



prospects

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# prospects

diversity and the career  
progression of managers  
in local government

## Prospects

**Diversity and the career progression of managers in local government.** This report describes the findings of a large-scale national piece of research investigating the career experience of just under 2,000 local government managers. Comprehensive areas of possible discrimination in treatment or opportunity were investigated. The results were analysed by ethnicity, gender, age and disability, and within specific managerial levels wherever possible. Findings, discussion of the findings and recommendations are included as well as guidelines on managing equality and diversity.

## Foreword

This is a mighty report! As if more confirmation is needed to show that Black and Minority Ethnic, women and disabled staff experience unfair, unequal and unlawful treatment, this study reveals with stark clarity the clear limitations for such staff who have aspirations for career progression in local government.

When it comes to talent, there is no basis whatsoever to regard Black and Minority Ethnic, women and disabled managers as any less able than White male managers. Yet, it is the White male managers who continue to dominate the most senior positions in local government. In turn, opportunities are being denied – perhaps unintentionally – for the diverse range of managers from all different backgrounds to utilise their talent.

Disabled managers and Black and Minority Ethnic managers are less satisfied with their career opportunities than White managers. Yet, the findings in the study reveal that the Black and Minority Ethnic managers are more interested in career progression than White managers at every level. Disabled managers find themselves being encouraged less by their bosses to take up training and development opportunities.

Local government, as an employer and public service provider, should be exemplary in offering opportunities to make equality and diversity a reality for staff and service users throughout all its activities. By utilising the talents of people from all backgrounds, local authorities will be equipping themselves with the skills, experiences and opportunities to provide professional and appropriate services to meet modern diverse communities' needs.

The big question is, which local government organisations will be first to take up the challenge and reap the rich benefits of embracing equality and diversity?

### Herman Ouseley

Lord Ouseley is a former executive chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality. He is president of the Local Government Association.



## Introduction

The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) commissioned this study to examine the career prospects of different groups of people working in local government. It sought to find out why some groups were under-represented at senior levels of management and the nature of any discrimination they experienced. The research was conducted and co-funded by Leadership Research and Development Ltd (LRDL) and is published in tandem with the results of 360° research into the perceptions of local government managerial competency, analysed by ethnicity and gender.\*

## Methodology and results

A thorough literature review was carried out into managerial career progression with regard to diverse groups, and a questionnaire was formulated on that basis. The questionnaire was designed to examine the current career status of these groups of managers, as well as perceived and actual barriers to their career development.

The questionnaire was distributed among more than 10,000 White, Black and Minority Ethnic, male, female, disabled and non-disabled local government managers of all ages and at all levels from junior management (including supervisor and team leader) to chief executive. A response rate of just under 20% was achieved.

The survey asked respondents about their level of education; their level of career satisfaction; their level of supervisory support; access to training and development; the quality of feedback offered to them; their interaction with colleagues and whether they felt included at work; and their desire for career progression, among other aspects of their job.

When compared to White males, who were significantly more likely to have a professional qualification or an undergraduate degree, Black and Minority Ethnic managers were found to be generally better educated academically, being, in common with female managers, more likely to have obtained a master's degree.

The findings also suggest that Black and Minority Ethnic managers received less supervisory support, training and development opportunities and high-quality feedback than White managers. They were also more likely than White managers to believe that, although they might have good ability, they would not be given leadership responsibility without appealing to those in positions of power.

Whilst there were no discernable differences identified by women managers in the above area compared to male managers, disabled managers felt that they were less likely to be encouraged to seek development opportunities by their boss than non-disabled managers; and managers over 50 reported less supervisory support in general than younger managers.

A consistent theme for both Black and Minority Ethnic and disabled managers was that they were more likely to feel part of the 'out-group' at work than White non-disabled managers. This meant, among other things, that they may often have missed out on important jobs or special assignments which could have helped their career progression.

In respect to promotion, the research found that Black and Minority Ethnic managers were more likely to want to progress to higher levels of management than were White managers. Female managers were found to be at a lower level of management overall than male managers, despite the fact that they were significantly more likely to engage in a variety of career strategy behaviours.

In the responses given by the three age groups of managers (20-35 years, 36-49 years and 50+ years), younger managers had a greater desire to progress to a higher level of management during their career, although this could be purely because they are currently at a lower level of management than the older managers in the study. Disabled managers did not exhibit any greater or lesser interest in progressing within their organisation compared to non-disabled managers, yet they were also at a lower level of management overall.

The findings conclude that diverse groups of managers will continue to face barriers to their career progression in a number of ways in local government, until organisations that are interested in their senior management structures effectively commit to managing diversity fairly and consistently.

# Introduction

Leadership is at the heart of the local government modernisation agenda. The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said in 2002: 'Nothing is more important in raising the standard of public services than the quality of their leadership.'<sup>1</sup>

The very concept of leadership itself is under close scrutiny, as it is seen as one of the fundamental building blocks for bringing about service improvement and change in the public sector.

The new agenda for leadership not only focuses on the qualities and attributes of the 'leader' but also on the link between policy, organisational performance and delivery. No longer is leadership at the top solely about policy making; delivery and performance are now of equal importance. The new demands for leadership, coupled with social, economic, technological and legislative change, mean that it is more important than ever for local government to attract, identify, develop and retain talent that can deliver modernisation.

Modernisation also encompasses the Government's approach to race equality. In *Modernising Government* (Prime Minister/Cabinet Office, 1999), one of the key objectives for public sector organisations is to begin to address the under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic staff at senior levels.

Local authorities, along with other public sector organisations, '*...must not only reflect the full diversity of society, but also be strengthened by that diversity. This has to be reflected in our ways of working, our personnel practices, and in the way managers manage. There has to be a change of culture. This needs to be championed from the top and driven throughout the organisation.*'<sup>2</sup>

In short, this means that public sector organisations must respond to the government's modernisation challenge by prioritising human resources strategies and practices that enable Black and Minority Ethnic talent to come through the ranks and deliver on the new leadership requirements.

Undoubtedly, modernisation clearly links leadership and race equality. The Government has set an ambitious agenda for local government to deliver on leadership and race equality. What is more, Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RRAA, 2000) provide the policy framework for authorities to drive leadership and race equality. The challenge, therefore, is for authorities to move beyond limiting equal opportunities policies and to develop approaches that release the diverse and untapped talent of Black and Minority Ethnic staff for senior positions and leadership roles within the organisation.

Whilst local authorities are aware that there is under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic employees in senior positions, there are very little research data in the United Kingdom that inform authorities on how to tackle this issue. Although local authorities developed good equal opportunities policies in the 80s and made significant progress in recruiting women and Black and Minority Ethnic staff, it can be seen now that the policies and practices did not facilitate a more representative workforce at every level of the organisations.

Recognising this, the Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA) commissioned and co-funded Leadership Research and Development Ltd in 2002 to investigate the career progression of both White male and more diverse groups of managers in local government within the modernisation context of leadership and race equality.

<sup>1</sup> Speech by the Prime Minister Tony Blair about Public Sector Reforms, 22 January 2002

<sup>2</sup> *Modernising Government* (Prime Minister/Cabinet Office, 1999), p.60

While diversity was considered in its fuller sense (i.e. ethnicity, gender, disability, age), the concerns of the IDeA as to where the future Black and Minority Ethnic chief executives and chief officers in local government would come from were such that this study focuses more specifically on the reasons given as to why Black and Minority Ethnic managers are under-represented at more senior levels of management.

The survey is presented in three parts. Part one looks at the findings by ethnicity followed by the discussion of the themes and summary recommendations. Part two considers gender, age and disability. The references, appendices and acknowledgements are contained in part three.

## Methodology and research approach

Following a thorough review of previous research on the issue of under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic staff at higher levels in organisations, a postal questionnaire was formulated and piloted. Over 10,000 copies were sent out for distribution among local government managers across the country. The full literature review is within part of this report and can be found in appendix 1.

The intention of the questionnaire was to examine the current career status of White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers, as well as possible and actual barriers to career progression. This was achieved through asking questions about their current status (e.g. level in the organisation, level of qualification, etc), together with a detailed examination of the themes identified from the research review.

Among these themes were:

- supervisory support
- training and development
- positive and constructive, critical feedback
- ‘in-group’ and ‘out-group’ membership
- career strategy behaviours
- personal belief in what affects change
- interest in career progression
- mentoring and sponsorship
- network groups
- positive action.

The themes were represented in the questionnaire by a series of statements. Respondents were asked to rate their current experience in the workplace against these statements on a six-point scale, ranging from 1 = *‘Strongly disagree’* to 6 = *‘Strongly agree’*. An example of a statement from the theme of ‘Supervisory support’ is:

*‘My boss takes time to learn about my career goals and aspirations’.*

Of the 10,000 questionnaires distributed, just under 20 per cent were returned completed. The data were analysed by comparing responses by:

- Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers
- male and female managers
- managers aged between 20-35, 36-49 and 50+ years
- disabled and non-disabled managers.

## Introduction

The data analyses were performed using statistical tests. This ensures that any apparent differences in overall response to the themes by the groups of managers are 'real' or, in other words, that they did not occur by chance. The results, therefore, allow for convincing evidence to be gleaned on the different experiences of local government managers.

### Questionnaire response

The total number of questionnaires returned by local government managers was 1,948.

Level of management:

- 23.4% junior managers
- 44.8% middle managers
- 27.9% senior managers
- 2.3% directors
- 0.1% chief executives.

Gender of respondents:

- 45.9% male
- 53.8% female
- 0.3% no response.

Ethnicity of respondents:

- 1,540 White
- 408 Black and Minority Ethnic.

Of the Black and Minority Ethnic managers:

- 35.0% were Black or Black British, of Caribbean descent
- 20.8% were Asian or Asian British, of Indian descent
- 11.5% were Black or Black British, of African descent.

Age of respondents:

- 2.8% between 20–29 years old
- 23.0% between 30–39 years old
- 39.1% between 40–49 years old
- 25.6% between 50–59 years old
- 1.3% over the age of 60.

### Disability

- 3.5% respondents described themselves as disabled (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995).





# Part 1

## Findings by Ethnicity

The findings are presented in the following order:

### Demographic information

- a. Gender
- b. Level of management
- c. Highest level of education

### Attitudinal findings

- a. Career satisfaction
- b. Supervisory support
- c. Feedback
- d. Training and development
- e. 'In-group' and 'out-group' status
- f. Career strategy behaviours
- g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)
- h. Interest in career progression
- i. Measures of promotion
- j. Mentoring and sponsorship
- k. Network groups
- l. Positive action schemes

Throughout the section, the statistical significance of the findings is presented. This means the extent to which the findings could not be by chance. The statistical significance is shown in asterisks. The asterisks represent the following:  
\*\*\* = the finding has a less than 1 in 1,000 probability of being found by chance  
\*\* = the finding has a less than 1 in 100 probability of being found by chance  
\* = the finding has a less than 1 in 20 probability of being found by chance.

### Demographic information

#### a. Gender

	White managers	BME managers
Male	46.8%	42.4%
Female	52.9%	57.3%
No response	0.3%	0.3%

It can be seen from the above table that:

- the percentage of males and females in each ethnic group is quite similar
- the percentage of males and females within the groups is fairly equal.

#### b. Level of management

	Whole sample	White managers	BME managers
Junior	23.4%	20.9%	33.1%
Middle	44.8%	44.4%	46.3%
Senior	27.9%	31.1%	15.7%
Director	2.3%	2.6%	1.2%
CEO	0.1%	0.1%	–
No response	1.5%	0.9%	3.7%

Statistical analysis of the individual managers' information revealed that White managers are at a higher level of management overall than Black and Minority Ethnic managers\*\*\*.

### c. Highest level of education

	Whole sample	White managers	BME Managers
O Levels/GCSEs	5.1%	5.5%	3.4%
A Levels	2.7%	2.8%	2.2%
ONC	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%
HND/HNC/Diploma/Cert HSM	7.3%	7.3%	7.4%
Professional Qualifications	28.7%	29.7%	24.5%
Undergraduate degree	31.1%	31.3%	30.4%
Masters degree	23.2%	21.3%	30.4%
PhD	–	–	–
No response	1.4%	1.6%	1.5%

It can be seen from the above table that:

- White managers are more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to have an undergraduate degree or professional qualifications as their highest level of education\*\*
- Black and Minority Ethnic managers are more likely than White managers to have a Masters degree as their highest level of education\*\*.

### Attitudinal findings

#### a. Career satisfaction

Comparison of the ratings given by White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers revealed that:

- White managers are significantly more satisfied with their careers overall than Black and Minority Ethnic managers\*\*\*.

Furthermore, within the scale measuring career satisfaction, each of the items showed significant differences between the attitudes of White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers.

In descending order of greatest to smallest difference, it was found that White managers are more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to feel that:

- they are satisfied with the progress they have made toward meeting their goals for income\*\*\*
- they are satisfied with the success they have achieved in their career\*\*\*
- they are satisfied with the progress they have made toward meeting their overall career goals\*\*\*
- they are satisfied with the progress they have made toward meeting their goals for advancement\*\*\*
- they are satisfied with the progress they have made toward meeting their goals for the development of new skills\*.

When the managers' career satisfaction was analysed with the responses divided into the categories of junior, middle and senior/director/CEO level, it was found that the reported career satisfaction of White managers was higher than that of Black and Minority Ethnic at each managerial level. The greatest difference was found among junior managers, followed by middle managers, and then senior/director/CEO level.

#### b. Supervisory support

Comparing the results of the supervisory support scale between White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers, it was found that Black and Minority Ethnic managers reported significantly less supervisory support overall compared with the White managers\*\*\*.

Every statement in the questionnaire that measured supervisory support found a highly significant difference between the responses of Black and Minority Ethnic managers compared with White managers. Specifically, the greatest differences in reported supervisory support were found in the following order:

Black and Minority Ethnic managers were *less likely* than White managers to feel that their bosses:

- take time to learn about their career goals and aspirations\*\*\*
- provide assignments that give them the opportunity to develop and strengthen new skills\*\*\*
- assign them special projects that increase their visibility in the organisation\*\*\*
- care about whether or not they achieve their career goals\*\*\*
- support their attempts to acquire additional training or education to further their careers\*\*\*
- make sure they get the credit when they achieve something substantial on the job\*\*\*
- keep them informed about different career opportunities for them within the organisation\*\*\*.

When supervisory support was analysed with the responses divided into the categories of junior, middle and senior/director/CEO level, it was found that the difference in the level of supervisory support reported by White compared with Black and Minority Ethnic managers was greatest at middle management level\*\*\* followed by senior/director/CEO level\*.

### **c. Feedback**

The type, quality and frequency of feedback that managers feel they receive from their bosses was measured. Analysis of the feedback scale revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly *less likely* than White managers to report receiving good quality, frequent feedback overall\*\*\*.

Specifically, Black and Minority Ethnic managers are *less likely* than White managers to feel that:

- their boss offers them constructive feedback when s/he is not satisfied with their work\*\*\*
- their boss gives them positive feedback when they deserve it\*\*\*
- the constructive feedback offered to them by their bosses is specific enough to help them to correct their mistakes\*\*\*
- their boss gives them enough positive feedback for work they have done well\*.

And Black and Minority Ethnic managers are more likely than White managers to feel that:

- their boss doesn't give them sufficient constructive, critical feedback when they make mistakes\*\*\*
- when they receive negative feedback from their boss it is usually vague, and they usually have to work on correcting the problem without their boss' support\*\*\*.

Other items included in the questionnaire, which relate to feedback, indicated that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to feel that:

- they often find that performance reviews bring up critical feedback that they weren't expecting\*\*\*
- their boss sometimes holds back from giving them critical feedback because s/he is afraid of hurting their feelings\*.

White managers reported receiving better quality and more frequent feedback than Black and Minority Ethnic managers overall, but the greatest difference was at the middle management level, followed by Senior manager/Director level.

### d. Training and development

Statements measuring the accessibility of training and development, and the organisation and bosses' encouragement of individuals to pursue training and development were included in this study.

Analysis of the ratings for this scale revealed that White managers were significantly *more likely* than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to feel that training and development is made accessible to them, and they are encouraged to pursue it\*\*\*.

Specifically, there were highly significant differences between the responses of White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers to *all* of the items within the training and development scale. They are presented below in descending order of greatest difference:

Black and Minority Ethnic managers were significantly *less likely* than White managers to feel that:

- their organisation encourages managers like them to pursue qualifications and training to further their career\*\*\*
- their organisation makes training and development accessible to them\*\*\*
- their boss encourages them to pursue qualifications and training to further their career\*\*\*
- the training and development they *need* in order to progress has been made very accessible by their organisation\*\*\*.

When the managers' responses to questions about training and development opportunities were analysed with the managers divided into the categories of junior, middle and senior/director/CEO level, it was found that White managers at each level are significantly more likely to feel that training and development is encouraged and made accessible to them, than Black and Minority Ethnic managers at the same level.

Furthermore, this difference is strongest among middle managers, followed by junior managers, and then senior/director/CEO level.

### e. 'In-group' and 'out-group' status

#### i 'In-group' status

Two statements in the questionnaire measured the extent to which managers feel that they are part of the 'in-group' in the workplace. There were significant differences between the responses of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers for both items, which are shown below:

- White managers were significantly *more likely* to report that they feel they get on well with the majority of their colleagues, than were the Black and Minority Ethnic managers\*\*\*
- Black and Minority Ethnic managers were *more likely* to report that they often socialise with their colleagues, than were the White managers\*.

#### ii 'Out-group' status

A scale was developed for this study to measure 'out-group' membership, or perceived exclusion in the workplace.

Responses revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers were more likely to perceive themselves as members of the 'out-group' within their organisation or department, than were the White managers\*\*\*.

Analysing responses to specific statements about feeling that they were part of the 'out-group' at work, the most significant differences between the perceptions of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers were found for the following items (listed in descending order):

Black and Minority Ethnic managers were significantly *more likely* than White managers to feel that:

- in order to progress within their organisation, they would have to compromise some of their cultural identity\*\*\*
- to progress in their organisation, they have had to compromise some of their cultural identity\*\*\*
- they often miss out on opportunities such as jobs or special assignments because these are discussed in informal gatherings to which they are not privy\*\*\*
- in order to progress any further in their organisation, they would have to compromise some of their values\*\*\*
- to progress in their organisation they have had to compromise some of their values\*.

Two other statements that also measured 'out-group' status in the workplace showed that:

Black and Minority Ethnic managers were significantly *more likely* than White managers to feel that:

- they are often the last to know important pieces of information\*\*
- they prefer not to socialise with their colleagues because of a difference in lifestyle\*.

Overall, the greatest differences in perceived 'out-group' status between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers were found at middle and junior management level\*\*\* and then at senior/director/CEO level\*\*.

#### **f. Career strategy behaviours**

These were measured under five categories which were:

- creating opportunities at work
- putting oneself forward for opportunities
- working above and beyond normal hours
- seeking career guidance
- ensuring your views are the same as your boss'.

##### **i Creating opportunities at work**

Analysing the statements which measured creating opportunities at work, it was found that:

Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly *more likely* than White managers to:

- be keen to obtain broadly based work experience within their organisation\*\*\*
- actively develop skills that may or may not be needed in their future careers\*\*\*
- actively prepare themselves for career opportunities that they cannot necessarily foresee\*\*
- keep an open mind as to where their career might lead, rather than sticking rigidly to one predetermined career course\*\*.

It was also found that White managers were significantly more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to assume a leadership role at work where leadership seems to be lacking\*.

### ii Putting yourself forward for opportunities

Analysis of the responses to statements measuring putting yourself forward for opportunities suggested that:

- Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely to report that they work particularly hard on assignments that they know their boss will see<sup>\*\*\*</sup>.

When managers' responses were analysed according to their level of management, it was found that the above difference was most likely to be found at middle management level<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, less likely to be found at Junior management level<sup>\*\*</sup>, and least likely to be found at senior manager/director level<sup>\*</sup>.

### iii Working above and beyond normal hours

For each of the statements measuring working above and beyond normal working hours, differences were found between the responses of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers. Analysis suggested that:

White managers, overall, are significantly *more likely* than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to report that:

- they spend a great deal of time outside work thinking about their job<sup>\*\*\*</sup>
- they often take work home with them<sup>\*\*\*</sup>
- they spend time outside their formal working hours doing further work<sup>\*\*</sup>.

However, when the managers' responses were categorised by grade, the responses painted a different picture:

- there was no significant difference between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers at any specific level of management to the statement that 'I spend a great deal of time outside work thinking about my job', and therefore the difference described suggests a weaker, consistent pattern across all levels
- there was no significant difference between Black and Minority Ethnic and White junior and senior manager/director level managers to the statement 'I often take work home with me'
- the above statement was much weaker for middle managers alone, when compared with the entire sample, and the finding was much less significant<sup>\*\*</sup>
- there was no significant difference between the responses of Black and Minority Ethnic and White junior managers to the statement 'I spend time outside my formal work hours doing further work'
- the difference in responses to the above statement between Black and Minority Ethnic and White middle managers was weaker for middle managers compared with the entire sample, and weaker again, and much less significant for managers at senior manager/director level<sup>\*</sup>.

### iv Seeking career guidance

All of the three statements that measured seeking career guidance showed differences in the responses between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers. They suggested that:

- Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to actively seek career guidance from a more experienced person/people outside the organisation<sup>\*\*\*</sup>
- Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to actively seek career guidance from people within the organisation other than their direct boss/es<sup>\*\*\*</sup>
- White managers are significantly more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to actively seek career guidance from their boss<sup>\*</sup>.

When managers' responses were categorised according to their level, analysis showed that the greatest difference in seeking career guidance was between Black and Minority Ethnic and White middle managers<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, followed by junior managers and senior manager/director level<sup>\*\*</sup>.

#### v Ensuring your views are the same as your boss'

This was measured by one statement in the questionnaire. Analysis of the responses revealed that:

- Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly *more likely* than White managers to agree outwardly with their boss' opinions even if they disagree inwardly<sup>\*\*</sup>.

When the managers' responses were categorised by level of management, it was found that this difference was only found among junior managers, and did not exist among middle and senior/director/CEO level managers.

#### g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)

One of the themes that emerged from previous research as an important factor in the career progression of Black and Minority Ethnic staff in organisations was the extent to which they believe they can affect what happens to them in the workplace. This is explained in greater detail in Appendix 1 which describes the background to these measures.

This theme is split into three areas:

- the extent to which an individual feels that they personally control what happens to their career
- the extent to which an individual feels that fate or chance has an overarching control on what happens to their career
- the extent to which powerful other people (e.g. boss or God) have an overarching control on what happens to their career.

#### i Belief in control by self on events in one's career

No significant difference in this belief was found between the Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers overall. However, at the senior/director level of management, Black and Minority Ethnic managers were found to be more likely than White managers to report more strongly than White managers that they feel they are in control of what happens to their life.

#### ii Belief in control by chance/fate on events in one's career

Analysis comparing the responses between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to believe that events in their life occur by chance, rather than being controlled by them<sup>\*\*\*</sup>.

More specifically, the two statements measuring this theme revealed the greatest difference in attitude between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers, suggesting that:

Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to:

- believe that getting a good job depends on whether they are in the right place at the right time<sup>\*\*\*</sup>
- feel that there is often no chance of protecting their personal interest from unlucky occurrences<sup>\*\*</sup>.

When the responses were categorised according to the level of management, analysis suggested that the only significant difference was found among junior managers<sup>\*\*</sup>. However, this is weaker than the overall significance, suggesting that this difference pervades among the other levels of management.

### iii Belief in control by 'powerful others' on events in one's career

Analysis of the responses to statements measuring the above suggested that:

Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to believe that:

- although they might have good ability, they will not be given leadership responsibility without appealing to those in positions of power\*\*\*
- if important people were to decide they didn't like them, they wouldn't make many friends\*\*\*
- their life will be determined by the actions of others\*.

When managers' responses were categorised by level, and analysed accordingly, it was found that:

- White middle managers are significantly more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic middle managers to feel that most of their beliefs and values are heavily influenced by their peers, rather than being truly their own\*.

### h. Interest in career progression

Two items were included in the questionnaire that measured whether or not managers are interested in career progression. Analysis of the responses revealed that:

- Black and Minority Ethnic managers are highly significantly more likely to want to progress to a higher level of management during their career than are White managers\*\*\*
- White managers are highly significantly *more likely* not to want to progress to a higher level of management during their future career than are Black and Minority Ethnic managers\*\*\*.

The same results emerged when the responses were categorised according to the level of the managers.

### i Measures of career progression

#### ii Years in current position

The average number of years in post was measured across the local government sample, and the average for the groups was compared. These results are illustrated in the table below:

	All local government managers	White managers	BME managers
Average years in current position	5.1	5.2	4.3

Analysis of the results showed that White managers are likely to have been in post for a significantly greater number of years than Black and Minority Ethnic managers\*\*\*.

However, when length of tenure was analysed with the managers' levels categorised, it appeared that the only significant difference in time in current position appears between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers at the senior/director level of management, where White managers are likely to have been in post for an average 2 years longer than Black and Minority Ethnic managers at this level.

### iii Increases in responsibility

Managers were asked to state how many times they had been given significantly more responsibility in their day-to-day jobs in the past two years. Analysis of the results revealed that:

- there was no significant difference between the number of times Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers had been given significantly more responsibility in their day-to-day jobs in the past two years, even when the responses were categorised into level of management.

### iv Increases in salary

Managers were asked to state how many times their salary had increased significantly in the last two years. Analysis of the results revealed that:

- Black and Minority Ethnic managers were more likely to have had a salary increase in the last two years, compared to White managers\*\*
- the average increase over the last two years was 0.9 times for Black and Minority Ethnic managers, compared with 0.8 times for White managers.

When the number of reported increases in salary was compared among the specific levels of management, it was found that there was no significant difference between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers at either junior or senior/director level of management, and the difference only existed among middle managers.

## j. Mentoring and sponsorship

### i Mentoring

Overall, the responses indicated that more Black and Minority Ethnic managers have mentors than White managers, where the percentages are 10.3 per cent for Black and Minority Ethnic managers, and 6.5 per cent for White managers.

Managers were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with two statements included in the questionnaire that related to the quality and type of support offered to the managers, by their mentors. The average responses to the two statements are shown in the table below:

	White managers	BME managers
Having my mentor is very useful in helping to progress my career	3.8 (‘slightly agree’)	3.9 (‘slightly agree’)
My mentor is very interested in helping me to progress my career	3.9 (‘slightly agree’)	3.7 (‘slightly agree’)

The results suggest that neither the Black and Minority Ethnic or White managers who had mentors found them particularly useful for, or interested in, their career progression.

### ii Sponsorship

Overall, the sample indicated that more Black and Minority Ethnic managers have sponsors than White managers, where the percentages are 7.2 per cent for Black and Minority Ethnic managers, and 3.5 per cent for White managers. This was supported by statistical analysis\*\*.

Managers were asked to rate the usefulness of their sponsors using three items in the questionnaire. The average responses to the items are shown in the table below:

	White managers	BME managers
My sponsor assigns me special projects that increase my visibility in the organisation	2.83 (‘slightly disagree’)	2.76 (‘slightly disagree’)
Having my sponsor is very useful in helping to progress my career	3.47 (‘slightly disagree’)	3.13 (‘slightly disagree’)
My sponsor is very interested in helping me to progress my career	3.56 (‘slightly agree’)	3.12 (‘slightly disagree’)

Although there were no significant differences in the responses to the usefulness of their sponsors between White and the Black and Minority Ethnic managers, the low scores seem to suggest that managers who had been assigned sponsors didn’t find them particularly useful.

## k. Network groups

Managers’ membership of network groups was measured by two items in the questionnaire.

The first item was:

- do you belong to a network group of people demographically and/or occupationally similar to you within or outside of your organisation?

	White managers	BME managers
Yes	48.8%	47.1%
No	48.6%	49.3%
No response	2.6%	3.6%

Analysis suggests that neither Black and Minority Ethnic nor White managers are significantly more likely to be members of a network group.

