raises public awareness about race equality and provides support for victims of racial harassment and undertakes casework and complainant aid. There is an emphasis on working with individual rather than corporate clients with little recognition of the need to assist public authorities with their race equality duties.

Broader equality remit

3.37 A majority of voluntary sector agencies thought that race equality work in Warwickshire should broaden its remit to embrace other dimensions of inequality. But two CVSs and one CAB expressed strong views that RECs should focus on colour, race and ethnicity. As one CVS explained: 'RECs

should focus on their core business and leave disability issues to the plethora of disability organisations’.

Location and access

- 3.38 CVSs and CABs, in particular, seemed to understand the need to provide local services at all essential locations across the county. This could be done by way of outreach or peripatetic work. It did not require a local office in every place.
- 3.39 The CVSs and CABs also stressed the importance of providing a specialist service in rural areas. In one response, locations other than those listed on the questionnaire were added: Shipston, Southam, Alcester and Studley, to emphasise the point that any new service had to take into account the essentially rural and small town and village life of Warwickshire. Another wrote: ‘Even Atherstone!’

Structure

- 3.40 The responses of voluntary sector agencies when asked which of four models of race equality organisation they preferred for the county are recorded in Table 10.

TABLE 10	
Voluntary sector agencies’ preferences for race equality models	
A single larger county-wide race equality organisation with local outreach facilities or offices.	57%
Two medium-sized organisations for North Warwickshire and one for South Warwickshire.	29%
Three smaller race equality organisations, one in the north (Nuneaton and Bedworth), one in the east (Rugby) and one in the south (Warwick and Stratford).	14%
Keeping existing arrangements with organisations based in Leamington and Rugby.	0%
A combination.	0%

- 3.41 They were also asked whether they knew of any structures in the public or voluntary sector for delivering services across the county that might serve as a model for future race equality service delivery in Warwickshire. One respondent mentioned Warwick District Race Equality Council, another the County Council.
- 3.42 Another mentioned how the CVSs and Volunteer Bureaux had come together to form a local Development Agency Forum, enabling organisations to retain

their individual identity while maximising opportunities to work together to ensure effective deliver and to avoid duplication.

- 3.43 In conversation relating to this question, the case of Herefordshire CVSs was mentioned, where five of six small, barely viable rural bodies had come together to form a larger structure, with far greater capacity.

Finance

- 3.44 Voluntary sector agency suggestions for funding race equality work mirrored those made by community groups.

Governance

- 3.45 Recommendations for inclusion on the executive committee or board of governors of a new voluntary-sector race equality organisation were broadly identical to those selected by the community groups, except that the voluntary sector agreed unanimously that local voluntary agencies should be represented.

Connectivity

- 3.46 Commenting under this section of the questionnaire, one CVS proposed that CVSs should be encouraged to develop work with local black and minority ethnic community groups. CVSs should also be resourced to undertake race equality work locally. It should not be assumed that some sort of REC operating locally would be the best option.

Opinions of public authorities (including Connexions)

- 3.47 Responses were received from borough and district councils, health trusts and Connexions (Coventry and Warwickshire).

Organisational priorities

- 3.48 Three quarters of public authority respondents prioritised the need to meet the specific race equality duties under the Race Relations Act as the most important issue their organisation faced in relation to race and other equalities. The second option chosen as a priority was the improvement of public services in order to make them more relevant and sensitive. Lower in the priority order, 'the inclusion of ethnic minorities' and 'achieving a more representative work force' were also seen as important issues for public authorities (Table 11).

TABLE 11					
Main race equality issues facing organisation					
	Priority order				
	1	2	3	4	5
Meeting specific race equality duties	75%	12%	12%	-	-
More representative work force	12%	25%	-	50%	-
Service improvement/more relevant services	12%	37%	25%	12%	-
Inclusion of ethnic minorities	-	12%	50%	25%	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-

3.49 Respondents were asked how they dealt with requests in relation to race equality matters which required specialist knowledge, skills and expertise. They were able to select more than one option. A majority said it would seek advice from the Commission for Racial Equality, half that it would turn to an internal equality, race equality or legal adviser, or its own race equality support worker. A third said it would contact a local race equality council.

3.50 Half of the sample operated in an area of Warwickshire currently served by a local race equality council. Of those that were operating in an area without a local race equality council, half said it would support the development of a local race equality service, while others were neither for or against, or did not respond.

3.51 Only two local authorities had in the past provided, or were currently providing, funds for a race equality council in Warwickshire (Rugby Borough Council and Warwick District Council). Neither wished to indicate by means of the questionnaire, its level of satisfaction with the service. Informal discussion, elsewhere, however, indicated that a number of public authorities was dissatisfied with the services it expected, or was currently receiving.

Race equality service provision

3.52 Respondents for the public authorities were next asked to express an opinion on the activities they thought a local race equality agency should engage in and, given the likely constraints on resources, to indicate the activities that should be prioritised. They could, of course, select more than one option.

TABLE 12		
Public authorities' view of local race equality activities		
Activities	Option choice	Priorities
casework and complainant-aid	87%	12%
support for victims of racial harassment	87%	50%
raising public awareness about race equality	87%	50%
assisting public authorities with their race equality duties	100%	75%
promoting community cohesion	62%	-
building the capacity of voluntary groups and communities	50%	12%
projects aimed at improving the quality of life of disadvantaged groups	25%	-
projects specifically aimed at young people or women to increase their autonomy	12%	-
rallying point for opposition to far right racist activity	-	-
other activities	-	-

3.53 All public authority respondents saw assisting public authorities with their race equality duties as a role of RECs and three quarters felt that providing assistance of this kind should be a REC priority.

3.54 There was a general consensus that RECs should focus on four main tasks: assisting public authorities, raising public awareness, supporting victims of racial harassment, and undertaking casework and complainant aid. The last has been a traditional function of RECs but, in recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to experience in obtaining funding for complainant aid.

Broader equality remit

3.55 When asked whether race equality work in Warwickshire should continue to focus on race alone or broaden its remit to embrace other dimensions of inequality, all public authority respondents, without exception, agreed that it should take on a broader equalities remit. This may reflect the fact that many public authorities already have in post general equality and diversity officers and can see no good reason why the same arrangement cannot be made for a REC. Alternatively, respondents may have assumed that, given the

government's stated intention of setting up an Equality and Human Rights Commission, any new Warwickshire development would be wise to take it into account.

Location and access

3.56 The questions on location and access triggered a variety of responses. Some respondents assumed that, were they to specify a particular area where a race equality service should be provided, this might rule out the possibility of a Warwickshire-wide service. Others indicated their desire for a Warwickshire-wide service by ticking all boxes provided. Generally, however, public authorities based in a particular district wanted race equality services to be provided in that locality. Thus a public authority based in Stratford wanted race equality services in Stratford.

3.57 Suggestions were invited as to how, given the geographical spread of the county, local race equality services might be organised and delivered to ensure maximum community access. The following proposals were offered:

- good telephone and web service.
- sharing office accommodation with another agency.
- peripatetic outreach workers, especially in isolated rural areas.
- networking: working closely with local communities.
- REC presence in community centres, libraries, mobile information unit at open days.
- partnerships with statutory and voluntary sector agencies through local strategic partnerships.
- outreach service provision may be provided by partnership working as, for example, the race equality support worker serving North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth. The small black and minority ethnic population in North Warwickshire is spread throughout the borough. Transport and isolation are key issues which need to be considered in any plan.

3.58 Public authority respondents were also asked whether they had any view as to how race equality services might best be expanded or reorganised to serve all the communities in Warwickshire. The response above is clearly relevant. Other comments were:

- The needs of isolated rural areas differ from urban areas with black and minority ethnic settlement: this realisation has to be reflected in any expanded provision (source: public authority in Stratford).
- A county-wide service with local offices.

- North Warwickshire black and minority ethnic communities need to be able to access a service: given the likely available resources, outreach services may be the only option.
- There could be three bases, north, east and south.

Structure

3.59 Public authority respondents were then asked about their preferences for the organisation of race equality work in Warwickshire. As indicated by Table 13, public authorities opted unanimously for a single county-wide organisation with local outreach facilities.

TABLE 13	
Public authorities' preferences for race equality models	
A single larger county-wide race equality organisation with local outreach facilities or offices.	100%
Two medium-sized organisations for North Warwickshire and one for South Warwickshire.	0%
Three smaller race equality organisations, one in the north (Nuneaton and Bedworth), one in the east (Rugby) and one in the south (Warwick and Stratford).	0%
Keeping existing arrangements with organisations based in Leamington and Rugby.	0%
A combination.	0%

3.60 While opting for a single organisation, one respondent suggested that, given the real geography and demographic make-up of the area, it would be sensible to cover the whole of Warwickshire and Coventry.

3.61 This option, of course, was not under consideration, but was in keeping with another suggestion that emerged from the interviews and discussions. This was the proposal that Warwickshire County join forces with Solihull Metropolitan Borough to spread the financial burden of a sub-regional race equality council.

3.62 Were there existing structures in the public or voluntary sector that might serve as a model for future race equality service delivery in Warwickshire? Respondents suggested the following:

- Establishing links with Connexions (which spans Coventry and Warwickshire).
- Working with the Local Education Authority.

- Councils for Voluntary Service.
- The model employed by race equality support worker employed for the north of the County.

Finance

3.63 A third of public authorities passed no comment on questions about how race equality work should be funded and by which agency. No public authority committed itself to providing funding and at least two made clear it was highly unlikely that they would provide funding to any new body. Nevertheless, the following suggestions were made for funding local race equality work.

- Central government
- Commission for Racial Equality
- Learning and Skills Council
- Local education authority
- Local government
- Local public sector agencies (in return for help with race equality schemes)

Structure

3.64 Partly as a result of the views of community groups in Nuneaton and Bedworth, the majority choice of community groups was for a model involving three smaller race equality organisations. Otherwise, the community group choices were roughly evenly spread between the four models proposed. Public authorities, by way of contrast, were unanimously in favour of a single county-wide solution.

Finance

3.65 Community groups suggested a range of funding agencies which they believed should fund local race equality work. Most of the agencies were public bodies that had funded race equality work in the past. The County Council, District Councils and Commission for Racial Equality were the agencies most mentioned.

3.66 A third of public authorities passed no comment on questions about how race equality work should be funded and, understandably, were reluctant to commit themselves on the questionnaire or at interview.

Governance

3.67 Respondents were asked who should be included on the executive committee or board of governors of any new voluntary sector race equality organisation. They could select more than one option. Responses are set out in Table 14.

TABLE 14	
Public authorities' preferences for memberships of race equality organisation executive committee/board of directors	
representatives of the funding bodies	62%
representatives of local communities (particularly black and minority ethnic communities)	75%
representatives of local voluntary groups	62%
local politicians	50%
county council and local district officers	75%
representatives of the Local Strategic Partnership(s)	62%
representatives of key public sector authorities	50%
students from local colleges of schools	25%
other	-

3.68 Most public authorities recognised the importance of local communities being represented, but also saw their own organisations as playing a central role in governance. Funders, the voluntary sector, and emerging Local Strategic Partnerships, were also seen as important contributors at board level.

