

# TACKLING RACIAL INEQUALITY

## Good Practice Case Studies

**LB Lambeth**  
Promoting progression for Black, Asian  
and Multi-Ethnic groups

The London Borough of Lambeth Adults and Health directorate introduced a programme to increase diversity and representation within its staff, following a review which found an under-representation of Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic staff at senior levels. They have worked with staff to develop a promoting progression forum, supporting a number of staff in moving forwards with their careers.



### Problem we were seeking to address

Lambeth Council has a sustained and coordinated programme to increase diversity and representation within its staff. This process began with an independent review into Race and Diversity carried out by Patrick Vernon OBE to advise, give guidance and make recommendations around racism and other aspects of protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act. This was in response to concerns raised by Black and Multi-Ethnic members of staff in relation to inequality in the workplace, and the need to truly represent our borough's diversity in support of our corporate mission to deliver fair and effective services and reducing inequality.

Patrick Vernon, a trained mediator, has decades of experience working in senior management in the voluntary and public sector. This background underpinned the approach to create an environment of trust, build confidence and understanding, and was used to allow staff to openly reflect on their experiences of working for the council, and to develop clear recommendations for the council to act on.

Whilst there is a high proportion of staff from a Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic background across the adults and health workforce, our data showed that there was under-representation by staff in this group at more senior levels.

### Contact information:



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### The solution or actions:

A few years ago, prior to the report into Race and Diversity in Lambeth, an article published in The Guardian reported on institutional racism within the council. In response, a group of black managers at Head of Service level from our Adults and Health directorate were asked to engage with staff from a Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic background. This led to the establishment of safe spaces through the Promoting Progression forum where staff could discuss issues that impacted on them such as the working environment and culture, recruitment, career progression, intersectionality and much more. The aim was to build a better working environment enabling staff to reflect on their experiences but to also inform senior managers with regard to the actions they felt needed to be taken to make progress on race equality which would also impact positively on our residents.

The Promoting Progression forum has developed over time and we are starting to see the fruits of their focus including:

- Attending monthly meetings
- The design of an action plan to tackle race inequality was shared with the senior management team
- Inspiring Your Development programme including workshops on job application interview skills preparation
- The group have developed as a peer to peer learning forum, supporting each other when engaging in the recruitment process
- Receive regular presentations from hiring managers to help to provide clarity about job roles prior to them being advertised
- The establishment of a resource pool of managers available to support colleagues with preparation of applications and preparation for interview
- Celebrating diversity and inclusion and intersectionality through observing key events such as Black History Month, International Women's Day and Pride

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### **Desired outcomes/delivered outcomes:**

Staff in Adults and Health directorate have been involved in the co-design of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan which includes a number of actions to be implemented between 2022 to 2025. The actions are in line with the recommendations from the Race and Diversity in Lambeth Council report covering six key themes:

- Career Progression
- A Healthy Working Environment
- Transparency and HR
- Healing and Resilience
- Recognition and Reward
- Scrutiny and Accountability

Over 40 actions and anticipated success measures are included in the Action Plan covering these themes.

### **Learning/evaluation:**

Learning and evaluation of progress made against the action plan will be ongoing. A directorate EDI senior sponsors group of Assistant Directors and a working group have been established to ensure good governance, share best practice and capture any lessons learnt. The plan will be reviewed six monthly and we will consult with the Promoting Progression for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff to seek their views on progress made.

Several people that regularly attend the sessions have made progression in their careers or secured opportunities at more senior levels.