The second item asked managers who had answered ‘Yes’ to the previous question to say what type of network group it predominantly was, out of a choice of:

- social
- professional
- both

These comparisons are illustrated in the table below:

Type of network group	White managers	BME managers
Social	10.8%	13.2%
Professional	63.6%	45.8%
Both	25.6%	41.1%

The results show that:

- the majority of both Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers belong to network groups that are predominantly ‘professional’ in nature
- more Black and Minority Ethnic than White managers belong to network groups that are either predominantly ‘social’ in nature or of a mixed nature.

Analysis revealed that the type of network group that the Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers in this sample belong to is significantly different\*\*\*.

## I. Positive action schemes

Managers were asked to state whether or not they were involved in a positive action scheme at work. The results are given in the table below:

Positive action scheme involvement?	White managers	BME managers
Yes	6.2%	8.1%
No	88.5%	86.5%
No response	5.3%	5.4%

Analysis of the results showed that there is no significant difference in the number of White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers taking part in what they perceive as 'positive action schemes'.

# Discussion and recommendations by ethnicity

## Ethnicity

This section follows the previous one in the order of themes discussed. Additionally within this section the theme of 'Appraisal and performance review' is discussed.

### Demographic information

#### a. Gender

The gender distribution within the two groups of managers (Black and Minority Ethnic and White) is fairly equal, and so suggests that the findings are able to be generalised for both male and female managers.

#### b. Level of management

Statistical analysis revealed that the White managers were generally at a significantly higher level in the hierarchy in local government organisations than the Black and Minority Ethnic managers.

This is not, however, particularly surprising and confirms a relatively well-known fact, which indeed was the basis for this research. Furthermore, the statistical significance of this finding was  $p < .000$ , which indicates that there is a less than 1 in 1,000 chance that this finding was an artefact.

One of the factors that could be responsible for the discrepancy between the number of White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers being assigned to senior posts is the ethnicity of Elected Members and their role in senior appointments. There is a perception that traditionally Elected Members act as 'gate-keepers' for such posts. A recent *Employers' Organisation (EO) and I&DeA* national census of local authority councillors in England and Wales found that 97.4 per cent of councillors across both countries are White.<sup>1</sup> Without councillors from minority ethnic backgrounds being represented in such positions of authority, and the understanding and commitment of Elected Members in general to the equality and diversity agenda in local government, it is unlikely that a substantially greater proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic managers will be promoted to the more senior positions.

#### c. Highest level of education

Analysis of the managers' highest level of education revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers appear to be generally better academically qualified than the White managers overall. Furthermore, Black and Minority Ethnic managers were equally likely to have a Masters degree as an undergraduate degree, whereas White managers were most likely to have only an undergraduate degree.

When this information is compared with the fact that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are likely to be at a significantly lower level of management, it dispels myths about Black and Minority Ethnic managers not being sufficiently educated for senior management positions. The data confirms suggestions that lack of education is not a sufficient reason for not promoting Black and Minority Ethnic managers to the level of White managers.

### Attitudinal findings

#### a. Career satisfaction

The most fundamental aspect of this research study is the relative career satisfaction of Black and Minority Ethnic compared with White managers. Indeed, it was not particularly surprising to discover that the results revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers at all levels were significantly less satisfied with their careers than were their White peers, given many previous

research findings into the lower satisfaction among employees who perceive barriers to their advancement.<sup>2</sup>

This was found to be true in terms of all of the factors measured, which were:

- goals for income
- success achieved
- progress made toward overall career goals
- progress made toward goals for advancement
- progress made toward goals for the development of new skills

It is important to note that the significant differences in career satisfaction overall were not limited to junior and middle management levels, but were found also at senior/director level (there were no Black and Minority Ethnic chief executives in the study). This suggests that when Black and Minority Ethnic managers are promoted to the more senior positions, they do not have the opportunities that their White colleagues experience.

One of the factors that could be causing the lower career progression reported even among Black and Minority Ethnic managers at the senior/director level of management in local government organisations, could be the functional area that these managers are working in. Research has shown that Black and Minority Ethnic employees are often steered into functional areas that concern provision for ethnic minorities or equal opportunities. These are not areas that Black and Minority Ethnic managers may necessarily be aiming for<sup>3</sup> and can be very stressful, but also can lead to career 'culs-de-sac', where such managers are labelled forever by their job area.

Local government organisations must monitor such appointments to ensure that candidates are not only selected on the basis of capability, but also on the basis of desire to work in such an area.

Previous research suggests that when minority group managers enter senior management or boards of directors, the current members of this level of management often feel uncomfortable. Senior managers may relegate such newcomers to tasks or committees, which the authors of the study equate to being 'banished to back offices', as 'an attempt to bolster and retain power within the traditional constituencies'.<sup>4</sup> This suggestion is supported in this study with significantly greater 'out-group' membership being reported among Black and Minority Ethnic senior/director level managers than their White colleagues (see later section).

It is suggested, therefore, that local government organisations run attitude surveys among senior managers, to ascertain whether certain groups of people are indeed being sidelined from the posts with the greatest influence, together with other forms of treatment discrimination they may be facing. In short, local government organisations who have Black and Minority Ethnic senior managers must not assume that since they have reached that level, they are necessarily being treated fairly.

It is important to note that the greatest significant difference in career satisfaction scores between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers was found among middle managers. This finding supports suggestions of a 'glass ceiling' below senior management for Black and Minority Ethnic managers. Research has consistently shown that Black and Minority Ethnic individuals who are unhappy with their career progression and prospects will leave an organisation,<sup>5</sup> which, at the bottom line, is a waste of talent and training investment.

#### **b. Supervisory support**

Black and Minority Ethnic managers were found to be significantly less likely to feel that they receive the same amount or quality of supervisory support as the White managers feel they do. They felt that their supervisors are less interested in their career goals, and that they don't spend time finding out what their career aspirations are in the first place.

Black and Minority Ethnic managers were also significantly more likely than White managers to feel that their supervisors do not provide them with the opportunity to develop and strengthen their skills, or support their own attempts to acquire additional training or education to further their careers.

They also feel that supervisors are less likely to assign them special projects to increase their visibility within the organisation. Another UK government study<sup>6</sup> found that managers felt that opportunities to 'act up' were more likely to be awarded to people whose faces fit, and that length of tenure was a more relevant criterion for selection than talent or ability.

The development of subordinates is a crucial part of management responsibility. It is fair to say that subordinates will find advancement extremely difficult without such managerial support. Previous research has suggested that local authorities as a whole should ensure that there are adequate chances for Black and Minority Ethnic managers to 'act up' in management roles more often.<sup>7</sup> It is also suggested that policy development and budget holding are specific areas in which training or qualifications need to be made more accessible for Black and Minority Ethnic staff, in particular.

One way to ensure training and development opportunities are granted would be through the monitoring of the supervisors (bosses) of Black and Minority Ethnic managers by their own bosses, to find out when and what sort of additional roles, training and qualifications such managers are being encouraged (and/or allowed) to take up.

Enquiry into, and action on, career aspiration should be a fundamental part of appraisal or performance review for all managers, and organisational guidelines should be developed on the importance for managers to act on the developmental needs identified among their subordinates, at all levels within the organisation.

An area of concern is the findings within the supervisory support scale that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are less likely than White managers to feel that their bosses would give them credit when they achieve something substantial in the job. This suggests that even when Black and Minority Ethnic managers perform well, they will not be recognised for their talent. This finding appears to support many previous research findings that Black and Minority Ethnic employees have to work much harder than their White colleagues to get the same recognition.<sup>8</sup> It is also supported by research that strongly suggests the 'relative reluctance' of bosses to give Black and Minority Ethnic managers credit for their achievements (see later section on Appraisal and Performance Review).

It is important that all managers, regardless of their ethnicity, feel that they are able to complain when they feel that they are being treated unfairly by their bosses. It is a well-documented fact, however, that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are less likely than other employees to feel that they are able to complain about their situation at work, without fear of their careers being 'blighted' by being labelled a 'troublemaker'.<sup>9</sup>

Generally, the quality of supervisory support offered by bosses is crucial, as the main reason people tend to quit jobs is a bad relationship with their manager,<sup>10</sup> and a bad relationship with a boss is a strong predictor of depression.<sup>11</sup> Structured, in-depth exit interviews have been suggested by UK research,<sup>12</sup> and also in the US private sector by the CEO of Lucent Technologies (who found that having a poor manager was the main reason why employees resigned),<sup>13</sup> as a way of identifying the reasons why Black and Minority Ethnic employees leave organisations.

Furthermore, the data from exit interviews would allow local government organisations to specifically identify the bosses, their behaviours, and the organisational procedures that are counterproductive to the workforce as a whole, as well as those that particularly affect Black and Minority Ethnic staff. However, for such a scheme to work, it is essential that the exit interviews are carried out by a party that the interviewee feels is neutral.

Similarly, to increase the chances that a Black and Minority Ethnic manager doesn't leave the organisation, local government organisations should provide such employees a 'safe environment' in which to discuss issues surrounding ethnicity and any treatment discrimination that could be occurring.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, it is important to note that the level of management where there is the greatest discrepancy in supervisory support is the middle management level. If this is indeed the case, then it would lend some explanation to why Black and Minority Ethnic managers appear to face a 'glass ceiling' (sometimes described as a 'concrete ceiling') in terms of advancement beyond this level. Furthermore, it is only slightly less significant at the senior/director level of management, suggesting that a lack of supervisory support pervades for such managers, despite advancement.

### **c. Feedback**

Analysis of the ratings given to questions about feedback revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly less likely to feel that they receive as much constructive feedback as White managers receive. Specifically, Black and Minority Ethnic managers are *less likely* than White managers to feel that:

- their boss offers them constructive feedback when s/he is not satisfied with their work
- their boss gives them positive feedback when they deserve it
- the constructive feedback offered to them by their bosses is specific enough to help them to correct their mistakes
- their boss gives them enough positive feedback for work they have done well.

And Black and Minority Ethnic managers are *more likely* than White managers to feel that:

- their boss does not give them sufficient constructive, critical feedback when they make mistakes
- when they receive negative feedback from their boss it is usually vague, and they usually have to work on correcting the problem without their boss' support.

This discrepancy in the provision of high quality, frequent feedback is a serious issue for managers who wish to progress within an organisation. Without being made aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they cannot be expected to improve their behaviour, and so will not be selected for advancement. The discrepancy is greatest at middle management level, again supporting evidence of a 'glass ceiling' effect.

The apparent discrepancy in feedback given to Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers is further supported by *Perceptions: ethnicity, gender and perceptions of managers in local government 360-degree feedback analysis*, a recent report by LRDL and the IDeA into 360-degree feedback and ethnicity. This research found that Black and Minority Ethnic local government managers appear to receive significantly less useful feedback than White managers, which probably significantly decreases their chances of career progression.<sup>15</sup>

One of the findings of particular concern related to the lack of constructive feedback, revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are much more likely to report that performance reviews often bring up critical feedback that they weren't expecting. This result supports previous findings in the UK Public Sector, where Black and Minority Ethnic employees have reported finding out about situations where they have not done well, or done badly, until this point.<sup>16</sup>

This is a very serious issue for Black and Minority Ethnic managers. Constructive feedback is as important as positive feedback, as it allows the manager to know where they are going wrong, and how they can improve. Without this guidance, managers cannot be expected to groom themselves for promotion in the same way as managers who do receive such support.

The afore-cited study<sup>17</sup> found that managers admitted that they felt their people management skills were underdeveloped when it came to dealing with a range of situation; that they were poor at being constructive and 'bringing out the positive in their teams'.

Given the above findings, it would appear that the same situation is the case for bosses of managers in local government organisations. Training and development in this area should be made readily accessible or even *compulsory* for all managers within the organisation, so that they know how to effectively manage performance in a constructive way.

Whether or not they are equipped to give useful feedback, some managers in the cited study<sup>18</sup> argued that there simply is not enough time to give regular performance feedback to staff, and no doubt many local government managers also feel this pressure.

However, what has been underlined in this study is that not only are bosses of local government managers not providing enough feedback to their staff, but the feedback is being differentially provided for White managers over Black and Minority Ethnic managers, and this is the crucial issue.

Whether or not bosses are providing their managers with regular feedback, they must ensure that they are providing it fairly. It is essential that bosses monitor their behaviour in this respect, and that giving useful feedback is monitored in some way to ensure that it is given well, and given fairly.

Local government managers who want to improve in this respect, could, for example, keep a truthful personal log for two weeks of the time they spend giving feedback to subordinates. At the end of the two weeks, they should review this log to find out for sure whether they are being non-discriminatory towards their staff (and not only their Black and Minority Ethnic staff).

Alternatively, the bosses of local government managers could solicit feedback from the managers' subordinates to find out whether giving feedback is one of their strengths. The results could form part of the manager's performance review and identification of their development needs. Such reviews should be carried out for managers at all levels of the organisation.

#### **d. Training and development**

Analysis of the responses to questions about the accessibility of training and development revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers generally feel that it is less accessible to them, and that their organisation was less likely to encourage them to pursue it, compared with White managers.

More specifically, they felt first and foremost that their organisation did not encourage managers 'like them' to pursue training and development to further their career, and that such training and development wasn't made accessible to them, compared with the White managers' responses. Black and Minority Ethnic managers were also *less* likely than White managers to feel that their boss encourages them to pursue training and development to further their career, and that the training and development they need in order to progress is *not* made accessible to them by their organisation.

Furthermore, when the analysis of ratings of the training and development scale was carried out by each managerial level, it was revealed that the relative dissatisfaction felt by Black and Minority Ethnic compared with White managers exists at each level – junior, middle and senior/director – suggesting that the discrepancies in treatment exist regardless of the managers' position in the hierarchy.

As was the case with career satisfaction, the greatest discrepancy in perceived training and development encouragement and accessibility was found among Black and Minority Ethnic and White middle managers, which could again be contributing to the 'glass ceiling' they are reported to face.

It is very important for local government organisations to tackle the perceived inequities in the encouragement and accessibility of training and development opportunities. Not only will unequal access to such opportunities mean that the career advancement prospects of certain minority groups be lower than for the majority, but research has shown that such a situation is detrimental to the performance of organisations, where employees' perceptions of being valued and cared about by their organisation is positively related to their attendance, job dedication and performance.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, analysis from this study has indicated that training and development accessibility and encouragement appears to be the biggest predictor of career satisfaction overall. Therefore, local government organisations that don't want to lose the talented Black and Minority Ethnic managers that they already have, or intend to recruit, are strongly advised to pay particular attention to this aspect of managers' experience.

It should be noted that the Black and Minority Ethnic managers in this sample were significantly better academically qualified than the White managers. This could explain in part the supervisors' or organisations' lack of commitment to offering them opportunities to increase their level of academic qualification. Previous research among local government managers stated that 'research suggests that after a certain level of academic attainment black and other minority ethnic people receive no added benefit in terms of improving employment prospects'.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, in terms of level of academic attainment, Black and Minority Ethnic managers should be aware of the problems educational over-qualification can cause.

Previous research suggests that some managers who initially sought qualifications that were higher than those held by White peers in order to get credibility,

regard them as sometimes being a 'double-edged sword', because they find themselves over-qualified for positions they would like to take up.<sup>21</sup>

However, this does not mean that vocational training and development should not be strongly encouraged.

#### e. 'In-group' and 'out-group' status

##### i 'In-group' status

Previous research by different authors has suggested that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are more likely than White managers to feel that they are not part of the 'in-group' at work.<sup>22</sup>

The findings of this questionnaire confirmed this suggestion for Black and Minority Ethnic managers in local government, where White managers were significantly more likely to respond that they get on well with the majority of their colleagues. What is interesting, however, is that despite this finding, Black and Minority Ethnic managers were more likely to state that they often socialise with their colleagues, than were the White managers.

This finding could be explained by the greater pressure Black and Minority Ethnic staff feel to socialise after work, compared with their White colleagues. A previous UK government study, for example, found that Black and Minority Ethnic staff expressed the view that 'not always being able to socialise after work was felt to limit the network opportunities to create favourable relationships that would contribute to a positive performance review'.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, they felt a real pressure to socialise with colleagues and managers, because not doing so was regarded by others as 'unsociability or a lack of interest rather than a commitment to something else'.

Looking at these findings together, a picture begins to appear which describes Black and Minority Ethnic managers trying to get into the informal network, despite the fact that this might mean getting home later in the evening, and thus affecting family life (on top of an already 'long-hours' culture in local government), or perhaps socialising in the pub, when a manager would never normally choose to do so.

##### ii 'Out-group' status

An analysis of the questionnaire results revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers in this local government sample are significantly more likely than the White managers to perceive themselves as members of the out-group within their organisation.

More specifically, Black and Minority Ethnic managers were more likely than White managers to feel that in order to progress within their organisation they would have to compromise some of their cultural identity. Furthermore, Black and Minority Ethnic managers were also significantly more likely than White managers to report that in order to progress any further in their organisation they would have to compromise some of their values. Both of these findings highlight the perceived importance of hierarchical assimilation, and demonstrate the fact that Black and Minority Ethnic managers appear to feel less so than White managers that senior management respects diversity.

What is as worrying is the finding that Black and Minority Ethnic managers were significantly more likely than White managers to feel that they *have already had to* compromise some of their cultural identity to progress as far as they have within the organisation. Given that Black and Minority Ethnic managers were found to be at a significantly lower level of management overall than White managers in this sample, the results seem to reveal the

difference-intolerant nature of management selection at all levels within local government.

As cited earlier, previous research has found that there is a link between employees' perceptions of being valued by their organisations, and their attendance, dedication and job performance.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, analysis of the data from this study indicated that out-group status is a strong, negative predictor of career satisfaction for managers, which underlines the need for local government organisations to tackle the problem seriously and effectively.

The pressure that Black and Minority Ethnic managers in this sample are experiencing to align their values and cultural identity with that of their organisation, means that engagement in their work may well be harder to achieve than it is for those organisational members who feel that their values and culture match well with those of the organisation.<sup>25</sup>

Black and Minority Ethnic managers were also significantly more likely to feel that they often miss out on important opportunities such as jobs or special assignments because these are discussed in informal gatherings to which they are not privy. They were also more likely than White managers to report that they often feel they are the last to know important pieces of information.

These findings together suggest that it is important for local government organisations that are committed to the increased inclusion of Black and Minority Ethnic managers to work to break down the barriers that are causing their members to segregate themselves.

Overall, the fact that Black and Minority Ethnic managers perceive the need to, at least outwardly, compromise some of their values to progress within local government suggests that such organisations have a lot to learn about the benefits of valuing a diverse workforce. It is important to note that this perceived out-group status begins at junior management level, and pervades throughout the hierarchy of local government organisations.

Suggestions made in later sections of this report: *'The Business Case for Managing Diversity'* and *'Managing Diversity'* might be good starting point for authorities in order to begin to understand the ways in which this situation for Black and Minority Ethnic, and indeed for any other manager, may begin to be ameliorated, so that organisations can get the best out of their available talent.

## **f. Career strategy behaviours**

### **i Creating opportunities at work**

Statements in the questionnaire that measured 'creating opportunities' revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers were significantly more likely than White managers to prepare in advance for unforeseen circumstances in their careers. Specifically, they were more likely to:

- be keen to obtain broadly based work experience
- actively prepare themselves for opportunities that they cannot necessarily foresee
- actively develop skills that may or may not be needed in their future careers
- keep an open mind as to where their career might lead.

These results could be interpreted in a number of ways. It could be, for example, that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are wanting to increase their chances of promotion by approaching all angles, or it could be that Black and Minority Ethnic managers do not necessarily expect their career plans to work, and are therefore preparing in case they need to implement Plan B or C.

### Ethnicity

The only statement for which White managers were *more likely* to agree than Black and Minority Ethnic managers suggests that they are more likely to assume a leadership role at work where leadership seems to be lacking. This appears to confirm suggestions that Black and Minority Ethnic managers feel less accepted as authority figures within the workplace, especially among their colleagues.

A later section of this report describing the background to this research explains how Black and Minority Ethnic managers are often fighting a continuous battle to prove their credibility within organisations, against the negative perceptions of others. Here again, the organisation-wide awareness and valuing of diversity must be built upon to ameliorate the situation, and give Black and Minority Ethnic managers fairer treatment in the workplace.

#### ii Putting oneself forward for opportunities

Analysis of the items related to putting oneself forward for opportunities (or 'self-nomination') suggested that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to work particularly hard on assignments that they know their boss will see.

Given previous findings that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to report that their boss doesn't make sure that they get the credit when they achieve something substantial in the job,<sup>26</sup> together with the finding that they are less likely than White managers to agree that their boss gives them positive feedback when they deserve it,<sup>27</sup> it appears to be somewhat understandable.

Furthermore, the most significant difference in this finding is at middle management level, as are the most significant differences in reported supervisory support and feedback, further suggesting a link.

#### iii Working above and beyond normal hours

All three of the items analysing this theme showed significant differences between the responses of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers, where White managers were more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to report that they:

- spend a great deal of time outside work thinking about their job
- often take work home with them
- spend time outside their formal hours doing further work.

When analysis of managers' responses to the above statements was controlled by grade, a slightly different picture emerged.

Responses to the first statement '*I spend a great deal of time outside work thinking about my job*' were found not to be significantly different between managers at any of the three levels – junior, middle and senior/director level. This suggests that there is more of a weaker, consistent pattern occurring, and so it appears that there is less support for a difference in attitude here.

There was also no significant difference between the Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers at either junior or senior/director level to the statement that they often take work home with them. There was a significant difference in the responses among middle managers. However, this was much weaker than for the sample as a whole, and therefore less significant.

The reason why Black and Minority Ethnic middle managers would report less strongly than White middle managers that they often take work home with them could be explained in part by the fact that they are reported as generally being given less high-profile assignments and special projects than White managers,<sup>28</sup> and so have less pressing work that needs to be taken on at home.

Alternatively, this finding could be a sign of a decrease in 'self-efficacy', where Black and Minority Ethnic managers generally have realised that increased commitment to work does not equal organisational reward. This explanation of the findings could also explain why there are no significant differences in response among junior managers, where the 'commitment does not equal organisational reward' recognition has not yet been sufficiently internalised.

Additionally, there was no significant difference among Black and Minority Ethnic and White junior managers in level of agreement that they spend time outside their formal work hours doing further work. However, there was a significant difference in responses to this statement among middle managers, although it was weaker than for the entire sample. There was also a significant difference between responses to this statement among Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers at senior/director level, but this was weaker again than for the middle managers, and had only a less than 1 in 20 chance of being found by chance.

The reasons why there are differences in the reported amount of work being carried out by Black and Minority Ethnic and White middle and senior/director level managers could again be explained by the fact that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are reported as generally being given less high-profile assignments and extra work to increase their visibility,<sup>29</sup> and they may have realised the lack of 'extra work does not equal organisational reward' relationship. Again, this is supported by the fact that the finding was not uncovered among junior managers.

#### iv Seeking career guidance

Each of the three items in the above scale revealed significant differences between the responses of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers. Specifically, it was revealed that Black and Ethnic Minority managers were significantly *more likely* than White managers to:

- actively seek career guidance from a more experienced person/people outside the organisation
- actively seek career guidance from people within the organisation other than their direct boss/es.

White managers were significantly more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to:

- actively seek career guidance from their boss.

These items are designed to measure career development strategies, and show that Black and Minority Ethnic managers have an active interest in their career progression and are working on it through gathering information and guidance from people within and outside their organisation. However, the above items also support findings from the previous '*Supervisory support*' theme of this study which found that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly less likely to find their boss interested and helpful in their attempts at career progression.

Overall, it appears that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are more likely than White managers to engage in career strategy behaviours. This is very important, and may well have come about because of a recognition of the extra mile that Black and Minority Ethnic managers have to go to be advanced in their organisation.

Here it is important to note that the greatest difference in seeking career guidance activity is at the middle management level, and that it is also found at the junior and senior/director level, suggesting that although middle management might be a crucial stage in advancement, it appears that Black

and Minority Ethnic managers have to work harder at their career advancement than White managers, at *every level*.

It has previously been stated that 'Black women should ultimately realise that no one is going to hand them a position in senior management on a silver platter. They must instead do battle in the form of an effectively waged campaign'.<sup>30</sup> It could well be argued that the same is the case for Black and Minority Ethnic male managers, highlighting the crucial nature of career strategy behaviours.

### v Ensuring your views are the same as your boss'

Analysis of responses to the item in the questionnaire designed to measure this theme revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to agree outwardly with their boss' opinions, even if they disagree inwardly.

However, analysis carried out with the responses categorised by managerial level showed that this difference was only significantly present between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers at junior level, although it was less strong than for the sample as a whole.

According to previous research, this is a strategy used by cunning managers to stay in favour with their boss.<sup>31</sup> However, in this case, looking at the previous results in the 'Supervisory support' section, it could be strongly argued that rather than being a cunning strategy, the Black and Minority Ethnic managers are using it as a defence mechanism against supervisors who they feel offer them minimal support at present.

### g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)

#### i Belief in control by self over events in one's career

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there was no significant difference overall between the likelihood of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers believing that they are in control of what happens to them.

However, at the senior/director level of management, Black and Minority Ethnic managers were found to be significantly more likely than White managers to feel that they are in control of what happens in their life.

This is perhaps not a surprising finding, given the fact that there are so many organisational barriers facing Black and Minority Ethnic managers in particular, which White managers do not have to negotiate. In other words, those Black and Minority Ethnic managers who have overcome such barriers to get to the position in the hierarchy that they now hold could arguably be those with a greater sense of control over their fate than those who were not required to.

This finding is supported by previous research of senior Black and Minority Ethnic women in the public sector where it is suggested that these women may feel more personally in control of their fate for similar reasons.<sup>32</sup>

#### ii Belief in control by chance/fate over events in one's career

Analysis of the ratings given by Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers to statements in the questionnaire, which investigated the above theme, *seem to suggest* that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to believe that events in their lives are predominantly caused by fate or chance.

Specifically, Black and Minority Ethnic managers appear more likely than White managers to:

- believe that getting a good job depends on whether they are in the right place at the right time
- feel that there is often no chance of protecting their personal interest from unlucky occurrences.

The first of the above findings shows a marked difference in the 'self-efficacy' (belief in ability to affect things) attitude between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers.

Whether the difference is caused by cultural norms, or past experience leading to negative self-expectations, it needs to be addressed. In order to have a representatively diverse and optimally competitive workforce in the future, local government organisations need to have equally career-orientated and self-believing employees who do not feel that their ethnicity, or any other demographic factor, will be a reason for them to be held back.

### iii Belief in control by 'powerful others' on events in one's career

There were two statements investigating the above theme within the questionnaire that showed significant differences between the responses of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers. They revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are significantly more likely than White managers to believe that:

- although they might have good ability, they will not be given leadership responsibility without appealing to those in positions of power
- if important people were to decide they didn't like them, they would not make many friends.

Both of these findings have a less than 1 in 100 chance of being an artefact, and highlight once again the worrying discrepancy in organisational fairness being perceived by Black and Minority Ethnic compared with White managers. They also lend support to the possibility of a strong belief among Black and Minority Ethnic managers that there is an 'in-group' within the organisation who control internal movements, instead of there being a fair merit system for promotion.

When managers' responses were analysed by level of management, an interesting finding emerged. It was found that White middle managers were *more likely* than Black and Minority Ethnic middle managers to feel that:

- most of their beliefs and values are heavily influenced by their peers, rather than being truly their own.

This finding could be explained by the existence of a salient 'in-group', which was suggested in the earlier '*In-group*' and '*out-group*' status section of this report. Since Black and Minority Ethnic managers do not tend to belong to the in-group in organisations,<sup>33</sup> they have less pressure to conform with their peers' beliefs and 'go with the crowd'.

### h. Interest in career progression

The findings revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers were *more likely* than White managers to want to progress to a higher level of management during their career. Furthermore, the findings revealed that White managers are *more likely* than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to not want to progress to a higher level of management during their careers.

While it could be thought that this finding might be due to the current discrepancy between the managerial level of Black and Minority Ethnic compared with White managers, analysis that categorised responses by managerial level revealed that this is probably not the case given that each level of management (junior, middle, senior/director) revealed the same finding.

The fact that the finding was replicated even among the most senior managers in the sample strongly refutes suggestions that the reason why Black and Minority Ethnic managers are not promoted is because they lack a desire for advancement. Indeed, they appear to be generally more ambitious than White managers in local government.

