

## Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260225 or Natalie Hill, Equality and Diversity Officer, on 01743 260236.

#### 1 Purpose of Report

This report informs the Human Resources Committee of the progress to date on this group, as requested by the Fire Authority.

#### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

#### 3 Background

In February 2006 the Fire Authority authorised a one off funding to this group of £5,000 for 2006/07, we have been involved in this group from its inception and attend many of the additional sub groups.

#### 4 Progress on the Group

The group itself has made a lot of progress; information on this is attached at the appendix. The Equality and Diversity Officer also attends this group and can monitor the progress to date through attending these meetings. Attached at the appendix is an overview report on Equality and Diversity for this group for 2004-2008.

Progress and activities to date include:

- Annual work and event programmes
- Hate Crime Campaign
- Migrant Communities work
- Equality Awards
- Working in partnership on events such as Rock Against Racism and Gay History Month.

- Local Strategic Partnership partner support for work on equality
- Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service are holding the Equalities Forum meeting on 2 December 2008 at Bridgnorth Fire Station

Minutes of the Equalities Forum meetings are also used as a communication tool. For example, a presentation was given to this group regarding our Integrated Risk Management Planning consultation or our positive action events. It is also used for communication by all of the group members.

## **5 Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **6 Legal Comment**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **7 Equality Impact Assessment**

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report as it is an update on progress. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

## **8 Appendix**

Overview Report on Equality & Diversity 2004-2008

## **9 Background Papers**

### **Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority**

8 February 2006, Report 18 – Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*

## Overview Report on Equality & Diversity 2004- 2008

### Recommendations

1. That the Equality Forum & Executive note the achievements of work with partners on Equality & Diversity & making Shropshire a more welcoming place.
2. Note that this report supplements the Review of the Equality & Diversity Forum carried out by Sushell Ohri Associates in February 2008.
3. That these reports provide a basis for forward planning beyond 2008

### 1. Background

This report has been compiled to provide evidence that *significant* progress has been made on Equality & Diversity in Shropshire since 2004. However, we are aware that there are on-going challenges and that this *level* of progress needs to be maintained in the future – particularly as Shropshire moves to one council.

In 2004 the Shropshire Partnership commissioned Sushel Ohri Associates to produce a report 'Step Change for Diversity Equality in Shropshire' with a number of recommendations (including the formation of the 'Shropshire Equality Forum' which had its first meeting in March 2005). This report followed the demise of the Race Equality Council's in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire and a growing recognition that diversity & equality was a growing national, regional and local level issue.

Since 2004 the national & regional picture of diversity policy & practice has developed rapidly with important developments:

- The establishment of a unified Commission for Equality & Human Rights (CEHR) chaired by Trevor Phillips.
- A single equality act covering the **six strands**: race, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender.
- Report of the government's commission on integration and cohesion (CiC).
- The decision of Lord Justice Moses that "there is no dichotomy in funding specialist services and cohesion; equality is necessary for cohesion to be achieved". (LB Ealing v SBS)
- Promoting and addressing equality issues will now require better evidence of communities and needs "community mapping", to promote local community empowerment and engagement to tackle persistent inequalities and be more outcome focussed than process driven.

This initial report and the establishment of the Equality Forum was accompanied by a number of other initiatives including:

- Promoting diversity and social inclusion was included in the first Integrated Shropshire Community Strategy (2002) as a top priority.
- The establishment of the Equality Forum through the Shropshire Partnership with agreed terms of reference.
- Agreement by the Public Service Board (25 May 2005) to provide £60k pa funding for diversity & equality on the basis of annual reports on progress. To be reviewed at the end of the first Local Area Agreement (2006-2009).
- The appointment by Shropshire County Council of a first diversity & equality officer in x
- The development of a Strategic Equalities Group with representation from SCC Directorates, Chaired by the Corporate Director, Economy & Environment.
- The establishment of SCC staff support groups for Black & Minority Ethnic (RARE Group) staff and LGBT staff (LGBT Group)
- Work by SCC and District & Borough councils to develop Race Equality Schemes and improve Equality Standard positions

The Shropshire Partnership Equality Forum was established in late 2004/early 2005 through contact with officers & communities and with IDeA and launched in March 2005. The Forum has met at least 4 times a year (15+ meetings) and membership is over 120 drawn from:

- Members of BME and Diversity Equality Communities e.g. Bangladeshi, Afro-Caribbean, disability & LGBT.
- Area officers with responsibility for diversity & equality
- Partners from key agencies involved in equality & diversity for staff and customers (Police, Fire, PCT, Prison etc.).
- SCC officers with relevant equality interests