3.69 Asked directly what role their organisation might play in the governance of a local race equality agency, most authorities agreed they should be represented. One, possibly significant, comment was: 'If we were to be a funding body, I would expect to play an active role'.

3.70 When asked whether the Local Strategic Partnership should play a role in the governance of any new race equality organisation, a quarter of respondents thought it should be represented, but most, while agreeing there should be practical cooperation and joined-up working with the LSP, did not think it should be directly involved.

Connectivity

3.71 Respondents were asked whether they had any suggestions to make about the arrangement necessary to ensure a close and supportive relationship was maintained between any new race equality organisation(s) and Warwickshire's black and minority ethnic groups. Most thought it important to build on existing relationships where they existed. Where there was no service at

present, as in North Warwickshire, there would need to be a visible presence and the provision would have to link in to the work and structures of the North Warwickshire Community Partnership. Most respondents also believed that minority ethnic groups should be involved in the governance of any new organisation(s).

3.72 Respondents were asked about how any local race equality organisation might relate to the Local Strategic Partnership, and voluntary and community groups such as Citizens' Advice Bureaux and Voluntary Sector Councils. The following are representative responses:

- Representation could be agreed within the theme group structures of the North Warwickshire Community Partnership. For example, there is a race equality steering group which is a sub-group of the 'Community Life Theme Group'.
- Build on existing arrangements where they exist.
- The race equality council should be represented on the Local Strategic Partnership.

Public authorities: reports of face-to-face interviews and other correspondence relating to the project

3.73 In addition to the information obtained from the questionnaires, the research team interviewed the county councillor with lead responsibility for equalities and senior officers with race equality responsibilities working for public authorities, especially the district councils. The team also received various other correspondence relating to the project. (Meetings with members and officers of RECs are reported in Chapter One.) What follows is a summary of the main points emerging from the interviews and correspondence.

Meeting with Councillor Martin Brassington

Use of REC services

3.74 Services should be provided that the community wants, such as casework and community capacity-building. Local race equality provision is important but it should not allow public authorities to abdicate their responsibility for promoting race equality. Although local services are needed, it is not clear why they should be separately provided from other existing voluntary sector services, such as the CVS and CAB.

Broader equality remit

3.75 The focus should be on race, as the implications of a general approach to equality are complex and have yet to be worked out. But the broader role could be performed by the CVS or CAB working with a broader federation of services.

Location, access and structure

- 3.76 Accessibility is the key to the success of any body. A county-wide approach with outposts would work, but it would be essential to have a presence in Rugby, Leamington and Nuneaton.

Governance

- 3.77 In Warwickshire, there is a county-wide LSP and five district LSPs and it has taken time for these organisations to explore their respective roles. Any new race equality body should have a close relationship with the emerging LSPs but they should not have a governance role on the new body. This would encourage the LSPs to become autonomous when they should be encouraging joined-up working within existing frameworks.
- 3.78 Research commissioned by Rugby LSP has shown the proliferation of small community groups, few of which understand what services are offered by the public authorities. There is little coordination or networking between these groups and priority should be given to community support workers to help them access the full range of services currently available, not just services relating to equality issues.

Funding

- 3.79 While equality issues appear to be high on the agenda, this is belied by the lack of further County Council investment this year in equality issues. Lack of resources, however, may be an excuse for not delivering on equality, when much can be achieved without the need for further resources. The health service and the police should put more money into equalities work.

North Warwickshire Borough Council (Gerry Hutchinson, Chief Executive, and Robert Beggs, Section Leader, Policy Support)

Use of REC services

- 3.80 North Warwickshire wishes to fulfil its statutory race equality duties and sees that local race equality work has a part to play as a 'critical friend' in that. Currently, the borough shares a race equality support worker with Nuneaton and Bedworth and this arrangement seems to work well. North Warwickshire participates with Nuneaton and Bedworth in the Partnership Against Racism Project.

Broader equality remit

- 3.81 North Warwickshire is strongly of the view that any new organisation should take on a wider equality remit, but this is a fundamentally different role and would require a different structure. It would, however, be more appropriate for the people of North Warwickshire, although this is not to say that race equality issues should be sidelined.

Location, access and structure

- 3.82 There was considerable discussion about the particular features of North Warwickshire, its mining, rural nature, its role as a business location and its proximity to the motorway network. The provision of services to isolated black and minority ethnic people in a rural borough is a concern. Isolated people need to be able to access services in an appropriate way, which does not necessarily mean having to travel to a REC based in Nuneaton or Rugby. Outreach service provision might be provided by partnership working, especially given the limited resources available.
- 3.83 North Warwickshire favours a single county-wide approach to race equality service provision. It is felt that the suggestion of links with Nuneaton and Bedworth in relation to an advisory committee should be further explored.

Finance

- 3.84 The point was made that a wider range of public bodies than the county and districts needed to provide funds.

Rugby Borough Council (Karen Pollard, Head of Performance and Development and Nick Moore, Equality and Performance Manager)

Use of REC services

- 3.85 Rugby Borough Council already funds Rugby REC to the tune of £6,000 per year.

Broader equality remit

- 3.86 It was felt sensible, in any new dispensation, to take on a broader equality remit, but the political difficulties of assembling disparate interests at local level were recognised.

Location, access and structure

- 3.87 Rugby was in principle in favour of a single county-wide approach but feels it essential that any new organisation has its roots in the local community and provides truly local services. Rugby would not have it any other way.

Stratford-on-Avon District Council (Robert Walsh, Head of Policy and Public Relations)

- 3.88 The Council is undertaking a best value review of equalities, although, because of the size of the black and minority ethnic community in the district, it has always been difficult in the past to get the issue of race equality onto the political agenda.

Use of REC services

- 3.89 Warwick District REC has suggested that it expand its services to Stratford-on-Avon District but the council is not convinced that it has the skills or right approach for operating in a largely rural area. The REC has never come forward with a formal costed proposition or service level agreement. Currently, the Council does not use Warwick District REC for advice, but goes to Dialogue, a London-based organisation. It consulted with the REC and the CRE over its race equality scheme but is still awaiting a response.

Broader equality remit

- 3.90 Stratford-on-Avon might consider support in the future but would want to know what it would get for its money. It feels strongly that a broader equality remit is the way forward for the district.

Location, access and structure

- 3.91 With its largely rural character, Stratford-on-Avon regards itself as more aligned to North Warwickshire than to Warwick District, and has considered that, in the context of a county-wide proposal, it might be better to separate out functions on the basis of a rural/urban divide.

Finance

- 3.92 Stratford starts next year's budget preparation between August and October, but is unlikely to fund next year as it faces major cuts. It already funds a post jointly with the County Council, Warwick District and the police.

Warwick District Council (Bernadette Allen, Policy and Projects Office)

Use of REC services

- 3.93 Warwick District funds Warwick District REC by providing them with rent and administrative support and small grant, a total value of approximately £18,000, more than any other district in the county. Currently, Warwick District is in receipt of complaints about the REC and an investigation into the SRB5 BME Social Inclusion Project is taking place. The local context appears politically factionalised.

Race equality service expectations

- 3.94 The Council needs a mechanism for engaging effectively with black and minority ethnic communities, to ensure black and minority ethnic issues are part of the community plan, and to consult with Warwick District and the County Council over their race equality schemes.

Broader equality remit

- 3.95 Warwick recognises that the remit of race equality work needs to extend to gypsies and travellers, asylum seekers, refugees and new immigrants, including white groups. The difficulties of developing a broader equality remit for a single agency at local level are acknowledged and it is thought that this agenda should be approached with caution.

Structure

- 3.96 Warwick prefers a county-wide solution to the provision of race equality services in Warwickshire.

North Warwickshire Primary Care Trust (Rano Bains, Race Equality Officer)

- 3.97 North Warwickshire Primary Care Trust employs a race equality officer and two other multi-lingual staff. They help to provide 'a seamless service to the community and make staff aware of the issues affecting the black and minority ethnic community'.

Use of REC services

- 3.98 The PCT has direct contact with community groups to explain access to health care. For specialist advice it has approached the CRE Birmingham Office which has been helpful in relation to their impact assessment. Local REC have not returned calls and given no support.

Broader equality remit

- 3.99 A broader equality remit is supported, providing there is also specialist advice on race equality issues.

Location, access and structure

- 3.100 There is ambivalence about support for any new body. The PCT is already doing what is required locally in relation to health. If there is to be a new body it should focus on assisting public authorities with the race equality duties. The County Council might consider the alternative of bringing people already doing equalities jobs in public organisations together as a comprehensive network.

Finance

- 3.101 The PCT is unlikely to be in a position to fund any new race equality body and is not sure of the potential benefits of support in any case, but it might be able to support in kind by contributing to governance and sharing intelligence about the local community.

Regenesis (Janet Alty, Chair)

Broader equality remit

- 3.102 Race equality work in Warwickshire should be broadened to embrace other dimensions of equality and human rights. Existing race equality councils should be subsumed into this greater project, alongside the local councils of disabled people and other equal opportunities bodies. Regenesis wishes to encourage this kind of initiative rather than to improve the services of the current Warwick District REC.

Comparisons and conclusions

Satisfaction with race equality services

- 3.103 Neither community groups nor public authorities were fully satisfied with the work of the existing RECs, although expectations may have been unrealistic. While public responses appeared to demonstrate a range of view points the researchers encountered a privately negatively-inclined assessment of REC local work and performance. Whether sufficient value was being obtained for money was clearly a preoccupation of some public authorities, even from those who made no contribution.

Race equality service expectation

- 3.104 Community groups and public authorities thought that local race equality organisations should engage in a wide range of activities. Community groups focussed on raising public awareness about race equality support for victims of racial harassment, and casework and complainant aid.
- 3.105 All public authorities, however, saw assisting public authorities with their race equality duties as an activity, with three quarters specifying that it should be a REC's main priority. Otherwise, they were in agreement about the essential role of raising public awareness, supporting harassment victims and undertaking casework.

Broader equality remit

- 3.106 There was an unexpected degree of consensus between community groups and public authorities that race equality work should attempt to broaden its remit to embrace other dimensions of inequality. However, a quarter of community groups argued strongly that race equality work should retain its focus on its core competence in respect of colour, race and ethnicity.

Location and access

- 3.107 As was to be expected, community groups wanted, or wanted to maintain, services local to them. Public authorities also wanted local service delivery, but recognised that given restraints on resources, traditional provision in the

form of centrally-placed offices was unlikely to provide an answer. Various outreach peripatetic and partnership approaches were offered as a solution. Authorities operating in rural areas were particularly insistent that their needs be taken into account when planning any new race equality service.

Funding

- 3.108 Public authorities mentioned many of the same sources of funding as the community groups. There seems to be a severely restricted number of plausible funding sources.

