



## **Executive Summary of the Summary of the UK Home Office Report, *Building Cohesive Communities: A Report by the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion.***

The inter-departmental Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion was formed on 10 of July 2001, following the race riots in Bradford on the 7-9 July earlier that year. The Group was asked to report to the Home Secretary on what Government could do to minimise the risk of further disorder, and to help build stronger, more cohesive communities. This report, served as the government response to the work of the Community Cohesion Review Team, an independent review team under the chairmanship of Ted Cante. This is the executive summary of the report.

The report identifies as the main issue the need to look at the underlying causes of these events. It stresses two main concluding remarks:

I. «We are clear that these are not matters that can be resolved purely through academic research and analysis. Understanding how the issues are seen and understood by local people is central to shaping effective policy responses. We need to involve local communities in the process of developing future policy.»

II. «The interaction between a series of economic, social and cultural issues must be understood. It seems unlikely that tackling one or more problems in isolation will provide a successful response to a complex and multi-layered situation.»

### **ISSUES IDENTIFIED**

I. Lack of a Strong Civic Identity and Shared Social Values to Unite Diverse Communities

II. Fragmentation and Polarisation of Communities

III. Weak Political and Community Leadership

IV. Disengagement of Young People from the Local Decision Making Process and Inadequate Provision of Youth Facilities and Services

V. High Levels of Unemployment, Particularly Amongst Young People and Problems with Regeneration Programmes

VI. Activities of Extremist Groups

VII. Weaknesses and Disparity in the Police Response to Community Issues, Particularly Racial Incidents

VIII. Irresponsible Coverage of Race Stories by Sections of the Local Media

### **THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

We believe that there is a need for a more holistic approach to regeneration and building civic renewal to focus and inform our efforts. This is captured by the concept of community cohesion, which is discussed in the report of the Community Cohesion Review Team.

Community cohesion requires that there is a shared sense of belonging based on common goals and core social values, respect for difference (ethnic, cultural and religious), and acceptance of the reciprocal rights and obligations of community members working together for the common good. The government can take a lead in articulating a vision and taking the practical steps necessary to empower and support communities to turn the vision into reality.

In the immediate wake of the disturbances, the Ministerial Group, with other agencies, took a number of initiatives to assist local communities:

#### **High Quality Services**

Improving the quality of services in deprived areas.

#### **Identity and Shared Values**

Need to articulate a clear set of shared values around which people from diverse backgrounds, faiths and cultural traditions can unite.

Need for an open and constructive debate about citizenship, civic identity, shared values, rights and responsibilities. It will sometimes be necessary to confront cultural practices that conflict with these basic values, such as those which deny women the right to participate as equal citizens.

The articulation of common values will feed into the broader citizenship agenda. The Community Cohesion team together with the Ministerial Group will take this forward.

The Immigration, Asylum and Citizenship White Paper focuses on promoting citizenship for those entering the country and those seeking naturalisation – including recognition of and adherence to fundamental rights and duties, and to English as our shared language.

On a local level, we will want to build civic pride, and a sense of shared values. We will also work to resolve conflict and reduce inter-community tensions.

### **Cohesion/Segregation**

Develop coherent strategies to tackle barriers to choice, and promote mutual understanding and interaction within and between communities. Consider how relevant government policy might be assessed for its impact on community cohesion. Encourage local authorities to consider community cohesion as part of their community development plans. Research on segregation and how community cohesion might be measured.

### **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 provides a legislative framework through which to take forward the development of community cohesion.

The CRE has been working on a code of practice for practical guidance to public bodies in order to comply with the new legislation. All public bodies will be required to monitor their workforces by ethnicity and publish the outcomes annually. Implementation of the Article 13 of the EC Employment Directive.

### **Housing**

Develop policies that ensure that individuals have real housing choices and ethnic groups are not concentrated in the worst housing stock. Local authorities have a role to play in this. We need a transparent prioritisation process undertaken on a fair and rational basis.

The Government Action Plan<sup>1</sup> on the housing needs of black and ethnic minority people.

### **Education**

Need inclusiveness at the heart of faith school policy; partnership arrangements between schools; schools as a community resource; narrowing the achievement gap between different ethnic groups; promoting community cohesion through post-16 education and training; and more ethnic minority head teachers, teachers, governors and support staff in schools.