#### **i. Measures of promotion**

##### **i Years in current position**

Previous research has shown that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are more likely to be at a career plateau than White managers,<sup>34</sup> and that White managers are likely to have had management responsibility for a greater number of years than Black and Minority Ethnic managers.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the managers in this sample were asked to state how many years they have been in their current position.

Findings revealed that the White managers had been in their current position within their organisation for an average of 1.1 years longer than the average for Black and Minority Ethnic managers in this sample.

This is another finding that could be affected by the discrepancy between the level of management between the White and Black and Minority Ethnic managers, and so a further analysis was performed, with the responses categorised by managerial level. This further analysis revealed that in fact the only level of management where White managers had been in post for a significantly longer period of time than Black and Minority Ethnic managers was at the senior/director level.

This finding is not particularly surprising, given evidence of a 'glass ceiling' faced by Black and Minority Ethnic managers.<sup>36</sup> White managers have been in senior management positions in local government organisations for many more years than Black and Minority Ethnic managers.<sup>37</sup>

##### **ii Increases in responsibility**

Managers were asked to state how many times they had been given significantly more responsibility in their day-to-day job in the last two years. Analysis of the results revealed that there was no significant difference between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers in terms of increases in responsibility, even after controlling for managerial level.

It is important, however, as pointed out by previous research,<sup>38</sup> that up-to-date job descriptions are provided for all staff. If these are carried out, then the less assertive members of staff and members of the 'out-group' generally (who we have already seen are most likely to be Black and Minority Ethnic managers) will be increasingly visible in terms of advancement prerequisites. This should decrease the greater pressure they have, to make personal appeals to those in positions of power for increased responsibility.

Furthermore, if such job descriptions include up-to-date lists of training and qualifications, then they will paint an accurate picture of the organisation's available talent. Such available information should positively impact costs in terms of reducing the need for local authorities to use agency staff for monitoring staff or managing special projects,<sup>39</sup> where the organisation will be in a much stronger position to constantly assess their budgetary requirements more cost-effectively.

##### **iii Increases in salary**

Managers were asked to state how many times their salary had increased significantly in the last two years. Analysis of the results revealed that Black and Minority Ethnic managers were more likely to have had more salary increases in

the last two years than White managers. However, when the same analysis was performed with responses categorised by managerial level it appeared that this discrepancy is only found among middle managers in local government.

Although at first glance it may seem as though the White managers are being treated unfairly compared with the Black and Minority Ethnic managers, it must be taken into account that previous research has shown that Black and Minority Ethnic employees are more likely to be 'fobbed-off' with pay increases by their employers rather than being given promotions,<sup>40</sup> and the current sample of local government managers has already shown that there is a serious discrepancy between the level of management between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers, favouring the White managers.

Further research should be carried out within organisations to find out whether such a system is in place where local government organisations are effectively trying to decrease disquiet among their Black and Minority Ethnic managers by increasing their salaries, rather than making significant improvements to their working lives by giving them 'real' rewards for their contributions.

Alternatively, these increases in salary could point to improvement being made in decreasing the salary gap identified by the *Drive for Change* (1995) document, which recognised an unfair pay system between people with similar job descriptions.<sup>41</sup> Not only is such a situation morally unfair, but it is also an unlawful situation. This should highlight the need for local authorities to run an audit of their pay structure, and using up-to-date job descriptions, ensure that such discrimination is not being practised towards any managers.

#### **j. Appraisal and performance review**

Although this report was not able to measure appraisal and performance review (except in terms of feedback), as described in the later section describing the background to the questionnaire, biased appraisal and performance review can be a significant barrier to career progression.

Local government organisations have a duty to address the issue, according to the *Race Relations Act (Statutory Duties) Order 2001*, where within *Article 5(3)* it is stated that organisations who have 150 or more full-time staff must monitor the numbers of staff in post who, 'benefit or suffer detriment as a result of its performance assessment procedures'.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, according to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), 'it is unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds in appraisals of employee performance'.<sup>43</sup>

Previous research in UK government discovered that many managers in the public sector find assessing performance very difficult, because there is an absence of clear guidance on performance measures.<sup>44</sup> As a result, some admitted to adding their own criteria and having to 'make a lot of it up'. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that local government organisations set and communicate clear guidelines for performance assessment criteria, and procedures for measuring them.

In terms of selection for promotion, criteria-referenced interviews have been found to be a useful way to decrease the likelihood that interviewers will focus on irrelevant criteria for posts.<sup>45</sup> Here, job analysis is used to identify the relevant skills and qualities that are necessary for the position, and they are trained to focus on these criteria.

Furthermore, situational interviews have been found to be more valid predictors of performance, and to be less adverse for Black and Minority Ethnic interviewees,<sup>46</sup> where again job analysis is used to formulate hypothetical

situations that are critical for the job holder to handle well, and their responses are compared with the responses given by current, highly effective post holders.<sup>47</sup>

However, it is very important in this situation, that the formulated best-response is not only based on one demographic type of job holder, and that a range of responses are solicited from people with a variety of backgrounds, and of differing gender, to avoid the selection of 'clones', rather than getting the best talent from a variety of effective approaches.

Overall, it appears that many promotional interviews may not be based entirely on relevant criteria, and this is an issue that needs serious attention. Not only are people from different backgrounds likely to be discriminated against in such situations,<sup>48</sup> but if the organisation is not careful to ensure that measures are valid, they risk losing out in terms of performance by not necessarily appointing the best person for the job.

Interviewers in performance assessment or promotional interviews must be careful and recognise the cultural differences between people, and not expect everyone to act in the same way. Research has illustrated the fact that some Black and Minority Ethnic teachers, for example, are less confident about selling their qualities than are White candidates.<sup>49</sup> It has also been found that many public sector employees felt that doing well in performance appraisal situations can depend to a large extent on the interviewee's relationship with their appraiser, and confirmed findings that Black and Minority Ethnic employees, unlike their White colleagues, do not feel able to be pushy in such situations, which may contribute to lower performance ratings.<sup>50</sup>

Thus, appraisers should be trained in how to solicit information from appraisees or interviewees on their achievements in the workplace, especially when they appear to be unconfident in that respect, to ensure that individuals are treated fairly.

There is an increasing reliance on local government organisations to use assessment centres, as they are assumed to be unbiased. Although there is evidence to suggest that they are indeed one of the least biased forms of assessment procedure for the promotion and/or selection of managers,<sup>51</sup> they are not necessarily fair in all circumstances.<sup>52</sup>

US research has shown that assessment centres can be biased against Black and Minority Ethnic candidates,<sup>53</sup> and other research has shown that when the numbers of White males in a group at an assessment centre increased, some of the ratings given to Black women decreased.<sup>54</sup>

Therefore, it is important that local government organisations do not blindly use assessment centres, but rather, carefully examine the processes that take place and the amount of diversity awareness training the raters have previously undertaken.

### **k. Mentoring and Sponsorship**

#### **i Mentoring**

Responses to questions about mentors suggest that Black and Minority Ethnic managers appear more likely to have a mentor than White managers.

Black and Minority Ethnic managers are also more likely to have a White mentor, than a Black and Minority Ethnic mentor (82.2 per cent of mentors for Black and Minority Ethnic managers are White, and 7.1 per cent are Black Caribbean).

However, there were no significant differences between the usefulness of, and interest shown by, mentors, between Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers. Furthermore, the agreement scores to statements about the

usefulness of, and interest shown by, mentors reveal that neither group find their mentors particularly useful.

The importance of mentoring schemes is highlighted by research which argues that the existence of effective mentors would help create positive expectations among Black and Minority Ethnic managers.<sup>55</sup> This is supported by an LGMB study of local government managers which found that 61 per cent of Black and Minority Ethnic managers who were asked strongly or very strongly supported mentoring as an element in a development programme, and 61 per cent of White staff supported it.<sup>56</sup>

However, the same study also uncovered problems in more than half the mentoring schemes that they examined, including:

- shortage of Black and Minority Ethnic mentors
- confusion about the role of the mentors
- confusion about the involvement of the line manager.

This information suggests that local government authorities should be very careful when implementing mentoring schemes. The above themes should be investigated as a starting point, and guidelines produced, where appropriate, to make the process of mentoring clearer. A shortage of Black and Minority Ethnic mentors is perhaps the hardest issue to tackle, given the lack of Black and Minority Ethnic managers in senior management. Work to increase this representation should improve this situation over coming years.

Another basis for improvement would be some kind of satisfaction analysis of managers who have mentors, where as much information as possible is solicited on the ways in which their mentors are helpful, and not so helpful, together with suggestions on how they feel their mentors could improve the support they provide. Additionally, local government organisations should use the solicited feedback as a basis for a mentor training scheme, to ensure that the optimum benefit is gained by protégés.

Given the importance for Black and Minority Ethnic professions of having not only a Black and Minority Ethnic but also a White mentor, local government organisations should take steps to ensure that such relationships are successful, by tackling the potential problems they may face.

A very large research study into the experiences of Black professionals with mentors found that many mentor/protégé relationships suffered from 'protective hesitation' – the tendency for both parties to 'refrain from raising touchy issues' such as ethnicity.<sup>57</sup> It is suggested that people think that if ethnicity is seen as a taboo topic, and that people tend to feel that if they raise it as an issue, then it is exposed as being a 'problem'.

In actual fact, the research found that the greatest advancement of Minority Ethnic protégés came when 'their white mentors understand and acknowledge race as a potential barrier', because it means that the mentor can effectively deal with barriers that present themselves.

Furthermore, it is suggested that organisations can improve the quality of their mentors by educating them in the importance of not only giving instructions to their protégés, but also offering advice from experience, offering emotional support and coaching, and helping to build a network of influential contacts for the protégé.

Perhaps most important of all, however, is that the mentor offers his or her protégé the benefit of the doubt, and supports his or her ideas, rather

than succumbing to negative stereotypes that may be consciously or subconsciously held.

In all of these aspects of mentoring, local government organisations must be committed and supportive of improvement, for good-quality mentors would not only aid those groups of managers who are under-represented in senior positions, but also the organisation as a whole, as talent is nurtured and developed in all managers, ensuring it is present when the current best performers retire or move on.

### ii Sponsorship

Overall, it was found that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are more likely than White managers to have a sponsor. Both groups were significantly more likely to have a White sponsor than a Black and Minority Ethnic sponsor (92.9 per cent of Black and Minority Ethnic managers had a White sponsor, and the remaining 7.1 per cent had a Black or Black British sponsor).

Although there were no significant differences in the Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers' perceptions of the usefulness of sponsors and their interest in helping their assigned managers, the scores for both groups revealed that their sponsors were generally not very useful.

Given that the definition of sponsor for this questionnaire was 'someone who has agreed/been assigned to increase your visibility and champion you within the organisation', the effect of sponsors was very disappointing. The average scores for both groups indicated that local government managers slightly disagreed that their sponsor assigns them special projects to increase their visibility in the organisation.

It seems that local government organisations might benefit from taking into account similar issues as those raised in the previous section about mentoring.

### I. Network groups

Responses to questions about network group membership, and type of network group, found that the majority of Black and Minority Ethnic local government managers did belong to a network group and such a group was usually predominantly professional in nature. Slightly fewer managers belonged to a network group that was both professional and social in nature, and significantly fewer belonged to a network group that was predominantly social in nature.

A significant majority of White local government managers belonged to a network group, that was predominantly professional, and less than half of that number belonged to a network group that was both professional and social. Finally, less than 10 per cent of White managers who belonged to a network group described it as predominantly social in nature.

These results seem to show that there are a significant number of both Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers in network groups that could potentially help progress their careers.

Previous research has highlighted the particular importance of network groups of Black and Minority Ethnic managers, where they can offer emotional and career-related support that is often lacking in the workplace,<sup>58</sup> and provide a networking alternative to the 'in-group' at work, which Black and Minority Ethnic managers are often excluded from.<sup>59</sup>

Furthermore, research into 'social capital' (helpful personal relationships at work) appears to show that the Black and Minority Ethnic managers have close relationships with colleagues overall than the White managers,<sup>60</sup> which would

increase their need to seek career-related support elsewhere within their organisation.

Given these findings, together with the fact that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are at a significantly lower level of management within their organisations than White managers, local government organisations should encourage the formation of network groups among all of their employees, to build up individuals' self-esteem, and to increase the likelihood that they will receive support from their colleagues during periods of stress and/or uncertainty.

Network groups need not cost the organisation anything to organise, yet the benefits could be great in terms of reduced stress, particularly among employees who perceive discrimination. Furthermore, if organisations are supportive, they could find the network groups very helpful in ameliorating discrimination, especially if the groups are given access to policy-making departments.

Given the problems associated with 'positive discrimination' and the negative feelings towards them from colleagues that employees who take part in positive action schemes can experience, it is important for organisations to note that there is no evidence of White male backlash against members of network groups.<sup>61</sup>

Due to the massive cost of employee turnover, and absenteeism due to stress, together with the business case for diversity, one could argue to even the most cynical of organisations that they are a very cost-effective action to adopt.

However, it must be noted that network groups are not an answer to all of the problems experienced because of the discrimination of Black and Minority Ethnic managers in local government, and can in fact only ameliorate the situation in small ways.

#### **m. Positive action**

Managers were asked to say whether they are currently involved in a positive action scheme at work. Results show that in terms of percentages, White managers are slightly more likely than Black and Minority Ethnic managers to be involved in positive action schemes.

This is both an encouraging and disheartening finding. On one hand, it is encouraging for majority-group managers to see that Black and Minority Ethnic managers got where they are today on the basis of merit, rather than in a positive action scheme (even though they are in a modest managerial position compared with White managers).

On the other hand, however, the fact that there is such a discrepancy between the level of management of Black and Minority Ethnic and White managers in local government, and that there are currently not enough schemes in place to redress this balance, is disheartening.

However, positive action schemes are very hard to implement effectively. Some of the reasons for this, and a more effective alternative, are discussed in a later section.

# The business case for ethnic equality and diversity

Many organisations, particularly in the US, are realising that having a diverse workforce brings positive benefits, and indeed 'may be fundamental to corporate success'.<sup>62</sup>

Diversity and managing a diverse workforce means valuing employees as individuals, together with their individual differences. It extends beyond equal opportunities, for individuals in minority groups, although these are people who would be equally valued together with White males in an organisation that manages equality and diversity effectively.

Independent research in the UK, carried out by *The Business of Diversity* (which was funded by the *Cabinet Office* and *Barclays Bank*), surveyed 140 leading organisations and found that 'successful equality and diversity policies deliver significant business benefits'.<sup>63</sup> Cited benefits included better recruitment and retention, and increased understanding of communities.

Key differences between managing equality and diversity and the traditional 'equal opportunities', which were noted in a recent UK survey<sup>64</sup> by 72 per cent of the organisations in the sample included:

- diversity is broader in scope
- equal opportunities is about meeting legal requirements whereas diversity is business driven
- equal opportunities is reactive, whereas diversity is proactive.

The authors of the above research observed that the fundamental issue behind managing diversity is the benefit of attracting and retaining the best talent regardless of physical characteristics of any kind. They point out that:

*'It goes without saying that organisations which continue to rely on the traditional pool of white, able-bodied males will be ignoring valuable potential in the remaining population and will thus run the risk of losing out to competitors'.<sup>65</sup>*

In recent years, the *Metropolitan Police* have begun to understand the real value of a diverse workforce. In publicising a recent drive to recruit more minority ethnic police officers, Deputy Commissioner Sir Ian Blair is quoted as saying, *'This is not a change because [the Metropolitan Police] wants to be politically correct. It is a change for the most basic of business reasons. The future survival of this organisation depends on its ability to attract and retain the most talented employees from all of our communities'.<sup>66</sup>*

Effectively managing equality and diversity has been found to reduce the turnover rates and absenteeism costs of groups who are in the minority within organisations.<sup>67</sup> Turnover among undervalued workers is a serious issue for organisations. The estimated cost of training a new employee is as much as four times the annual salary of the previous job holder.<sup>68</sup>

Organisations that effectively manage equality and diversity are able to attract talented individuals from diverse groups, and will find that such employees will be willing to give more effort when they feel that they are fairly treated and that career progression is available for them.<sup>69</sup>

## Ethnicity

Some other benefits of equality and diversity that have been demonstrated through research studies have been compiled by Kandola and Fullerton (2002), and include:

- the organisation's culture being one in which the potential of all employees is realised
- employees are valued, motivated, developed, and encouraged to progress up through the organisation
- employees are reluctant to leave.

Other research studies<sup>70</sup> have found that optimising a diverse workforce can:

- increase marketplace understanding
- stimulate creativity and innovation.

Adaptability to change is a major factor in today's public sector organisations, and so the ability to generate innovative solutions, and to be flexible, is crucial. Increased creativity and innovation in organisations that support and nurture a diverse workforce is expected because *'attitudes, cognitive functioning, and beliefs are not randomly distributed in the population, but tend to vary systematically with demographic variables such as age, race, and gender'*.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, innovation is found particularly among employees who feel valued and supported.<sup>72</sup>

In the UK public sector, as illustrated above in the example of the *Metropolitan Police*, equality and diversity is being increasingly seen, particularly in service delivery, as a major signifier of effectiveness.<sup>73</sup> Sir Richard Wilson, former head of the *Home Civil Service*, is quoted as saying:

*'It is no accident that diversity lies at the heart of public service reform. Organisations who get this right get a lot of other things right too, whether for their employees, their managers, or the people they serve'*.<sup>74</sup>

A 'business case' for equality and diversity in terms of ethnicity has been put together in a study of public services, where it was concluded that:

*'Public service organisations face major challenges in developing a service provision capable of responding sensitively to diverse ethnic communities, whether in local government, health and other welfare services.... It is inconceivable that such a process could develop effectively without a significant contribution from black people in leadership and decision-making positions across the broad spectrum of public services'*.<sup>75</sup>

Once an organisation has developed a business case for equality and diversity, and decided to commit to that path, there are many issues that need to be taken into account. Appendix 3 of this report, entitled *'Managing diversity as an alternative to Positive Action'*, gives guidelines on how organisations should proceed.

## Gender, age and disability

This section describes the findings of the questionnaire, and discussion and recommendation of the findings with regard to:

- gender
- age
- disability.

These sections are presented in the following order:

### Demographic information

- a. Gender
- b. Level of management
- c. Age
- d. Ethnic origin
- e. Highest level of education

### Attitudinal findings

- a. Career satisfaction
- b. Supervisory support
- c. Feedback
- d. Training and development
- e. 'In-group'/'Out-group' status
- f. Career strategy behaviours
- g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)
- h. Interest in career progression
- i. Measures of promotion
- j. Mentoring and sponsorship
- k. Network groups
- l. Positive action schemes

Throughout the findings sections, the statistical significance of the findings is presented. This means the extent to which the findings could not be by chance. The statistical significance is shown in asterisks. The asterisks represent the following:

- \*\*\* = the finding has a less than 1 in 1,000 probability of being found by chance
- \*\* = the finding has a less than 1 in 100 probability of being found by chance
- \* = the finding has a less than 1 in 20 probability of being found by chance.

## End notes

- 1 Employers Organisation and IDeA, 2001
- 2 See, for example, Henderson, 1994 and Davidson, 1997
- 3 See, for example, Eszed, 1991, Bhavnani, 1994 and Thomas, 2001
- 4 Joplin and Daus, 1997
- 5 See, for example, Davidson, 1997 and Cox and Nkomo, 1991
- 6 Capita and IES, 2001
- 7 Mukasa, Morris and Clery, 1999
- 8 See, for example, Andrew, 1996 and Davidson, 1997
- 9 Capita and IES, 2001
- 10 See, for example, Choi, 2001
- 11 Snapp, 1992
- 12 Mukasa et al., 1999
- 13 Pine, 2001a
- 14 Mukasa et al., 1999
- 15 LRDL and IDeA, 2004
- 16 Capita and IES, 2001
- 17 Capita and IES, 2001
- 18 Capita and IES, 2001
- 19 Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro, 1990
- 20 Local Government Management Board, 1996
- 21 Davidson, 1997
- 22 Ilgen and Youtz, 1986, Jones, 1986
- 23 Capita and IES, 2001
- 24 Eisenberger et al., 1990
- 25 Kahn, 1990
- 26 Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1993
- 27 Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1993
- 28 Thomas, 1990
- 29 Thomas, 1990
- 30 White, 1990; cited in Davidson, 1997
- 31 Gould and Penley, 1984
- 32 Davidson, 1997
- 33 See, for example, Jones, 1986, Ilgen and Youtz, 1986
- 34 Hayes James, 2000
- 35 Local Government Management Board, 1996
- 36 Davidson, 1997
- 37 Local Government Management Board, 1996
- 38 Mukasa et al., 1999
- 39 Mukasa et al., 1999
- 40 Jones, 1986
- 41 Cited in Mukasa et al., 1999
- 42 Commission for Racial Equality, 2002
- 43 Commission for Racial Equality, 1999
- 44 Capita and IES, 2001
- 45 Davidson and Earnshaw, 1991
- 46 Kandola, 1995
- 47 Davidson and Earnshaw, 1991
- 48 Konrad and Linnehan, 1995
- 49 McKenley and Gordon, 2002
- 50 Capita and IES, 2001
- 51 See, for example, Iles, 1989, Alban-Metcalfe, 1989
- 52 Kandola, 1995
- 53 Lewis, 1997
- 54 Schmitt and Hill, 1977
- 55 Davidson, 1997
- 56 Local Government Management Board, 1996
- 57 Thomas, 2001
- 58 Thomas, 1986
- 59 See, for example, Jones, 1986
- 60 Hayes James, 2000
- 61 Friedman, Kane and Cornfield, 1998
- 62 Joplin and Daus, 1997
- 63 Reade, 2002
- 64 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 65 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 66 DeGroat, 2001
- 67 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 68 Choi, 2001
- 69 Robinson and Dechant, 1997
- 70 Filley, House and Kerr, 1976
- 71 Robinson and Dechant, 1997, see also Thomas and Ely, 1996
- 72 Eisenberger et al., 1990
- 73 Andrew, 1996
- 74 Reade, 2002
- 75 Andrew, 1996





## Part 2

### **Gender, age and disability**

Findings by gender

Discussion and recommendations by gender

Findings by age

Discussion and recommendations by age

Findings by disability

Discussion and recommendations by disability

The business case for gender, age and disability

## Findings by gender

### Demographic information

#### a. Gender

This sample was made up of:

- 908 male managers (46.1% of total)
- 1,058 female managers (53.8% of total).

#### b. Level of management

The table below shows the managerial level of the male and female managers:

	Male	Female
Junior	18.8%	27.5%
Middle	44.1%	45.7%
Senior	33.2%	23.4%
Director	3.3%	1.5%
CEO	0.1%	0.1%
No Response	0.5%	1.8%

- Statistical analysis shows that male managers are at a higher level of management overall than female managers\*\*\*.

#### c. Age

Statistical analysis suggests that male managers were significantly older overall than the female managers in this sample\*\*.

- The average age for the male managers was 46.0 years
- The average age for the female managers was 43.2 years.

#### d. Ethnic origin

	Male	Female
Black and Minority Ethnic	19.2%	21.9%
White	80.8%	78.1%

- Statistical analysis revealed that neither male nor female managers are significantly more likely to be either Black and Minority Ethnic or White.

#### e. Highest level of education

The highest level of educational attainment of the male and female managers is shown in the table below:

	Male	Female
O-Levels/GCSEs	3.2%	6.7%
A-Levels	2.7%	2.7%
ONC	0.6%	0.4%
HND/HNC/Diploma	8.0%	6.7%
Professional Qualifications	28.7%	28.7%
Undergraduate degree	33.4%	29.2%
Masters degree	22.0%	24.4%
PhD	-----	-----
No Response	1.3%	1.5%

Analysis suggests that although male managers were significantly more likely to have professional qualifications or an undergraduate degree as their highest level of educational attainment, female managers were significantly more likely to have a Masters degree than were the male managers\*.

## Gender, age and disability

## Attitudinal findings

### a. Career satisfaction

Analysis of responses to statements measuring the above theme suggests that there was no significant difference in the reported career satisfaction of the male and female managers overall. However, male junior managers reported lower career satisfaction than female junior managers\*.

### b. Supervisory support

Analysis of responses to statements measuring the above scale suggests that there was no significant difference in the quality or supervisory support perceived by male and female managers overall nor at any specific managerial level.

### c. Feedback

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the theme of feedback suggests that there is no significant difference between the quality or frequency of feedback offered to male and female managers overall. However, junior female managers reported more feedback than male junior managers\*.

It also appears that male managers were significantly more likely to report that performance reviews often bring up critical feedback that they weren't expecting than were female managers\*\*\*. This is especially true at the middle management level\*\*\* and senior/director level of management\*.

### d. Training and development

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there is no significant difference in the encouragement to take up and accessibility of training and development opportunities perceived by male and female managers overall. However, female junior managers were more likely to report access to training and development than male junior managers\*\*.

### e. 'In-group'/'Out-group' status

#### i 'In-group' status

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that female managers are significantly more likely to feel that they are part of the in-group at work, than are the male managers\*\*.

In particular:

- Female managers are significantly more likely to report that they often socialise with their colleagues\*\*.

Analysis that categorised responses by level of management found that this difference was greatest at the junior management level\*\*.

#### ii 'Out-group' status

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither male nor female managers are significantly more likely to feel that they are part of the 'out-group' at work. However, controlling for managerial level, it appears that male junior managers are more likely to report out-group status than female junior managers\*.

### f. Career strategy behaviours

#### i Seeking career guidance

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that female managers are significantly more likely overall to engage in seeking career guidance than are male managers\*\*\*.

## Findings by gender

In particular, they are more likely than male managers to report that they actively seek career guidance from:

- a more experienced person/people **outside** their organisation\*\*\*
- people **within** their organisation other than their direct boss\*\*\*
- their boss\*\*.

The greatest difference in reported seeking of career guidance was at the senior/director level of management\*\*\*, followed by the middle management level\*\*, and junior management level\*. Female managers reported greater activity at each of the levels.

### ii Putting oneself forward for opportunities

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that female managers are significantly more likely overall to engage in putting themselves forward for opportunities than are male managers\*\*\*.

In particular, they are more likely than male managers to:

- make their boss aware of the assignments they want\*\*\*
- present themselves as someone who 'gets things done'\*\*\*.

The difference in overall self-nomination was found to be greatest at senior/director level of management\*\*\*, followed by middle management level\*.

### iii Creating opportunities at work

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that female managers are more likely to create opportunities at work than are male managers\*\*.

In particular, they are more likely to:

- keep an open mind as to where their career might lead, rather than sticking rigidly to one predetermined career course\*\*\*
- actively develop skills that may or may not be needed in their future career\*\*
- actively prepare themselves for career opportunities they cannot necessarily foresee\*
- be keen to obtain broadly based work experience within their organisation\*.

The greatest differences in creating opportunities were found at the middle management level\*\*, followed by the senior/director level of management\*.

### iv Working above and beyond normal hours

Analysis of responses to statements measuring the above theme suggested that neither male nor female managers were significantly more likely to report that they spend time outside formal work hours doing further work, take work home with them, or spend time thinking about work outside formal work hours, even when responses were categorised by managerial level.

### v Ensuring your views are the same as your boss

Analysis suggested that neither male nor female managers are significantly more likely to agree outwardly with their boss' opinions while disagreeing inwardly, even when responses were categorised by managerial level.

## g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)

### i Belief in control by self on events in one's career

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither male nor female managers are significantly more likely to have a belief in control by self on events in one's career overall.

## Gender, age and disability

However, at the middle management level, female managers are significantly more likely than male managers to believe that they control what happens in their careers\*\*.

#### ii Belief in control by chance/fate on events in one's career

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that male managers are significantly more likely to believe that chance/fate affects what happens to their careers than are female managers\*\*.

In particular, male managers are significantly more likely to feel that:

- they are often a victim of circumstance beyond their control\*\*\*
- there is often no chance of protecting their personal interest from unlucky occurrences\*\*.

However, female managers are more likely to report that if they do well at a task, they usually feel it was down to luck\*.