Governance

- 3.109 Community groups saw representatives of local communities playing a central role in local race equality governance, together, but to a lesser degree, with representatives of voluntary groups and of funding bodies. Key public authority and local strategic partnership representation was also a possibility.
- 3.110 Public authorities also recognised the importance of local community representation in race equality governance but also saw themselves and their own organisations as playing a central role. Their view of their role in governance was not shared to the same extent by community groups. A possibly significant public authority comment was “If I were to be a funding body, I would expect to play an active role”.
- 3.111 Opinion in public authorities was divided over the role of Local Strategic Partnerships in local race equality governance, but the remarks of Councillor Martin Brassington on this subject (see above) should be taken into account, in further exploration of this possibility.

Connectivity

- 3.112 Community groups believed that good communications, transparent working and fairness of treatment were key to ensuring relationships were maintained between local race equality organisations and black and minority ethnic groups.
- 3.113 Voluntary sector agencies provided the example of how CVSs and Volunteer Bureaux had come together to form a local Development Agency Forum, enabling organisations to retain their individual identity. Elsewhere, in Herefordshire, CVSs had pooled their meagre resources and merged to provide an enhanced service.
- 3.114 Most public authorities thought it important to build on existing relationships where they existed.

Chapter Four

Criteria for successful local race equality work

Why do RECs fail?

- 4.1 What are the factors that result in the success of local race equality organisations? One way of shedding light on this question is to examine the more common reasons for their collapse or failure to achieve their potential. There has been a considerable flux over the last fifteen years in the fortunes of race equality councils, some rising and others falling. In the West Midlands, in the recent past, race equality councils have closed in Coventry, Stafford, Walsall and Wolverhampton. (Others in Birmingham, Dudley, East and North Staffordshire, and Worcestershire have been remarkably successful.)
- 4.2 Common reasons for failure have been:
- political or communal factionalism within the executive or between race equality council members.
 - poor leadership and management, especially in regard to finance, human resource and project management.
 - persistently poor staff performance, with few apparent measurable or desirable outcomes.
 - lack of strategic direction or awareness, detaching the organisation from the changing social context and making it appear increasingly irrelevant to events.
- 4.3 Conversely, successful race equality organisations show a unity of purpose, strong leadership and management, demonstrate a high level of achievement, and play a strategic role in local affairs.
- 4.4 A successful local race equality organisation has to have sufficient internal resources and competences to operate in its constantly changing social, political, economic, legal and technical environment. Some of these resources and competences will be particular to race equality organisations. Others, however, will be common requirements for most voluntary sector service providers.
- 4.5 In practice, however, the configuration of race equality-specific and voluntary organisation-generic features are difficult to separate out. For example, while most voluntary organisations may need to demonstrate a degree of 'community embeddedness', a race equality council will have to earn the trust of the sub-set of black and minority ethnic groups if it is to be successful in regard to this criterion.

The eleven critical success factors

4.6 What follows is a list of eleven factors critical to the success of local race equality work. They are not entirely discrete and each impacts on the other. Some factors are complex and multi-faceted and could be described in other ways with different emphases. Nevertheless, a race equality organisation that cannot demonstrate that it complies in some large degree with these criteria is unlikely to succeed in Warwickshire or, for that matter, elsewhere.

4.7 The eleven criteria are:

1. clarity of vision,
2. strategic involvement,
3. community embeddedness,
4. autonomy,
5. service range,
6. local presence and provision,
7. critical mass,
8. skill sufficiency,
9. financial viability,
10. management expertise, and
11. attractive staff conditions.

These are explained in greater detail in the remaining part of the chapter.

1. *Clarity of vision*

4.8 A local race equality council must set out clearly its aims and objects, translate them into a comprehensive work programme commensurate to the staffing resources available, and establish measurable outcomes and pursue them vigorously. It helps if all staff understand the vision, what is expected of them, and are enthused by the charismatic leadership of a director with a thoroughly ambitious 'can-do' mentality. It is important that the organisation sets out precisely what it is about and what it is going to do, goes out and does it, and then makes sure it demonstrates publicly what it has succeeding in doing.

4.9 Race equality councils fail because their staff are uncertain about what they are supposed to be doing, which tasks have to be prioritised, when, and for what purpose. They fail because they do not deliver what they have promised or are unable to demonstrate or explain what, if anything, they have achieved. They also fail because they are overwhelmed by the multitude of tasks expected of them, by a lack of clarity as to how they should go about prioritising them, by ignorance and incompetence as to how to undertake them, and by an inability to generate any form of synergy or added value.

2. *Strategic involvement*

4.10 A local race equality council has to be aware of the changing external social, political, economic, legal, and technical environment that is likely to affect its

current local operation and future development. This environmental scanning has to be built into the routine operation of the organisation and the judgments made on the basis of it used to adjust the deployment of internal staffing resources and the services on offer.

- 4.11 RECs that fail to understand the power structures in which they operate, or the changing social climate, rapidly become isolated and irrelevant. Failure to sustain or generate increased economic resources directly impacts on the organisation's ability to deliver its objectives, but the inability to sustain or win political allies or to enter into symbiotic partnerships (or conversely the knack of creating enemies) are equally damaging.
- 4.12 Related to the need for strategic involvement and positioning is the issue of connectivity and linkages. With whom should the organisation work most closely on its project, accept referrals from, or send them to, cooperate in advertising services or delivering them through outreach, or share office accommodation? How should it consult with users, clients, members of the public, etc., on the one hand, and service commissioners, providers and funders, on the other? How should it relate to local politicians?
- 4.13 Connectivity is important and a REC should develop its own customised communication and marketing policy and programme.

3. *Community embeddedness*

- 4.14 A race equality service must have close links with the communities it has been set up to serve. These communities of interest or residents should not be vaguely stated but sharply defined and targeted in line with the need for clarity of organisational vision.
- 4.15 In the Warwickshire context, are they clustered black and minority ethnic communities living in Leamington, Nuneaton and Rugby, or black and minority ethnic individuals disseminated and living in the rural areas of the county? In regard to issues of community cohesion, should the focus be on relations between white people and ethnic minorities, thus broadening the scope to include disadvantaged or discontented white communities? Should greater attention be given to recent immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees, white and black? Or should the increased recognition of the needs of rural Warwickshire involve taking on the vexed issue of gypsy and traveller relationships with local communities? These questions need to be addressed.
- 4.16 When they have been, any new race equality organisation must begin to establish and then to sustain its links with these communities and their constituent families and individuals. The degree to which a race equality council is embedded in the communities it is set up to serve and is supported by them is a central justification for its continued existence.
- 4.17 Ultimately, it should be the communities that decide on whether a REC continues to exist, even if funding is withdrawn. (Just over the county border in Redditch, there is a unique example of a Community Relations Council that

has continued in existence since the era of community relations, without any financial support from the Commission for Racial Equality.)

- 4.18 The support of communities is difficult to achieve and sustain and the success of both Rugby REC and Warwick District REC in surviving on the basis of their respective communities' support over many years should not be underestimated or undermined. It would be difficult to recreate that consistently-sustained community participation either in Rugby or Leamington if the RECs were to close, or elsewhere in Warwickshire, if the service were to be extended.
- 4.19 Related to community embeddedness are the strengths of continuity and tradition. The very fact that these organisations have survived year on year is a measure of local communities' support for them and belief that they meet a need, real or imaginary. The strength of tradition is also a weakness. The questions of whether the communities supporting the original project have moved on, or have had their needs satisfied, and of whether the organisation continues to serve any useful purpose, are seldom asked or objectively answered.

4. *Autonomy*

- 4.20 Unlike large impersonal public authorities, like the distant county council, community and voluntary sector bodies are regarded as being close to communities and in a strong position to articulate and aggregate local needs. The voluntary sector is thought to play a useful role in responding innovatively to emerging needs, in augmenting and plugging groups in existing services, and in pressuring local government and public authorities to improve their practice.
- 4.21 The recent Race Relations Act, aimed at eliminating all vestiges of institutional racism and ensuring there was no repeat of the events exposed in the MacPerson report, requires public authorities to undertake specific duties one of which is to consult with local communities about their race equality schemes. Within this context, it is important for community and voluntary bodies, such as the local REC, to be in a position to voice freely any criticism they may have. The Commission for Racial Equality stresses that local race equality agencies should have the autonomy to exercise just such a function.
- 4.22 While encouraged to work in partnership with local authorities, such as the police and local councils, and to seek funding from them, race equality organisations should have sufficient freedom, autonomy and critical space to speak out against what they may judge to be unfairness in the operation of the public services. Autonomy of this kind and the perception of its existence must remain at the heart of local race equality work.
- 4.23 In practical terms, it probably means that community groups, rather than funders, must be in a majority on any governing body. Local race equality organisations should be accountable for their work and performance to local communities, not to the public authorities that fund them.

4.24 This may imply a governing board of three or four parts (see appendix A on race equality partnerships), two, at least, consisting respectively of community groups and voluntary agencies. In the final analysis, however, the organisation must be accountable to the local communities it was set up to serve.

5. *Service range*

4.25 Closely related to resources and conditions of funding is the need to offer a wide range of possible services. The Warwickshire project's terms of reference envisage any new organisation serving not only black and minority ethnic community needs, but public authorities, too. But even within these parameters, there is a range of needs and of possible public authorities, each of which may require its own customised service. A race equality organisation will have to demonstrate considerable flexibility in catering for these needs, while at the same time maintain its claim to specialist expertise.

4.26 Smaller organisations might have difficulty in providing the range of services, demanded alike by communities and public bodies, but failure to satisfy demand might jeopardise any further service level agreement and funding. Conversely, of course, an insufficient budget is likely to restrict the range of services that the organisation can offer.

4.27 In deciding on service range, many of the points made in previous chapters need to be taken into account. It is clear, for example, that local communities want race equality councils to provide complainant aid and victim support: services involving one-to-one casework, usually requiring legal expertise, that are extremely human-resource hungry (and, therefore, also financially expensive). Funding for these kinds of service is not easy to obtain.

4.28 Local authorities, on the other hand, expect help with their race equality schemes, with policy development, neighbourhood renewal and regeneration, and consultation with hard-to-reach groups. These functions may indeed require voluntary sector race equality council involvement, but surely Councillor Brassington and Rano Bains have a point in asking whether some of these tasks might, as a matter of course, be undertaken by the public authority itself.

4.29 Crucially for Warwickshire, there is the issue for service range of whether to broaden a race equality organisation's remit to other equalities.

4.30 There is a little intrinsic opposition to this development from community groups, while public authorities overwhelmingly welcome the idea (possibly because they see no other way, in some parts of Warwickshire, of getting race equality onto the political agenda). But the idea has not yet been sufficiently explored in Warwickshire, or, for that matter, elsewhere, in relation to the kinds of practical local service that might be delivered. The best solution is probably to leave the issue open, allowing in any new structure for the development of such services as and when the opportunity or the need arises.

6. *Local presence and provision*

- 4.31 In recognition that three of the local authorities of Warwickshire have no race equality service, and in the light of the responses to the questionnaire, the need for local service provision and a local race equality presence appears to have been established. In addition, the predominantly rural areas of North Warwickshire and Stratford-on-Avon were insistent that any local service must explore new channels of delivery to dispersed populations. They did not want an urban-style service reliant on centrally-located offices.
- 4.32 The merits of any new proposal, therefore, will rest on its potential ability to provide truly local services in a variety of locations – not merely from offices in Rugby and Leamington Spa – and to establish a local presence accessible to all who want to use it. The areas of benefit of current race equality services do extend to rural areas, but possibly for want of resources, RECs have not yet managed to offer outreach or peripatetic facilities. In some other areas of the region, such as East Staffordshire, there have been projects exploring the possibilities of providing for rural areas.

