The Royal Borough of Greenwich promises to address racial inequalities affecting its BME residents.

A new report by The Runnymede Trust shed light on the racial inequalities facing the residents of Greenwich, in terms of wellbeing and access to services.

The report, which was launched on Friday at the Woolwich Centre, examined the experiences of local residents in seven different areas and found striking differences between the experiences of BME residents and their local white counterparts. Insight from minority ethnic communities highlighted how such differences are driven by long-standing prejudice and discrimination.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Cllr Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich said, “This report highlights that we are not always getting it right for the people in our Black communities, and that can be a hard thing to say and a harder thing to hear, but that honesty is important. We are committed to making this scorecard a living document driving concrete action and dialogue with BME communities, so that we do the right thing and address these long-standing inequalities.”

The result of Runnymede’s research is a Race Equality Scorecard report which includes statistics on outcomes for different ethnic groups in the following areas:

- Criminal justice
- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Civic participation
- Support for the BME voluntary sector
- Health

The purpose of the Scorecard was to enable BME communities to enter into meaningful dialogue with their local authority and its partners, to assess their performance and help identify what the local priorities were for race equality. The Council and other local authority partners are looking to take this forward through a newly formed partnership looking into race equality.

Laurie Mompelat from the Runnymede Trust and editor of the report said “the Scorecard facilitates a better understanding of the pressures faced by BME communities not only in Greenwich but in London as a whole. Years of austerity have disproportionately impacted BME communities and their access to appropriate services. It is crucial for local
authorities to assess the consequences of such injustice at the local level, so that concrete action can be taken to improve the status quo.”

The Greenwich Inclusion Project (GrIP) also contributed to the research, as a local and community-led race equality organization. Gilles Cabon - CEO of GrIP - highlighted the challenge the future partnership will face in demonstrating action in this area. This position was grounded in the community engagement that GrIP carried out as part of the report.

“Community members respond with scepticism regarding public body’s intention to remove racial inequality. In fact, the majority of responses drew a pessimistic link between UK attitude to racial differences ranging from tokenistic claims for inclusion to the instrumental exclusion of the ‘hostile environment’, and people’s anticipation that there will be further racial marginalisation and inequality as a result of leaving the European Union. This report presents both an opportunity and a challenge – to use the information and confidently plan interventions that actually reduce the racial inequalities that we know exist.”

Laurie Mompelat is available for interview.

To arrange an interview contact Lee Pinkerton at lee@runnymedetrust.org or on 0774 632 0079

Notes for editors:

1) In 2013 the Runnymede Trust ran a pilot Race Equality Scorecard project in three London boroughs: Croydon, Kingston and Redbridge. Since then the Scorecard project has also been delivered in Sutton, and Barking and Dagenham, and has been refreshed in the three pilot boroughs.

2) HD pictures of the report launch are available.