#### iii Belief in control by 'powerful others' on events in one's career

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that male managers are significantly more likely than female managers to report that:

- they feel their life will be determined by the actions of others\*\*\* (this is especially true at middle management level)
- in order to make their plans work, they make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over them\*\*
- most of their beliefs are heavily influenced by their peers, rather than being truly their own\*\* (this is especially true at senior/director level of management).

### h. Interest in career progression

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither male nor female managers are significantly more interested in progression within their organisation.

However, female managers were slightly more likely than male managers to report that they would rather not progress to a higher level of management during their career\*. This finding does not exist at any specific level of management, and so would appear to be weak, consistent pattern across the three levels.

### i. Measures of promotion

#### i Years in current position

Analysis suggests that male managers are likely to have been at the same position within their organisation for a significantly longer period of time than the female managers\*\*\*.

However, analysis that categorised responses by managerial level suggested that:

- there was no significant difference in number of years in post between male and female middle managers
- male managers had been at senior/director level of management for a significantly longer period of time than had female managers\*\*\*.

## Findings by gender

### ii Increases in salary

Analysis suggests that female managers were likely to have had more salary increases in the last two years than male managers overall\*.

However, analysis that categorised responses by managerial level found that in fact this was only true among junior managers.

### iii Increases in responsibility

Analysis suggests that female managers were significantly more likely to have had a greater number of increases in responsibility over the past two years than were male managers\*\*.

Analysis categorising responses by managerial level showed that this difference was greatest among middle managers\*.

## j. Mentoring and sponsorship

### i Mentoring

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that:

- there were no significant differences between the reported **usefulness** of the mentors of either male or female managers, or their perceived **level of interest** in their protégés' careers
- neither male nor female managers were significantly more likely to have a mentor.

However, it does appear that both male and female managers with mentors:

- only slightly agree that their mentor is **useful** in helping them to progress their career
- only slightly agree that they feel their mentor is **interested** in helping them to progress their career.

### ii Sponsorship

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that:

- there were no significant differences between the reported **usefulness** of the sponsors of either male or female managers, or their perceived **level of interest** in their careers
- neither male nor female managers were significantly more likely to have a sponsor.

Furthermore, analysis also suggests that neither male nor female managers reported that their sponsors were significantly more likely to assign them special projects to increase their visibility within the organisation.

However, it does appear that overall:

- both female and male managers slightly disagree that their sponsor **assigns them special projects** to increase their visibility within the organisation
- male managers slightly disagree, and female managers only slightly agree, that their sponsor is very **useful** in helping them to progress their career
- male managers slightly disagree, and female managers only slightly agree, that **their sponsor is very interested** in helping them to progress their career.

## Gender, age and disability

#### **k. Network groups**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither male nor female managers are significantly more likely to be a member of a network group at work.

However, of the managers who were involved in a network group:

- **male managers** were more likely to report that they are part of a network group that is **predominantly professional** in nature than were female managers
- **female managers** were more likely to report that they are part of a network group that is **both social and professional** in nature than were male managers.

#### **l. Positive action schemes**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither male nor female managers were significantly more likely to report that they are involved in some type of positive action scheme with their organisation.

## Discussion and recommendations by gender

### Gender, age and disability

It should be noted that the questionnaire was originally designed to analyse barriers to career progression for Black and Minority Ethnic managers, and so although many of these barriers are the same for managers depending on their age, not all of the possible barriers associated with gender have been investigated.

#### Demographic information

##### a. Gender

The sample of local government managers who stated their gender is fairly large (n = 1966) and the percentage of males and females in the sample was quite even, suggesting that the findings can reasonably be generalised among local government organisations.

##### b. Level of management

Analysis revealed that male managers were at a significantly higher level of management overall than female managers in the sample. This is not a surprising result, and indeed reflects reports by organisations such as the Equal Opportunities Commission, whose research has consistently found women significantly less well represented than men at senior managerial levels within local government.<sup>1</sup>

##### c. Age

Analysis suggested that male managers were significantly likely to be older than female managers in the sample, with an average age gap of just under three years.

##### d. Ethnic origin

Analysis suggested that neither male nor female managers were significantly more likely to be either Black and Minority Ethnic or White.

##### e. Highest level of education

Analysis suggested that while male managers were significantly more likely than female managers to hold an undergraduate degree as their highest level of qualification, the female managers were significantly more likely to hold a masters degree than the male managers as their highest level of education.

This finding appears to refute any suggestion that female managers are under-represented in senior management because they are under-qualified academically, and supports previous research findings that female managers are often better educationally qualified than their male colleagues.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, other reasons must be investigated as to why local government female managers are at a lower level overall.

#### Attitudinal findings

##### a. Career satisfaction

Analysis of the career satisfaction scale suggested that there was no overall difference in the career satisfaction of male and female local government managers. At junior management level, however, male managers reported lower career satisfaction than female managers, although this was not a strong finding. Local government organisations may find it useful to investigate this further, to avoid the loss of such managers in future.

##### b. Supervisory support

There was no significant difference in the overall level of supervisory support perceived by either male or female managers. This suggests that it may not be

a contributing factor to the lower representation of senior women in local government.

### **c. Feedback**

Analysis suggested that there is no significant difference overall in the quality and frequency of the feedback that received by male and female managers.

However, male managers were significantly more likely to report that performance reviews often bring up critical feedback that they were not expecting. This was a highly statistically significant finding, and is supported by findings of a recent *LRDL* and *IDeA* survey in which it was found that female managers tended to underestimate their performance, rather than overestimate it, when compared with the ratings given to them by their boss, whereas male managers were equally likely to overestimate their performance as underestimate it.<sup>3</sup>

It is important to ensure that feedback, both positive and negative, is being offered equally, and that male managers are not disadvantaged by only hearing negative reports about their performance when it is too late to rectify the situation before it goes on the record.

Bosses should ask themselves why this situation might be occurring. Are they afraid to challenge the poor performance of certain subordinates? Do they feel that it is not worth their time and effort? With the support of their organisations, they have a duty to address this situation.

### **d. Training and development**

Analysis suggested that overall there is no significant difference in the degree to which male and female managers perceive that training and development is made accessible to them by their organisation, and the extent to which their boss encourages them to pursue it.

However, male managers at the junior level report less access and encouragement to training and development than junior female managers. This could explain to some degree the earlier finding that junior male managers report less career satisfaction than junior female managers.

Discrimination against male employees is just as serious as discrimination against female employees, and so local government organisations should be careful to ensure that where discrepancies are found, they alter the situation.

### **e. 'In-group'/'Out-group' status**

#### **i 'In-group' status**

Analysis of in-group status suggested that female managers are significantly more likely than males to feel that they are part of the in-group at work, in that they are more likely to report that they often socialise with their colleagues.

Regularly socialising with colleagues can be very useful in career advancement because, among other things, it offers people a chance to hear important pieces of information about the organisation and changes within it.

However, it is important to note that the increase in in-group status was only found to be significant among junior managers. Therefore, the extent to which it is aiding the careers of female managers should not be overestimated.

#### **ii 'Out-group' status**

Analysis of the above scale suggested that junior male managers were more likely to report experiencing out-group status than junior female managers, although this was not a strong finding.

## Discussion and recommendations by gender

### Gender, age and disability

As mentioned earlier in terms of overall career satisfaction and training and development opportunities, it is suggested that local government organisations investigate this issue further, to ensure that they do not lose valuable talent.

#### **f. Career strategy behaviours**

##### **i Seeking career guidance**

Analysis suggested that female managers are significantly more likely than male managers to actively seek career guidance from not only their boss, but also from a person or people within and outside of their organisation. This was found particularly at the senior/director level of management, and the middle management level.

This finding may suggest that female managers are being more proactive in their careers than male managers overall. However, to gain a fuller understanding, it should be considered in light of the other findings on career strategy behaviours.

##### **ii Putting oneself forward for opportunities at work**

Analysis suggested that female managers are also significantly more likely than male managers to put themselves forward for opportunities at work, by letting their bosses know about the assignments they want, and by presenting themselves as someone who 'gets things done'.

Again, this suggests that women managers are generally more proactive in their careers than male managers, and again it was found to be most significant at the senior/director level of management, followed by the middle management level.

##### **iii Creating opportunities at work**

Here again, female managers are significantly more likely to report actively creating opportunities at work to keep their career options open than male managers. And again, differences in level of activity between male and female managers were greatest at the senior/director level of management and the middle management level.

Taken together, the differences in level of reporting of seeking career guidance, putting oneself forward for opportunities, and creating opportunities at work, paint a picture of the apparent differences in the career experiences of male and female local government managers.

It could be that female managers feel the need to put this type of extra effort into their careers because they are aware that opportunities, guidance, and the assignments they want will not be easily attainable, even when they reach the highest levels of the organisation.

##### **iv Working above and beyond normal hours**

No significant differences were found between the extent to which male and female managers engage in extra work outside formal hours or think about work during their free time.

##### **v Ensuring your views are the same as your boss'**

Analysis suggested that neither male nor female managers are significantly more likely to agree outwardly with their boss' opinions while disagreeing inwardly.

#### **g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)**

##### **i Belief in control by self over events in one's career**

Analysis suggests that, overall, neither male nor female managers overall were significantly more or less likely to believe that they control events in their career.

However, among middle managers, female managers were significantly more likely than male managers to believe that they determine the events that

happen in their life. They were also more likely to believe that when they make plans, they are almost certain to make them work.

This was a significant finding which seems to suggest that there is something particular about females who have made it past junior management level in local government, compared with men in the same position. In light of the previous findings that women managers are generally significantly more likely to engage in various career strategy behaviours, it could be that women managers have had to become more proactive to advance their careers than have males. It could also possibly be that women who had less self-belief have either left such organisations, or accepted a stunted career below middle management level.

#### ii Belief in control by chance/fate over events in one's career

Analysis suggested that male managers are significantly more likely than female managers to believe that chance/fate controls events in their life. Specifically, they were more likely to feel that they are often a victim of circumstance beyond their control and that they often have no chance of protecting their personal interest from unlucky occurrences.

Previous research has often shown that men and women often suffer from 'attribution error'. This describes the fact that when something goes wrong, men tend to attribute the fault to someone or something other than themselves, whereas when something goes right, they tend to attribute the cause to themselves.<sup>4</sup>

Fundamental attribution error also suggests that the reverse situation is true of women, i.e. when something goes badly for a woman, she tends to attribute the fault to herself, whereas when something goes well for a woman, she tends to attribute the cause to someone or something other than herself. Indeed, this was also found in this research where it can be seen that women managers were more likely to report that if they did well at a task, they usually felt it was down to luck.

#### iii Belief in control by 'powerful others' over events in one's career

Analysis suggested that male managers are significantly more likely than female managers to feel that their life will be determined by the actions of others, especially among those at middle management level.

They were also more likely to report that they make their plans work by ensuring that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over them, and that most of their beliefs are heavily influenced by their peers, rather than being truly their own, especially for those at senior/director level of management.

It could be argued that these findings indicate that there is a gender-related difference in the perception of the best route to career progression between men and women. Whereas women managers are perhaps more likely to believe that engaging in career strategy behaviours is the key to progressing within the organisation (see earlier findings), male managers are perhaps more likely to believe that the best route is through mirroring the values of those currently in the hierarchy.

#### h. Interest in career progression

Analysis suggested that neither male nor female managers are significantly more or less interested in progressing to a higher level of management during their careers.

## Discussion and recommendations by gender

### Gender, age and disability

Given this finding, it cannot be assumed that a lesser interest in career progression is the fundamental reason why there are fewer females than males in senior management in local government.

The relatively weak finding of women being more likely to not want to progress to a higher level of management is nonetheless worth considering in light of the 'long hours' culture often described as synonymous of local government.

This culture may make senior management less attractive to women managers (and male managers) to some extent, as it represents a barrier to having both career realisation and having a family/work balance. Indeed, research has found that senior females are significantly less likely to be married and/or have a family than their male colleagues, or women managers at lower levels of the hierarchy.<sup>5</sup>

Research has shown that organisations who have policies which take family life into account have greater commitment and lower intention to quit shown by employees.<sup>6</sup> The EOC are currently requesting organisations to discourage long-hours cultures, and suggesting that wherever possible, flexible working arrangements are encouraged, even within senior positions, where possible.<sup>7</sup> However, organisations must also encourage all employees to take up this opportunity, since research has shown that women are sometimes afraid to take up parental benefits because they fear it may damage their careers.<sup>8</sup>

#### **i. Measures of promotion**

##### **i Years in current position**

Analysis found that male managers were likely to have been in post for a significantly longer period of time than female managers overall, particularly at the senior/director level of management. This finding supports suggestions that male managers have been more senior than female managers for a long period of time, and may demonstrate to local government organisations that the need to do something about this situation is overdue.

##### **ii Increases in salary**

Although it was not a strong finding, analysis suggested that female managers are significantly more likely to have had more salary increases than male managers in the past two years. However, analysis categorising responses by level of management found that it was only true specifically at the junior level of management.

At first glance, this might appear to be a discrimination against male managers, but it should be noted that research by the EOC consistently shows that female managers earn less on average than male managers with the same experience, level of qualification, etc.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, this situation could in fact be describing local government organisations attempting to equalise the situation.

##### **iii Increases in responsibility**

Analysis of reported increases in responsibility suggest that female managers have had significantly greater increases in responsibility over the past two years than male managers overall. This could explain the previous finding that women managers are also more likely to have had more increases in salary over the past two years.

However, it should also be noted that when looking at specific levels of management, this difference was only significant at the middle management level, where a greater number of increases in salary for women managers was not specifically found.

Overall, the evidence may suggest that in local government organisations overall, pay is not necessarily related to amount of responsibility. The EOC<sup>10</sup> suggests that organisations could engage in regular pay reviews to try to ameliorate any discrepancies.

## **j. Mentoring and sponsorship**

### **i Mentoring**

Analysis of reported mentor usefulness and interest in their protégé suggests that there are no significant differences between male and female managers. However, it is important to note that male and female managers overall only slightly agreed that their mentors are useful, and only slightly agreed that their mentors are interested in helping them to progress their career.

This finding poses questions about the value of mentoring schemes in local government organisations, and may suggest that an analysis of added value should be undertaken to make such schemes more effective. It should be noted, though, that mentors can be a very useful aide in many ways for managers who wish to progress.

It has been suggested that, in particular, female mentors can be extremely useful for women managers in beginning to lessen the perception that a place in senior management comes at the price of having a family life, and it has been found that having a mentor in general can raise the aspirations of women in management, even for traditionally male functional areas.<sup>11</sup> Women who fail to reach such positions often state that the lack of a mentor is a causal factor in this situation.<sup>12</sup>

### **ii Sponsorship**

Analysis suggests that there were no significant differences between the reported usefulness of sponsors, and their perceived interest in protégés' careers, by male or female managers. Furthermore, neither male nor female managers were significantly more likely to report that their sponsor assigns them special projects to increase their visibility within the organisation.

Again, as was the case with mentors, neither male nor female managers were likely to rate their sponsors as particularly useful overall. Given how valuable sponsors can potentially be in the career progression of managers, local government organisations might benefit from looking carefully at their impact, and how their usefulness can be increased.

## **k. Network groups**

Analysis suggested that although neither male nor female managers were significantly more likely to be members of a network group, female managers are more likely to be in a network group that is both social and professional in nature, whereas male managers are more likely to be in a network group that is predominantly professional in nature.

Male and female managers appear to be as likely to actively network as each other, and it may well be that the difference found between the type of network group male and female managers belong to is a simple gender difference in style of interaction.

## Discussion and recommendations by gender

### Gender, age and disability

#### I. Positive action schemes

Analysis of positive action scheme involvement suggests that neither male nor female managers are significantly more likely to be part of a positive action scheme at work.

While this result suggests that female and male managers in local government are equally likely to have attained their current position without specific assistance, given the relatively low representation of women in senior positions, particularly in traditionally male-dominated functional areas such as finance, it could be that the lack of women managers engaged in positive action illustrates the lack of action currently being taken to ameliorate this situation.

However, involvement in positive action schemes could potentially lead to questions of 'credibility' among the colleagues of women managers, or questioning of their authority. Therefore, it is suggested that local government organisations that are interested in increasing the representation of female senior managers in local government consider carefully the concept of 'managing diversity' as an alternative to positive action. For further details of this approach, see Appendix 3 of this report.

#### In conclusion

It should be noted that research commissioned by the EOC,<sup>13</sup> which examined organisations with an extensive track record for promoting equalities, concluded that the best performers, among other characteristics:

- have a corporate framework for gender equality
- enjoy the political support and commitment of senior managers
- have institutional arrangements which place a corporate equalities strategy at the heart of policy making, supported by sufficient resources
- mainstream gender through policy development, performance management, service review (including Best Value) and service delivery and staffing
- monitor and evaluate the application of equalities policies at every level of the organisation and assess the equality impact of initiatives.

## Findings by age

An analysis of possible barriers to career progression among local government managers related to age was carried out. For this analysis, the managers who gave their age were divided into three groups. These were:

1. 20 – 35 years old (n = 247)
2. 36 – 49 years old (n = 1020)
3. 50+ years old (n = 526)

### Demographic information

#### a. Gender

The gender distribution of the three groups of managers is shown in the table below:

	Male	Female
20 – 35 years	36.4%	63.6%
36 – 49 years	42.4%	57.6%
50+ years	56.8%	43.2%

- statistical analysis suggests that there are significantly more females in the age group of managers between 20-35 years\*\*\*.

#### b. Level of management

The table below shows the managerial level of the three groups of managers:

	20 – 35 years	36 – 49 years	50+ years
Junior	38.0%	22.7%	24.2%
Middle	46.3%	46.0%	45.2%
Senior	14.9%	28.9%	28.1%
Director	0.8%	2.2%	2.4%
CEO	–	0.1%	0.1%

- statistical analysis suggests that the three groups of managers are at significantly different levels of management from each other overall\*\*.

#### c. Ethnic origin

The table below shows the most frequently stated ethnic origins of the three groups of managers:

	20 – 35 years	36 – 49 years	50+ years
White	67.6%	76.3%	90.1%
Black and Minority Ethnic	32.4%	23.7%	9.9%

Analysis suggests that:

- there are significantly more Black and Minority Ethnic managers in the age group 20-35 years than in the age group 50+\*\*\*
- there are significantly fewer Black and Minority Ethnic managers in the age group 50+ than the age groups 20-35 and 36-49 years\*\*\*.

### d. Highest level of education

The highest level of educational attainment of the three groups of managers is shown in the table below:

	20 – 35 years	36 – 49 years	50+ years
O-Levels/GCSEs	4.9%	5.1%	4.7%
A-Levels	4.9%	2.9%	1.8%
ONC	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%
HND/HNC/Diploma	7.7%	8.4%	5.7%
Professional Qualifications	18.7%	28.4%	35.8%
Undergraduate degree	41.9%	31.1%	29.4%
Masters degree	21.5%	23.7%	21.9%
PhD	–	–	–

### Attitudinal findings

#### a. Career satisfaction

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there was no significant difference in the overall career satisfaction of managers, depending on their age group.

#### b. Supervisory support

##### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years received significantly more supervisory support than managers aged 36-49 years\*\*.

In particular, managers aged 20-35 years were significantly more likely than managers aged 36-49 years to report that:

- my boss cares about whether or not I achieve my career goals\*\*
- my boss supports my attempts to acquire additional training and education to further my career\*\*.

##### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years received more supervisory support than managers aged over 50\*\*.

In particular, managers aged 20-35 years were more likely than managers aged over 50 to report that:

- my boss cares about whether or not I achieve my career goals\*
- my boss supports my attempts to acquire additional training and education to further my career\*.

##### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there was no significant difference between the quality of supervisory support offered to managers aged between 36-49 years and managers over the age of 50.

#### c. Feedback

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there was **no significant difference** in the quality and frequency of feedback received by the managers depending on their age group.

#### **d. Training and development**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there were **no significant differences** between the accessibility and encouragement by organisations and/or bosses to training and development opportunities, relating to the age group of the managers.

#### **e. 'In-group'/'Out-group' status**

##### **i In-group status**

###### **20-35 years vs. 36-49 years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years were significantly more likely to report feeling that they are part of the in-group at work, than were managers aged between 36-49 years<sup>\*\*</sup>.

In particular, managers aged between 20-35 years were significantly more likely than managers aged between 36-49 years to report that:

- they often socialise with their colleagues<sup>\*\*\*</sup>.

###### **20-35 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years were significantly more likely to report feeling that they are part of the in-group at work, than were managers aged 50+ years<sup>\*</sup>.

In particular, managers aged between 20-35 years were significantly more likely than managers aged 50+ years to report that:

- they often socialise with their colleagues<sup>\*\*\*</sup>.

###### **36-49 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there was no significant difference between perceptions of in-group status between the above groups of managers.

##### **ii 'Out-group' status**

###### **20-35 years vs. 36-49 years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 36-49 years are more likely to report feeling that they are part of the out-group at work, than are managers aged between 20-35 years<sup>\*</sup>.

In particular, managers aged between 36-49 years were significantly more likely than managers aged between 20-35 years to report that:

- in order to progress further in this organisation, I would have to compromise some of my values<sup>\*\*</sup>
- in order to progress further in this organisation, I would have to compromise some of my cultural identity<sup>\*\*</sup>.

###### **20-35 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there was no significant difference overall between the responses of the above groups of managers to questions about out-group status.

###### **36-49 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 36-49 years were more likely than managers aged over 50 years to report feeling that they are part of the out-group at work<sup>\*</sup>.

In particular, managers aged between 36-49 years were significantly more likely than managers aged over 50 years to report that:

- to progress within this organisation, I have had to compromise some of my cultural identity\*\*
- in order to progress any further in this organisation, I would have to compromise my cultural identity\*\*.

### f. Career strategy behaviours

#### i Seeking career guidance

##### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years were significantly more likely than managers aged between 36-49 years to seek career guidance\*\*\*.

In particular, managers aged between 20-36 years are significantly more likely than managers aged between 36-49 years to report that they:

- actively seek career guidance from people **within** the organisation other than their direct boss\*\*\*
- actively seek career guidance from a more experienced person/people **outside** the organisation\*\*\*
- actively seek career guidance from their boss\*\*.

##### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years were significantly more likely than managers aged 50+ years to seek career guidance\*\*\*.

In particular, managers aged between 20-35 years are significantly more likely than managers aged 50+ years to report that they:

- actively seek career guidance from people **within** the organisation other than their direct boss\*\*\*
- actively seek career guidance from a more experienced person/people **outside** the organisation\*\*\*
- actively seek career guidance from their boss\*\*\*.

##### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 36-49 years were significantly more likely than managers aged 50+ years to seek career guidance\*\*.

In particular, managers aged between 36-49 years are significantly more likely than managers aged 50+ years to report that they:

- actively seek career guidance from a more experienced person/people **outside** the organisation\*\*\*.

#### ii Creating opportunities at work

##### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither the managers aged between 20-35 years, nor those aged between 36-49 years, were significantly more likely to report that they engage in the active creation of opportunities at work.

##### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are significantly more likely to report that they create opportunities at work than managers aged 50+\*\*.

In particular, managers aged between 20-35 years are significantly more likely than managers aged 50+ to report that:

- rather than sticking rigidly to one predetermined career course, they keep an open mind as to where their career might lead\*\*\*
- they are keen to obtain broadly based work experience within their organisation\*\*\*
- they actively prepare themselves for career opportunities they cannot necessarily foresee\*\*.

However, managers aged 50+ are significantly more likely than managers aged between 20-35 years to report that:

- they tend to assume a leadership role in situations at work where leadership seems to be lacking\*\*\*.

#### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither the managers aged between 36-49 years, nor managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to engage in the active creation of opportunities at work.

### iii Working above and beyond normal hours

#### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 36-49 years are more likely to work above and beyond normal hours than managers aged between 20-35 years\*.

In particular, managers aged between 36-49 years are significantly more likely than managers aged between 20-35 years to report that:

- they often take their work home with them\*\*
- they spend time outside their formal working hours doing further work\*.

#### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged 50+ years are more likely to work above and beyond normal hours than managers aged between 20-35 years\*.

In particular, managers aged between 50+ years are significantly more likely than managers aged between 20-35 years to report that:

- they often take their work home with them\*\*
- they spend time outside their formal working hours doing further work\*\*.

#### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither managers aged between 36-49 years, nor managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report that they work above and beyond normal hours.

### iv Ensuring your views are the same as your boss'

#### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis suggests that neither managers aged between 20-35 years, nor managers aged between 36-49 years, were significantly more likely to agree outwardly with their boss' opinions if they disagree inwardly.

#### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years were **significantly more likely** than managers aged 50+ years to report that they tend to agree outwardly with their boss' opinions, even if they disagree inwardly\*.

## Findings by age

### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis suggests that neither managers aged between 36-49 years, nor managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to agree outwardly with their boss' opinions if they disagree inwardly.

### v Putting oneself forward for opportunities

#### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are **significantly more likely** than managers aged between 36-49 years to report that they work particularly hard on assignments that they know their boss will see\*\*.

#### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are **significantly more likely** than managers aged 50+ years to report that they work particularly hard on assignments that they know their boss will see\*\*.

#### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that **neither** managers aged between 36-49 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report that they work particularly hard on assignments that they know their boss will see.

## Gender, age and disability

### **g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)**

#### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither managers aged between 20-35 years, nor those aged between 36-49 years, were significantly more likely to report either:

- belief in control by self over events in one's career
- belief in control by chance/fate over events in one's career
- belief in control by 'powerful others' over events in one's career.

#### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither managers aged between 20-35 years, nor managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report either:

- belief in control by self over events in one's career
- belief in control by chance/fate over events in one's career.

However, it was found that:

- managers aged between 20-25 years are more likely than managers aged 50+ years to report feeling that if important people were to decide they didn't like them, they wouldn't make many friends\*
- managers aged 50+ years are more likely than managers aged 20-35 years to report feeling that their life will be determined by the actions of others\*.

#### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither managers aged between 36-49 years, nor managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report either:

- belief in control by self over events in one's career
- belief in control by chance/fate over events in one's career
- belief in control by 'powerful others' over events in one's career.

## **h. Interest in career progression**

### **20-35 years vs. 36-49 years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are significantly **more likely to want to progress** to a higher level of management during their career than managers aged between 36-49 years\*\*\*.

Furthermore, managers aged between 36-49 years are significantly **more likely** than managers aged between 20-35 years to report that they would **rather not progress** to a higher level of management during their future career\*\*\*.

### **20-35 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are significantly **more likely to want to progress** to a higher level of management during their career than managers aged 50+ years\*\*\*.

Furthermore, managers aged 50+ years are significantly **more likely** than managers aged between 20-35 years to report that they would **rather not progress** to a higher level of management during their future career\*\*\*.

### **36-49 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that managers aged between 36-49 years are significantly **more likely to want to progress** to a higher level of management during their careers than managers aged 50+ years\*\*\*.

Furthermore, managers aged 50+ years are significantly **more likely** than managers aged between 36-49 years to report that they would **rather not progress** to a higher level of management during their future career\*\*\*.

## **i. Measures of promotion**

### **i Years in current position**

#### **20-35 years vs. 36-49 years**

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 36-49 years are likely to have been in their current position within their organisation for a significantly greater number of years than managers aged between 20-35 years\*\*\*.

#### **20-35 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis suggests that managers aged 50+ years are likely to have been in their current position within their organisation for a significantly greater number of years than managers aged between 20-35 years\*\*\*.

#### **36-49 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis suggests that managers aged 50+ years are likely to have been in their current position within their organisation for a significantly greater number of years than managers aged between 36-49 years\*\*\*.

### **ii Increases in salary**

#### **20-35 years vs. 36-49 years**

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are likely to have had significantly more increases in salary over the past two years than managers aged between 36-49 years\*\*\*.

#### **20-35 years vs. 50+ years**

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are likely to have had significantly more increases in salary over the past two years than managers aged 50+ years\*\*\*.

## Findings by age

### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis suggests that **neither** managers aged between 35-49 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, are likely to have had significantly more salary increases in the past two years.

### iii Increases in responsibility

#### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis suggests that **neither** managers aged between 20-35 years, **nor** managers aged between 35-49 years, are likely to have had significantly more increases in responsibility in the past two years.

#### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis suggests that **neither** managers aged between 20-35 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, are likely to have had significantly more increases in responsibility in the past two years.

#### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis suggests that **neither** managers aged between 35-49 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, are likely to have had significantly more increases in responsibility in the past two years.