7. *Critical mass*

- 4.33 A local race equality organisation has to be of a sufficient size to be able to undertake the jobs expected of it. It has long been realised that the old singleton race equality council, where one race equality officer was expected to do everything, is not a viable option. Often, business came to a halt if the officer was sick, on holiday, or suspended for any length of time. And yet, strip out the time-limited project work of most RECs, and there are very few core staff in post. A staff complement of five is likely to be the minimum requirement to guarantee the sustainable long-term success of the kind of race equality organisation envisaged here.
- 4.34 The achievement of critical mass is essential to a race equality council's success. Without a sufficient size it will be unable to deliver its services in sufficient quantity or quality. Its staff will be unable to specialise or to hone their skills and will rapidly relinquish any claim to be expert in their field. Overworked, they will soon lose any creative get-up-and-go and resort to the kind of routine response that inevitably fails to bring about change or improved race relations. The key to critical mass is the acquisition of income to pay for a larger complement of suitably-qualified staff.

8. *Skill sufficiency*

- 4.35 Closely related to critical mass is the need for an organisation to support the core competences necessary to deliver the diverse set of services required of it. The fewer the staff, the greater the range of expertise required of them. But this is in a social context in which public policy development and community regeneration are becoming increasingly specialised and sophisticated.

- 4.36 Race equality organisations, to be relevant, need to have staff who are sufficiently knowledgeable and skilled to provide advice and consultancy services that can be relied upon and respected. They will need to employ enough people to allow for specialisation. It is increasingly a requirement (particularly in this field) that advice and decisions should be evidence-based, with the implication that some staff at least should have current knowledge of research techniques.
- 4.37 Another requirement of the information age is that staff should keep up-to-date with their subject specialisms through training and staff development programmes.

9. *Financial viability*

- 4.38 Although increasingly judged on their ability to provide relevant services to the community, many voluntary organisations experience difficulty in obtaining funding on a regular basis to sustain their work. Race Equality councils, in particular, have been beset by a steady reduction in the proportion of their budget supported by grant aid from the Commission for Racial Equality. This funding was originally envisaged as a quantum to support the salary and pension of one or more full time race equality officer posts.
- 4.39 Under *Getting Results*, the CRE's latest funding regime, funding is directly related to proposed outcomes, and awarded on an annual basis per approved outcome, each of which must relate closely to the CRE's national community development priorities. As already mentioned previously, across the West Midlands as a whole, only one tenth of RECs' income is provided by the CRE. Local authorities contribute a fifth and the other two thirds currently comes from the Community Fund and various neighbourhood regeneration grant programmes, such as the NRF and SRB.
- 4.40 In rural areas, such as Warwickshire, regeneration funds of this kind are generally not available. Funding at the levels currently enjoyed in the West Midlands conurbation and Stoke-on-Trent is unlikely to be forthcoming. Indeed, it is doubtful that the proportion of per-capita public funding available for race equality work in Warwickshire will increase even were new boroughs and districts to agree to make a contribution in return for services provided in their localities.
- 4.41 It is apparent that unless there is some radical change in government policy towards the voluntary sector in general, and voluntary-sector race equality work in particular, local race equality organisation will continue to experience demand for services far outstripping its capacity to supply them.
- 4.42 Funding is likely to be based on the delivery of outcomes, with correspondingly little so-called core funding and most grants made on a short-term basis. In this uncertain financial climate, local race equality organisation will be strongest and most financially viable when it attracts funding from a multiplicity of sources. In the context of local government and the public services, this is only likely to occur with expansion of territorial range.

- 4.43 A proposal to expand local race equality services to cover the whole of Warwickshire may lead to an increase in organisational resources and of critical mass, but unless new money is injected, it could lead to an increase in demand with no further capacity to meet it. Nevertheless, the increased critical mass, in itself facilitating greater specialisation, may enhance the organisation's service delivery. From this point of view it may be worth exploring with neighbouring local authorities (Solihull, Coventry?) the possibility of further territorial expansion and opportunities for tapping further funding streams.
- 4.44 Paradoxically, as a result of the urgent need for race equality directors to persuade others to give their organisations money, successful directors are no longer judged on the basis of their knowledge and skills in the field of race equality, but on their entrepreneurial skills, demonstrated by the speed with which the budget of their organisation expands. A good directors is seen as one who is able to attract funding.

10. *Management expertise*

- 4.45 Management expertise is essential in any small organisation hoping to tap into a multiplicity of funding streams, to respond to the conditions imposed by different funding bodies, to elicit support from local communities, and to provide them with relevant high-quality services, as well as to mount successful projects and build a motivated team of staff. Indeed, precisely because the organisation is small and comparatively politically and financially fragile, the senior staff member must have considerable management knowledge, skills and experience. Otherwise, the organisation will fail, or at the very least, fail to live up to expectations.
- 4.46 In regard to race equality councils, the essential management skills are entrepreneurship and financial management, human resource management (with sound knowledge of employment law), project management (projects and services have to be delivered on time to specification), and, specific to the job, diversity management. A knowledge of quality, contracts, and estates management will not come amiss, either.
- 4.47 A race equality director will not be respected by a chair, executive committee, funders, public authority or private sector managers, politicians, or members of the local communities if these skills are not apparent on the job. Advice given to others on, for example, management of diversity will not be appreciated if it is apparent that the advice giver is an incompetent manager.
- 4.48 Having a good manager is a prerequisite for all successful organisational endeavour, and probably even more so in small voluntary sector service delivery agencies. Unfortunately, good highly-motivated and committed managers rarely emerge naturally, have often benefited from expensive management training, and have come at a price. Given the salaries and conditions in the voluntary sector, the quality of existing services should come as something of a surprise.

11. *Attractive staff conditions*

- 4.49 As previously explained, conditions of service in race equality councils have deteriorated in recent years. The CRE no longer underwrites race equality officer salary costs, nationally agreed pay scales have been abandoned, and the CRE/REC pension scheme has been closed to new appointees. Most REC employees have been denied success to the Local Government Pension Scheme. The majority of staff is on fixed-term contracts (making it difficult for them to obtain mortgages, for example).
- 4.50 If staff are to provide quality race equality services, they need attractive conditions, including opportunities for training and development. This can only partly be achieved through higher rates of remuneration. The financial stability of the organisation, with permanent appointments, and some measure of career progression, would enhance staff prospects and, in the longer term, improve the quality of the service on offer.

Chapter Five

Four models for local race equality work in Warwickshire and their evaluation

- 5.1 In March 2004, following interviews with key stakeholders and the return of questionnaires, TMP Worldwide prepared a draft document setting out four possible models for local race equality work in Warwickshire. The document was circulated widely to commissioning partners and stakeholders, the project steering group and race equality councils.
- 5.2 Chapter five presents the four models in turn and, taking into account consultation outcomes, discussion, and other feedback, provides an evaluation based on the eleven critical success factors explained in Chapter Four.

The four models

- 5.3 In brief, the four models were:
1. *Extension of existing local organisations*
(Rugby REC would continue to operate in Rugby but would extend its services to North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth. Warwick District REC would continue to operate in Warwick District but extend its services to Stratford-on-Avon.)
 2. *Three-fold decentralised federation*
(Rugby REC would retain its operation in Rugby borough. Warwick District REC would continue to operate in Warwick District but extend its services to Stratford-on-Avon district. A new REC would be set up for Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire. A county-wide strategic equality promotion coordinating committee would ensure a joint approach.)
 3. *Bipolar north/south division*
(The separate autonomous bodies, one for the north (North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, and Rugby) and one for the south (Warwick District and Stratford-on-Avon) would be set up, each registered as a charity and company.)
 4. *Single all-Warwickshire body*
(Existing RECS would lose their status as employers, but remain as advisory bodies. New equality forums would be created in those boroughs currently without local race equality services, and a new single independent county-wide organisation set up, employing staff and liaising closely with race equality and equality forums.)
- 5.4 Each model is now explained in more detail and evaluated in relation to the eleven critical success factors.

Model 1 Extension of existing local organisations

Brief description

- 5.5 Rugby and Warwick District Race Equality Councils develop outreach projects to serve other boroughs and districts of the county.

Legal framework

- 5.6 The Rugby REC and Warwick District REC would continue as before. Rugby REC is a charity but, in addition, would register as a company. Warwick District REC is already a registered charity and company.

Governance

- 5.7 Governance arrangements (in the form of annual elections to the executive committee) would continue as before, but both RECs would consider allocating a proportion of their executive committee places (perhaps a third) to persons from neighbouring boroughs or a neighbouring district. Consideration might also need to be given to increasing local authority or public authority representation on executive committees.

Employer scope and status

- 5.8 Both RECs would continue to employ staff. With further funding made available to Rugby REC by North Warwickshire Borough, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough and other public authorities, and to Warwickshire District REC by Stratford-upon-Avon District and other public authorities, designated outreach officers would be employed on projects providing local race equality services to the new areas.

Office location and service access

- 5.9 Rugby REC would continue to operate from its office in Rugby but would provide a dedicated local project (or projects) for Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire, based locally, in an office (or offices), possible shared with another voluntary agency, such as the CAB and VSC.
- 5.10 Warwick District REC would continue to operate from its office in Leamington Spa but would provide a dedicated local service for Stratford, based locally, possibly in an office shared with another voluntary agency, such as the CAB or VSC.

Functions in brief

- 5.11 It is envisaged that the RECs would continue to provide race equality functions as before, but with greater emphasis on providing advice and guidance and community consultation opportunities for public authorities in respect of their race equality duties. RECs would be expected gradually to extend their remit to deal with a wider range of inequalities.

Relationship with existing RECs

- 5.12 This model envisages continuity of current structures with extension of race equality services to the boroughs and districts not currently covered.

Evaluation

Clarity of vision

- 5.13 Except in relation to the area of benefit, the vision of RECs is likely to remain very much the same, as set out in the constitution and operationalised through work programmes.

Strategic involvement

- 5.14 There would be a particular need to relate closely with the public authorities and communities of North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth in the north, and Stratford-on-Avon in the south, to negotiate service level agreements, and take on board the new authorities' concerns about rural isolation, local service delivery, and the logistics of travel and travel time. It may be difficult to establish links with agencies based in neighbouring boroughs and used to operating with others on their own patch.

Community embeddedness

- 5.15 The great strength of the existing RECs is their community embeddedness, the loyalty of their existing members, and the continuity of tradition they represent. Unfortunately, these very strengths make it more difficult for them convincingly to operate services elsewhere in the county, as they are identified so closely with the communities they currently serve. At the very least, their executive committees would have to be reconstituted to include significant representation from other areas. They might have to meet at other venues in the county, too. A measure of their success would be the degree to which communities in other districts began to identify with Rugby and Leamington-based organisations.

