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# Merton Council

## Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations Agenda

### Membership

#### Councillors:

Edith Macauley MBE (Chair)  
Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE  
Marsie Skeete  
Slawek Szczepanski  
Hina Bokhari  
Jenifer Gould  
Nick McLean

#### Co-opted members:

#### Substitute Members:

Laxmi Attawar  
Max Austin  
Kirsten Galea

**Date: Tuesday 13 June 2023**

**Time: 7.15 pm**

**Venue: Council chamber - Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX**

This is a public meeting and attendance by the public is encouraged and welcomed. For more information about the agenda please contact [diversity@merton.gov.uk](mailto:diversity@merton.gov.uk) or telephone [020 8545 4637](tel:02085454637).

All Press contacts: [communications@merton.gov.uk](mailto:communications@merton.gov.uk), 020 8545 3181

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# **Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations Agenda**

## **13 June 2023**

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### **Note on declarations of interest**

Members are advised to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting. If a pecuniary interest is declared they should withdraw from the meeting room during the whole of the consideration of that matter and must not participate in any vote on that matter. For further advice please speak with the Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership.

## **MertonCouncil**

### **JointConsultativeCommitteewithEthnicMinorityOrganisationsAgenda**

#### **Membership**

**Councillors:** Edith Macauley MBE (Chair), Marsie Skeete, Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE, Slawek Szczepanski, Jenifer Gould, Hina Bokhari, Nick McLean

**Substitute Members:** Laxmi Attawar, Max Austin, Kirsten Galea,

#### **Ethnic Minority Organisations**

African Educational Cultural & Health Organisation (AECHO)	Revd Mrs H Neale
Deputy	
Ahmadiyya Muslim Association	Mr .H.Nawaz
Asian Diabetic Support & Awareness Group	Mrs N. Shah
Asian Elderly Group of Merton	Mr M S Sheikh
Asian Youth Association	
BAME Voice	Revd Mrs H Neale
Bangladeshi Association of Merton	Mr. N. Islam
Deputy	Mr J Choudhurry
Bengali Association of Merton	Mr Rahman
Deputy	
Bengali Women's Association of Merton	Mrs M Ahmed
British Muslim Association of Merton	Mr B. Afridi
Ethnic Minority Centre	Mrs Sabitri Ray
Euro Bangla Federation	Dr Haque
Deputy	Mr Q Anwar
London South West Chinese Community Association	Ms L Saltoon
Merton African Organisation	Mr C J Lusack
Merton Somali Community	Mr A. Ali
Mitcham Filipino British Association	Ms Colquhoun
Deputy	Ms C Batallones
Merton and Lambeth Citizen's Advice Bureau	Ms S Hudson
Pakistan Cultural Association of Merton & Wandsworth	Mr M A Shah
Pakistan Welfare Association	Mr S U Sheikh
Deputy	
Positive Network	Ms G Salmon
Polish Family Association	Mr S Szczepanski
South London Somali Community Association	Mr A Musse
South London Tamil Welfare Group	Dr P Arumugaraasah
Victim Support Merton and Sutton	Ms J Davidson
West Indian Families and Friends Association	Mr R Dawson
Wimbledon Mosque	Mr N Din

**Date: Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

**Time: 7.15 pm**

**Venue: Council Chamber and Via Zoom**

Please click this URL to join.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81723902983?pwd=aUxjM3JwYXNWM1UrS0tMQ0h2K1ZMdz09>

Passcode: 728464

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# Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations Agenda

## 13 June 2023

1	Declarations of Interest	-
2	Apologies for Absence	-
3	Minutes of previous meeting	3 - 6
4	Update on Armed Forces Day, Windrush 75 and Mitcham Carnival – Keith Burns	-
5	Role of the new Borough Superintendent and the Turnaround Plan – Supt. Luke Mooney	-
6	Mitcham Town Centre manager update – Paul McGarry	-
7	Merton Race Equality Conference – Alison Cramp	-
8	Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – Keith Burns	-
9	Any Other Business	-

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## **Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

### **MINUTES**

Present: Councillor Edith Macauley (Chair), Councillor Eleanor Stringer, Councillor Agatha Akyigyina, Councillor Slawek Szczepanski, Councillor Hina Bokhari, Councillor Nick McLean, Councillor Jenifer Gould, Councillor Joan Henry, Hannah Neale, Sharon Scott, Grace Oyerinde, Helen Duckworth, Chelliah Lohendran, Dr P Arumugaraasah, Michael Lord, Keith Burns, Kris Witherington, Amanda Roberts, Heather Begg, Octavia Lamb (clerk)

#### **1. Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **2. Apologies**

Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah

#### **3. Minutes**

Agreed. Amend spelling of Councillor Hina Bokhari's name on page 3.

Keith Burns gave a verbal update on the planning for National Windrush Day 2023, the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, including an event in the Council Chamber celebrating the life of Tony Sanderford, and a calendar of events across the borough. Mic Lord at Five Aside theatre – asked about working in partnership with the Council on these events. KB agreed.

#### **4. Connecting Merton- IT equipment loaning and training scheme**

Anthony Hopkins presented on the Council's IT resources, digital inclusion and digital support. A package available on loan through the Council's libraries. Tailoring the right level of support to each individual's need. Available for free to residents aged 18+. Since March 2021, have supported 1344 residents to get online.