## Gender, age and disability

### j. Mentoring and sponsorship

#### i Mentoring

	20-35 years	36-49 years	50+ years
% With a mentor	11.7%	7.4%	6.8%
% Without a mentor	88.3%	92.6%	93.2%

- Statistical analysis suggests that the managers in the group 20-35 years are more likely to have a mentor than the other two age groups\*.

#### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that **neither** managers aged between 20-35 years, **nor** managers aged between 36-49 years, were significantly more likely to report that:

- their mentor is useful in helping them to progress their careers
- their mentor is interested in helping them to progress their careers.

#### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that **neither** managers aged between 20-35 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report that:

- their mentor is useful in helping them to progress their careers
- their mentor is interested in helping them to progress their careers.

#### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that **neither** managers aged between 36-49 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report that:

- their mentor is useful in helping them to progress their careers
- their mentor is interested in helping them to progress their careers.

## ii Sponsorship

	20-35 years	36-49 years	50+ years
% With a sponsor	6.5%	5.5%	5.1%
% Without a sponsor	93.5%	94.5%	94.9%

- Analysis suggests that there is no significant difference in the distribution of sponsors by age group of manager.

### 20-35 years vs. 36-49 years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that **neither** managers aged between 20-35 years, **nor** managers aged between 36-49 years, were significantly more likely to report that:

- their sponsor assigns them special projects to increase their visibility within the organisation
- their sponsor is useful in helping them to progress their careers
- their sponsor is interested in helping them to progress their careers.

### 20-35 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that **neither** managers aged between 20-35 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report that:

- their sponsor assigns them special projects to increase their visibility within the organisation
- their sponsor is useful in helping them to progress their careers
- their sponsor is interested in helping them to progress their careers.

### 36-49 years vs. 50+ years

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that **neither** managers aged between 36-49 years, **nor** managers aged 50+ years, were significantly more likely to report that:

- their sponsor assigns them special projects to increase their visibility within the organisation
- their sponsor is useful in helping them to progress their careers
- their sponsor is interested in helping them to progress their careers.

## k. Network groups

	20-35 years	36-49 years	50+ years
Yes	43.6%	48.2%	55.3%
No	63.4%	51.8%	44.7%

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that:

- Managers in the age group 20-35 years are significantly less likely to be in a network group than the other two groups of managers\*\*
- Managers in the age group 50+ are significantly more likely to be in a network group than the other two groups of managers\*\*.

There is no significant difference between the types of network group managers belong to in relation to their age group.

## Findings by age

### I. Positive action schemes

	20-35 years	36-49 years	50+ years
Yes	4.3%	5.6%	10.3%
No	95.7%	94.4%	89.7%

Analysis suggests that of those who responded:

- Managers in the age group 20-35 years are least likely to report that they are part of a positive action scheme\*\*
- Managers in the age group 50+ years are most likely to report that they are part of a positive action scheme\*\*.

## Gender, age and disability

## Discussion and recommendations by age

It should be noted that the questionnaire was originally designed to analyse barriers to career progression for Black and Minority Ethnic managers. Therefore, although many of these barriers are the same for managers depending on their age, not all of the age-related barriers have been investigated.

### Demographic information

#### a. Gender

The gender distribution was fairly even for all three age groups, except the youngest, where there were significantly more females than males. This could be worth considering in light of the findings of gender differences between junior managers (see previous section).

#### b. Level of management

Analysis showed that managers aged between 20-35 were the most likely group to be junior managers, and the least likely group to be at senior/director level of management. Given the amount of relevant experience usually required for an individual to rise to such levels of management, this may not be surprising.

However, all three age groups are equally likely to be middle managers, suggesting that length of acquired experience does not necessarily predict reaching this level in the hierarchy, or moving above it.

#### c. Ethnic origin

Analysis of the ethnic origin of the three age groups revealed that there were more Black and Minority Ethnic managers in the younger age groups. This may suggest either that local government organisations have begun actively to recruit young Black and Minority Ethnic managers, or that Black and Minority Ethnic managers tend to leave local government organisations as they get older.

#### d. Highest level of education

Analysis suggests that there are significant differences in the highest level of education for the three age groups of managers.

It appears that the older the manager, the more likely they are to have professional qualifications, whereas the younger the manager, the more likely they are to have an undergraduate degree. This may reflect changes in the educational choices of today's generations, where more people than before are likely to attend university.

It is also worth noting that there was no significant difference overall in the most educationally qualified group of managers – those with a Masters degree – where each age group was equally likely to possess such a qualification. This means that any arguments that older employees are not as well qualified as their younger counterparts cannot be made with regard to local government managers.

### Attitudinal findings

#### a. Career satisfaction

Analysis did not yield any significant differences in reported career satisfaction between the three age groups of managers. However, it must be noted that these items were specifically related to career satisfaction, rather than satisfaction with the working environment in general.

Factors that might be particularly relevant to the satisfaction of older managers that have not been included in the questionnaire include things like:

- feeling that you are valued by your organisation for your contribution
- feeling that your job is secure

## Discussion and recommendations by age

### Gender, age and disability

- feeling that you are given the same respect as younger managers in your position.

Therefore, it is important that such factors be measured before conclusions are drawn as to the relative satisfaction of older workers with their working environment.

#### **b. Supervisory support**

Analysis indicated that the youngest managers (aged between 20-35 years) might be receiving significantly more supervisory support than managers aged over 36. These were strong findings, and were centred specifically on bosses' interest in their career goals and bosses' support of training and education to further their careers.

What these findings may suggest is that bosses of managers over the age of 35 feel that they have no need to be interested in their direct reports' career aspirations. This could either be because they assume that managers over this age no longer have career aspirations, or that they do not require support in achieving such aspirations.

Whatever the situation, it is not necessarily fair, or in the best interests of the organisation. In order to ameliorate such a situation, it may be useful for local government organisations to actively encourage a culture of support for career development and learning regardless of age, where the manager wishes to progress. Managers' bosses should be encouraged to find out about their direct reports' career goals and aspirations, possibly as part of their performance review, and be required to act on them.

#### **c. Feedback**

Analysis suggests that age does not appear to be a factor in the frequency and/or quality of feedback given to managers by their bosses.

#### **d. Training and development**

Analysis suggests that, in general, age is not a factor in whether local government managers are encouraged to take up training, or whether it is made accessible to them by their organisation.

However, it can be seen that, for the item investigating encouragement by bosses for managers to pursue training and development within the training and development scale, it was found that managers aged between 20-35 years were significantly more likely to report that their boss encourages them to pursue training and development than managers over this age.

These results seem to show that managers over 35 do not perceive their organisation as discouraging them from taking up training and development opportunities, but rather they *perceive* that it is *their line manager who is not particularly encouraging*, and so may pose a barrier to their development.

This is an important point, and signals where organisations may need to make improvements in practice if they are to invest in older managers and decrease this apparent discrimination. *The Code of Practice on Age Diversity* (DfWP, 2002) recommends that organisations ‘regularly review the training needs of all employees’, and ‘carry out regular skills audits to find out who has what skills’. This identification of the development needs of all staff should be made part of regular performance appraisal, and it might be useful to assess managers’ bosses’ performance against this criterion.

#### **e. ‘In-group’/‘Out-group’ status**

##### **i In-group status**

Analysis indicated that managers aged 20-35 are significantly more likely to report socialising regularly with their colleagues.

This is not a particularly surprising finding, given that with age usually comes increased responsibility, in the form of families and/or other dependants.

##### **ii Out-group status**

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 36-49 were significantly more likely to report feeling part of the ‘out-group’ at work than either managers who were younger, or managers who were older than them.

However, there were similarities and differences in the ways in which the age groups of managers varied in their perceptions of their ‘out-group’ status. For example, managers that were either younger or older than those between 36-49 years were both significantly *less* likely to report that in order to progress any further, they *would have to* compromise some of their cultural identity.

A similar difference was found between managers aged 36-49 and 50+, where the younger group were significantly more likely to report that to progress within this organisation, they have had to compromise some of their cultural identity.

These are not easy findings to interpret, as the statements were included in the questionnaire to measure differences due to ethnicity rather than differences due to age. However, they are highly significant findings, and so should be considered seriously by local government organisations. Furthermore, one manager who responded to this questionnaire explicitly stated that this was the case even though they are White.

Less difficult to interpret is the finding that managers aged between 20-35 years are significantly *less* likely than managers aged over 36 years to report that they *would have to* compromise some of their values in order to progress further within their organisation. This may be explained by the fact that with age, experience, and increasing levels of management, individuals realise that there is a certain way of working within the organisation which must be adhered to in order to progress further.

This is often an effect of ‘organisational culture’, which dictates that managers are expected to espouse and hold sacred certain values. The more senior the position held by a manager in the organisation, the more expected it often is that they espouse and hold sacred the particular values of their organisation.

#### **f. Career strategy behaviours**

##### **i Seeking career guidance**

Analysis suggested that the youngest managers (those aged between 20-35 years) were significantly more likely to actively seek career guidance than managers who were older. Also, managers in the middle age group (36-49

## Discussion and recommendations by age

### Gender, age and disability

years) were significantly more likely to actively seek career guidance than the managers in the oldest age group (50+ years).

These may not be particularly surprising findings, given that analysis of managerial level indicated that the age of the managers was related to their level in the hierarchy, and so older managers might require less guidance given that they have generally achieved more in their careers already.

It may be worth noting, however, that managers in the middle age group (36-49 years) were significantly more likely than the older managers (50+ years) to actively seek career guidance from a more experienced person/people outside of the organisation.

#### ii Creating opportunities at work

Analysis suggested that there were only significant differences between the active creation of opportunities at work between the youngest and oldest groups of managers (20-35 years and 50+ years, respectively).

The type of opportunities that the youngest managers reported trying to create were based around keeping one's career course open to possibilities. Given that most managers over 50 have already experienced most of their careers, it is perhaps not particularly surprising that they are not in as much doubt as to the course of their career as the youngest managers.

It may also be worth noting that there are no significant differences in the reported active creation of opportunities by the middle age group of managers (those aged between 36-49 years) and managers older and younger than them. This may suggest that local government managers' careers tend to become fixed on a certain course roughly between the ages of 36 and 49.

The fact that managers aged 50+ are significantly more likely to report that they would assume a leadership role at work where one is lacking than the youngest group of managers is again unsurprising, and may be related to the fact that level of management seems to be related to age. In other words, the older the manager, the more likely they may be to have one of the higher positions in authority within the organisation, and thus experience of leadership that they are willing to use.

#### iii Working above and beyond normal hours

Analysis suggested that managers aged 36 and above were significantly more likely to report taking their work home with them, and spending time outside their formal hours doing further work than managers under the age of 36.

Again, this finding may well be related to the finding that age group tends to correlate with level of management, and so older managers tend to have more responsible positions, with greater amounts of work and duties to be carried out, and the youngest managers tend to be at the lower levels of management.

It may also be worth noting that this finding was not apparent when comparing responses of managers in the middle age group (36-49 years) and the oldest age group (50+ years). This may suggest that after junior management, the tendency to have a workload that requires working outside formal hours, and perhaps at home, remains somewhat stable.

#### iv Ensuring your views are the same as your boss'

Analysis revealed that managers aged 35 and below were significantly more likely than older managers to engage in agreeing outwardly with their boss, while disagreeing inwardly.

This suggests that local government managers below a certain age, or level of management, may feel it necessary to engage in ingratiating themselves with their boss through intellectual flattery, or there may be a pervasive culture of not challenging authority. Whether or not this is helpful to the effectiveness of the organisation may be questioned.

#### v Putting yourself forward for opportunities

Analysis suggested that the managers significantly more likely to put themselves forward for opportunities are those aged 35 and below. In particular, these managers tended to report more strongly that they work particularly hard on assignments that they know their boss will see.

Engagement in this type of behaviour might be explained by the need for ambitious young managers to be identified from a large pool of talent, in order to get a 'leg up' on the local government career ladder.

#### g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)

Analysis suggests that managers aged between 20-35 years are more likely than managers aged 50+ to feel that if important people were to decide that they did not like them, they would not make many friends.

Given that the first group of managers are probably at the earlier stages of their career, and so still establishing themselves professionally, compared with the second group, this finding may not be particularly surprising.

It may, however, be worth noting that managers aged 50+ were more likely than managers aged between 20-35 years to feel that their life will be determined by the actions of others. This was not a particularly strong finding, but it could be related to the incidence of early retirement, which may suggest that a very large proportion of early retirement is not entirely voluntary (see Appendix 4 for further details). Recommendations for local government organisations on early retirement are given at the end of this section.

#### h. Interest in career progression

Analysis suggests that the younger the manager, the greater the desire to progress to a higher level of management during their career. They also suggest that the older the manager, the greater the likelihood that they do not wish to progress to a higher level of management during their career.

These results may not be surprising, given that previous results suggest that the older the manager, the higher their level of management, and vice versa.

#### i. Measures of promotion

##### i Years in current position

Analysis suggests that the older the manager, the greater number of years they are likely to have spent in their current position within the organisation, and the younger the manager, the fewer the number of years they are likely to have spent within the organisation.

These results seem to suggest that managers in local government tend to spend a long time with the same organisation.

### ii Increases in salary

Analysis of increases in salary over the past two years suggested that the greatest number of salary increases of local government managers occur below the age of 36. This could be because junior managers tend to join organisations on low salaries and progress quite quickly in the initial stages of their career, after which salaries tend to plateau.

In order to understand the basis for this phenomenon, a thorough review of average salaries at different grades and different age groups would have to be undertaken.

### iii Increases in responsibility

Analysis indicated that number of increases in responsibility does not appear to be related to the age of the manager.

This suggests that discrimination does not occur in terms of older managers being regarded as relatively inactive, and in fact they appear to be being offered as many increases in responsibility as the younger managers.

However, age discrimination may be more concerned with the **type** of responsibility being given to older managers – whether it is the type of responsibility that they would like, whether it is the same type of responsibility being given to younger managers, whether their ability is underestimated, etc. In short, the type and quality of responsibility being given to older vs. younger workers should be examined in more detail to ascertain whether the situation is fair.

To ensure that promotion decisions are fair to managers of all ages, local government organisations should consider guidelines given in the *Code of Practice for Age Diversity*, published by the Department for Work and Pensions.<sup>14</sup> They advise that:

- promotion opportunities should be made available to all staff
- skills, abilities and potential of candidates should be focused on when sifting application forms
- interviewers should be aware of the need to ask job-related questions only
- where possible, the interview panel should be made up of people of different ages
- interviewers should be trained to avoid prejudice.

## j. Mentoring and sponsorship

### i Mentoring

Analysis suggests that managers aged under 36 are most likely to have a mentor, whereas there are no significant differences between the prevalence of mentors among managers over the age of 36.

This finding suggests either that local government organisations think that their youngest managers are in most need of a mentor, or the youngest managers are most active in seeking out a mentor to help with their career, or both.

It was also found that the usefulness or perceived interest of mentors did not appear to be related to the age of their protégé.

### ii Sponsorship

Analysis revealed that there is no significant difference in the prevalence of mentors, depending on the age group of the managers.

Furthermore, sponsors were not more likely to be perceived as more useful, interested in their protégés' career, or likely to assign them visible projects, depending on the age of the manager.

### **k. Network groups**

Analysis suggested that the greater the age of the manager, the more likely they were to report being part of a network group, and the younger the age of the manager, the less likely they were to report being part of a network group.

The reason why older managers are more likely to be in a network group could be that the greater the number of years a manager is in local government, the greater the number of contacts they are likely to have accrued, who might make up such a network group. Furthermore, no strict definition of network group was given, and so the reported network groups might actually have included professional associations, or other such bodies.

### **l. Positive action schemes**

Analysis suggests that the older the manager, the more likely they were to report being part of a positive action scheme, and vice versa for younger managers.

This finding could, in theory, be explained by large numbers of local government organisations working to recruit greater numbers of older managers. However, it seems more plausible that the definition of 'involvement in a positive action scheme' should have been clarified, and thus it could be that the older managers (who tend to be more senior) may have assumed that 'involvement' included planning, implementation, or possibly the running of a positive action scheme.

## **Early retirement**

Although the questionnaire did not measure, in any way, the prevalence of early retirement, there are a couple of guidelines that local government organisations might find helpful in the avoidance of the problems it can cause (see Appendix 4 for a discussion of the issues).

It is suggested by Henderson,<sup>15</sup> for example, that to avoid a shortfall in individuals qualified for certain positions in the future, organisations should consider carrying out a workforce analysis to ascertain in which functions are the largest number of older managers, and use this information to predict what would happen if these managers took early retirement in large numbers.

This analysis should also ask the older managers what their desires are for the future of their careers – whether they are in fact keen to sever links with the organisation entirely – or whether they would prefer to enter retirement more gradually. Research has shown that older workers may well prefer to reduce working hours or partially retrain rather than retire completely, although personnel departments appear not to be particularly helpful in this regard, preferring the latter option.<sup>16</sup>

However, organisations who are convinced by the business case for retaining older employees, or whose workforce analysis recommends that they are necessary for the efficiency of the organisation, must be aware that in order to retain older workers, their needs must be taken into account. It is suggested that the most attractive options for older workers include less stress, more flexibility in working arrangements, and greater autonomy, factors that research has previously shown would in fact benefit everyone.<sup>17</sup>

## Discussion and recommendations by age

Despite the fact that there is as yet no legal legislation against age discrimination, the Department for Work and Pensions has produced a *Code of Practice for Age Diversity in Employment*.<sup>18</sup> It includes guidelines on best practice in redundancy to avoid it being a discriminatory situation, by suggesting that job-related criteria replaces age as a criterion for employee selection.

It also suggests that alternatives to redundancy should be considered, such as part-time working, short-term contracts, retraining, or relocation. How well these options would work specifically for the individual local government manager, and what other alternatives might be more effective, should be considered carefully.

Furthermore, given that the *Institute for Public Policy Research* has suggested that the retirement age should be increased to 67,<sup>19</sup> together with planned age diversity legislation coming into effect in 2006, local government organisations should start to prepare themselves for later ages of retirement.

## Gender, age and disability

## Findings by disability

Please note that owing to the size of the sample, analysis controlling for level of management between disabled and non-disabled managers could not be carried out at the senior/director level of management.

### Demographic information

#### a. Gender

Of the 67 disabled managers in the sample:

- 55.2% are male
- 41.8% are female
- 3% no responses

#### b. Level of management

The table below shows the managerial level of the disabled and non-disabled managers:

	Disabled	Non-disabled
Junior	43.3%	22.6%
Middle	32.8%	45.1%
Senior	17.9%	28.6%
Director	1.5%	2.4%
CEO	–	0.1%

- Analysis suggests that non-disabled managers are at a significantly higher level of management overall than disabled managers\*\*.

#### c. Age

Analysis suggests that there was no significant difference in the average age of the disabled and non-disabled managers.

#### d. Ethnic origin

The table below shows the ethnic origin of the disabled and non-disabled managers:

	Disabled	Non-disabled
Black and Minority Ethnic	25.4%	19.8%
White	74.6%	80.2%

- Analysis suggested that there was no significant difference between the percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic and White disabled and non-disabled managers in the sample.

## e. Highest level of education

The highest level of educational attainment of the disabled and non-disabled managers is shown in the table below:

	Disabled	Non-disabled
O-levels/GCSEs	7.5%	4.8%
A-levels	6.0%	2.6%
ONC	–	0.5%
HND/HNC/Diploma	10.4%	7.0%
Professional Qualifications	28.4%	28.7%
Undergraduate degree	16.4%	31.8%
Masters degree	26.9%	23.3%
PhD	–	–
No responses	4.4%	1.3%

- Analysis suggests that there is no significant difference between the highest level of educational attainment for disabled and non-disabled managers overall.

## Attitudinal findings

### a. Career satisfaction

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that overall, disabled managers are less satisfied with their careers than non-disabled managers. In particular, they are:

- Less satisfied with the progress they have made towards their overall career goals\*
- Less satisfied with the success they have achieved in their career\*
- Less satisfied with the progress they have made towards their goals for advancement\*.

Categorising responses by level of management, disabled managers are significantly less satisfied than non-disabled managers at middle management level\*.

### b. Supervisory support

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that non-disabled managers report receiving more supervisory support than disabled managers overall.

In particular, disabled managers are less likely to report that:

- Their boss supports their attempts to acquire additional training or education to further their career\*\*
- Their boss assigns them special projects that increase their visibility in the organisation\*
- Their boss provides them with assignments that give them the opportunity to develop and strengthen new skills\*.

An analysis categorising response by level of management suggests that disabled managers report significantly less supervisory support at the middle management level\*.

### c. Feedback

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that there was no significant difference between the reported quality and frequency of feedback offered to either disabled or non-disabled managers overall. However, disabled managers reported less frequent and useful feedback at the middle management level\*.

### d. Training and development

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that the non-disabled managers were significantly more likely to feel that they have access to training and development within their organisation\*\*.

In particular, **disabled** managers are significantly less likely to report that:

- their organisation makes training and development accessible to them\*\*
- their organisation has made the training and development they need in order to progress very accessible to them\*\*
- their boss encourages them to pursue qualifications and training to further their careers\*.

### e. 'In-group'/'Out-group' status

#### i In-group status

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers are significantly more likely to feel that they are part of the 'in-group' at work.

#### ii Out-group status

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that disabled managers are more likely to feel that they are part of the out-group at work, than are non-disabled managers\*.

In particular, disabled managers are more likely to report feeling that:

- they often miss out on important opportunities such as jobs or special assignments because they are discussed in informal gatherings to which they are not privy\*.

### f. Career strategy behaviours

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme – including: seeking career guidance, creating opportunities at work, ensuring your views are the same as your boss', and working above and beyond normal hours – suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers were significantly more likely to report engaging in the above activities.

However, **disabled managers were more likely** than non-disabled managers to report that they actively put themselves forward for opportunities\*.

In particular, they were **more likely than non-disabled** managers to report that they:

- make their boss aware of the assignments that they want\*.

### g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme found that there was no significant difference between the proportion of disabled and non-disabled managers overall with either:

- belief in control by self over events in one's career
- belief in control by chance/fate over events in one's career
- belief in control by 'powerful others' over events in one's career.

However, analysis categorising response by level of management suggested that among middle managers, non-disabled managers are more likely to report that:

- in order to have my plans work, I make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over me\*.

### **h. Interest in career progression**

Analysis of responses suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers are particularly more or less interested in progressing within their organisation.

### **i. Measures of promotion**

#### **i Years in current position**

Analysis of the above suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled were likely to have been in post for a significantly longer period of time.

Furthermore, there were no significant differences in length of time in post even when controlling for managerial level.

#### **ii Increases in salary**

Analysis of the above suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers were likely to have had significantly more increases in salary over the last two years.

#### **iii Increases in responsibility**

Analysis of the above suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers were likely to have had significantly more increases in responsibility over the last two years.

### **j. Mentoring and sponsorship**

#### **i Mentoring**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers are significantly more likely to report having a mentor.

Among disabled and non-disabled managers with mentors, it appears that:

- they only slightly agree that their mentors are useful in helping to progress their career
- they only slightly agree that their mentors are very interested in helping them to progress their career.

#### **ii Sponsorship**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers are more likely to have sponsors.

Furthermore, it appears that overall among managers with sponsors:

- disabled managers disagree that sponsors assign them special projects to increase their visibility within the organisation
- non-disabled managers only slightly disagree with the above statement
- both disabled and non-disabled managers slightly disagree that their sponsors are useful in helping them to progress their careers
- disabled managers slightly agree that sponsors are very interested in helping them to progress their careers, whereas non-disabled managers slightly disagree.

#### **k. Network groups**

Analysis of responses to statements investigating the above theme suggests that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers are significantly more likely to be part of a network group within or outside of their organisation.

Furthermore, among the managers who reported that they are part of a network group, there was no significant difference found between the types of network group to which either disabled or non-disabled managers belong.

#### **l. Positive action schemes**

Analysis revealed that significantly more disabled managers reported being part of a positive action scheme at work than non-disabled managers<sup>\*\*\*</sup>.

# Discussion and recommendations by disability

## Gender, age and disability

It should be borne in mind that the sample of local government disabled managers is quite small (n= 67), and therefore conclusions that can be generalised based on the findings of this questionnaire alone should be treated with caution.

Furthermore, the managers who have defined themselves as 'disabled' in this study have done so on the basis of the definition given by the *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA, 1995), which defines a disabled person as '*anyone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*'.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the managers who have described themselves as 'disabled' in this study may not include those with a lesser disability than those covered by the DDA, which could nonetheless be the cause of discrimination against them by others.

It should be noted that the questionnaire was originally designed to analyse barriers to career progression for Black and Minority Ethnic managers, and so although many of these barriers are the same for managers depending on their age, **not all of the barriers reported because of disability may have been investigated.**

### Demographic information

#### a. Gender

The gender distribution of the disabled managers was fairly equal, so the findings should be generalisable to male and female managers respectively.

#### b. Level of management

Statistical analysis of the disabled and non-disabled managers showed that the disabled managers in the sample were at a significantly lower level of management overall than the non-disabled managers.

This is consistent with previous research, which suggests that disabled employees are not promoted as frequently as non-disabled employees. If, as is suggested, this situation is the result of discrimination in everyday working life, the findings reported in the remainder of this section could partly be explained.

#### c. Age

Analysis showed that there was no significant difference between the ages of disabled and non-disabled managers in the sample.

#### d. Ethnic origin

Analysis revealed that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers in this sample were more likely to be either Black and Minority Ethnic or White.

#### e. Highest level of education

Analysis revealed that there were no significant differences in the highest level of educational attainment overall between the disabled and non-disabled managers in the sample. Therefore, any disparities reported here, such as a significantly lower level of management, could not be explained by lower academic qualification.

## Attitudinal findings

### a. Career satisfaction

Analysis revealed that disabled managers report being significantly less satisfied with their careers than non-disabled managers, in terms of:

- progress towards their career goals
- success achieved in their careers
- progress towards their goals for advancement.

This finding supports previous research suggesting that disabled employees do not enjoy the same opportunity in their careers as non-disabled managers. Furthermore, the greatest difference in career satisfaction between disabled and non-disabled managers was at the middle management level, which suggests that disabled managers, like other minority groups within local government, may face a career 'glass ceiling' at this level.

### b. Supervisory support

Analysis revealed that the **disabled managers in the sample reported receiving less supervisory support** overall than the non-disabled managers, and this was especially true at the middle management level, which again supports the suggestion of a career 'glass ceiling' at this level for disabled managers.

In particular, compared with non-disabled managers, disabled managers felt that their boss was much less likely to support their attempts to acquire additional training or education to further their career.

Previous research has suggested that disabled employees tend to have a less high-quality relationship with their supervisor than non-disabled employees,<sup>21</sup> which could lend some explanation to this finding. Furthermore, non-disabled supervisors of disabled employees are described as often holding negative stereotypes of them, viewing them as more helpless or dependent than non-disabled employees.<sup>22</sup>

Where this is the case, it may explain why disabled managers are being given less support in their attempts to acquire additional training or education, if their supervisor sees it as a waste of time.

Given that disabled managers could not fairly be described as more helpless or dependent than non-disabled managers, the attitude of supervisors who may be effectively holding back their organisational rights, are acting in a discriminatory fashion.

Disabled managers were also less likely than non-disabled managers to report being assigned projects by their supervisor to increase their visibility within the organisation. Here again it may be that supervisors are denying disabled managers equality of opportunity. Research has shown that supervisors who are physically dissimilar to a subordinate are less likely to trust such a subordinate in the same way that they would trust one who was more physically similar to themselves.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, in previous UK government research disabled employees have reported feeling that their supervisors appeared to be uncomfortable with their disability.<sup>24</sup>

Disabled managers were also less likely to report being given the opportunity to develop and strengthen new skills. Supervisors should be careful not to assume they know what the talents or aspirations of their subordinates are, or their development needs, if they have not enquired.

Whatever the reason for these apparent disparities in treatment, whether conscious or unconscious, they are discriminatory, and should be addressed. One way that organisations can tackle this type of situation is through greater accountability of supervisors at every level for the development of their staff. Staff development could be made an appraisal performance indicator, and organisations should set up some type of system to ensure that supervisors develop the talent and aspirations of all staff, not just the majority group members.