Autonomy

- 5.16 Autonomy is a strength of the existing RECs, but may make it more difficult for them to win support from distant public authorities unused to dealing with 'critical friends'.

Service range

- 5.17 Already, even with their existing level of resources, the two RECs have difficulty in providing a full range of services, especially complainant aid and victim support and might find stretching themselves to cover new territory even more testing. Warwick District may be right in hesitating to commit itself to taking on a broader range of equalities. With more resources

economically used, however, retention of service range might become less of an issue.

Local presence and provision

- 5.18 This issue will have to be dealt with systematically if this model is to have any chance of success. Some kind of outreach or peripatetic service would have to be developed.

Critical mass

- 5.19 While it is envisaged that the existing RECs would attract more resources if their services were extended to cover other areas, it is still unlikely that they would be able in any meaningful sense to specialise, undertake research, or engage in innovative development projects. Two smaller organisations cannot expect to gain much advantage from size and specialisation.

Skill sufficiency

- 5.20 The remarks under critical mass apply here too. It is likely that, while there might be a marginal growth in staff numbers, there will be little opportunity for specialisation or major new skill acquisition.

Financial viability

- 5.21 Is this solution likely to attract major new funding from areas such as North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth and Stratford-on-Avon which do not currently fund the RECs? Conversely, are the existing RECs funded sufficiently to sustain the current services they attempt to offer? Each small organisation has also to undertake its own financial, human resource and project management, with attendant costs.

Management expertise

- 5.22 Existing RECs, it is assumed, would, at least initially, retain their current staff and management arrangements. Management expenditure would remain stable.

Attractive staff conditions

- 5.23 These would be likely to remain the same. Currently, one employee is a member of the old CRE/REC pension scheme. Thought would need to be given to how to improve staff prospects.

Model 2 Three-fold decentralised federation

Brief description

- 5.24 A three-fold federated approach maintaining the Rugby Race Equality Council, extending the services of Warwickshire District Race Equality Council to Stratford-upon-Avon, and the setting up of another body for Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire. At the same time, all three organisations would move rapidly towards a generic equalities approach.

Legal framework

- 5.25 The Rugby REC and Warwick District REC would remain as before, but measures would be taken to broaden their aims and objects to cover other dimensions of equality. In addition, an equality council would be set up as a charity and company for Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough in partnership with North Warwickshire Borough.

Governance

- 5.26 Each of the three organisations would be invited to nominate three members of its executive committee to a county-wide strategic equality promotion coordinating committee. In addition, Warwickshire public authorities would be invited to nominate up to nine additional representatives who would provide strategic direction and possibly, by agreement, approve funding applications and work programmes for the two local RECs and the new equality council.
- 5.27 The new organisation for Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire would draw two thirds of its membership from local communities and one third from public authorities.
- 5.28 Warwick District REC would change its name either to 'Warwick and Stratford REC' or 'South Warwickshire REC'. It might also choose to drop 'Race' from its title. Half of its executive committee positions would be allocated to persons from Stratford District.

Employer scope and status

- 5.29 The two existing RECS would continue to employ staff. The new organisation in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth would appoint a dedicated officer: initially this person might be employed by a borough council or neighbouring REC, but the longer-term aim would be for the new organisation to become an employer, too.

Office location and service access

- 5.30 Existing RECs would continue to operate from offices in Rugby and Leamington Spa. The new equality organisation in the north would be allocated space in Nuneaton and Bedworth, possibly with an office shared

with another local voluntary service organisation. The re-designated Warwick and Stratford REC should consider operating a local service from office accommodation (possibly shared) in Stratford. The county-wide strategic equality promotion coordinating committee would meet periodically at Shire Hall in Warwick.

Functions in brief

- 5.31 It is envisaged that the three organisations would initially provide race equality functions but would progressively broaden their remit to promote other equalities. They would also provide advice and guidance and community consultation opportunities for public authorities in respect of their race equality duties.

Relationship with existing RECs

- 5.32 There would be continuity of current structures with extension of services to boroughs not currently covered. It is assumed that all three local organisations voluntarily agree to relinquish some of their autonomy to achieve a greater degree of jointly-planned activity and coordination across the county as a whole.

Evaluation

Clarity of vision

- 5.33 The setting up of a third REC to serve North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth would lead to a clear statement of its purpose within the changing context described in Chapter Two. There would be the need to consider the broader equality remit, as well as the issues relating to service provision in the rural context, including the possibility of extending facilities to gypsies and travellers. In areas covered by the existing RECs, organisational priorities would remain much the same.

Strategic involvement

- 5.34 Initially, the new race equality council would rely on the support of North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth and would have to consider engaging closely with their agenda. Each of the three equality organisations would nominate three members of its executive committee to the county-wide strategic equality promotion coordinating committee. It remains to be seen how much autonomy over strategy each of the organisations would concede to this committee, but it is unlikely that the overarching federal structure would be able to determine a vigorous Warwickshire-wide strategy without having to refer back to the respective executives.

Community embeddedness

- 5.35 The great strength of this model (except perhaps in regard to Stratford-on-Avon) is that it retains existing levels of community involvement in Rugby

and Leamington and attempts to emulate them for North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth. Warwick District REC, too, would change its name and allocate half of its executive committee positions to persons from Stratford. The proposals avoid the parochial opposition that might be generated by the Rugby REC or Warwick District REC 'take-over' implied by Model 1.

Autonomy

- 5.36 Another strength of the model is that it guarantees the continuing autonomy of three community-based organisations. On the other hand, their autonomy may be constrained by their increased financial dependency as scarce resources are divided three-fold.

Service range

- 5.37 The same comments apply as for Model 1. Three small equality bodies will find it difficult to deliver a full range of race equality services or to diversify into other equality areas.

Local presence and provision

- 5.38 The new organisation for North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth and the reconstituted South Warwickshire REC will have to give serious thought to how they will deliver services to rural areas. This will undoubtedly involve working closely with CVSs, CABs and others.

Critical mass

- 5.39 This issue is not addressed and, indeed, is probably made worse by the three-fold model.

Skill sufficiency

- 5.40 Staff working for the three equality organisations will have to be generalists and flexible in their approach to the range of different demands made upon them. There will be little opportunity for any specialisation in function.

Financial viability

- 5.41 With micro-organisations of this kind, income is always likely to be constrained, with funding from local authorities, at least, divided three ways. There may be applications to organisations like the Community Fund, but these initiatives require large inputs of staff time if they are to stand any chance of success. Staff time in small organisations is always at a premium.

Management expertise

- 5.42 Small organisations of the kind envisaged here cannot afford the kind of salaries that are likely to attract or retain high-calibre qualified and experienced managers.

Attractive staff conditions

- 5.43 If the organisations find difficulty in making ends meet, and attract only short-term funding, staffing conditions will not improve.

Model 3 Bipolar north/south division

Brief description

- 5.44 Two separate autonomous bodies, one for the north and east and one for the south of the county.

Legal entities

- 5.45 Two separate independent equality organisations, one serving the north and east of the county and the other the south, each registered as a charity and company.

Governance

- 5.46 Boards of directors to be drawn two thirds from local communities and one third from public authorities.
- 5.47 *North and East Warwickshire.* North Warwickshire Borough, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough and Rugby Borough to be treated as constituencies for the voluntary and community groups living there, each borough grouping nominating four persons to serve on the board of the North Warwickshire organisation.
- 5.48 In Rugby, the nominations might be made by the Rugby Race Equality Council.
- 5.49 A further six persons to be selected by public authorities operating in the north of the county including the County Council and others, such as the Borough Councils, Primary Care Trusts, the Warwickshire Police Force, and the Learning and Skills Council.
- 5.50 *South Warwickshire.* Stratford-upon-Avon District and Warwick District to be treated as constituencies for the voluntary and community groups living there, each borough grouping nominating six persons to serve on the board of the South Warwickshire organisation.

5.51 In Warwick, the nominations might be made by the Warwick District Race Equality Council.

5.52 A further six persons to be selected by public authorities operating in the south of the county, including the County Council and others, such as the District Councils, the South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust, Warwickshire Police Force, and the Learning and Skills Council.

Employer scope and status

5.53 Both bodies would employ staff, each with a staffing complement sufficient to cover respectively the three boroughs in the north and east and the two districts in the south.

5.54 Rugby REC would cease to be an employer and transfer its existing staff to the new North and East Warwickshire organisation.

5.55 Warwickshire District REC would cease to be an employer and transfer its existing staff to the new South Warwickshire organisation.

Office location and service access

5.56 Consideration would have to be given to the location of the new offices but existing REC offices might (with the agreement of those RECs) be utilised. Equality officers would need to be based for a proportion of their time in these boroughs and districts not currently provided with a service.

5.57 An initial responsibility would be to establish the proposed new equality forums and ensure the continued activity of the (reformed) race equality council (forums).

5.58 In addition to its main office, each organisation would establish local service access points to cover all of its areas. Shared accommodation with other local voluntary organisations, eg. CAB, VSC, might be considered.

Functions in brief

5.59 Both organisations would retain a primary race equality function but would gradually expand their remit across a wider range of social inequalities.

5.60 Resources might limit the scope and range of local equalities work. Whereas it is to be hoped that some level of complainant aid and victim support service would be offered, it might prove necessary to prioritise community development and policy advice work.

Relationship with existing RECs

5.61 If they so decided, the two RECs would continue to meet and advise the new bodies, and nominate to their boards. But the RECs would cease to be employers and funding would be directed to and through the new bodies.

Evaluation

Clarity of vision

- 5.62 Two new autonomous bodies would allow organisational aims, objects, functions and services to be reconsidered and provide fresh opportunities to install performance management systems. The scale of the reorganisation is likely to require advertisement of posts and appointment of managers who would be expected to demonstrate their virtuosity in delivering the organisation's vision.

Strategic involvement

- 5.63 The new organisations would have boards of directors drawn two thirds from local communities and one third from public authorities. These would be carefully balanced to ensure representation of community groups and public authorities from each of the constituent boroughs or districts. The structure of governance may ensure effective strategic involvement and positioning.

Community embeddedness

- 5.64 It would be possible to retain the existing RECs as advisory bodies, but, realistically, the new structure would render them obsolete. The success of the selection process for the two boards would be a mark of ownership but is likely to require a considerable development input. Ways would also have to be explored of providing feedback to communities on the new organisations' work. The achievement of community ownership would have to be a priority of the bipolar north/south model.

Autonomy

- 5.65 The two thirds community majority on the board should guarantee autonomy, although the proposal that the other third should be drawn from public authorities might lead to concern that the scope for independent criticism would be constrained.

Service range

- 5.66 The new organisations' territorial expansion should result in increased staffing and the capacity to deliver a greater range of services. The new organisations would retain a primary race equality function but would gradually expand their remit, especially in new areas, to a wider range of social inequalities. The potentially larger size of organisations might enable them to offer complainant aid and victim support services.

Local presence and provision

- 5.67 The new organisations would have to explore new ways of working to provide services in North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, and Stratford-on-Avon. Success would be closely monitored by boards of directors, with

proportional representation from these areas, thus ensuring more even distribution of benefits.

Critical mass

- 5.68 There would be greater critical mass and more possibilities for specialisation than in models 1 and 2.