The Terms of Reference for the Equality Forum need review

The topics covered by Equality Forum Meetings & associated events have been:

- Themed meetings (e.g. with speakers)
- Reports on work programme (e.g. Hate Crime)
- Update on Diversity & Equality awards
- Future planning or report back on events
- Attendance has averaged between 25 - 45

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Theme / Outcome</b>
27 January 2005	Holocaust evening	Dr Eve Clevenger
31 March 2005	Equality Forum	Inaugural meeting
14 June 2005	Equality Forum	Agree work plan
30 September 2005	Equality Forum (Music Hall)	WMRA Equality Panel
11 October 2005	Criminal Justice	Mock Trial (D&E issues)
16 December 2005	Equality Forum	Visible Minorities
30 March 2006	Equality Forum (SECC)	Aftab Rahman – Community Cohesion
29 April 2006	Rock Against Racism	Shrewsbury
19 June 2006	Equality Forum	Disability & Questionnaire
14 September 2006	Equality Forum (SECC)	Sport & Booster sample
15 November 2006	Launch of the Hate Crime Campaign	Chief Constable Theatre Group Fire Engines etc.
11 December 2006	Equality Forum (SECC)	Celebration of Awards
26 January 2007	Dignity of Difference	Holocaust memorial
6 March 2007	Equality Forum	BME Network & new way forward discussion
8 May 2007	Rock Against Racism	Shrewsbury
18 June 2007	Equality Forum supper at Marsala Restaurant	Bangladeshi Welfare Association
17 September 2007	Equality Forum	Steering Group & reports
1 November 2007	Workshop with Sushel Ohri on Review	Council Chamber
9 November 2007	Big Equality Day	D&E Workshop at Ludlow Assembly Rooms
15 August 2007	Equality Forum Steering Group	Inaugural meeting
13 November 2007	Equality Forum Steering Group (Abbey Wood)	
3 December 2007	Equality Forum, Enterprise HQ Shrewsbury	Nindar Johal BME Businesses in WM
25 January 2008	Remember, Reflect React with SCAT students & Shrewsbury Prison	Holocaust Memorial
29 February 2008	Equality Forum Steering Group	
11 March 2008	Equality Forum	Sushel Ohri Review Report
12 May 2008	Equality Forum Steering Group	

7 June 2008	Love Music Hate Racism, Market Square & Buttermarket Shrews.	Lemn Sissy (Poet)
18 June 2008	Equality Forum (SECC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair &amp; Vice Chair</li> <li>• Health &amp; Equality –Bharti Patel Smith</li> <li>• Julia Cave – SORI &amp; Chaplaincy Project</li> <li>• Liz Adams - Complaints</li> </ul>

Dates set for the Equality Forum in 2008 are 16.9.08 and 2.12.08

## 2. The Equality Executive

The Equality Executive was established on the 15.8.07. and has as its purpose:

- To provide support to the Chair and Vice Chair including re the Leadership Board agenda's (meeting quarterly before Leadership Boards)
- To act for the Equality Forum to remove administrative items to free Forum agenda's and make decisions
- To provide leadership for the annual E&D Action plan and task and finish groups.

Membership of the Equality Executive is:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role and area of responsibility</b>
Michele Hatfield	Chair of Forum, Area Manager Probation Service Trust (offenders)
Shaun Luke	Chair, A4U Charity (disabilities)
Mick Homden	Inspector, West Mercia Police (hate crime)
Natalie Hill	Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service (?)
Bharti Patel-Smith	PCT (health & equality)
Parveen Hassan	Crown Prosecution Service (criminal justice)
Steve Cunningham	Shrewsbury Action Against Racism (race & events)
Enid Smith	Impact Alcohol Service (voluntary & community)
Peter Roscoe	SCC LBGT Group (LBGT issues)
Georgina Cussak	Shrewsbury College (young people issues)
Jonathan Hyams	SAAR (Central Area)
Richard Phillips	South Shropshire Access Group (Southern Area)
Vacancy	Northern Area

### 3. The Equality Forum Annual Work Programme

The Equality Forum work Programme (action plan) is agreed annually with the Chair, Equality Forum Executive and Equality Forum. The latest work programme is as set out in the "Review of the Equality Forum" (February 2008) :