### c. Feedback

Given that there were no significant differences between disabled and non-disabled managers overall in terms of their responses to the feedback scale, it can be assumed that the disparities in feedback being offered to disabled vs. non-disabled managers are not great in terms of availability and usefulness of positive, constructive, and critical feedback.

However, once again, a disparity was found at the middle management level, where disabled managers reported significantly less feedback than non-disabled managers. Although this was not a particularly strong finding, it should not be overlooked in terms of contributing to a 'glass ceiling', and organisations should ensure that adequate, high quality feedback be provided to all their managers to ensure equality of opportunity to develop and progress.

### d. Training and development

Analysis of responses revealed the strong finding, that **non-disabled managers are significantly more likely** than disabled managers to report that:

- their organisation makes training and development accessible to them
- their organisation has made necessary training and development accessible in the past
- their boss encourages them to pursue qualifications and training.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has guidelines on the issue of training, specifically because disabled employees are often discriminated against in this way. In the case of local government organisations, it could be the case that organisations are not as willing to invest in the training and development of disabled managers because current training might need to be altered to make it accessible to them. Examples of necessary alterations might be the design of seminars where there is heavy use of overheads that a blind or partially-sighted person might not be able to see, or the use of a training venue that does not offer wheelchair access.

It is essential that local government organisations undertake a thorough review of their training arrangements, to ensure that they are accessible to disabled as well as non-disabled managers, in whatever dimension necessary.

Organisations need to publicise their valuing of all employees, regardless of physical or mental differences, together with guidelines on what will happen if employees are found to be discriminating on these bases.

### e. 'In-group'/'Out-group' status

#### i 'In-group' status

Analysis suggested that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers were more likely to report 'in-group' status.

## ii 'Out-group' status

Analysis suggested, however, that **disabled managers are more likely to report feeling part of the out-group** at work than non-disabled managers. In particular, they were more likely to report that they feel they often miss out on important jobs or special assignments because they are discussed in informal gatherings to which they are not privy.

This finding is supported by previous research where disabled central government employees felt that their departments *'were full of white non-disabled men who do not understand or value difference'*.<sup>25</sup> Local government organisations have a duty to tackle this problem among their staff. An active culture of managing diversity, where the talents and differences between and within groups of people are appreciated, is essential if disabled managers are to be given the same opportunity as non-disabled managers.

While local government organisations are in the process of tackling the apparently diversity-intolerant culture, they should consider the formation of network groups of disabled managers, where opportunities for development and psychosocial support can be shared informally. Network groups are discussed in more detail later.

## f. Career strategy behaviours

Analysis showed that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers were significantly more likely to engage in any career strategy behaviours other than putting themselves forward for opportunities, where disabled managers were more likely to report making their bosses aware of the assignments they want.

This finding could be explained by the fact that, as reported earlier, disabled managers do not feel that their supervisors tend to give them assignments to develop or strengthen their skills or ones that increase their visibility within the organisation, to the same degree than non-disabled managers do. As a result, it appears that the disabled managers are being proactive and requesting assignments, because it appears that the alternative is to be overlooked.

It is a positive finding that disabled managers are engaging in such proactive behaviour, but it is a negative reflection on the local government organisations that they work for that it may be necessary to do so. Again, the recommendation is that organisations make managers at all levels responsible for the development of all staff, and that this is a criterion in their performance appraisal.

## g. Locus of control (personal belief in what affects change)

Analysis suggests that neither the disabled nor the non-disabled managers appeared to differ in whether they perceive control over their own life, or whether it is controlled by chance/fate or 'powerful others'.

This is important, because it suggests that despite the possible frustrations of disparity of treatment at work, disabled managers have not internalised a sense of loss of control over their working lives any more than non-disabled managers, although it has been previously suggested that this can sometimes occur.<sup>26</sup>

It was also found that non-disabled middle managers are more likely to feel that in order to have their plans work, they make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over them, although this was not a strong finding.

### **h. Interest in career progression**

Analysis suggested that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers were more likely to want to progress further in management during their career or not progress. This is an important finding, showing that the lower level of management that disabled managers generally hold compared with non-disabled managers cannot be explained by a lack of ambition.

It highlights the need for organisations to do something to ameliorate the possible discrimination that is supporting this situation.

### **i. Measures of promotion**

#### **i Years in current position**

Even when looking at specific managerial levels, no significant differences were found between the length of time spent between disabled and non-disabled managers in their current position within their organisation.

This may indicate that disabled managers who do not progress within the organisation for a certain period of time may be leaving the organisation, since this result seems to find that they are not remaining in their current position for years on end.

#### **ii Increases in salary and responsibility**

The above themes were investigated to measure promotion rate. Since there was no significant difference between the responses given by disabled and non-disabled managers, it appears that neither group receives more increases in salary or responsibility than the other overall.

However, given the disparity in the overall managerial level of disabled and non-disabled managers, it appears that the type of increase in responsibility being reported may differ between the two groups. Again, it is recommended that local government organisations pay particular attention to the need to develop staff from each demographic group.

### **j. Mentoring and sponsorship**

#### **i Mentoring**

Analysis suggested that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers are more likely to have a mentor.

Unfortunately, the number of disabled managers with a mentor was much too small to use statistical analysis to find out whether the sponsors of disabled managers were more or less interested or useful than the mentors of the non-disabled managers.

However, the average score for both groups indicates that the mentors assigned are not particularly helpful. This may be something that local government organisations need to look at carefully, given that mentoring schemes can be costly, and are useless if they do not benefit protégés.

#### **ii Sponsorship**

Analysis suggested that neither disabled nor non-disabled managers are more likely to have a sponsor.

Unfortunately, the number of disabled managers with a sponsor was much too small to use statistical analysis to find out whether the sponsors of disabled managers were more or less interested, useful, or likely to assign special projects than the sponsors of the non-disabled managers.

However, as with mentors, the overall results showed that local government organisations should look very carefully at the actual usefulness of their managers' sponsors, as overall, the results suggest that they do not appear to be particularly useful.

#### **k. Network groups**

Analysis showed that neither the disabled nor the non-disabled managers in the sample were more likely to belong to a network group. Also, among the managers that did belong to a network group, there was no difference overall in the type of network group to which disabled and non-disabled managers report belonging.

Given the situation that disabled managers appear to be in, with regard to relative level of management, possible discrimination in their treatment, among other things, local government organisations may benefit from considering encouraging the formation of network groups specifically for these individuals.

Research has shown that network groups can be extremely beneficial, not only for disabled employees, but also for their organisation. Research,<sup>27</sup> which looked at disabled employees' network groups within three large US multi-nationals, included interviews with group members. They described the positive aspects of membership for individuals, such as the opportunity to seek advice from people who are more likely to understand their particular situation.

The research also outlined the positive benefits for the organisations themselves, such as increased understanding of customers through support by these groups in marketing and product design specifically for disabled customers, and the chance for organisations to learn about government grants for providing equipment that creates 'reasonable accommodation' for disabled employees.

Disabled employees may also benefit from network group membership as an informal support system. For example, a support group for employees with dyslexia has been set up at GCHQ. Furthermore, network groups can be useful in offering a way for a collective voice to be heard by senior management on issues important to the group members.

Local government organisations must be aware of the importance of network groups' issues being heard by those in policy-making positions. However, in order to increase the chance that group members' issues are taken seriously, it is suggested<sup>28</sup> that there are important guidelines for the formation of network groups among employees to achieve optimum benefit:

- they should support the objectives of the organisation
- they should be supported strongly by the leadership
- they must be voluntary
- they should be formal and well organised, with a mission and a goal.

#### **l. Positive action schemes**

Analysis revealed that disabled managers were significantly more likely to report that they are part of a positive action scheme than non-disabled managers in the sample.

This finding suggests that local government organisations are at least trying to do something to increase the representation of disabled employees at managerial level. It is important however that such organisations continually measure and support the various programmes they have in place, to ensure that they are doing what they are intended to do, in the time scale allotted.

Furthermore, selected candidates should be asked personally whether they want to participate in a positive action scheme. While some disabled managers

in local government may wish to take part,<sup>29</sup> other people argue that disabled employees may well see such action as patronising, and their involvement as a way of filling government targets.

### The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

Since 15 December 1998 it has been unlawful for organisations with 15 or more employees to discriminate against an employee or potential employee on the basis of their disability, unless it would *'genuinely and significantly impede that person from doing the work in question, and there is nothing the employer can reasonably be expected to do to overcome this'*.<sup>30</sup>

The DDA covers all areas of employment, including:

- opportunities for promotion or training
- any other benefit

Organisations are responsible if any of their employees are in breach of the Act.<sup>31</sup>

For this reason, in the light of evidence from this study, such as:

- different levels of supervisory support
- unequal access to training and development.

Local government organisations should be very careful to make sure that they are not in violation of the Act, and develop formal policies as part of their equal opportunities policies to tackle disability discrimination.

Research has shown that the most significant predictors of employer willingness to make reasonable adjustments for their disabled employees, to allow them to perform their jobs with the same opportunity as non-disabled employees, were employer attitude and level of knowledge of the DDA.<sup>32</sup>

It should not be assumed however that the DDA will make a significant impact on the working lives of disabled managers in local government, without the active participation of local government organisations, given that research has shown that seven years after the introduction of its equivalent in the US, little difference has been made to the employment prospects of disabled employees.<sup>33</sup>

All that can be hoped, therefore, is that disabled managers will use their voice when they feel they are being discriminated against, in the hope that action will be taken and preventative steps will be taken by other organisations as a result, or that local government organisations will truly recognise the bottom line business case for increasing the diversity of their workforce (see the following section for more details).

## The business case for gender, age and disability equality and diversity

UK legislation, which makes it unlawful for companies to discriminate against people on the basis of their gender, has existed for more than 20 years, and in the US, on the basis of their age, for more than 30. Despite this, the number of women in senior positions in organisations in the UK remains low<sup>34</sup> and the number of complaints about age discrimination in the US has increased significantly since 1990.<sup>35</sup>

Legislation against discrimination towards disabled people has only been around for eight years in the UK, but given the track record of other anti-discrimination laws, there is little reason to be overly optimistic. If organisations do not react sufficiently to legislation, a business case for equality and diversity needs to be presented.

### The business case for gender equality and diversity

Recent research into leadership in the UK public sector has produced a model of leadership that is referred to as 'transformational'. This model emphasises, among other things, the importance of empowering staff, valuing their contributions, and supporting their development. It is also very much about engaging the contributions of partners, including the community and external agencies.

This transformational style is often contrasted with the more formal managerial style, which is referred to as 'transactional'. While it is essential for managers to be effective at the transactional components of their jobs, including the setting of targets, creating strategic plans, reviewing performance, and so on, this is not sufficient for managing the challenges facing organisations in the public sector, such as local government. The most effective managers, and the ones with staff and teams that have both high levels of morale and performance, are those described as transformational.

There is substantial evidence from studies conducted in the US and UK, and more widely, that, in general, women are perceived to be significantly more transformational than are men<sup>36</sup> and that men are more likely to be perceived as more transactional.<sup>37</sup>

One of the most important drivers for change, with respect to women's entry into more senior positions in organisations, particularly those in the public sector, is the Government's pledge to modernise the public sector. At the core of the *Modernisation Agenda*, and the means by which it will be achieved, is the quality of leadership shown by managers at all levels in local government, but particularly at the top.

Even without the *Modernisation Agenda*, organisations should consider that the consequences of not ensuring the quality of their leaders, particularly at the most senior levels, are considerable. One reason relates to the amount of stress in organisations. According to a recent *CBI* study of the cost of stress at work,<sup>38</sup> it is the equivalent to between 4% and 6% of GDP. Stress is caused by a range of factors in the workplace, but according to a review undertaken by some organisational psychologists, '60% – 75% of employees, irrespective of their industry, sector, level or occupational group, state that the most stressful aspect of their job is their boss'.<sup>39</sup>

### The business case for age equality and diversity

Organisations need to be aware that they will probably have to rely much more on older employees in the near future, given that the number of people between the ages of 24 and 34 is decreasing rapidly.<sup>40</sup> By 2005, it is predicted that more than 36% of the labour force will be over 45, rising to 40% five years later. Given this shift in the age of available talent, it is argued that

## The business case for gender, age and disability equality and diversity

### Gender, age and disability

*'employers that continue to chase a diminishing resource – young people – at the expense of older workers will be putting their competitiveness at risk'.<sup>41</sup>*

However, organisations shouldn't require the predicted dependency on older workers in order for them to realise what a useful resource they might squander. Older employees have a far greater knowledge base, and arguably more wisdom and stability than younger professionals.<sup>42</sup> They also have added experience and job-related skill.<sup>43</sup> The *Nationwide Building Society*, who have an age diversity strategy in place, have found that the reduction in turnover saves them around £7million per year through lower recruitment and training costs.<sup>44</sup>

The Government have put together a *Code of Practice*, published by the *Department for Work and Pensions*<sup>45</sup> on age discrimination, which lists the benefits of discounting 'unnecessary age criteria'. This list includes:

- improved staff turnover
- higher staff morale
- fewer short-term absences
- higher productivity
- a better public image
- a wider range of skills and experience.

The *Code of Practice* recommends that age discrimination is acted upon in recruitment, selection, promotion, training and development, redundancy, and retirement, for these benefits to be accrued. It is estimated that the annual cost of ageism to the economy is between £16 – £31 billion per year.<sup>46</sup>

### The business case for disability equality and diversity

Given that nearly a third of people of working age have a disability, and that these people are twice as likely to be unemployed as non-disabled people, a huge amount of talent is being wasted among this section of the population.

It is suggested that organisations that wish to lead public policy, rather than simply follow it, in the proactive employment of disabled alongside non-disabled employees, will benefit from individuals with a strong commitment to employment.<sup>47</sup> Disabled people are said to place a higher value on employment than non-disabled people,<sup>48</sup> which may not be surprising given how much harder it is for them to secure.

Given that the average cost of training a new job incumbent can be as much as four times that of the salary of the seasoned employee,<sup>49</sup> it makes sense for employers to work to retain employees who become disabled while on the job, which is a common occurrence.

Furthermore, organisations that have a large proportion of disabled customers or service users, such as local government organisations, would do well to employ disabled staff who reflect the customer base they serve. Previous research has shown that this kind of diversity mirroring can greatly benefit organisations' bottom line through the understanding of needs that only similar people can bring.

The benefits can be most evident when diverse employees are at adequately senior positions within the organisation to influence policy, or when they at least have a voice with senior managers and other policy makers.

## End notes

- 1 See, for example, EOC, 2003
- 2 Davidson and Cooper, 1984
- 3 IDeA and LRDL, 2004
- 4 See, for example, Frieze, 1975
- 5 Brett and Stroh, 1999; EOC, 2002a
- 6 Chiu and Ng, 1999; Grover and Crooker, 1995
- 7 EOC, 2002a
- 8 Broad, 2002
- 9 See, for example, EOC, 2003
- 10 EOC, 2002a
- 11 Linnehan and Walsh, 1999
- 12 Burke and McKeen, 1994; White et al. 1992; Ragins, 1989; Clutterbuck and Devine, 1987; cited in Linnehan and Walsh, 1999; Broad, 2002
- 13 EOC, 2002b
- 14 DfWP, 2002
- 15 Henderson, 1994
- 16 Henderson, 1994.
- 17 The Economist, 2002
- 18 DfWP, 2002
- 19 The Economist, 2002
- 20 DfEE, 2001
- 21 Colella and Varma, 2001
- 22 Colella and Varma, 2001
- 23 Levine and Moreland, 1990
- 24 Capita and IES, 2001
- 25 Capita and IES, 2001
- 26 Capita and IES, 2001
- 27 Gensing-Pophal, 2002
- 28 Gensing-Pophal, 2002
- 29 Hearn, 1998
- 30 DfEE, 2001
- 31 DfEE, 2001
- 32 Jackson et al., 2000
- 33 Blanck, 1997
- 34 EOC, 2002
- 35 Wolf, 2001
- 36 See, for example, Bass and Avolio, 1994; Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2003a
- 37 Bass, Avolio and Atwater, 1996
- 38 CBI, 1999
- 39 Hogan, Curphy and Hogan, 1994
- 40 The Economist, 2002
- 41 Hodge, 2000
- 42 Wolf, 2001
- 43 Henderson, 1994
- 44 The Economist, 2002
- 45 DfWP, 2002
- 46 DfWP, 2002
- 47 Kearns, 1998
- 48 Henderson, 1994
- 49 Choi, 2001





# Summary of recommendations

## For all groups

### General recommendations

- work to increase the representation of more diverse Elected Members
- build a business case for equality and diversity for the organisation
- use the business case to work to gain the understanding of and commitment to equality and diversity among Elected Members
- encourage the political support and commitment of senior managers to equality and diversity
- ensure that equality and diversity are treated as mainstream issues and that they are supported by corporate strategy
- consider equality and diversity in policy development, performance management, service review and service delivery
- monitor and evaluate the application and effectiveness of equality and diversity policies at every level of the organisation

### Career satisfaction

- monitor the numbers of different demographic groups of managers appointed to different functional areas to ensure that certain groups of more diverse managers are not 'steered' into less prestigious areas or roles
- undertake attitude surveys and/or cultural audits among senior managers to ensure that more diverse groups of managers are not being sidelined from posts with greater influence
- pay particular attention to the possibility of 'glass ceiling' effects for more diverse managers above middle management level

### Supervisory support

- ensure that there are adequate chances for more diverse managers to 'act up' in more senior positions, particularly those with budgetary or policy-making responsibilities
- monitor the bosses of all managers to ensure that additional roles, training and qualifications are being encouraged equally to diverse groups of managers
- enquire into and take action on career aspirations of staff as a fundamental part of appraisal or performance review for all managers
- develop organisational guidelines on the importance for all managers to act on the developmental needs identified by their direct reports at all levels within the organisation
- conduct structured, in-depth exit interviews with managers who leave in order to identify the individuals, behaviours and/or organisational procedures that may be counterproductive in the workforce as a whole
- ensure that exit interviews are conducted by someone the interviewee views as neutral
- provide managers with a 'safe environment' in which to discuss issues surrounding equality and diversity and any treatment discrimination that could be occurring
- actively encourage a culture of support for career development and learning regardless of age or seniority

### Feedback

- ensure that there is readily available or compulsory training and development in the area of offering constructive, critical feedback to all staff
- encourage managers to write a truthful, confidential log of the time they spend giving feedback to direct reports, and to review this at the end of two weeks to analyse whether they are being fair to all staff
- consider the possibility of bosses eliciting feedback from the manager's direct reports to find out whether giving feedback is one of their strengths
- feed such information into every manager's performance review

## Summary of recommendations

- carry out regular skills audits to ensure that able staff are not being overlooked in favour of other staff or agency staff

### Training and development

- more diverse groups of managers may often be 'overqualified' academically for the positions they hold or aspire to. However, they should still be encouraged to pursue training and development, especially vocational, particularly in the form of secondments and opportunities to 'act up' within or outside of the organisation
- ensure that accommodation is made to enable all managers to benefit from training, considering possible physical barriers such as the heavy use of overheads, or wheelchair access
- undertake a thorough review of training arrangements to ensure that they are accessible to all in every dimension
- publicise the valuing of all employees and guidelines on what will happen if discrimination occurs

### In-group and out-group membership

- try to identify and break down any cultural, physical or other barriers that are causing organisational members to segregate themselves or become segregated
- further guidelines can be found in Appendix 3 of this report entitled '*Managing diversity as an alternative to positive action*'

### Career strategy behaviours

- build on organisation-wide valuing of diversity to help to increase the acceptance of more diverse managers as equally-credible authority figures
- increase equality of provision of high-profile assignments and special projects among all managers
- ensure that supervisory support is offered fairly for all managers (see recommendations above for supervisory support)

### Locus of control – personal belief in what affects change

- increase the sense of equality within the organisation perceived by managers in order to increase the chances that more diverse managers do not feel that demographic factors might impede their career progression

### Interest in career progression

- think outside the box in terms of the widespread usage of flexible working hours including among senior managers
- encourage all managers to take up such opportunities
- work to decrease the 'long-hours' culture of local government organisations

### Measures of promotion

- ensure that up-to-date job descriptions exist for all managers to ensure that even those who are less assertive are visible for their advancement requirements and decrease the need for them to make personal appeals to those in power
- include in these up-to-date lists of training and qualification to paint an accurate picture of the organisation's available talent
- explore the possibility that more diverse managers are being given pay increases rather than 'real' promotions
- engage in regular pay reviews, using up-to-date job descriptions to identify potential discrimination
- consider the type as well as the number of increases in responsibility given to managers, to ensure that they are fair
- ensure that promotion opportunities are available to all staff
- focus on skills, abilities and potential of candidates when sifting application forms, rather than demographic details
- ensure that selection panels always reflect diversity

## Summary, appendices and references

### **Appraisal and performance review**

- set and communicate clear guidelines for performance assessment criteria and procedures for measuring them
- train selectors in criteria-referenced interviewing for promotion to reduce potential bias
- consider the introduction of ‘situational interviewing’ for promotion
- ensure that any situational interviewing scenarios used are formulated on the basis of a diverse group of current post holders’ views
- train appraisers in how to elicit information from appraisees or interviewees on their achievements in the workplace, especially when they appear to lack confidence
- train appraisers and selection interviewers in the appreciation and consideration of equally valid but diverse ways of approaching tasks in the workplace
- do not assume that assessment centres eliminate bias in selection. Investigate the prevalence of diversity-awareness and appreciation training and the use of less-biased selection techniques among the assessors

### **Mentoring and sponsorship**

- implement mentoring schemes sensitively
- pay particular attention to the shortage of more diverse mentors, confusion about the role of mentors, and confusion about the involvement of the line manager
- run satisfaction analyses among managers who have a mentor, eliciting information on ways in which their mentor is helpful and not so helpful, and suggestions on how they feel the support offered could be improved
- feed the information elicited into mentor training schemes
- train mentors not only in giving instructional advice to protégés but also to offer advice from experience, emotional support and coaching, and in the importance of helping to build a network of influential contacts for their protégés
- ensure that mentors are always willing to offer their protégé the benefit of the doubt and support their ideas, rather than succumbing to conscious or unconscious negative stereotypes
- encourage individuals in mentoring relationships to discuss any issues of difference between them, such as ethnicity or disability and how it impacts organisational and career experiences, rather than treating them as ‘taboo’ issues
- consider the particular provision of diverse mentors for more diverse managers, especially in the more majority-group-dominated functional areas such as finance
- apply the above principles to sponsorship

### **Network groups**

- encourage the formation of network groups, particularly among more diverse groups of employees
- ensure that network group representatives have a voice with those in policy-making positions
- ensure that the network groups support the objectives of the organisation, that they are supported by the leadership, voluntary, formal and well-organised, and that they have a mission and goals

### **Positive action**

- consider carefully the use of positive action in the light of recommendations made in Appendix 3 of this report entitled ‘*Managing diversity as an alternative to positive action*’
- ask people before enrolling them in any positive action schemes

## Summary of recommendations

### Recommendations specific to age

- consider other factors than those measured in this report which might be particularly relevant to the satisfaction of older managers, such as:
  - feeling that you are valued by your organisation for your contribution
  - feeling that your job is secure
  - feeling that you are given the same respect as younger managers in your role

### Recommendations specific to early retirement

- consider carrying out a workforce analysis to ascertain the functions in which are the largest number of older managers and use this information to predict what would happen if they took early retirement
- use the analysis to investigate the future plans and desires of older managers to find out whether they are keen to sever links completely with the organisation, or whether they would prefer to enter retirement more gradually
- consider replacing age with job-related criteria in employee selection for redundancy, voluntary or otherwise
- consider alternatives to redundancy such as part-time working, short-term contracts, retraining or relocation, and how well these would work
- start to prepare for later ages of retirement

## Summary, appendices and references

## Appendix 1

### Background research on ethnicity

Among the United Kingdom workforce, it is generally accepted that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are under-represented, and that Black and Minority Ethnic employees generally experience disadvantage in the labour market relative to their White peers.<sup>1</sup> This is despite a rising number of Minority Ethnic students graduating from universities in the UK, where 12% of students are of Minority Ethnic origin.<sup>2</sup>

The latest local government figures from the *Employers' Organisation* indicate that as few as 1.9% of chief executives, 1.2% of chief officers and directors, and 2% of deputy chief officers, assistant directors and heads of service are of Minority Ethnic origin.<sup>3</sup>

The situation in the private sector could be described as even worse than the public sector, where a survey of diversity in *FTSE100* companies found that, of the 30+ companies who responded, only one company had a director of Minority Ethnic origin, and he is based in the US, not the UK.<sup>4</sup>

### Reasons proposed for the under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic staff in senior managerial positions

There are many theories posited as to why Black and Minority Ethnic employees continue to be under-represented in organisations, particularly in senior management. They include the ideas that potential Black and Minority Ethnic employees are under-qualified, that for some reason they are not 'management material', or that they are simply not interested in career progression.

However, the research that has been carried out both in the UK and the US rarely supports such suggestions. In fact, studies have shown that there is no difference by ethnicity in an individual's desire to progress within an organisation.<sup>5</sup> Indeed Black MBA students have been found to place a higher value on independence and to be more individually oriented than White managers and MBA students.<sup>6</sup> Black students have been found to be more interested in upward mobility than their White counterparts.<sup>7</sup> A very recent analysis of 360-degree (multi-rater) feedback data from over 400 local government managers has also shown that, rather than being rated as less competent, peers rate Black and Minority Ethnic managers higher than their White counter-parts on some of the most crucial managerial competencies.<sup>8</sup>

### What action has been taken so far?

Numerous public sector organisations, including many in local government, have implemented processes to try to counteract the biased treatment of Black and Minority Ethnic managers. However, a recent public services study<sup>9</sup> states, *'It is clear that racism remains a reality for many of them [Black and Minority Ethnic managers], whether personal racism exhibited by White colleagues, or institutionalised racism which serves to maintain the status quo of Black exclusion from senior positions'*. This statement is supported by the findings of a wealth of recent research.<sup>10</sup>

However complex the process might be, it remains essential that organisations work to counteract the discrimination faced by Black and Minority Ethnic staff, especially in light of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Even without a legal obligation to correct the under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic managers in local government, organisations should be aware that there is a growing body of evidence from the US and the UK that equality and diversity among employees is a positive attribute that increases organisations' effectiveness, and positively affects the bottom line (see *'Business Case' at the end of Part 1* of this report).

### Factors affecting the equal treatment of Black and Minority Ethnic managers

The majority of research studies into the experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic managers find that they are subject to discrimination in a number of ways. It is said to begin at the selection phase,<sup>11</sup> is found in terms of the psychosocial support they receive,<sup>12</sup> in comparison of the lack of promotions offered to them,<sup>13</sup> and in the very appraisal systems by which their performance is measured,<sup>14</sup> among other areas.

Black and Minority Ethnic managers have the added burden of having to fight against the negative stereotyping that others often have of them, together with the real possibility that their colleagues view their presence as merely 'tokenistic'.<sup>15</sup>

As a result of such stereotyping and negative perception by peers, Black and Minority Ethnic managers often feel that they have to prove their credibility to a greater extent than would their White peers and that they have to be 'better' than them just to get noticed.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, it is suggested that the daily environment of Black and Minority Ethnic managers is one of *'tension, instability, and distrust'*.<sup>17</sup>

Research has found that qualified minority ethnic employees are *'routinely passed over for jobs and promotions in favour of less qualified white males'*.<sup>18</sup> A US study<sup>19</sup> found that Black and Minority Ethnic managers felt that they had less job discretion and lower feelings of acceptance than White managers felt that they themselves had, and they were more dissatisfied with their career.

Many organisations now, particularly public sector organisations, have implemented *Equal Opportunities (EO)* policies. One of these policies is usually designed to ensure that a certain proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic managers is employed. However, this is often as far as organisations go in addressing the issue – something that has been described as meeting 'in-put', but ignoring 'through-put'.<sup>20</sup>

What often seems to be the case is that after talented Black and Minority Ethnic managers have been recruited they subsequently find that they cannot progress within the organisation because they face discrimination that has not been tackled. Eventually they leave the organisation out of frustration.<sup>21</sup>

#### Supervisory support

One of the most important factors in the career prospects of managers is the supervisory support they receive from their bosses.