Skill sufficiency

- 5.69 More staff should mean a greater range of expertise but whether this would be sufficient to enable the organisations to undertake research or to offer credible consultancy to public authorities remains to be seen.

Financial viability

- 5.70 Potential funding sources would increase but so also would the demands from local authorities for high quality services and value for money as a condition of grant aid. Overall, however, with the political backing of the local authorities, the twin organisations are likely to become more financially sustainable.

Management expertise

- 5.71 Larger organisations are likely to attract more manager applications to better paid management jobs. Their success will continue to be judged on their ability to bring in new or extra money.

Attractive staff conditions

- 5.72 Larger organisations may be in a better position to offer staff improved conditions, including permanent contracts and staff development. The employer pension contribution to personal pensions could be increased if there was funding to do so.

Model 4 Single all-Warwickshire body

Brief description

- 5.73 Existing RECs would lose their status as employers, new equality forums would be created in those boroughs currently without local race equality services, and a new single independent county-wide organisation set up.

Legal entity

- 5.74 A single independent county-wide equality organisation registered as a charity and company.

Governance

- 5.75 A board of directors would be constituted with two thirds of its membership drawn from local communities and one third from public authorities.
- 5.76 Each district of Warwickshire would nominate two board members from their communities (ten in total) selected as follows:
- Rugby Borough by the existing Rugby REC.
 - Warwick District by the existing Warwick District REC.
 - Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough* by an interim equality committee prior to the more formal creation of an equality forum.
 - North Warwickshire Borough* by an interim equality committee prior to the formal creation of an equality forum.

(* Alternatively Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire might wish to combine their efforts to set up a single equality forum to serve both areas.)

- Stratford-upon-Avon District by an interim equality committee prior to the more formal creation of an equality forum.
- 5.77 Local Strategic Partnerships to set up, or make use of an existing Diversity Sub-committee in order to select six persons as board members to represent public authorities operating in the county (to include the County Council and others such as the Primary Care Trusts, the Warwickshire Police Force, and the Learning and Skills Council).

Employer scope and status

- 5.78 The organisation would employ staff. It would have a minimum staffing complement of a chief executive, support staff and equality officers (a minimum of five officers, one per borough/district).
- 5.79 Rugby and Warwick RECs would cease to be employers, transferring, with appropriate safeguards, staff on permanent contracts to the new organisation. Staff on fixed-term contracts might be transferred or allowed to work out their remaining periods in the REC. Other local race equality workers (eg. racial harassment officers) might also be attached to the new organisation.

Office location and service access

- 5.80 Equality officers would be allocated for half of their time to work in the boroughs and districts. An initial responsibility would be to establish the proposed new local equality forums and to ensure the continued activity of the (reformed) race equality council (forums). In addition to its central office, the organisation would have local bases in current REC accommodation or shared accommodation with other local voluntary organisations, eg. CAB and VSC.

Functions in brief

- 5.81 The new organisation initially would rely on the support of the existing race equality forums for direction but, as local equality bodies were developed, it would gradually shift its remit and deal with a wider range of social inequalities.
- 5.82 As resources would be finite, it would be necessary to prioritise the various possible functions, such as community development and policy advice, but it would, if possible, be desirable to retain some level of complainant aid and victim support service.

Relationship with existing RECs

- 5.83 If they so decided, the two existing RECs would continue to meet and advise the new body and nominate to its board. But they would cease to be employers and local authority funding would be directed to and through the new all-Warwickshire body.

Evaluation

Clarity of vision

- 5.84 The aims, objects, functions and services would be arrived and agreed at through a process of consultation between funders, public authorities and community groups. A chief executive with management credentials would be appointed to give direction to the new organisation.

Strategic involvement

- 5.85 The new organisation would have a board of directors drawn from across the county, two thirds from local communities and one third from public authorities. Each borough and district would nominate two board members from their communities. The county-wide or district LSP would nominate one third of the board or, failing this, other arrangements for selecting public authority representatives would be put in place. The county-wide selection process should enable the new organisation to gain a grip on the strategic context and to position itself to maximum effect.

Community embeddedness

- 5.86 With a proportionately smaller number of community representatives involved in governance, community ownership could prove a weakness. In an effort to combat this, the old RECs would be persuaded to continue as advisory bodies to the new board and, in new areas, equality committees would be set up for the same purpose.
- 5.87 Employees of the new body would devote some of their time to developing and sustaining five (or possibly four) autonomous councils or forums to advise

the board. By these means, the new organisation could benefit from the community embeddedness and approach of the old race equality councils.

Autonomy

- 5.88 The two thirds community majority on the board should guarantee autonomy, although the proposal that the other third should be drawn from public authorities might lead to concern that the scope for independent criticism would be constrained. The insistence on county-wide representation, however, might make it extremely difficult for any faction to dominate the board and dictate the agenda.

Service range

- 5.89 Larger size might permit the organisation to offer a wider service range. In any case, only a larger organisation is likely to be in a position to undertake professional legal complainant aid and victim support. The organisation would retain a primary race equality function but, in new areas, would develop local equality bodies and gradually shift its remit to deal with a wider range of social inequalities.

Local presence and provision

- 5.90 The Warwickshire-wide organisation would be in a position to develop distinctly urban services, as well as rural ones appropriate to North Warwickshire and Stratford. Board members from rural areas would expect the new organisation to have a comprehensive local presence.

Critical mass

- 5.91 This model scores most points on critical mass. It might also be able to add to that mass, in a way that only a county-wide service could, by entering into strategic partnerships with neighbouring boroughs and cities such as Solihull and Coventry (although this proposal is not part of the brief and remains to be explored).

Skill sufficiency

- 5.92 This model provides the greatest scope for specialisation, staff development, and the emergence of areas of professional expertise.

Financial viability

- 5.93 A larger county-wide unit should be able to attract more income and would not be in competition with other race equality bodies for county or district resources. It might also be in a position to employ specialist staff to manage accounts and write funding applications.

Management expertise

- 5.94 A larger organisation, able to pay a larger salary, should be in a position to attract a high-calibre manager with the expertise to lead the organisation on to greater achievement.

Attractive staff conditions

- 5.95 A larger organisation is likely to be in a better position to improve staff conditions on pay, contract permanency, staff development and pension contributions.

How is any new structure to be put into place?

- 5.96 The four models described above offer different ways for delivering a local race equality service across the county as a whole. They describe the different possible means of delivery but leave unanswered the question of how the model that is eventually chosen is to be practically installed. This issue of agency: who is to undertake the requisite organisational development and how, with what resources, and when, is crucial to deliberations on the choice of model.
- 5.97 For model 1, and may be even for elements of 3, it might be possible to persuade the existing race equality councils to play a lead role in the organisational development necessary. For model 2, it is likely that the boroughs of North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth would have to facilitate the creation of the third equality council, and the county council actively encourage the county-wide federation. The constitutional development work required in relation to models 3 and 4 would have to be initiated by the commissioning partner or an agency selected by them.
- 5.98 The county-wide structure, envisaged in the case of model 4, would require the dedication of considerable human and financial resources to bring it in to being. It is worth asking at this stage whether there is sufficient political and corporate collective will to launch such a radical initiative, even were it to be considered the optimum solution to local race equality service provision in Warwickshire.
- 5.99 The public authority responses, so far, reveal a reluctance to make unambiguous commitments to support any of the proposed initiatives financially. Is there sufficient will to see through any radical new initiative and who is going to shoulder overall responsibility?

Chapter Six

Recommendations to commissioning partners and stakeholders

1. To distribute this report widely to all interested parties and to hold further consultation on the recommendations that follow and the respective strengths and weaknesses of the four models for local race equality work in Warwickshire, in an effort to achieve agreement on, and support for, the way forward.
2. To extend local race equality service coverage to all the boroughs and districts of Warwickshire.
3. To develop suitable services for some, or all, of the following groups:
 - all Warwickshire communities (including majority white communities) which need them.
 - black and minority ethnic communities living in urban or rural areas.
 - new immigrant groups, asylum seekers and refugees.
 - mixed-race families.
 - gypsies and travellers.
 - visitors and tourists.
4. To ensure that local race equality organisation has the resources to provide advice, guidance and constructive criticism to public authorities on their race equality duties, assisting them in the processes of consultation and impact assessment.
5. To encourage arrangements for partnership working and collaboration that make it easier to move towards, or take on, a broader equality remit.
6. To recognise and to reflect, as far as possible in resource allocated, the desire expressed by black and minority ethnic communities for local complainant aid, casework, and victim support services.
7. To consider the proposed models for race equality work in Warwickshire, to assess their respective strengths and weaknesses against the eleven critical success factor criteria (as applied in Chapter Five), and to select the model most suited to delivering the services required to all areas of the county. (Models 1 and 2 are strongest on community embeddedness, organisational continuity and autonomy, while 3 and 4 are likely to improve strategic involvement, service range, critical mass, financial viability and management expertise).

8. To take into account the scale of intervention required to realise the preferred model and to identify the agency, resources and timescale necessary to bring it into being.
9. If models 3 or 4 are chosen, to explore the possibility of extending territorial range and potential sources of funding by approaching Solihull Metropolitan Borough and/or Coventry City with proposals for collaboration.
10. To seek commitments to fund local race equality work on an ongoing basis from all the boroughs and districts of Warwickshire and other public authorities.
11. In relation to models requiring innovation in governance, to assist in making arrangements to ensure each borough/district is represented on the board(s) by community groups and public authorities drawn for those areas.
12. For stakeholders to define very clearly what exactly they expect any new local race equality structure to deliver.
13. To make sure that any new race equality organisation provides strategic leadership in equality matters and is suitably positioned to do so. Such an organisation should be expected to produce its own strategic and/or business plan.
14. To explore further the potential, in regard to matters of strategic planning, governance, inclusivity and connectivity, for relating proposed organisational development for delivering local race equality services to Warwickshire's emerging Local Strategic Partnership infrastructure.
15. To recognise that stability and critical mass are prerequisites for organisational specialisation, skill development, and improvement in service quality and range.
16. Whichever model is selected, to make strenuous efforts to preserve and extend the community representative nature of the old race equality councils. (In model 4, they would be expected to continue as advisory forums.) In areas without race equality councils, to assist in developing representative equality forums.
17. To commission further research on how best to deliver race equality services in predominantly rural locations.
18. In any new arrangement, to improve local race equality organisation employees' employment conditions, attempting, where possible, to pay good rates, offer advantageous pension arrangements, and reduce the number of fixed-term contracts.
19. To ensure the remuneration and conditions of managers are sufficiently attractive to attract high-calibre candidates.

20. To ensure that any new local race equality organisation has a sufficient staff development and training budget.

APPENDIX A

WEST MIDLANDS RACE EQUALITY PARTNERSHIPS

1. **Current situation**

Three local race equality partnerships have been set up in the West Midlands each replacing or supplementing preceding local race equality organisations. They are:

- Birmingham Race Action Partnership
- Race Equality Sandwell
- Walsall Strategic Race Equality Partnership.