1. Raise awareness of the six equality strands.	2. Draft a statement & action plan for integration and cohesion
2. Ensure arrangements for equality training in the new council	Standardise equality monitoring arrangements for employment & service delivery
4. Draft an Annual Report	5. Establish task & finish groups for the work programme
6. Plan equality work & resources for the one council	7. Operation & development of the Equality Forum
8. Re- launch the Hate Crime campaign & monitoring	9. Development of the Migrant Communities Task Group work programme
10. Operation and development of the Diversity & Equality Awards & monitoring	12. Operation & Development of the annual programme of D&E events
13 Equalise equality activity across Shropshire to meet needs	14. <i>Deliver the Race for Health report action plan with the PCT</i>

Re (6) an intention of this report is to provide a briefing and 'tool' for the Chair, Equality Officer, Executive & Forum to plan how work on Equality will be delivered under the new council and through the community regeneration teams.

### 4. Annual Programme of Diversity and Equality Events

This programme has developed during the life of the Equality Forum and is growing. Many events are initiated by Forum members and partners but may need support (including finance) and help with marketing and event development. The list is through the year.

Event	Date	Organisation
Holocaust & genocide memorial	January	Shropshire Council/LSP Equality Forum
Gay History Month	February	LBGT Group etc.
Rock Against Racism	April/May	Shrewsbury Action Against Racism/SABC etc.
Shrewsbury Summer Festival	July/August	Usually 1-2 events with D&E themes
Black History Month & Kick Racism out of Football	September/October	Shrewsbury Action Against Racism



Big Equality Event (to be developed)	October/ November	Needs to be with partners & area based with theme
Celebration of Eid, Asian, Bangladeshi days & festivals	Through the year	A developing programme of cultural events
Rainbow Film Festival	LBGT films	Old Market Hall LBGT community

## 5. The Diversity & Equality Awards

The Diversity & Equality Awards were established in 2006 with an Application Form & guidance for applicants. The maximum grant is for £1,000 and the maximum available pa is £15,000. The aim of the awards is to support 3 Equality Forum objectives:

- Developing Opportunities for training & equality issues
- Providing support for local festivals and events to celebrate diversity & equality.
- Providing resources to help diverse minority communities and groups to develop and carry out activities

The Awards are provided on a quarterly basis with a published deadline and applications considered by an Appraisal Panel (drawn from Executive members). Applicants can attend to speak for projects. Appraisal questions are circulated in advance. Applicants can appeal to the full Equality Forum who receives reports on awards made and in process.

Technical guidance and administrative support for the awards and administration is provided by the SCC Economic Development (External Funding) team & finance team, including help to secure match funding.

39 Projects have received awards since 2006 and 9 further projects have been agreed in principle and are waiting for match funding or answers to specific appraisal questions or suggested developments.

### Budget

Total allocated 2006/2007	£13,873.42
Total allocated 2007/2008	£11,670.46
Total allocated 2008/2009 (excluding projects agreed in principal)	£ 6274.03
Total	£31,817.91
Total remaining 2008/2009	£13,457.09

## Geographical Spread

Area	Number Applications	Funding
North Shropshire	2	1,481.64
Oswestry	3	2,000.00
South Shropshire	14	13,433.00
Bridgnorth	0	0.00
Shrewsbury	13	10,900.00
Countywide	7	5,658.00

The Geographical spread highlights the need for action in Bridgnorth & Oswestry in the new Areas. This need has also been identified by the police who are keen to maximise publicity on Hate Crime and take action to increase the reporting of incidents.

## List of Applications receiving awards

Project	Area	Award
1. Shrewsbury Action Against Racism (central)	Travelling exhibition, leaflets & posters	£450
2. Gender Advisory Bureau (county+)	Awareness raising of Gender Recognition Act	£1,000
3. Impact (southern)	Alcohol prevention with BME community	£ 1,000
4. Expanding Horizons (northern)	Information for disabled people re accessible tourist destinations & activities	£ 320
5. Display Boards (county)	Purchase of display boards by Equality Forum as resource for all groups	£ 559
6. Shropshire Asian Society (county)	Cultural evening at Shrewsbury Sports Village	£ 1,000
7. Homophobia and schools (county)	To develop work to tackle homophobia in schools	£ 500
8. Gender matters/Trans Shropshire (county)	Awareness raising of services available to Trans gender persons	£ 564.78
9. Southern Shropshire Access Partnership	Infra red hearing loop for community centre's	£ 998
10. North east rural youth project	Purchase of games to help gypsy & traveller groups	£ 481.64