In a UK study of public sector managers, it was found that the majority of Black and Minority Ethnic managers disagreed with the statement *'Most managers at all levels show a personal commitment to staff development'*, whereas the majority of White managers had agreed. The same study also found that while the great majority of White managers (82%) felt that *'people who demonstrate ability are encouraged to seek career development opportunities'*, only 28% of the Black and Minority Ethnic managers felt that way, and 49% disagreed.<sup>22</sup> Another major study across 13 UK government departments<sup>23</sup> found that Black and Minority Ethnic staffs were less likely than White staff to feel that *'most managers treat employees with respect'*.

The importance of the supervisor's role in advancement opportunities is highlighted in research around ability attributions. Positive expectations of direct reports' future behaviour are more likely than negative expectations when previous success is attributed to stable characteristics (e.g. ability to do the job) rather than unstable ones (e.g. luck, or help from others).<sup>24</sup> Employees

who are thought of as generally capable (i.e. whose success is attributed to stable characteristics) are most likely to be seen as deserving of a promotion.<sup>25</sup>

Studies have confirmed the existence of racial bias in ability attributions.<sup>26</sup> Another study<sup>27</sup> found that *luck* attributions were significantly stronger for Black and Minority Ethnic male managers than for their White male and Black and Minority Ethnic female counterparts. Furthermore, they found that *ability* attributions were stronger for White managers than for Black and Minority Ethnic managers.

These findings show how easily and frequently the successful performance of Black and Minority Ethnic managers can be discounted by a *'relative reluctance to attribute Blacks' performance to ability'*.<sup>28</sup>

### **Feedback**

For a manager's performance to improve, their boss must give them adequate feedback, both positive and negative, point out development needs, and offer them opportunities for development.<sup>29</sup> One of the major conclusions of the aforementioned study<sup>30</sup> was that supervisors/bosses in local authorities are often severely deficient in the feedback skills required to effectively lead an ethnically diverse workforce.

The study uncovered a double-bind situation for Black and Minority Ethnic employees, caused by managers who admitted that they were afraid to give negative feedback. This led to which situations supervisors described as *'bending over backwards'* to be seen to be fair, or alternatively as involving disciplinary procedures *'from the start, [in order to] keep it on record and make sure your back's covered'*. The assumption being those informal challenges to poor performance could be interpreted as harassment or bullying. Either of these options is likely to detrimentally affect managers' career prospects.

Further evidence of this deficiency among public sector supervisors was revealed in a recent study of diversity management in the *NHS*. There it was concluded that one of the ways in which the organisation practised *'institutionalised discrimination'* was in *'the reluctance of some White managers to challenge poor performance by the Black and Minority Ethnic staff they manage'*.<sup>31</sup>

A lack of negative feedback when it is required is very damaging to the advancement prospects of employees, because it means that they are not made aware of their weaknesses, and so cannot improve their performance. Furthermore, it diminishes employees' chances of a good performance appraisal, as in the Capita and IES<sup>32</sup> study which reported that Black and Minority Ethnic staff found that their annual review contained unpleasant surprises. This meant that, unlike other groups, they were unable to improve their performance before it was noted on their records.

However, not only do supervisors need to provide their subordinates with critical feedback, but they also need to ensure that it is constructive by being specific enough to allow direct reports to improve. A number of studies over the last few years have shown that, compared with men, women tend to receive less specific, critical feedback from their boss.<sup>33</sup> More recently, such findings have been replicated among ethnic groups, where White employees were more likely to receive more useful feedback from supervisors than their Black and Minority Ethnic counterparts.<sup>34</sup>

Such a situation was found in the Capita and IES<sup>35</sup> study, where it was noted that regular feedback was not forthcoming for Black and Minority Ethnic staff, and that on the occasions when it was given, it was often *'unsubstantiated and unspecific'*. One example of feedback given to a Minority Ethnic employee that was quoted in the study was *'need more settling in before you can get promoted'*.

Research into 360-degree feedback<sup>36</sup> found that Black and Minority Ethnic managers do not appear to be offered critical feedback at the same level as their White colleagues, and this appears almost certainly to be detrimentally affecting their career progression.

### **Training and development**

Evidence from a number of studies suggests that Black and Minority Ethnic managers are likely to feel that they do not have the same access to training and development opportunities as White managers within their organisation. Research in an inner London local authority found that Black and Minority Ethnic women felt that they were offered fewer opportunities than their White colleagues to take time off for job-relevant training, or to further their qualifications.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, a 1996 LGMB<sup>38</sup> study of local government managers found that a number of participants felt that they faced unequal access to development resources, such as secondment and project work.

Other research<sup>39</sup> found that even when the training and development needs of Black and Minority Ethnic government employees were identified by their managers during their annual performance review, the recommendations made were not subsequently followed up by the managers.

### **'In-group'/'out-group' status**

There is much evidence to support the theory that individuals are more likely to feel comfortable with, and therefore interact more often with, others that are similar to them.<sup>40</sup> Also, people of the same ethnic group have been found to spend more time with each other in an organisational setting than with people from a different ethnic group to themselves.<sup>41</sup>

The net effect of the above behaviours is that Black and Minority Ethnic managers, who are usually, if not always, in a minority in local government, can find themselves to be effectively 'out-group' members of the organisation.<sup>42</sup> Such out-group status means that they are often excluded from informal conversations that take place between in-group members, and thus miss out on important pieces of information about, for example, the organisation, opportunities to gain work experience and/or secondment, project opportunities, and peer support.<sup>43</sup>

Research suggests that managers personally assign their subordinates to either the 'in-group' or the 'out-group', and treat the two groups differently.<sup>44</sup> It was found that as Minority Ethnic employees were usually described by their common characteristic of race, they were more likely to be assigned to the out-group. According to this theory, out-group members are generally treated less favourably than in-group members, especially in terms of support given, and they are more likely to be treated using an authoritarian style.

Many studies have reported that Black and Minority Ethnic managers feel a very real pressure to conform to the dominant culture of the organisation, where it is predominantly White or White male, and indeed stated that *'conformity is an unwritten rule. If you don't conform, you can't be trusted – especially for higher positions'*.<sup>45</sup> The relatively over-exaggerated importance given to the assimilation or conformity of Black managers, compared with the more *'relevant'* skills sought in White rates, has been suggested in studies.<sup>46</sup>

A research sample of Black and Minority Ethnic women managers explained the various ways in which they have had to abandon their culture in the workplace, because diversity is not appreciated.<sup>47</sup> This finding was confirmed in research which found that Asian women have to *'play the role of a western successful business woman'* to avoid racial stereotypes, and therefore, for example, cannot wear traditional dress.<sup>48</sup>

Another study confirmed findings of previous research that had found that there is a link between employees' perceptions of being valued by their organisations and their attendance, dedication and job performance.<sup>49</sup> Research has also shown that employees must feel secure if they are to fully engage themselves in the workplace.<sup>50</sup> The feeling of security in the workplace, and an attendant engagement in their work, however, is hard to achieve for out-group members, especially when they feel that their personal values do not fit those of the organisation.<sup>51</sup>

### **Career strategy behaviours**

Research in the US found that *'the assignment of routine, non-challenging tasks, the lack of supervisory interest in the subordinate's career aspirations, and the infrequent provision of performance feedback are likely to stunt a manager's professional growth on the job'*.<sup>52</sup>

A later study by the same author and his colleagues<sup>53</sup> found that under such conditions, *'an attendant decline in the manager's job performance is likely to occur'*. A lack of career growth prospects can not only lead to a lowering of commitment and career aspirations, but also to the tendency of the individual to demonstrate behaviours that reinforce negative beliefs that others have of them.<sup>54</sup>

Mayor<sup>55</sup> studied the career paths of Black and Minority Ethnic UK nurses who had managed to attain positions of leadership. She concluded that such women had been very proactive in their career progression, through making careful decisions about their career course, developing their identified needs, developing and nurturing useful networks, and gaining appropriate practitioner experience, rather than leaving their future to chance.

The research examples given above, and in previous sections illustrating the possible barriers to career progression experienced by Black and Minority Ethnic managers, highlight the increased importance for them to engage in specific career strategy behaviours, compared with other employees who may not face such obstacles.

### **Appraisal and performance review**

There is a wealth of evidence, both in UK and US studies, of significant differences in appraisal ratings given to Black and Minority Ethnic and White employees, favouring White employees.<sup>56</sup> These differences could be illustrating a true evaluation of performance, but given the fundamentally widespread evidence of racial discrimination in day-to-day organisational experiences, and in appraisal and performance reviews, the real explanation is unlikely to be as simple as that.

A larger number of studies have illustrated the discriminatory practices that often occur in appraisal and performance reviews, which can be extremely damaging, not least because promotion has been found to be determined to a great extent on job performance ratings.<sup>57</sup>

Research has previously found that harsher performance evaluations may be given to Black and Minority Ethnic employees than White males.<sup>58</sup> If these harsher ratings are not purely the result of discrimination by the rater, they could be attributed in part to the lower levels of job discretion and

## Appendix 1

### Summary, appendices and references

organisational experience that Black and Minority Ethnic employees experience.<sup>59</sup> For example, Black and Minority Ethnic managers are generally given fewer opportunities for secondment, and often tended to be more closely monitored than their White peers, diminishing their chances to grow and develop.

Another way in which performance ratings can be biased is in the relative reluctance of Black and Minority Ethnic staff to be *'pushy and self-promoting'* in appraisal reviews, often because of a fear of being labelled as *'aggressive'*. It is suggested that among government employees this can lead to a better performance rating for in-group members, especially those who have a good relationship with their rater.<sup>60</sup>

A study of the UK public sector found that White ratees are significantly more likely to be described positively by White raters than Black and Minority Ethnic ratees, and that White raters are significantly more likely to attribute positive attributions to White ratees than they are to Black and Minority Ethnic ratees.<sup>61</sup>

This study also found that White raters made significantly less negative attributions about White employees than they do about Black and Minority Ethnic employees, especially in terms of *'interpersonal skills'* and *'work knowledge'*, and less so in terms of *'approachability'* and *'communication skills'*. They were also more likely to make positive attributions of White rather than Black and Minority Ethnic individuals on *'commitment'* and *'self-motivation'*.

A recent study investigating the effects of ethnicity in 360-degree (multi-rater) feedback<sup>62</sup> found that the ratings given by bosses to White managers generally concurred with the ratings given to them by their peers and direct reports. However, the same was not true for Black and Minority Ethnic managers, where it was found that the ratings given by bosses were often significantly lower than the ratings given by peers and subordinates.

However, even if the various discriminatory practices noted above are not occurring in some form or other during appraisal or performance review, it is worth noting the various forms of treatment discrimination that Black and Minority Ethnic employees tend to undergo on a day-to-day basis. These include a lack of supervisory support in terms of feedback and training and development opportunities, which are likely to depress the performance of Black and Minority Ethnic employees after a time.

Such effects have been documented by numerous studies, where, for example, negative beliefs from others about their self-efficacy are internalised.<sup>63</sup> A lack of constructive feedback means that shortcomings in performance are not pointed out,<sup>64</sup> and consequently employees cannot work to improve them, and a lack of training and development means among many other effects that developmental needs are not addressed.

Since the existence of these effects is much smaller for White employees, it follows that Black and Minority Ethnic employees will probably receive lower performance evaluations, mostly through the fault of the organisation and its discriminatory practices, rather than through a lack of talent or potential.

#### **Job ghettoisation**

According to Bhavnani,<sup>65</sup> *'there is some evidence from local government which suggests that the segregated patterns of black women's professional areas actually block access into senior management'*, and *'there is also evidence that black staff employed at a managerial level in local government are primarily recruited for directing services towards black users'*.

In research into the career glass ceiling faced by Black and Minority Ethnic women in the London Borough referred to previously the same situation was found. One interviewee commented: *'You are put in a post because you are Black. Then you find yourself in a position where all Black issues come to you, and any other professional skills or interests are ignored. You can't be Black and have interests or expertise in other fields'*.<sup>66</sup>

### **Perceived 'tokenism'**

Research has shown that many Black and Minority Ethnic employees feel that they are perceived in the workplace as *'token'*. Such a perception can seriously undermine the credibility of Black and Minority Ethnic managers.

Research has shown that when individuals are perceived as having been employed through 'tokenism', failures tend to be attributed to their gender, age, or race, and successes tend to be attributed to chance.<sup>67</sup> Davidson<sup>68</sup> interviewed Black and Minority Ethnic women managers who perceived that they were employed as 'tokens' and a director from the NHS described the constant stress she feels having to prove that she deserves her job. Similar situations were described by Black and Minority Ethnic female interviewees in a study by Kamenou and Fearfull.<sup>69</sup>

Black and Minority Ethnic women managers are thought to be especially vulnerable to perceptions of 'tokenism' because they represent two minority groups: women and an ethnic minority.<sup>70</sup>

Positive action initiatives are said to add to the problem of losing credibility as a perceived 'token' employee. This is discussed further in *Appendix 3* of this report.

### **Mentoring and Sponsorship**

Local government organisations have long realised the benefits of providing their managers with a mentor and/or sponsor.

Research has shown that having a mentor can:

- increase individuals' optimism with respect to their career opportunities<sup>71</sup>
- provide psychosocial support<sup>72</sup>
- provide advancement opportunities and advice<sup>73</sup>
- increase promotion prospects through the provision of developmental opportunities and highly visible tasks.<sup>74</sup>

Studies have also shown that having a sponsor can:

- offer an individual endorsement<sup>75</sup>
- provide favoured status, special treatment, and increased power<sup>76</sup>
- increase chances of being promoted, create higher levels of career satisfaction, and decrease the likelihood of career plateauing.<sup>77</sup>

A recent *LGMB*<sup>78</sup> study looking at equality issues among local government managers found that 61% of Black and Minority Ethnic and 64% of White managers strongly feel that mentoring would be useful as part of a development programme. This finding is supported by the various research studies, including one that found that having a mentor is particularly important for Black and Minority Ethnic professionals.<sup>79</sup>

However, simply having a mentor and/or sponsor does not necessarily lead to greater career opportunities. Above all, the mentor or sponsor needs to be willing to provide active support for the employee they have been assigned. The dynamics of the relationship between the individual and their mentor/sponsor is a key factor in determining whether or not the relationship is useful to the individual.<sup>80</sup> Cross-racial relationships, for example, have been found to sometimes be problematic in this respect.

A developmental relationship with someone of the same race is important for Black and Minority Ethnic employees, because same-race developmental relationships offer greater psychosocial support than cross-race relationships, regardless of the ethnicity of the employee.<sup>81</sup>

Black and Minority Ethnic employees have been said also to recognise the need to have at least one developmental relationship with a White male, where they are the dominant group within the organisation, because of the culture of the organisation.<sup>82</sup> It has been argued that, within White dominated organisations, Black and Minority Ethnic mentors and sponsors are less likely to be seen as having adequate influence within the organisation to offer their protégés useful endorsement.<sup>83</sup>

However, the support of White male mentors and/or sponsors can be difficult to secure.<sup>84</sup> In a study of cross-racial mentoring, it was found that while Black women were likely to have more developmental relationships than the average employee, they were less likely to include White males among their mentors/sponsors.<sup>85</sup> A US study of hundreds of Black and Minority Ethnic executives found that *'White managers are not comfortable sponsoring black managers for promotion or high-visibility assignments. They fear ostracism from other whites'*.<sup>86</sup>

Black and Minority Ethnic women are said to have a particular problem when it comes to finding someone to emulate or turn to for advice on what to expect, etc, since they are often the first Black and Minority Ethnic woman to reach such a position in the hierarchy of their organisation.<sup>87</sup> As a result of the low number of Black and Minority Ethnic females being promoted into senior management, they are often required to map out an entirely new situation without specific support.

They can often find themselves subject to psychological conflict, due to the fact that they must both deal with stereotyping and create a role that they are happy with,<sup>88</sup> rather than compromising themselves by acting out what others expect of their behaviour. Interviews conducted with Black and Minority Ethnic women managers revealed that the majority felt they would have benefited from having a Black and Minority Ethnic female mentor.<sup>89</sup>

### Network groups

Some organisations that are interested in solving the problem faced by Black and Minority Ethnic managers in relation to the fact that psychosocial and career-related support from ethnically similar individuals is harder to find, given the relative absence of ethnically similar colleagues, have tried to remedy the problem by encouraging the formation of support groups or networks.

Such support groups and networks are intended to offer Black and Minority Ethnic employees the chance to share concerns and informal information, offer psychosocial support, and mentoring opportunities. They are also an opportunity for people to offer each other feedback, with a decreased likelihood that that criticism is due to ethnic stereotyping.

Black and Minority Ethnic women particularly might benefit from the support and guidance given by network groups because of the added stress they often suffer because of cultural isolation. The fact that they are often the first Minority Ethnic women in their positions can sometimes lead to their being perceived negatively by their own communities.<sup>90</sup>

Researchers found that not only did network groups increase the importance of psychosocial support from ethnically similar employees, but also decreased the feeling that White individuals could not easily act as mentors.<sup>91</sup> They were

also found to increase career optimism, which might have been depressed by treatment discrimination (see earlier section) or other factors.

A 1996 study of local government organisations found a number of network groups in existence.<sup>92</sup> However, the formulation of network groups will not by any means solve all of the major problems Black and Minority Ethnic managers face when striving for career progression, and can only ameliorate the situation in small ways.

# End notes

## Summary, appendices and references

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- 8 IDeA and LRDL, 2004
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- 12 See, for example, Thomas, 1991, 1989; Hayes James, 2000
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- 71 Friedman, Kane and Cornfield, 1998
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- 73 Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley, 1990
- 74 Cianni and Romberger, 1995
- 75 Thomas, 1990
- 76 Greenhaus et al., 1990
- 77 Greenhaus et al., 1990
- 78 LGMB, 1996
- 79 Caver and Livers, 2002
- 80 Thomas, 1986
- 81 Thomas, 1990
- 82 Thomas, 1990
- 83 Dreher and Cox, 1996
- 84 See, for example, Bell, 1990; Caver and Livers, 2002
- 85 Thomas, 1989
- 86 Jones, 1986
- 87 Bell, 1990
- 88 Denton, 1990
- 89 Davidson, 1997
- 90 Bell, Denton and Nkomo, 1993
- 91 Friedman, Kane and Cornfield 1998
- 92 LGMB, 1996

## Appendix 2

### Details of the scales used in the questionnaire

The demographic variables in the questionnaire were measured using simple items. The majority of attitudinal 'themes', however, were measured using scales. These are described below:

#### a Career satisfaction

Career satisfaction was measured using a scale with five items taken from Greenhaus and Parasuraman.<sup>1</sup> The scale was tested on the current sample of managers, and was found to have high internal consistency, where the alpha coefficient is .86.

#### b Supervisory support

The scale measuring supervisory support was taken from a previous study of managers by Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley<sup>2</sup> and has seven items. The internal reliability of the scale was tested on the current sample of managers, and the alpha coefficient was found to be very high, at .86.

#### c Feedback

The type, quality, and frequency of feedback that managers feel they receive from their bosses was measured using both a scale and singular items. The scale, containing six items, was developed for the study, and the alpha reliability coefficient was found to be .88 for this sample.

The two other items included in the questionnaire measured unexpected critical feedback in appraisal interviews, and bosses holding back from giving critical feedback for fear of hurting feelings, respectively.

#### d Training and development opportunity

A scale containing four items measuring the accessibility of training and development, and the organisations' and bosses' encouragement of individuals to pursue training and development was created for this study. It was tested on the current sample and found to have high internal reliability, where the alpha coefficient was .86.

#### e 'In-group'/'out-group' status

'In-group' status was measured using two single items. 'Out-group' status was measured both by a scale which was developed for this study, and two other items. The scale contained five items, and an internal reliability analysis of the scale on the current sample revealed it to have high internal consistency, with an alpha value of .76.

The additional two items measured the extent to which the managers felt that they were the last to know important pieces of information, and preference to not socialise with other colleagues because of a difference in lifestyle.

#### f Career strategy behaviours

Career strategy behaviours were measured using a range of items taken from an earlier study by Gould and Penley.<sup>3</sup> Specifically:

- 'seeking career guidance' was measured using three items taken from the scale of the same name
- 'creating opportunities at work' was measured using six items from the scale named 'Creating opportunities'
- 'putting oneself forward for opportunities' was measured using three items from the 'Self-nomination' scale
- 'working above and beyond normal hours' was measured using three items taken from the 'Extended work involvement' scale
- 'ensuring your opinion is the same as your boss' was measured using one item from the 'Opinion conformity' scale.

## Appendix 2

### **g Locus of control (personal belief in what affects events in one's career)**

This theme was measured using items taken from three scales of an instrument developed by Alban-Metcalfe.<sup>4</sup>

- belief in control by oneself was measured by four items taken from the 'Internal/External' locus of control scale
- belief in control by chance/fate was measured by five items taken from the 'Chance' locus of control scale
- belief in control by 'powerful others' was measured by five items taken from the 'Powerful others' locus of control scale.

### **h Interest in career progression**

This theme was measured using single items.

### **i Measures of career progression**

This theme was measured using single items.

### **j Mentoring and sponsorship**

These themes were both measured using single items.

### **k Network groups**

This theme was measured using single items.

### **l Positive action scheme involvement**

This theme was measured with a single item.

Summary,  
appendices  
and references

## End notes

- 1 Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1993
- 2 Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley, 1990
- 3 Gould and Penley, 1984
- 4 Alban-Metcalfe, 2001

### Managing diversity as an alternative to positive action

Positive action schemes have been implemented by organisations for many years, as an intended solution to the discrimination that minority groups experience in the workplace. They are often concerned with addressing developmental needs among minority-group employees in order to help them progress to higher ranks within the organisation. They are **not** the same as 'reverse discrimination', which has been previously used within organisations when, for example, race has been used as a 'Genuine Occupational Qualification' under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Given the possibility of several areas of discrimination that are suggested by this report, positive action schemes for minority group managers would appear to be necessary to redress this balance. However, although positive action can be effective, it also often creates many problems that can result in negating the positive benefits that should follow.

For example, some minority ethnic employees are wary of targets being set by their organisations to increase representation of minority group members because it can lead to a fear of being perceived as having been employed through 'tokenism'.<sup>1</sup> Positive action schemes have also been perceived by Black and Minority Ethnic employees as marginalised and ineffective. Unmet expectations can lead to increased stress, frustration, anger, and ultimately, disengagement.<sup>2</sup>

A study of Minority Ethnic women in employment revealed that although they felt that there were some benefits to be gained from exclusive training, they felt that *'there is a danger for them inherent in such approaches since they can be perceived as having 'special needs' and 'needing a push'. Such a perception, it was argued, would diminish their credibility'*.<sup>3</sup>

Local government research has previously reported that Black and Minority Ethnic-only development initiatives can *'create resentment among other staff'*.<sup>4</sup> This is supported by other research, which suggests that positive action schemes can cause feelings of resentment among majority-group employees, who may feel that other individuals are being given *'preferential treatment'* or *'special privileges'*.<sup>5</sup> Research from the US suggests that positive action schemes could indeed lead to claims of reverse discrimination by majority-group employees, who may feel threatened by such initiatives.<sup>6</sup>

These problems cannot be ignored, since they effectively call into question the usefulness of positive action schemes aimed specifically at minority-group employees. Indeed, the *Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)* includes in its general (statutory) duty for public authorities to meet the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, recommendations to ensure that any action organisations take to reduce discrimination not only promote equality of opportunity, but, crucially, must also *'promote good race relations'*.<sup>7</sup> Where positive action is causing problems in the relationship between minority and majority-group members, it goes against this aspect of the duty.

In another publication, the CRE<sup>8</sup> suggests that *'positive action will often follow from steps to remove indirect discrimination'*. Local government research also concluded that there is *'greater support for a broad based range of interventions than there is for a programme from black and other minority ethnic managers only'*.<sup>9</sup>

#### Recommendations

On the basis of the above evidence, it is recommended that local government organisations move toward managing equality and diversity by removing

discriminatory procedures and behaviours, rather than focusing exclusively on positive action initiatives.

### **Introduction to managing equality and diversity**

Managing equality and diversity, if implemented and monitored properly, should negate the need for positive action, because individual employees would be valued and developed equally on the basis of their skills and talents. This is not necessarily a utopian ideal, if managers are held personally accountable for the development of their individual staff, as is explained shortly.

Managing equality and diversity is different to traditional 'equal opportunities' practices because it is not only concerned with eradicating discrimination for minority groups, but it is also the organisational practice of getting the best out of their human resource, through valuing and nurturing talent in all employees, regardless of their physical characteristics.

This is not, however, to say that organisations should take a '*colour-blind*' approach to their managers. The *Stephen Lawrence Inquiry* report<sup>10</sup> states that '*A colour blind approach fails to take into account the nature and needs of the person involved*', and from this it is suggested that '*Treating everyone the same will not provide equal opportunities for people who are substantially disadvantaged and discriminated against and whose culture may not be understood*'.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, managing equality and diversity is about respecting differences in people's culture and background, and taking them into account when managing them. Organisations should also measure discriminatory practices that appear to be taking place because of a person's ethnicity, and use as much information as they can gather to eradicate such procedures or behaviours occurring through such discrimination.

Because equality and diversity is about valuing all employees, then specific efforts to utilise fully the talents of undervalued employees should not necessarily be targeted specifically at certain minority groups, but rather all employees with such issues should find developmental assistance and support forthcoming.

Given the research findings of this study, it appears that minority groups such as Black and Minority Ethnic, female, and disabled managers face particular barriers to career progression, and older managers face differential access to training and development opportunities. Therefore, such individuals may benefit more in the first instance from an organisation that only now brings in improvements to ensure their individual value is equal to that of all other managers.

However, this is not to say that the managers in this study who have reported less feeling of discrimination in their career progression, typically White, non-disabled, male managers, would not also benefit from an organisation that is committed to managing diversity effectively. Where such employees are individually undervalued, or perceive personal developmental needs, they would also experience improved working conditions. Furthermore, changes brought in to effectively manage diversity, such as flexible working, parental benefits, or an increased focus on personal development, should benefit everyone.

As described in some detail at the end of *Part 1* of this report, organisations both in the US and in the UK are increasingly realising the bottom-line and service delivery benefits of effectively managing diversity. A culture of managing diversity is '*voluntary, developmental, and proactive*'<sup>12</sup> and concerned with meeting business objectives,<sup>13</sup> for the good of the organisation as they have realised it.

### Starting points

As a starting point, organisations that are interested in principle in the concept of managing equality and diversity should research the benefits that it will bring and build a convincing business case for their organisation. This business case must be presented to those people with the most influence, such as elected members and the most senior managers, to bring them on board. Once an organisation has decided that it wishes to pursue this business objective, it must formulate a clear vision of the objectives, and reasons for this vision.<sup>14</sup>

The objectives of the organisation's vision should be based on a thorough assessment of the changes that need to be made in order to create a climate of valuing all employees. Some measure of the current composition of the workforce should be carried out in order to identify areas that need careful attention. Findings sections of this report should also give organisations suggestions of areas in which discrimination currently appears to exist in local government organisations.

Kandola and Fullerton,<sup>15</sup> in a very thorough analysis of the steps which should be taken at this stage in the organisations' needs assessment, recommend that organisations run a sort of 'health check' on their current procedures which may contain sources of potential bias against certain employees. This 'health check' should include data collection on:

- HR systems: selection, induction, appraisal and promotion
- attitudes and opinions of employees.

Furthermore, the Commission for Racial Equality,<sup>16</sup> in their suggestion of how organisations should monitor equal opportunity policy, make another useful suggestion that should form part of the 'health check' process:

- an analysis of the ethnic composition of the workforce of each plant, department, section, shift and job category, and changes in the distribution over time.

If this analysis is increased to encompass gender, physical disability, and age demographics, then it should be a very useful starting point and benchmark for future progress towards managing diversity.

Furthermore, to uncover overt and covert discrimination, the use of the following recommended methods for collection of crucial data have been advocated:<sup>17</sup>

- feedback from focus groups
- attitude surveys
- analysis of personnel indices: selection ratios, turnover rates, performance appraisal ratings, promotion ratings, and training allocation.