Of these two remain extant, but Walsall has closed. Elsewhere in the region, work is proceeding on the development of local race equality services through partnership, as in Wolverhampton and Warwickshire. Race Equality West Midlands is currently negotiating a new contract to fill the vacuum caused by the closure of Walsall Strategic Race Equality Partnership.

2. **Birmingham Race Action Partnership (BRAP)**

(i) *Background*

The Birmingham Race Action Partnership developed from the All Different All Equal Campaign launched in Birmingham in 1995, itself an attempt to fill the gap left by the demise of the Birmingham Race Equality Council in the early 1990s. The initiative was intended as a response to the CRE-commissioned KPMG report and recommendations on race equality councils, the review of the sufficiency of the 1976 Race Relations Act, the 1997 PSI survey on diversity and disadvantage, and the McPherson report. There was a recognition that a new approach to local race equality in Birmingham was needed to tackle issues of institutional racism highlighted by McPherson, the relative failure of public policies designed to address racial discrimination and disadvantage, the weaknesses in inter-agency collaboration, growing 'consultation fatigue' (with corresponding failure to improve services), and the marked increase in the city's ethnic minorities (one third of the population in 2001).

(ii) *Aim*

BRAP was set up to be a strategic multi-agency partnership aimed at improving the way institutions dealt with issues of race equality in employment and service delivery. This was to be achieved by developing collaborative working between the major public bodies and involving black

and ethnic minority communities in meaningful decision-making about their services and neighbourhoods.

BRAP enthusiastically explained its philosophy as follows:

‘The race agenda is not an add-on but an integral component of the way organisations do business... No more tokenistic attempts at community governance. Let us, the local community, engage in the decision-making processes and show you what effective progressive change is all about ...

BRAP aims to bring together Birmingham’s major stakeholders, community and voluntary sector organisations, community activists and you, the people, in issue-based forums to develop mainstream policy and practice... To ensure that the services delivered to our black communities are appropriate, effective and meet our needs, to ensure that employment, retention and promotion opportunities are equally available to us all in all sectors. For the first time, there are no middle people; people from the heart of our communities have direct access to key decision makers to work with to influence change.

The city’s stakeholders are ready to hear your voice. Are you ready to make your voice heard?’

(BRAP Newsletter, April 2001)

The principal aim of BRAP is ‘fundamentally to change institutional police and practice through genuine partnership working with black and minority ethnic communities’. Instrumental in this task are BRAP’s community action forums: a number of thematic or issue-based panels (eg. employment access, health and social care, housing) made up of a maximum of twelve ‘community auditors’.

(iii) ***Structure and governance***

Community auditors are elected or selected from among local Birmingham community groups on the basis of their professional, voluntary or personal knowledge and understanding of an issue and their commitment to a multi-ethnic approach. Community auditors are offered travel and child-care expenses, accredited training and up-dating, links with the higher education sector, and other kinds of support. They are also represented on, and comprise of at least fifty percent, of the BRAP governing body or board.

BRAP is a private limited company with a status independent of its partner agencies. (The five founding agencies were Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Trades (Union) Council, Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, and (since replaced by successor bodies) Birmingham and Solihull TEC and Birmingham Health Authority.) Half of the company board, therefore, is drawn from bodies in the public and voluntary sector and half from members of the communities in Birmingham.

(iv) ***Comment***

From this brief description, it would appear that BRAP focuses its work almost entirely on public authority policy development; assisting authorities to improve the scope and sensitivity of services by experimenting with innovative ways of consulting with black and minority ethnic communities and involving them in decision-making. This is only part of the story. BRAP has also succeeded in gathering around itself a cluster of community development and regeneration projects, all of which assist it in retaining its links with local Birmingham communities.

The emphasis, however, remains on strategic intervention and ensuring services developed for black and minorities are mainstreamed. Thus, BRAP was well-placed to assist the Birmingham (Local Strategic) Partnership and its members with its inclusivity objectives, and is an active and respected member of the Partnership.

BRAP does not provide services to individual clients in the form of aid to complainants of racial discrimination or support for victims of racial harassment. Two other Birmingham-based organisations: Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit and Birmingham Partnership Against Racial Harassment exist for this purpose.

BRAP has suffered criticism from some community groups for (i) undermining long-established consultation methods with traditional community groups and (ii) acting as an unsolicited mediator (without community roots) between the communities and the public authorities.

Birmingham, however, is big enough and the public authorities sufficiently departmentalised, detached and bureaucratic to give ample opportunity for all comers to contribute to improving public services, communications and employment prospects. Under the leadership of Inderjit Dehal, its first director, and Joy Warmington, his successor, BRAP has acquired and maintained an excellent reputation as a model for the future of local race equality work.

3. **Race Equality Sandwell (RES)**

(i) ***Background***

Sandwell is a borough of 283,000 people (a fifth ethnic minority) situated on the north-western border of Birmingham. Race Equality Sandwell was set up in interim form in April 2003, with the new finalised board due to come into being from April 2004.

Following widespread discussion about the future of race equality and community cohesion in Sandwell, Sandwell's Local Strategic Partnership (the Sandwell Partnership) produced a proposal for a new local race equality partnership agency. The report was based on a review of the emerging race

relations context (Sandwell had been designated a community cohesion pathfinder pilot), the closure of the Sandwell Racial Harassment Unit (following an adverse tribunal case), and a growing recognition of the inadequacy of and difficulties created by the constitution and remit of the Sandwell Ethnic Minority Umbrella Forum. It concluded that a wider partnership of public and voluntary sector partners was required to implement the provision of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. A new fully-inclusive mechanism was needed to engage ethnic communities, including white communities, and to tackle service improvement by bridging the gap between service providers and users.

Sandwell Ethnic Minority Umbrella Forum was set up in 1998 on the basis of recommendations from external consultants. Its governing body (often poorly attended) consisted of the chairs of six single ethnic minority forums drawn from the Indian, Sikh (sic), Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African-Caribbean and Yemeni communities. (Constitutional problems had been caused when the Irish had asked to join the umbrella forum.) The governing body was served by a core of three staff: a director, administrator and secretary, and a Community Funded development project was also attached. Tension arose from SEMUF's inception over whether funds should be allocated directly to the single ethnic forums or to the umbrella organisation. Nevertheless SEMUF was always viewed in the West Midlands as an example of a 'community partnership' model.

The CRE responded in detail to the LSP consultation document, stressing the importance of equality bodies being independent, free-standing agencies to ensure that independent advice and criticism could be given on race issues, at arms distance from key funders. The CRE specified that the organisation should:

- (i) be inclusive, working with and across all communities (not like SEMUF),
- (ii) be integrated and serve key stakeholders,
- (iii) have a multiple funding base,
- (iv) not be overly complex or multi-tiered,
- (v) have an elected board which would make decisions to be executed by paid officers,
- (vi) be strategic in vision, but practical in operation, and
- (vii) be realistically resourced to achieve agreed outcomes, fulfil its business plan, and meet quality assurance standards.

(ii) *Aims*

The new organisation came into being in April 2003. Race Equality Sandwell's objects were the standard ones arising from the Race Relations Act but with a nod towards generic equality:

- to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination, but especially of the kind based on colour, race or ethnicity.
- to promote equality of opportunity in Sandwell within and across the borough's public, private, voluntary and community sectors.
- to promote good relations between persons and communities of different racial groups.

The aims are augmented with a list of detailed functions, set out under headings deriving from the 1990 CRE race equality council model constitution: policy development, community development, casework and public information and education:

Policy development

- To facilitate collaboration between the public, private and community sectors, by means of the Local Strategic Partnerships and other thematic, geographical and cross-cutting partnerships, in order to promote race equality, encourage inclusivity and improve community cohesiveness.
- To assist local service providers to work individually, and in partnership with one another, the private sector, and in partnership with one another, the private sector, and the broader community, to ensure their services are delivered in an holistic manner, free of institutional racism and discrimination.
- To advise and assist public authorities on their general and specific duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and, where appropriate, to monitor and scrutinise their performance in relation to the legislation.
- To assist in identifying, assessing and monitoring functions and policies that impact on race equality, consulting groups that may be affected by those functions and policies, and making available information about the outcomes of assessment, consultation and monitoring exercises, and the benefits or services available.

Community development

- To engage with, and participate actively in plans, programmes and services aimed at alleviating disadvantage and discrimination and improving social conditions.

- To play an active role in local forums and community networks aimed at involving members of local communities in the decision-making processes that affect their lives.
- To encourage, support and empower groups, such as women, disabled and other persons, faith and youth groups, and people from black and minority ethnic communities.
- To contribute to community cohesion by playing an active part in developing a common vision, a sense of belonging, an appreciation of diversity, and strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in local schools, colleges, places of work and residential neighbourhoods.

Casework

- Either separately, as a free-standing service, or in partnership with (a) other agency(ies), to give information, advice and other support to individuals who seek assistance as a consequence of their experience of unlawful discrimination, particularly of a racial kind, in circumstances where such information, advice and support are not readily obtainable from other local agencies.
- To offer help and support to victims of racial harassment, intimidation, and violence, and other racially-motivated crime.
- To monitor closely incidents of discrimination and racially motivated crime, with a view to providing information and advice to public authorities on measures that might be taken to reduce their number.

Public information and education

- To provide information and education to members of the public and to local organisations, especially those that are members of the Local Strategic Partnership, on race and community relations with a view to dispelling misconceptions and stereotypes and promoting understanding and tolerance.
- To monitor national, regional and local media news, views and opinion about racial groups and their relations and to take action to redress misinformation and promote positive reporting about the benefits of living in a multi-racial environment.
- To monitor and take effective action against the propaganda, behaviour and campaigning of extreme nationalist and racist groups that oppose the Race Relations Act and other anti-discrimination legislation and seek to undermine good race relations and the cohesion of local communities.

General

- To undertake any other similar function compatible with the general objects.
- To work closely and in collaborative partnership with other race equality organisations within the region to fulfil these functions.

(iii) *Structure and governance*

Race Equality Sandwell's structure and governance is best understood in terms of the driving force behind the move to set it up, namely the Sandwell (Local Strategic) Partnership, and the need to accommodate elements of previous local race equality organisations, especially SEMUF (the umbrella forum) and the Sandwell Racial Harassment Unit. Race Equality Sandwell's executive committee was to be constituted in two stages: for the first year it would consist of twelve members drawn in equal numbers from the Local Strategic Partnership (6) and from the Sandwell ethnic minority forums (6). This interim executive was charged with establishing Race Equality Sandwell, pursuing its new objects and functions, securing its funding, appointing its officers and staff, and making the necessary arrangements for setting up the second and final stage executive committee to take office on 1 April 2004.

The finally-constituted executive committee would be known as the Board and consist of twenty voting members drawn from two categories (i) public authority and (ii) community, public authority representatives would be nominated by the LSP. The community category would consist of persons nominated and selected by the Community Empowerment Network (3), the Citizen's Advice Bureau (1), a voluntary women's interest group (1), the Sandwell Disability Network (1), the Youth Forum and the Interfaith Group (1).

The interim executive committee followed by the new board would employ staff safeguarded and transferred in the first instance from SEMUF and SRHU together with new appointees, but all on new or revised employment contracts. Race Equality Sandwell has just appointed (2004) a new chief executive to a post advertised at a salary of £35k-£45k.