<b>11.</b> Multi cultural dance & music (central)	Dance workshops and performance around cultural differences	£ 1,000
<b>12.</b> South Shropshire Voluntary Action (CVS)	Diversity and discrimination training for VCS groups	£ 1000
<b>13.</b> Ludlow inclusive workshops (DASH)	Costs towards the access worker for the workshops that will take place prior to carnival	£ 500
<b>14.</b> Shrewsbury Action Against Racism 2	Workshops and exhibitions on the 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2007 to celebrate Black History Month & Kick Racism out of football	£ 500
<b>15.</b> Improving volunteer involvement (NSVA)	D&E training & recruit BME volunteers	£ 1,000
<b>16.</b> Shropshire BME network (county)	To establish BME network in Shropshire	£ 1,000 (£464.54 returned) due to lack of progress
<b>17.</b> Eid Festival (central)	Event for Asian parents & children	£ 500
<b>18.</b> LBGT Group (county & central)	Travelling exhibition of local gay history	£ 500
<b>19.</b> South Shropshire Youth Forum.	Cricket project in Craven Arms to engage young Asian community	£ 1,000
<b>20.</b> Pedal	Providing the opportunities for young people with disabilities to take part in outdoor pursuits to improve quality of life and empower individuals	£ 750
<b>21.</b> Borderline Film Festival (southern)	Multi cultural films in rural settings (eg Bangra)	£ 750
<b>22.</b> Ludlow Assembly Rooms	D&E training for board & volunteers with theatre group, video, workshops & displays (e.g. hate crime & LBGT)	£ 1,000
<b>23.</b> Dash (2) training – breaking barriers	Two shows of disability arts theatre, event to bring together social care providers & artists and 4 short 'day in life' films	£ 1,000

<b>24.</b> Polish community event (southern & county)	Community evening to identify issues & celebrate community	£ 735
<b>25.</b> Difference & Diversity pilot in Shropshire Schools	Training and raising awareness with teachers and schools on D&E issues.	£ 1,000
<b>26.</b> Impact (southern)	Alcohol research with Polish community, report & action plan	£ 1,000
<b>27.</b> Gallery on the Move –Cry Freedom	Multi cultural arts project based on abolition of slave trade in two schools. Afro-Caribbean drumming. Visit to Liverpool Maritime museum	£ 1,000
<b>28.</b> In Touch with Dance - Blue eyed soul dance company	10 dance workshops for disabled, deaf & other children with signage	£ . 990 .
<b>29.</b> Traveller community & Gypsy/Roma history	Venues, IT support, cameras, leaflets	£ 784.03
<b>30.</b> Love music/hate racism 24 May 2008	Shrewsbury College music/community event	£ Contribution to cost up to £1,000
<b>31.</b> Shrewsbury Action Against Racism	Food, stage, entertainer costs for Cultural Diversity day in Square	£1,000
<b>32.</b> Rock Against Racism (central) 7 June 2008	Additional set up costs for Rock Against Racism event	£1,800 (special award)
<b>33.</b> Nachdasansaar Indian Dancers from Birmingham (southern) at Michaelmas Fair	New D&E input to annual community event in Bishops Castle & pots & pan community music	£ 1,000
<b>34.</b> Face It -	Multi Cultural Arts project in Craven Arms	£1,000
<b>35.</b> Rainbow Film Festival	LBGT pop up banners for events	£ 400
<b>36.</b> Disability & deafness film festival (southern)	Award to pay for sign interpreters	£ 700
<b>37.</b> SPAM Factor		£ 1,000
<b>38.</b> Eid Festival	Food, entertainment etc. for local Eid festival – open to all community at infant school	£ 1,000

<b>39.</b> Working together	Setting up website and on line charity shop – enabling people with learning disabilities to develop range of skills	£ 1,000
<b>40</b>		

### **Equality Awards under development/ being finalised or refocused**

<b>Application</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Sum Requested</b>
1.Woman Rough Sleepers in Shrewsbury	John Mcardle Community MH Team	Application discontinued
2. Challenging Prejudice -D&E Training	Paula Redway Ludlow Assembly Rooms	£1,000 Discussion held to develop two projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop toolkit from previous events to challenge prejudice</li> <li>• Project with 8 primary schools &amp; migrant &amp; gypsy/traveller communities</li> </ul>
3. Same difference – raising HIV/Aids awareness - Art exhibition to raise awareness of bullying	Shropshire Buddies & Body Positive -	£1,000 Concept supported but need to resolve details & timescale
4. Paradise – recording gypsy/traveller settlement in homes	Ian Patterson Hadnall, N Shropshire	£ 850
5. Hidden Voices – music, drama & song with physically disabled	Grange Day Centre Shrewsbury	£1,000
6.Cultural Diversity through music (Shrewsbury Prison)	Julia Cave Community engagement & diversity coordinator	Not agreed – felt that Prison Service should fund
7. Financial Inclusion Conference	Karen Farrow Just Credit Union	Not agreed but funding arranged from Access Partnership & other funds