It is particularly important for organisations to consult with their employees when designing policies for managing diversity, because the real experts on eradicating discrimination are those who experience it. Furthermore, involving employees at this early stage of development increases their ownership of the process, and can elicit useful suggestions, which is very important.

As has been seen in the analysis of this research report, there are a great many intangible negative effects experienced by minority groups within organisations, and probably also among majority members, for example, the effects of in-group/out-group membership, some forms of discrimination in their treatment, and the various unwritten rules of an organisation's culture.

Therefore, questionnaires and other attitude surveys containing open questions (which could be formulated on the basis of focus group discussions) should try to uncover what these factors might be and how they appear to operate. Furthermore, if organisations currently know of network groups that exist

among their employees, they should consider asking such groups to offer advice on perceived discrimination within the organisation's policies and procedures.

The next stage for organisations in the development of a culture of managing diversity is an assessment of how potential policies will affect various occupational groups of employees. The *CRE* suggest that information or research on the impact of equality policies on public authority employees may already be held by other similar organisations, or that organisations might want to consider working together to share and create new information, before commissioning new research,<sup>18</sup> as this will reduce costs.

Once organisations have formulated the most effective strategies for managing diversity, they must ensure that the strategies in question have '*clear, quantifiable objectives with set time-scales*', although they must not be '*seen as quotas or targets that are set in stone*'.<sup>19</sup> One such objective suggested could be a repeat of the initial health check, to ensure that progress has been made, or a certain amount of diversity training could be aimed for.

### **The importance of leadership from the top**

Research has consistently shown that the key to the values and culture of an organisation is in its leaders' behaviour.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the people at the top of organisation's hierarchy effectively model for all other employees what is acceptable behaviour, and what is not. Therefore, if an organisation is to manage diversity effectively, the chief executive and senior managers must be seen to visibly sustain commitment to the issue.

The crucial nature of senior management support for diversity initiatives has been shown in a great many research studies.<sup>21</sup> 73% of public sector Black and Minority Ethnic managers surveyed felt that there was a lack of senior management commitment to address the issue of their barriers to career progression.<sup>22</sup>

### **Managing diversity as an operational issue**

Not only is commitment from senior management crucial in managing diversity but it is also of fundamental importance that the issue be centralised from its current, usual position of being exclusively in human resources, and moved into the boardroom. This is supported by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which states that public authorities must make race equality a central part of their functions.<sup>23</sup> Previous research has suggested that when an operational director is involved in the implementation of managing diversity, the communication is seen to have even more of a powerful impact than if it was to come from an HR director.<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, if managing diversity is an operational concern, then managers can be held accountable for making it happen. The attitudes of managers cannot be easily changed towards minority group members. *Racism Awareness Training*, for example, which has been used in organisations for many years, has been criticised for not presenting convincing evidence that behavioural or structural changes follow.<sup>25</sup>

However, behaviours, not attitudes, are said to '*comprise the major inter-group problems confronting managers and supervisors*'.<sup>26</sup> '*Corporations cannot manage attitudes, but they can manage behaviour with accountability, rewards, and punishment ... What gets measured in business gets done, what is not measured is ignored*'.<sup>27</sup> Thus it is suggested that organisations review their reward systems to ensure that managing diversity is part of the reward structure,<sup>28</sup> and employee development becomes part of the performance review for all managers in local government.

## Appendix 3

### Summary, appendices and references

#### **The role of all managers**

As a major change in the management of human resources, managing diversity cannot succeed without commitment at all levels.<sup>29</sup> It must also be the responsibility of all managers. The message that managing diversity is crucial must be communicated effectively throughout the organisation, or it risks getting lost when it reaches lower levels of management.<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore, as managing diversity is about utilising the optimum in the talent of all employees, there must be a change in the culture of organisations, where managers are expected to recognise the key skills of their individual staff, and utilise them as effectively as possible.<sup>31</sup> As with senior managers, middle and junior managers should be rewarded for the development of their staff as well as themselves.<sup>32</sup>

#### **Valuing individual differences**

Organisations who expect to be able to maximise the talent pool they have by effectively managing diversity must learn to be more flexible in the approach they take towards individual differences. Effective managers, therefore, could be judged by the way they accommodate different ways of working, which might not fit into the current 'standard', in terms of style or approach, but nonetheless create an as effective, or perhaps more effective, end result.

Managers must also be able to deal with, and indeed encourage, opinions from diverse individuals. They should also learn how to see things through another person's perspective, rather than referring all situations to their own frame of reference.<sup>33</sup>

#### **Communication of the implications**

As discussed at the beginning of this section, majority group members should benefit equally from managing diversity, since it is concerned with the valuing and development of all individuals. Therefore, it is important for organisations to guard against the perception among their employees that managing diversity is the valuing of minority group members over majority group members (who are typically White, non-disabled males).<sup>34</sup>

It has been suggested that even though White males currently control the majority of managerial positions in organisations, many may sense '*an impending loss of job entitlements*' as a result of a move to managing diversity,<sup>35</sup> which is understandable given the partial redistribution of power that might eventually take place in such organisations. Care must be taken by organisations to communicate clearly their equal valuing of majority group members alongside minority group members, to ensure that they are not under the impression that their skills are less valued than others' because of their current majority status.

It is not only essential that the vision be communicated to the majority group members, but it must be communicated clearly to all members of the organisation. The communication must ensure that all employees have a full understanding of the issues, the vision, and the benefits that will be gained<sup>36</sup> if the process is to work.

#### **Training**

Given the fact that diversity training often requires the examination of socially undesirable opinions or stereotypes, it can often produce initial feelings of anger and defensiveness among employees.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, employees who are forced to attend diversity training when they are not convinced of its value, or if their organisation does not appear to be entirely convinced of its worth, can become more negative towards minority group members, rather than positive.<sup>38</sup>

Both of these issues highlight the importance of implementing such training carefully.

However, once a convincing business case for diversity has been produced, the compulsory attendance of top managers becomes particularly important, increasing the likelihood that they will model the desired training outcomes and reinforce them in others.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, it is important that trainees return to a supportive environment for applying what they have learned, though unfortunately many organisations appear to *'fail to capitalise on their initial training investment by modelling, supporting, and reinforcing trained behaviours'*.<sup>40</sup> And to be optimally effective, *'training must be long term and appropriate'*.<sup>41</sup>

It is important that managing diversity training does not focus exclusively on the differences between individuals, rather than looking at the similarities among them. Research has shown that the differences between individuals are what managers usually tend to focus on.<sup>42</sup>

As a way of employees from different cultures increasing their awareness of each other, and thus reducing stereotypes, Joplin and Daus<sup>43</sup> cite an example from a very large organisation in the US, where 'diversity pairing' is used. Diversity pairing involves putting two managers from dissimilar cultural backgrounds, gender, or physical ability, encouraging them to spend time together. This organisation has found that, after a time, such people begin to learn personal details about each other, and so start to eradicate some entrenched stereotypes.

### **Implementing change**

Any changes that are implemented as part of a managing diversity strategy must be handled carefully. Actions that disrupt the current flow of work are said to cause additional stress for employees. Such additional stress can be reduced by:

- making the purpose of the change clear
- involving those affected in the planning
- paying attention to groups' current work patterns
- communicating the change well
- reducing anxiety over job security<sup>44</sup>

After change has been implemented, it is important that employees be updated constantly on progress, to increase confidence in senior management, and that staff be encouraged to offer feedback, which can be an important motivator.<sup>45</sup>

Monitoring is also crucial, because organisations should not expect that their well-thought-out strategies would necessarily work. A re-run of the recommended organisational 'health check' would be useful for monitoring progress against a benchmark.

Crucially, however, it is suggested that organisations must ask themselves: *'What will you do if, after employees undergo diversity training, some of them are still behaving in discriminatory ways?'*<sup>46</sup>

## End notes

- 1 Andrew, 1996
- 2 Davidson and Earnshaw, 1991
- 3 Kamenou and Fearfull, 2001
- 4 LGMB, 1996
- 5 Davidson and Earnshaw, 1991
- 6 Joplin and Daus, 1997
- 7 CRE, 2002
- 8 CRE, 1996
- 9 LGMB, 1996
- 10 McPherson, 1999
- 11 Mukasa et al., 1999
- 12 Bartz et al., 1990
- 13 Kandola, 1995
- 14 Harrington, 1993; Rossett and Bickham, 1994; Ross and Schneider, 1992; cited in Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 15 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 16 CRE, 1999
- 17 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 18 CRE, 2002
- 19 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 20 See, for example, Schein, 1985
- 21 See, for example, Runnymede Trust, 2000; Reade, 2002; Henderson, 1994; Lorbeicki, 2001; Morrison, 1992; Walker, 1990; Konrad and Linnehan, 1995; Bartz et al., 1990
- 22 Andrew, 1996
- 23 CRE, 2002
- 24 Lorbeicki, 2001
- 25 Pumfrey, 1985; Tomkin, 1987; cited in Davidson and Earnshaw, 1991
- 26 Henderson, 1994
- 27 Jones, 1986
- 28 Cox, 1993
- 29 Henderson, 1994
- 30 Jones, 1986
- 31 Henderson, 1994
- 32 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 33 Joplin and Daus, 1997
- 34 Rynes and Rosen, 1995
- 35 Henderson, 1994
- 36 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002; Bartz, 1990
- 37 Murray, 1993
- 38 Joplin and Daus, 1997
- 39 Goldstein, 1991; Wiggernhorn, 1990
- 40 Rynes and Rosen, 1995
- 41 Jones, 1989; cited in Henderson, 1994
- 42 Henderson, 1994
- 43 Joplin and Daus, 1997
- 44 Henderson, 1994
- 45 Kandola and Fullerton, 2002
- 46 Henderson, 1994

## Summary, appendices and references

## Appendix 4

### Background research on gender, age and disability

#### i The situation for female managers

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) estimates that women still hold fewer than a quarter of executive positions in organisations and make up only a tenth of company directors in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

Specifically within local government, however, the situation is slightly better for women, where the latest figures from the *Employers' Organisation* show that the proportion of female chief executives in England and Wales has risen from 1% to 12% in ten years.<sup>2</sup>

However, the figure of 12% is still very low, and closer inspection reveals that the majority of senior positions held by women tend to be concentrated in certain functional areas, such as social services.<sup>3</sup>

It is suggested that barriers to career progression for women tend to be particularly impenetrable just above the middle management level.<sup>4</sup> Such barriers are said to begin with selection, and to exist in many other facets of organisational experience.

One of the ways in which male managers are said to have an advantage over female managers is in obtaining key assignments. Research has found that female executives tend to have to seek out developmental or visible opportunities, whereas male executives are more likely to be sought out by senior management.<sup>5</sup> It has also been suggested that male mentors may prefer male protégés to female protégés,<sup>6</sup> due to the tendency of people to be more trusting of those who look like them.

Stereotypes can also play a part in affecting the career progression of female managers, where they are often felt not to be suitable for such positions.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, where having a family tends to have a positive effect on a male manager's career, it can have negative effects on the selection of women<sup>8</sup> because of potential problems in future.

One of the greatest problems that women are said to face in their advancement within organisations, is the fact that the criteria used for selection for promotion in organisations is often based on the current best performers. Where these individuals are male, the organisation may well be searching for a distinctly 'male' style of behaviour. This means that the unique, and equally effective, qualities of a female manager are precluded, together with female candidates.

Women also face barriers in the lack of feedback they are offered on their performance, where it has been found that they tend to receive less constructive, critical feedback than men<sup>9</sup> and less help with the setting of objectives to improve performance in future.<sup>10</sup> However, even when women's performances are equal to those of men, it has been found that in UK organisations, including the Civil Service, women with equal performance ratings to men may be given fewer promotions.<sup>11</sup>

Although legislation exists against gender discrimination, where it is reported, there is no statutory duty to promote gender equality. Furthermore, research commissioned by the EOC found that even in those public sector organisations where gender initiatives were taking place, the approaches were inconsistent, with a lack of commitment from senior management.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, it appears that, as with other groups that are discriminated against, the only way to persuade organisations to tackle the problem is to present a convincing business case for inclusion that will appeal to the bottom line. Details of such a business case can be found at the end of *Part 2* of this report.

### ii The situation for older managers

Research by the *Economic and Social Research Council* has found that the percentage of older workers in the UK who report being 'completely' or 'fairly' satisfied with work has fallen from 61% to 49% since the early 1990s.<sup>13</sup> In the US, where anti-age discrimination has existed since 1967, the situation is very similar.<sup>14</sup> 'Older workers' are generally defined as those over 45 or those over 50.

According to *UNISON*,<sup>15</sup> age discrimination occurs in: recruitment, selection, promotion, training and development, redundancy and retirement.

In terms of recruitment, it has been reported that many employers will not even consider applications from people over the age of 45,<sup>16</sup> usually because it is thought that they will not stay long.<sup>17</sup> This is despite the fact that there is no guarantee that younger individuals would stay any longer with the organisation.

Older workers tend to be most vulnerable when it comes to redundancies, where almost 6 out of 10 organisations surveyed had focused mainly on older staff.<sup>18</sup> Older workers tend to be less satisfied with the way that they are managed by their boss<sup>19</sup> and according to *UNISON*,<sup>20</sup> 'nine out of ten older people believe that employers discriminate against them'.

One of the reasons for this perceived discrimination could stem from the effects of stereotypes. Negative characteristics, such as being slow, forgetful, or ill are often attributed to older workers, despite their lack of factual basis.<sup>21</sup> It is argued that older workers perform less well but age is a poor indicator of performance,<sup>22</sup> as variations within an age group tend to be wider than those between age groups.<sup>23</sup>

Within local government specifically, negative stereotypes of older employees found included resistance to change, not being as career minded as younger staff, and being less able to cope with change.<sup>24</sup> However, positive stereotypes also found included having a more mature attitude to work, being more responsible and reliable, and being more patient and committed.

Furthermore, older employees have been shown to exhibit less absenteeism, lower turnover, higher job satisfaction, and more positive work values.<sup>25</sup>

Despite these positive findings about older workers, research into local government found that 'justification' was often offered for offering early retirement to individuals where cutbacks in the workforce needed to be made. Early retirement is described by many as discriminatory due to findings like that of the European Commission, who estimated that as many as 40% of those who take early retirement feel that they have been coerced.<sup>26</sup> It is, however, often supported by trade unions.<sup>27</sup>

It is suggested that a more sensible and fair approach to surplus manpower might be gradual retirement, which would also minimise organisations' loss, in terms of corporate memory, key skills, and knowledge.<sup>28</sup>

Another way older workers are said to be discriminated against in organisations is in access to training and development. It is estimated that only 7% of training budgets are spent on older workers,<sup>29</sup> thus meaning that such individuals have to rely on previous experience alone.<sup>30</sup>

Research in local government has found that there was a fair amount of indirect discrimination on the basis of age was taking place in training and development, and that '*nearing retirement*' and the issue of 'return on investment' were used as reasons for withholding training for older workers. In other research, older workers have been found to be overlooked for promotion

in favour of younger workers,<sup>31</sup> assigned less important responsibilities, and left out of informal social interactions within organisations.<sup>32</sup>

### iii The situation for disabled managers

In an article in *People Management* in 2002, it was admitted by the then *Civil Service* cabinet secretary that the number of disabled staff in senior positions in the Civil Service had only increased by 0.3% in two and a half years between 1998 and 2001.

Research has shown that disabled people who are able and want to work are much more likely to be unemployed or under-employed than the average person.<sup>33</sup> Also employed disabled people are less likely to occupy 'visible' positions or positions that put them in direct contact with customers or service users.<sup>34</sup>

Disabled people are also less likely to have the same opportunities at work due to inappropriate facilities or equipment.<sup>35</sup> They are not promoted as often as non-disabled individuals<sup>36</sup> and there is said to be a pervasive negative attitude towards disabled people.<sup>37</sup>

A study of disabled staff in central government found that they felt that their performance capabilities and ability to cope under pressure was questioned, and thus senior posts might be considered 'too much or too hard' for them.<sup>38</sup>

The reasons behind the discrimination against disabled staff are varied and complex. However, certain stereotypes appear to be widespread. For example, it is suggested that the more that a person's disability deviates from what is considered to be 'normal', the more their intelligence is questioned.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, employers are not concerned enough about and/or afraid of the possible cost involved in providing facilities to make the working conditions of their disabled employees fair.<sup>40</sup>

Disabled employees are often seen as less 'safe' than non-disabled staff, despite evidence that they may in fact have better occupational safety records than non-disabled staff.<sup>41</sup>

Disabled employees may also be negatively affected by the quality of their relationship with their supervisor. Research suggests that non-disabled supervisors feel less comfortable with disabled staff, and so have a less high-quality relationship with them.<sup>42</sup>

Perceived physical differences from the 'norm' have also been found to lead to supervisors assigning staff to the 'out-group' at work, leading to less discretion, closer supervision, less opportunity to develop.<sup>43</sup> 'Out-group' status can also lead to supervisors wrongly attributing success to luck and failure to faults within the person (as opposed to the opposite with 'in-group' members).<sup>44</sup>

It has also previously been found supervisors may offer less support to disabled staff,<sup>45</sup> that raters may have lower expectations for disabled than non-disabled rates,<sup>46</sup> and that non-disabled people may often perceive disabled people as more helpless and dependent than others.<sup>47</sup> These factors, it is argued, contribute to discrimination experienced in the workplace.

## End notes

- 1 EOC, 2002
- 2 EO, 2001
- 3 EO, 2001
- 4 See, for example, Van Vianen and Fischer, 2002
- 5 Ragins et al., 1998
- 6 e.g. Bowers, 1984; Linnehan and Walsh, 1999
- 7 Van Vianen and Fischer, 2002; Broad, 2002
- 8 Thatenou, Latimer and Conroy, 1984
- 9 Corby, 1983
- 10 Harlan and Weiss, 1983
- 11 Gupta, 1980; Williams and Walker, 1985
- 12 EOC, 2002b
- 13 Management Services, 2003
- 14 Wolf, 2001
- 15 UNISON, 2003
- 16 Drury, 1993
- 17 Wolf, 2001
- 18 HMSO, 1996
- 19 Occupational Health, 2002
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## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the managers who kindly completed and/or distributed the questionnaire, and whose help is greatly appreciated. They were from the following organisations:

Arun District Council  
Basildon District Council  
Bedfordshire County Council  
Birmingham City Council  
Bradford City Council  
Bristol City Council  
Burnley Borough Council  
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council  
CPRASBU  
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council  
Cambridge City Council  
Charlwood Care Services  
Children's Fund  
Chorley Borough Council  
City of Westminster  
Croydon Council  
Dacorum Borough Council  
Derby City Council  
Devon County Council  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
EMRLGA  
Early Years Service  
East Kent LEA  
East Sussex County Council  
East Riding of Yorkshire County Council  
Essex County Council  
Gloucester County Council  
Guildford Borough Council  
Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)  
Kent County Council  
Leeds City Council  
Leicester City Council  
Leicestershire County Council  
Liverpool County Council  
London Borough of Barnet  
London Borough of Camden  
London Borough of Enfield  
London Borough of Greenwich  
London Borough of Harrow  
London Borough of Havering  
London Borough of Hounslow  
London Borough of Lewisham  
London Borough of Merton  
London Borough of Newham  
London Borough of Redbridge  
London Borough of Sutton  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Luton Borough Council  
Newcastle City Council  
Newport City Council  
Northampton Borough Council  
Northampton City Council  
Nottingham City Council  
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council  
Oswestry Borough Council  
Peterborough City Council  
Preston Borough Council  
Preston City Council  
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea  
Rhondda Cynon Taff Borough Council  
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council  
Rotherham Borough Council  
Sheffield Social Services  
Somerset County Council  
South Bedfordshire District Council  
South Essex PT  
South Gloucestershire County Council  
South Wales Police  
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council  
Staffordshire County Council  
Stratford District Council  
Tameside Metropolitan District Council  
Tewkesbury Borough Council  
Thurrock Borough Council  
Trafford Borough Council  
Watford Borough Council  
Waverley Borough Council  
West Lancashire District Council  
Wigan Metropolitan District Council  
Wolverhampton Social Services

## Summary, appendices and references

# The IDeA: bringing out the best in public service delivery

Public service improvement is as much about inspiring political vision as it is about better management, as the country's best councils show. They excel at creating local solutions to local needs by combining visionary goals with highly professional management.

These councils deliver top-quality basic services, which they do by focusing unashamedly on the needs of local people and local communities to drive improvement, and by welcoming external challenge and competition.

The IDeA uses the lessons learned from these councils to help all councils improve, so that they can match the standards of the best.

By advocating the best in local government, the IDeA aims to:

- deliver practical solutions to improve local government performance
- develop innovative approaches to transfer knowledge within local government
- act on behalf of local government to develop new ways to deliver joined-up, local services
- promote local government success
- influence public service policy so that it supports local government improvement
- employ highly-skilled people to meet the needs and priorities of local government as and when they are required
  - from member peers to chief officers
- work with customers in a way that respects diversity and promotes equalities
- be recognised as the improvement partner of choice for all local authorities.

## Our services

The IDeA is the leading practitioner in local government improvement. We have led the way in sharing knowledge, best practice and member development and have pioneered the use of peer reviews and peer involvement, which are now widely accepted as the key to local authority improvement. We have also innovated cutting edge e-government services whose use of new technology helps management across local government to develop new e-solutions.

Five key themes support the IDeA's work:

### e-government

The IDeA helps local authorities transform the ways in which they lead their communities and deliver services through the opportunities offered by e-government.

### leadership

The IDeA supports authorities in developing their political and officer leadership so they continually improve the ways they serve their communities.

### strong performance

The IDeA can help local authorities review their performance and ensure that they have the resources to deliver change to meet the needs of their communities.

### improving council services

The IDeA works actively with local authorities to continually improve local services and challenge poor performance.

### community well being

The IDeA can help local authorities engage effectively with their communities, by building local partnerships and integrating sustainable development within their decision-making processes and delivery of services.

### Who we are

Established in 1999, the Improvement and Development Agency was created by local government for local government. The IDeA is an independent, non-party-political body with a board made up of representatives from all political parties and independent members as well as representatives of other key stakeholders. The IDeA is funded by a combination of local authority grants and fees generated from local authority services and projects.

The IDeA's work covers all local authorities in England. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGGA) is responsible for driving local government improvement in Wales and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) plays a similar role in Scotland.

We work in partnership with a range of stakeholders, including government departments, the Audit Commission, the Local Government Association (LGA), other central bodies and the private sector.

The IDeA has recently appointed nine Regional Associates to represent the IDeA in each of the English regions. The Regional Associates will ensure the IDeA understands the improvement needs of councils in their areas and that our services are tailored to their needs. Do call the number below to get in touch with the Regional Associate for your council.

### Get in touch

If you would like more information about the IDeA, its improvement work and other projects to support public service development, please visit our website at:

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/> or call us on 020 7296 6600

### How will our success be judged?

The success of the IDeA will be judged by the extent to which local government improves, measured by clear evidence of improvement in performance including evidence of satisfaction among local people and communities with their councils and the services they provide

# Leadership Research & Development Ltd: at the cutting edge of research and development in leadership and diversity

Leadership Research & Development Ltd (LRDL) was created as a University of Leeds spin-out company in 2001. It was originally formed to exploit the expertise of Professor Beverly Alimo-Metcalfe, Professor of Leadership Studies at the University, who is respected internationally as being at the 'leading edge' of research into ethical transformational leadership. Now, however, LRDL has built up a reputation of its own and employs a number of expert psychologists and practitioners on a permanent and Professional Associate basis to deliver high quality products and services.

LRDL is committed to working with clients in a manner which reflects the values and qualities of its ethical model of leadership, which include integrity and inclusiveness, evidence-based practice, and true partnership working, such that client internal capacity is increased, at an individual and organisational level.

## Mission

LRDL's mission is to improve the quality of leadership and management in both public and private sector organisations, through the production of valid and robust diagnostic instruments and the provision of high quality training and other developmental activities.

## Diversity

In parallel with the research presented in this report, LRDL has also recently completed research into the nature and assessment of organisations valuing and managing equality and diversity. This research, which was based on a representative range of managers and professionals working in local and central government, culminated in the publication of two diagnostic feedback instruments, the *Embracing Diversity Inventory (EDI)®*, which can be used to undertake organisational audits, and the *Embracing Diversity Questionnaire (EDQ)®*, a 360 instrument for use by individuals.

The *EDI®* also enables organisations to measure the extent to which change has occurred, either over time or following targeted intervention (pre-test/post-test data).

## Research

LRDL has recently completed a number of large research projects for major public sector bodies, which include the 'Transformational Leadership in Schools (TLIS)' project, funded by the National College for School Leadership. It is currently working, in partnership with King's College London Sainsbury's Centre for Mental Health, on a major investigation of leadership in mental health Crisis Resolution Teams, funded by the Department of Health.

## Developmental Interventions

The *TLQ®* has been used extensively among public sector organisations, including the Cabinet Office-sponsored 'Public Sector Leadership Scheme' and the CMPS-Inlogov-LRDL modules of the IDeA's Advanced Leadership Programme, for both of which the *TLQ®* is the principal diagnostic tool, and in an increasing number of local authorities and central government agencies, NHS trusts, universities and schools.

The *EDI®* is also currently being used to inform developmental activities around equality and diversity within a number of public sector organisations.

## Diagnostic Instruments

The research that led to the development of the *TLQ®* involved a gender-inclusive and black and minority ethnic-inclusive sample of managers and professionals at all levels in local government and the NHS. The pilot version of the *TLQ®* was tested among a representative sample comprising over 3,500 public sector managers and professionals.

Subsequent research has led to the development of four other 360 diagnostic feedback leadership instruments: the private sector version of the *TLQ®*, developed in cooperation with three FTSE100 companies; *Integration-Leadership Competencies Profile®*; the *Police 360 Ethical Leadership Inventory (P360ELI)®*; and an organisational 360 feedback instrument, the *Ethical Leadership Culture & Change Inventory (LCCI)®*.

## Normative Data

Important features of instruments devised by LRDL include the availability of normative data, based in the case of the *TLQ®* on over 7,000 ratings by managers and professionals working in a wide range of public sector organisations. These can be used as a benchmark against which current organisational performance can be judged.

## Developing Personal and Organisational Development Plans

Increasingly, LRDL is being invited to work with local authorities and other public sector organisations to undertake leadership development and related activities. These involve working both at Board level and among managers and professionals at senior and middle levels in local government and other public sector organisations, and chairs of NHS Trusts.

## LRDL Associates and Strategic Partnerships

LRDL's development activities are supported by a growing number of LRDL Associates, some of whom have a national or international reputation, and by the development of strategic partnerships with certain prestigious universities in the UK and abroad, and major private sector companies.

## Current Projects

LRDL is currently undertaking research into the leadership behaviours and qualities of individuals who occupy representational/political roles. This investigation, which involves elected members, chairs and non-executive members of NHS Trusts, school and college governors, and boards of private sector companies, will culminate in the development of a number of sector-relevant versions of the *Corporate Governance Questionnaire (CGQ)®*.

project managers for the IDeA  
Carmelita Charles  
Andy Jackson

project manager for LDRL,  
author and researcher  
Juliette Alban-Metcalf

for more information about this  
work and the IDeA's response  
please contact  
Carmelita Charles  
020 7296 6573  
carmelita.charles@idea.gov.uk

or purchase copies from  
ec logistics  
po box 364  
Hayes, Middlesex  
UB3 1US

tel 020 8867 3298  
fax 020 8867 3215  
email [idea@eclogistics.co.uk](mailto:idea@eclogistics.co.uk)

isbn 0-7488-9216-8  
idea 012  
ref IDT 731

Leadership Research and  
Development Ltd  
Stewart House  
St. Andrews Court  
Leeds LS3 1JY

tel 0845 601 7708  
fax 0113 234 2191  
email [info@lrld.co.uk](mailto:info@lrld.co.uk)  
[www.lrdl.co.uk](http://www.lrdl.co.uk)

Improvement and Development Agency  
Layden House  
76-86 Turnmill Street  
London EC1M 5LG

tel 020 7296 6600  
fax 020 7296 6666  
[www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)

design  
[www.theteam.co.uk](http://www.theteam.co.uk)

print  
Geoff Neal Litho

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