

COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Date: 3 February 2000

Time: 9.30am

Venue: Committee Room 1, National Assembly Building

Title: Stephen Lawrence Enquiry Report

The Committee is invited:

- to note the attached note of a meeting on the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry report (Annex A); and
- to agree the proposals for a steering group to take matters forward (Annex B).

Annex A

Committee on Equality of Opportunity

NOTE OF A MEETING ON THE STEPHEN LAWRENCE INQUIRY REPORT: 19 JANUARY 2000

Attendance: Richard Edwards AM

Helen Mary Jones AM

David Melding AM

Kirsty Williams AM

Jazz Iheanacho

Race Equality First

Rob Cater

Race Equality First

Charles Willie

Public Administration, Equality and Public
Appointments Division

Julie Bragg

Committee Secretariat

Mark Christopher

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1. The Equal Opportunities Committee had invited volunteers from each party to consider how to take forward the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and to report back to the Committee. This would enable the Assembly to provide strategic direction and achieve practical and visible actions on this important topic.

Action - The Committee would be invited to consider a proposal that the group of volunteers should continue in existence as a steering group in order to monitor progress on the matters below. Subject to the Committee's views officials would prepare draft terms of reference (now attached at Annex B). (NB. Standing Orders 8.26 to 8.29 on the Establishment of Sub Committees would apply to these proposals, if the group were to constitute a formal sub-committee of the Committee.)

Education

2. The Chair had received a response to her letter to Rosemary Butler on recommendations relating to education. As recommendation 67 dealing with the curriculum was so important, it was thought that the Committee needed to discuss this as soon as possible because there was a perception that these issues were not being addressed effectively. Recommendation 68 concerned the monitoring and attainment of standards within schools. The Policy Division responsible for this work was currently initiating a consultation and it was expected that some good work will emerge from this.

3. Recommendation 69 covered school strategies in response to the enquiry report and their subsequent monitoring and inspection by ESTYN. Concerns were expressed about the training of School Governors and the current lack of monitoring of the ethnic origins of Governors.

Action - Subject to the Chair's agreement, Committee Secretariat would invite officials to provide a paper for the Committee on the current situation and invite Rosemary Butler and ACCAC to an early Committee meeting. The Committee would also be invited to consider whether to establish a working party of officials to take forward the emerging action points on education more effectively. The group could include ACCAC, ESTYN, Race Equality First and National Assembly officials and the South Wales Police.

Conference

4. A national conference, possibly entitled "MacPherson, One Year On", was being planned by Race Equality First for September/October 2000. This would be organised in partnership with the Assembly. The Cabinet and Assembly Members would be invited to become involved in other events such as an Awareness Week and would also be kept informed of Local Authority events.

Assembly Leadership

5. It was important for the Assembly to lead from the front and do all that it could by itself. In addition, the

Committee should be putting resolutions to the Assembly with the aim of initiating action by other public bodies on the Report's recommendations. Most importantly, this would involve improving the public appointment process. It should also be worth involving the Partnership Council and private sector in this process.

Committee Secretariat
January 2000

Annex B

STEPHEN LAWRENCE INQUIRY - STEERING-GROUP PROPOSAL

1. At the meeting on the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry on 19 January it was agreed to produce a short paper to enable the standing Committee on Equality of Opportunity to give consideration to:

- i. the terms of reference of a steering-group (Appendix 1);
- ii. the establishment of a small working party of appropriate officials and external bodies to take forward the education recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report (Appendix 2).

Background

2. The working party of volunteers had been invited to give consideration as to how the Assembly should take forward the recommendations from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report. In particular to give consideration to the education recommendations in the report.

3. There are three recommendations (67-69) in the report that are specific to education. Recommendation 67 relates to valuing cultural diversity and the National Curriculum. Recommendation 68 refers to strategies that schools and local education authorities should adopt to tackle racism and recommendation 69 proposing that implementation of these strategies form part of the school standards inspection regime.