(iv) *Comment*

The development of Race Equality Sandwell as a partnership between public authorities and community and voluntary groups has progressed relatively smoothly, assisted by the context of the new public authority duty to promote race equality, the LSP criterion of inclusivity, the Community Empowerment Network, Neighbourhood Renewal Funding and the Sandwell Community Cohesion Pathfinder Pilot. There was also a widespread realisation that the ethnic forum approach had not been a great success and that Sandwell communities needed to get their act together in the face of the growing threat from the Far Right. (The BNP gained two seats on Sandwell Council in the May 2003 council elections.) It is too early to evaluate the success of the new

partnership, but important seminars and conferences were mounted in Sandwell in 2003 on community cohesion and community development of race equality.

4. **Walsall Strategic Race Equality Partnership (WSREP)**

(i) ***Background***

Walsall is a borough in the West Midlands conurbation with a population of over 253,000 people, of which 14 per cent are from black and minority ethnic communities. Following the failure of the Walsall Race Equality Council, which was felt to have focussed unduly on immigration and language issues and to have lost strategic direction, Walsall Council, Walsall Council for Voluntary Service and the Commission for Racial Equality embarked on a joint venture to set up the Walsall Strategic Race Equality Partnership which came into being in January 1997. In March of that year, a Racial Harassment Forum was also established.

Following an unsuccessful *Getting Results* funding application for 2003 to 2004 to the Commission for Racial Equality, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council reviewed WSREP's work and achievements and decided to withhold funding, leading to wholesale staff redundancy in autumn 2003. At the same time, discussion took place between the Council, Walsall Strategic Partnership, the Commission for Racial Equality and Race Equality West Midlands on what measures to take to restore local race equality services in Walsall.

(ii) ***Aims***

Walsall SREP had the standard local race equality council aims of working towards the elimination of racial discrimination and promoting equal opportunity.

It was intended to work at a corporate level with the major public authorities in Walsall, especially Walsall MBC, as well as with private sector companies, to tackle 'the causes rather than the symptoms of discrimination'.

The emphasis was to be on offering advice, consultancy, training, policy development and joint promotions, but at a strategic level to achieve structural change over the longer term. This was interpreted as focussing on public authority policy advice, with perhaps too little emphasis on community involvement and empowerment. WSREP made it clear that it had no brief to undertake casework with individuals. Nevertheless, later, in the course of its evolution, it secured funding to set up a service for victims of racial harassment (Walsall Racial Harassment Partnership) and a network of local community-based reporting stations was established.

(iii) *Structure and governance*

WSREP began life with a steering group of 33 members. This group approved the initial work programme and began work on the WSREP constitution. The steering group included individuals from the bme communities, members of the voluntary sector and representatives of most major public bodies, including Walsall Council, Chamber of Commerce, the TEC, the police, careers service, the health authority, the local technical college (WALCAT) and Wolverhampton University. The Council for Voluntary Service played a central role in driving forward the WSREP initiative, and, for a time, the race equality officers were accommodated in the CVS office.

WSREP eventually adopted an incorporated company-style constitution in the form of a memorandum of agreement and articles of association, although the new company's aims were identical with those of the CRE's model constitution for race equality councils. The main change, considered a radical departure at the time, was a departure from the model constitution's open membership (where organisations and individuals are free to join as members providing they register their agreement with the REC's objects). In the case of the WSREP constitution, founding members were free to decide who they admitted to the company. The company framework was standard for its type, with provision for company members to be elected to a board of directors registered as a company. No restrictions or limitations were put on the proportion of board members from community and voluntary groups or public authorities. To my knowledge, the board met regularly.

The Board employed a number of staff in various capacities and the organisation functioned, at least in employment terms, much like a conventional race equality council.

(iv) *Comment*

In the six years of its existence, WSREP had three lead officers with different management style and strategic priorities. They each had to come to terms with the notoriously difficult local Walsall political environment which has recently led to the departure of the borough's senior management and the placing of Walsall council under government administration.

While much was made of the uniqueness of WSREP's strategic approach, neither the board, nor its succession of senior officers, succeeding in implementing a recognised strategy for radical institutional change in the borough. From the point of view of REWM, the Walsall model appeared to be derived from the Birmingham Race Action Partnership, but applied without the structural insights and innovation of directors such as Inderjit Dehal or Joy Warmington. WSREP failed, not because of any fault in the partnership model adopted, but because it never succeeded in operating strategically or as a strategic partnership. It never embraced the opportunities provided by the Walsall Partnership or its Community Empowerment Network, remaining to the end on the periphery of Walsall's neighbourhood regeneration and renewal initiatives.

5. Conclusion

The partnership model of local race equality work assists organisations in relating public authority service improvement for black and ethnic minorities to community regeneration, development and empowerment initiatives. The race equality partnership forms an inclusive bridge between service providers and users, assisting or strengthening other government initiatives with similar aims, such as the Local Strategic Partnership or the Community Empowerment Network.

There is a tendency, however, to focus on the issues of public service improvement and the eradication of institutional racism, possibly at the expense of community development, casework with individuals, or victim support.

As with traditional race equality councils, partnerships may demonstrate key strengths and weaknesses in regard to purpose, leadership, local support, staffing, user focus, and adequacy in resourcing. When they fail, it is usually due to the absence of one or more of the following factors. Partnerships need:

(i) *Purpose*

- to be clear as to purpose, objects and modes of operation.
- to have a realistic local strategy and ability to implement it.
- to exhibit a creative tension between a dominant collective racial equality purpose and ethnic sectional interests.

(ii) *Leadership*

- to have effective governance and competent professional officers.
- to have a chair respected in the community with some political leverage.
- to have a smart, hard-working and effective director with a clear vision for local racial equality work and a determination to realise it.
- to have a director with knowledge and experience of human resource, project and financial management.

(iii) *The support of local communities*

- to be embedded in local community networks and supported by ethnic minority groups.

(iv) *Adequate staffing levels and skilled personnel*

- to have skilled and experienced staff who are capable of adding value through their work.
- to be able to pay good wages and provide acceptable conditions to attract and keep high-calibre staff.

(v) *Strong user focus*

- to monitor the quality of services provided and to ensure outcomes are achieved in full.

(vi) *Resources*

- to be allocated or to win resources sufficient for purpose.
- to draw on multiple funding sources.
- to achieve some degree of longer-term financial security.

APPENDIX B

Methodology and fieldwork

Information sources

The research report drew on the following sources of information about race equality arrangements in Warwickshire:

- The Race Equality West Midlands 2003 audit of the resources of West Midlands race equality councils and partnerships.
- Warwickshire County Council information on local authority funding of race equality work.
- Responses to the TMP questionnaire (1) on local race equality work sent to Warwickshire community groups.
- Responses to TMP questionnaire (1) on local race equality work sent to Warwickshire voluntary sector agencies.
- Responses to TMP questionnaire (2) on local race equality work sent to Warwickshire public authorities, including borough and district authorities and health trusts.
- Face-to-face interviews with race equality personnel, borough and district council officers, a leading county councillor, public authority members and officers, and others.
- Consultation and correspondence on the four models offered for race equality work in Warwickshire.

Questionnaires for community groups

Questionnaires (1) were sent to 60 community groups of which 18, or 30% replied. The following community group respondents identified themselves:

Ahmadiyya Muslim Association (Mohammed Salim, President)

Amani, Nuneaton

Asian Community Equality Centre (Cllr D S Kundi, Chief Executive)

Benn Partnership Centre (Gita Natarajan, Centre Manager)

Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Rugby (Hardip S Bassan)

Guru Narak Day Centre, Nuneaton

ISTC Community Union

Indian Welfare Association, Nuneaton (A Pathan, Secretary)

NABEMA, Nuneaton (J S Matharu, Secretary)

Nuneaton Caribbean Friendly Association (Thomas Douglas, Chairperson,
Debbie Foote, Secretary)

Rugby Race Equality Council (James Shera, Chair)

Rugby Warwickshire Chinese Society (Ms Wen Dou, Chairperson)

Rugby West Indian Association (Norris McKenzie)

Satkaar Asian Elders Day Care Services (R S Birla, Chair of Management
Committee)

Shree Krishna Community Centre, Leamington Spa (Mr S Gupta, Manager)

Sikh Community Centre, Warwick and Leamington Spa (Pam Nagi)

Questionnaires for voluntary sector agencies

Questionnaires (1) were sent to 12 voluntary sector agencies of which seven, or 58%, replied. Responses were received from the following voluntary sector agencies.

Mid-Warwickshire Mind (Karen Martin, Acting Manager)

North Warwickshire Council for Voluntary Service (Jacquie Allcott)

Rugby Council for Voluntary Service (Nicholas Wharton)

Stratford-on-Avon Citizens' Advice Bureau (Sara Cole, Deputy Manager)

Stratford-on-Avon Council for Voluntary Service (Alan Bartlett)

Warwick Districts Citizens' Advice Bureau (Eve Small, Advice Work
Supervisor)

Warwickshire Rural Community Council (Alison Chappell, Chief Officer)

Questionnaires for public authorities

Questionnaires (2) were sent to 16 public authorities of which eight, or 50%, replied. Responses were received from the following public authorities:

Connexions Coventry and Warwickshire (Debbie Lynne, Delivery Manager)

North Warwickshire Borough Council (Robert Beggs, Corporate Services Officer)

North Warwickshire Primary Care Trust (Rano Bains, Race Equality Officer)

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (Christine Kerr, Chief Executive)

Rugby Borough Council (Karen Pollard, Head of Performance and Development)

South Warwickshire General Hospitals NHS Trust (Mrs D Hartley, Equality and Diversity Coordinator)

Stratford-on-Avon District Council (Robert Walsh, Head of Policy and Public Relations)

Warwick District Council (Bernadette Allen, Policy and Projects Officer)

Interviews

Face-to-face interviews were held with the following people:

Bernadette Allen, Policy and Projects Officer, Warwick District Council

Janet Alty, Chair Regensis

Rano Bains, Race Equality Officer, North Warwickshire Primary Care Trust

Cllr Martin Brassington

Gerry Hutchinson, Chief Executive and Robert Beggs, Section Leader, Policy Support, North Warwickshire Borough Council

Karen Pollard, Head of Performance and Development, and Nick Moore, Equality and Performance Manager, Rugby Borough Council

James Shera, Chair, Rugby Race Equality Council

Robert Walsh, Head of Policy and Public Relations, Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Consultation and feedback on the four models

Following consultation on the four models, various community groups and associations wrote to TMP to express their support as follows:

For model 1

Gurdev Singh Bains, Sikh Community Association, Rugby

Ish Mistry, President, Bharat Sevak Samaj, Rugby

Gita Natarajan, Centre Manager, Benn Partnership Centre, Rugby

James Shera, Chair, Rugby Race Equality Council

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11. Respondents from Warwickshire communities, community associations, voluntary agencies, and public authorities (especially at local borough and district councils).
12. James Shera, Chair, and Junaid Hussain, Acting Director, of Rugby Race Equality Council.