8. Craven Arms Cricket Project/ Southern Area Youth Forum	Health & Fitness project based on Asian/White Cricket Project	Recent road accident has led two deaths of members and a memorial day is being planned Agreed £1,000 to support event but not salaries.
9. Celebrating diversity at Shrewsbury College (With Bridges Centre)	Culmination event in 2009 for work with students on D&E themes	Details and date to be confirmed. Agreed in principle to support event costs £500-£1,000
10. NE Shropshire Rural Youth Project	Computer for use with gypsy & traveller groups	Support in principle to £500. Project to attend October Appraisal
11. Rugby Inclusion Project with disabled young people.	Weekly sessions	Agreed £1,000 in principle. Details to be confirmed by October Appraisal meeting.
12. Shropshire Disability Network	Clarifying plans, membership & link with VCS Assembly	Agreed with Appraisers £1,000

## 6. Hate Crime Campaign

- 6.1 The Hate Crime Campaign was launched at a major event in Shirehall with the Chief Constable & Carolyn Downs on 15 November 2006. This followed development of a Multi Agency Protocol based on good practice research and visits and establishment of a Member task Group The launch was supported by a theatre group, poster, reporting site leaflet and balloons, wristbands and pens with logo. The day was replicated in districts, with a lightshow in the market square and the Fire Service labelled engines and took fire safety & hate crime messages to Shropshire supermarkets. Training has taken place at council & partner reporting sites and with registered social landlords. Hate Crime talks and displays have been provided annually e.g. Rock Against Racism.
- 6.2 The Hate Crime Campaign needs to be re-launched in the autumn and current thinking is to link with schools – e.g. anti bullying and to build the campaign into local businesses.
- 6.3 Hate Crime has been monitored through the first LAA and targets not just race crimes but also hate around disability, sexuality and faiths. The number of cases reported is indicated by the figures below:

Area	Racism	Harassment
South Shropshire	5	4
Bridgnorth	11	14
North Shropshire	13	7
Oswestry	10	10
Shrewsbury	75	4

## 7. Migrant Communities

There has been growing evidence that there are a small but growing number of migrant communities locating in Shropshire on a permanent or temporary basis including the Polish and other European communities from EEC accession states.

This has been noted by the Equality Forum and a Task & Finish group has been established by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Desktop research has been supplemented by visits to Hereford and to Cornwall to collect good practice.

Regional research has been convened by the LSC and Regional Observatory using employment & seasonal data which has indicated sectors for employment, reasons for migration and the issues faced by migrants which include:

Employment not related to skill levels	Lack of suitable accommodation
Need for ESOL English language provision by colleges etc.	East European communities lack multi cultural experience
Lack of access to polish language catholic churches & priests	Dependence on private employment agencies/gang masters
Overuse of alcohol	Road traffic & driving issues
Need for leisure & community provision	Some single male communities others need family & education support

The work programme established by the Scrutiny Panel Task & Finish Group is:

- Setting up a focus group with representatives from migrant worker communities to ensure participation and consultation
- Develop a 'Welcome to Shropshire' pack available in print or by web which will contain key information and signpost to key agencies including VCS based services.
- Work with the police and others to produce a short DVD to raise awareness and cover crime prevention issues.
- Develop a 'media plan' to ensure good news stories are published to celebrate diversity in Shropshire and to combat negative stories.
- Undertake a partnership audit of the use of interpretation and translation services.
- Fully involve partners in the production of the 'welcome pack' and work plan including Job Centre Plus, Citizen's Advice and Victim Support and in its distribution.

The Task & Finish Group believes that a strategic framework is necessary to ensure ownership and commitment from all our partners. Therefore once endorsed, this action plan will contribute to the delivery plan for LAA 10 'Community Cohesion'. This delivery plan will be performance managed by the Safer & Stronger Board.