Argument

4. There is an expectation that the Assembly needs to show leadership in Wales in tackling the underlying issue of institutionalised racism.

5. There also exists within the black and ethnic minority community in Wales a great deal of scepticism with regard to the extent that the Assembly has taken account of the education

recommendations in the MacPherson Report. This scepticism has deepened in what the black and ethnic minority community perceive as a lack of understanding of the issues by the Assembly as demonstrated, they argue, by the lack of explicit reference to race in the recently developed Personal and Social Education Framework.

6. As a way of demonstrating leadership, to better address the education issues and as a means to plan how recommendations 67-69 can be progressed, the steering-group considered the need for a working party to be established. This would be made up of representatives from:

- i. Relevant National Assembly for Wales Divisions
- ii. Estyn
- iii. ACCAC
- iv. Black and ethnic minority organisations
- v. The South Wales Police.

7. The specific role envisaged for this group would be on the basis of a partnership approach to formulate and progress an action plan to take forward the education recommendations of the report, utilising both internal and external expertise.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that the Committee endorses:

- i. The terms of reference for the steering-group in Appendix 1;
- ii. The establishment of a working party to take forward the education issues, with a task and finish mandate on the basis of the terms of reference in Appendix 2.

**Equality Policy Unit
January 2000**

APPENDIX 1

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE LAWRENCE INQUIRY REPORT STEERING-GROUP: TERMS OF REFERENCE

This steering-group will work to and under the authority of the Standing Committee for Equality of Opportunity.

Role

The Steering-Group will give consideration to, and make recommendations on:

- practical and appropriate actions necessary for the effective implementation of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report in Wales;
- how the National Assembly for Wales and other organisations fulfil their responsibilities and obligations under the report;
- mechanisms to inform, advise and raise public awareness of the issues and recommendations contained in the report throughout Wales;
- how best practice information can be identified and disseminated for effectively and positively combating racism in all its forms, in particular institutional racism* as defined within the report;
- actions and progress regarding the implementation of agreed objectives;
- resource requirements to achieve the stated and agreed objectives;
- how the National Assembly can provide public accountability so that agreed objectives relating to the implementation of the Stephen Lawrence recommendations are not ignored or undermined by those charged with the responsibility for implementing them.

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

Membership

The membership of the steering-group will comprise four nominated representatives from the Standing Committee for Equality of Opportunity and a representative from the Equality Policy Unit, supported by Committee Secretariat.

Mode of Operation

The Steering-Group will meet quarterly for a period to be agreed by the Standing Committee for Equality of Opportunity but not beyond the 2 year review of the curriculum commencing September 2000.

The Steering-Group will make recommendations to the Committee of Equality of Opportunity on how the National Assembly for Wales and its ASPB's should fulfil their responsibilities and

obligations identified in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report. The Committee of Equality of Opportunity will provide guidance and agree actions to be undertaken by the Steering-Group.

APPENDIX 2

STEPHEN LAWRENCE INQUIRY REPORT EDUCATION WORKING PARTY – TERMS OF REFERENCE

This task and finish working party will work to and under the authority of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Steering-Group of the Standing Committee for Equality of Opportunity.

Role

The Working Party will:

- Consider and recommend practical and appropriate actions for taking forward the education recommendations (67-70) of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report in Wales;
- Advise and provide recommendations on guidance on best practice methods to effectively and positively combat racism in schools;
- Provide advice on progress regarding the practical implementation of agreed objectives.

Membership

The membership of the working party will be made up of a representative from relevant National Assembly Divisions (NAED, EPU), Race Equality First, Estyn, ACCAC, the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association, South Wales Police and the Commission for Racial Equality.

Mode of Operation

The Working Party will meet on a regular basis for a period to be agreed by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry steering-group but not beyond the 2 year review of the curriculum.

The Working Party will make recommendations and proposals to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry steering-group who will provide guidance and agree actions to be undertaken by the Working Party.