### **Community Leadership – Supporting Communities**

Strengthening civic leadership and institutions through support to local communities, local government, and other delivery partners before problems become acute. We also need to be able to identify emerging problems through better links with local authorities and local communities.

### **Children and Young People**

Consultation document<sup>2</sup> for a new strategy concerning children and youth. The CYPU is setting up small seminar discussions and workshops with local community groups, children and young people and key local service providers, focusing on community cohesion. The Government has also published principles for participation by, and consultation with, young people in the development of all relevant government policy<sup>3</sup>.

CYPU programme working with young people on ways to re-engage young people in the formal democratic process. DfES and the Home Office are working on a government response to *Transforming Youth Work*. We also work on developing additional summer activities for summer 2002 and programmes in the areas of sports and culture.

### **Employment**

The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to increasing the employment rate of people from ethnic minorities and to narrowing the gap with the overall employment rate, as well as building employment opportunities people from all

<sup>1</sup> 'Addressing the housing needs of Black and Minority Ethnic People: A DTLR (Housing Directorate) Action Plan', 23 November 2001

<sup>2</sup> 'Building a Strategy for Children and Young People: Consultation Document', 21 November 2001 – CYPU

<sup>3</sup> 'Learning to Listen: Core Principles for the Involvement of Children and Young People', 2 November 2001 – CYPU

communities. Also, in order to tackle urban unemployment, Action Teams for Jobs work from outreach sites with people in living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) objectives include promoting economic development and regionally based growth and social cohesion through integrated local regeneration programmes; enhancing skills of the unemployed; and promoting enterprise, innovation, increased productivity and competitiveness.

Centrally aggregated employment figures often hide significant pockets of extreme deprivation. The introduction of Neighbourhood Statistics should provide better information. The PIU project, *Improving labour market achievements for ethnic minorities in British Society*, will address the causes of disadvantage in the labour market.

### **Regeneration**

The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal aims to narrow the gap between the outcomes in deprived areas and the rest.

In order to address the gaps in the National Strategy we need to help communities resolve their conflicts so that they can successfully participate in the renewal of their neighbourhoods; build strong and representative civic leadership and local institutions; tackle inequalities in the main services and levels of resources received by different ethnic groups; and encouraging better cross-community and cross-cultural co-operation.

### **Activities of Extremist Groups**

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is identifying best practices in responding to rumoured or actual activities that may be triggers for disorders. The Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Bill will make incitement to religious hatred an offence. It will also expand racially aggravated offences introduced in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to cover offences aggravated by religious hostility.

### **Tackling Crime and Disorder**

The police must have the confidence of all sections of the community. Also, Effective Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships are not only about helping to reduce crime and the fear of crime: they should also be a means of creating

public understanding of, and confidence in, the way in which crime and anti-social behaviour will be tackled, communities will be policed and the important role local people and communities have in supporting the police.

It's important to involve voluntary and community organisations in the work of Crime and Disorder Partnerships. Also, the Crime Fighting Fund for police recruitment is increasing the ethnic minority recruitment. Following the Stephen Lawrence enquiry, the police will continue to implement agreed measures on the handling of racist incidents, stop and search, and improved community and race relations training.

ACPO have published a manual on hate crime. The National Operations Faculty are producing a good practice guide on policing urban disorder, which will cover appropriate use of public order legislation to ban marches; activities of extremist organisations, and the policing of the disturbances.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Communities need to be fully engaged in, and take responsibility for, the task of civil renewal. To this end, the government will maintain the inter-departmental Ministerial Group to drive further work on community cohesion and ensure continued cross-departmental working; establish a Community Cohesion Panel to work with the Ministerial Group on policy issues.

### **ANNEX I - Glossary**

ABI Area Based Initiative; ACPO Association of Chief Police Officers; BME Black and Minority Ethnic; BNP British National Party; BURA British Urban Regeneration Association; CRE Commission for Racial Equality; CYPY Children and Young People's Unit; DCMS Department for Culture, Media and Sport; DfES Department for Employment and Skills; DTLR Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions; DWP Department for Work and Pensions; GO's Government Offices; HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary; HO Home Office; LA's Local Authorities; LCS Learning Skills Council; LGA Local Government Association; LSP's Local Strategic Partnerships; NRU Neighbourhood Renewal Unit; ONS Office of National Statistics; PIU Performance and Innovation Unit; RCU Regional Co-ordination Unit; RDA Regional Development Agency; TTA Teacher Training Agency; YJB Youth Justice Board