## **8. LSP Partner Support for work on Equality.**

Partner support for work on equality & diversity is reflected in the membership of the Forum, Executive & Task & Finish Groups. The main supporting partners have been to date: the Council, Police, Fire & Rescue, the PCT, CAB and Victim Support. We are aware that this issue is also of concern to GOWM, Advantage West Midlands, the Environment Agency and the Criminal Justice Agencies including the Probation Trust & Crown Prosecution Service. A more recent & growing partnership has been with Shrewsbury Action Against Racism and Shrewsbury Prison

The PCT have recently established an Equality & Human Rights Committee chaired by the PCT Director of Corporate Affairs. This follows a previous Equality Group chaired by the Director of Public Health with a Non Executive PCT Board member. The Shropshire PCT is the only rural member of the NHS Race for Health initiative with a Race for Health Action Plan. Much effort is going into Equality Impact Assessments for all services. The SCC Diversity Officer has recently been seconded briefly to assist the PCT. The PCT have also produced a report on Health & BME groups (presented to the Forum) covering diabetes, strokes, heart disease and mental health.

Shrewsbury Prison invited SCC/LSP staff in 2007 to visit the prison to discuss action on equality and to meet the Chaplaincy service & Governor. Subsequently the prison has appointed an Equality & Community Engagement Officer who is an ex NSDC employee (who worked with the Equality Forum on hate crime etc.) and who continues to work closely with the Forum. The Service has established a staff LBGT group and a day (with displays & information) was held at the Prison. The Prison is also engaging through its Supporting Offenders through Restoration project and its Chaplaincy Project to help offenders return to community life and avoid reoffending. .

The Police Service regularly support the Equality Forum & Executive and are the main partner on Hate Crime, receiving details of cases, carrying out investigations & producing regular monitoring reports. The police also put together regular tension monitoring reports for the Forum, Safer & Stronger Board and GOWM. The Police also support events such as Rock Against Racism and support work in schools to eliminate racism e.g. with Shrewsbury Action Against Racism.

The Fire Service also supports The Equality Forum, Executive, Diversity & Equality Awards and action on Hate Crime. Fire Engines carry Hate Crime messages and the service spreads messages e.g. at supermarkets and by using its multi purpose display vehicle. The Service has worked with Equality Forum to raise its Equality Standard level above Level 3.

Shrewsbury Action Against Racism meets regularly and is transforming into Shropshire Against Racism, SAAR have been the engine behind the annual spring "Rock Against Racism" event – bringing music, dance, poetry and displays to Shrewsbury's Market Square and the Music Hall or Buttermarket. Also behind the autumn Black History Month and the associated Kick Racism out of football tournaments. SAAR has worked with the police, schools and youth service to react to racist behaviour, activities and incidents and spearheaded work with schools in Shropshire. SAAR works closely with the Equality Forum.



Shrewsbury College (SCAT) is a member of the Equality Forum and Executive and has an Equality Group. It has a growing range of students from BME communities in Shropshire and uses personal & social education and other classes to address equality issues. It also organises student fairs and music events with equality themes.

The LGBT Group and LGBT older peoples and social groups meeting in Shrewsbury have spearheaded a range of activity including events in Gay History Month (February) including shop front displays, display boards featuring the gay history of Shropshire, work with the Library service on reading lists, top gay books and talks and readings at Shrewsbury Library. The group has two pop up LGBT banners, held an information week in the Shirehall foyer and organised three successful December Gay Film Festivals with a week of gay & lesbian films and discussion. The LGBT staff group meets regularly at the Peach Tree, Shrewsbury. e and actively spreads LGBT information and inputs where possible into policy development. The LGBT community has also held an event to make awards to those local businesses and supporters who have supported the Film Festival and other events.

The Bangladeshi Welfare Association is the leading BME organisation in the Forum. The community includes local restaurateurs and business people, SCAT students and NHS employees and family members across Shropshire. The BWA community has been working with the Forum to seek premises to establish a prayer and community facility to be shared with other BME & community groups to build cohesion. The BWA community has hosted Forum meetings

## **9. Schools**

With support from the Diversity & Equality Awards & the Children & Young Peoples service there has been a growing programme of work to assist schools to address racism, homophobia, bullying and other forms of discrimination.

This has involved work in Shrewsbury Schools including the Wakeman & Sundorne schools and the William Brookes School, Much Wenlock, and the Oldbury Wells and Endowed Schools in Bridgnorth also the Sixth Form College.

Workshops have been run for schools to look at stereotypes and prejudice including racism. A teaching pack has also been prepared.