Councillor Jenifer Gould commended the work and asked how long laptops can be borrowed for and can we guarantee data security. AH responded the loan period is 3-6 months with option for renewal, and all machines are wiped of data when returned. Training also focusses on data protection.

Sharon Scott what follow up is there in order to prevent deskilling, and to provide sustainability. AH responded people are helped to access home broadband and IT access if they have the financial means. For those that don't we link them up with voluntary organisations for grants and support. Adult Learning Service also has a rich offer of training and skills.

Councillor Joan Henry commended the report and asked how long the funding is around for the training. AH responded that it is built in to core budgets and working with voluntary partners, so ongoing. Adult Learning is part of core grant from GLA and we don't anticipate any changes. Slides to be circulated.

## **5. Engagement plan for street names with historical links to the slave trade**

Kris Witherington gave a verbal update. Several streets in the borough that are named after individuals with links to the Atlantic Slave Trade. Wimbledon Community Forum in October discussed this and submitted a motion to council on how to acknowledge this history. Council launching a consultation later this week asking residents and other stakeholders how we can do this. Several options are presented, excluding changing the street names. Link will be circulated. (THIS WAS COMPLETED)

Councillor Eleanor Stringer commended the consultation. We will be going to people who live in the affected streets as well people more widely. We are very aware that the affected streets have majority white residents so we are making sure we are getting a wider consultation response.

Councillor Hina Bokhari asked for clarification on the wording of the motion submitted by the Community Forum. KW confirmed it did not include an explicit request for street names to be changed.

## **6. Future Approaches to Community Engagement**

Kris Witherington presented on the council's review of how it has been carrying out Community Engagement in the corporate team, including a review of Community Forums. Community Forums will be reshaped to include Question Time-type format with Leader and Cabinet, and Citizen Assembly format. Will also look at how best to support local community groups, and improving the digital offer to build on online surveys.

The Chair commended the work and how much it will improve relationships with the community.

Councillor Joan Henry asked if recruitment of support staff will be internal or external. KW responded the former first and then the latter.

Grace Oyerinde asked when Community Forum meetings took place because she hadn't been made aware of them. KW responded Community Forums have been publicised in my Merton and on e-newsletter. There was a drop in numbers when just online and have picked up slightly since in person again. Posters go up in GP surgeries and in halls. Local MPs could also publicise but then it goes too widely. Councillor Eleanor Stringer remarked that that is why we have done a lot of work to make communications more streamlined and targeted.

## **7. Civic Pride Grant Funding Update**

Amanda Roberts and Heather Begg presented on the outcomes of the Civic Pride Funding Programme.

Supporting the Voluntary and Community Sector – almost £5million. An increase of 35% in funding. Oversubscribed in some areas and difficult decisions had to be made. In recognition of work during pandemic and now on Cost of Living, BAME Voice, Commonsense and Polish Families Association have all had increased allocations. There has also been support for organisations that didn't receive funding including one to one feedback sessions. These sessions have also been an opportunity for organisations to give feedback to the council on the application process.

The Chair commended the report and the fund, and extended her thanks to the cabinet member, Councillor Stringer.

Grace Oyerinde thanked the officers for the report and asked for clarity on 24 successful applications from 18 organisations, so some received more than one lot of funding. HB confirmed and gave the example of Merton Vision applying successfully for two very distinct projects.

Councillor Hina Bokhari asked if there will be assessment for successful organisations. HB and AR confirmed they monitor the grants programme with quarterly/6 month monitoring meetings to report on outcomes and evidencing impact, and ensuring they are reaching target audiences and having a boroughwide reach. Councillor Bokhari asked if there are opportunities to address any gap in recipients that may arise. HB confirmed they welcome challenge, and AR confirmed there was an extensive Equalities impact Assessment as part of the work too.

Councillor Nick McLean asked about auditing the outcomes and if audits will be available to scrutiny panels. HB and AR confirmed they will look into the process and will follow up with the scrutiny team.

Keith Burns added that we are continuing to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and the requirement that we have a reach of services across our communities, and we would welcome the role of scrutiny within this.

## **8. Wimbledon Guild Small Grants Programme**

Helen Duckworth, Head of Community Services at Wimbledon Guild, presented on the Guild's work across the whole of Merton, in particular its hardship grants for individuals and households. Wanted to speak at the JCC to disseminate this information about hardship grants so that people are aware of what is available to help them. All the Guild needs to see is a bank statement to show how little money they have, and proof of a Merton address. Helping people to pay energy bills, or giving small cash grants, and helping buy items such as household goods. Also giving advice on debt management, and giving out fuel vouchers through the Warm and Well programme in partnership with the Council, Age UK and Thinking Works.

The chair commended the report and the services provided.

Councillor Agatha Akyigyina asked about the criteria necessary for people to show to be able to access the funds. HD confirmed there is detailed information on the WG website but very broadly it is a bank statement to show financial need, and proof of a Merton address. The Guild looks at income and incomings and outgoings. If outgoings are above incomings this evidences financial need. The best thing is to call the Guild.

Councillor Joan Henry thanked Helen for the work of the Guild and asked for how long financial support is given. HD confirmed it is usually one financial grant per year, however the team is being more flexible and is addressing cases where less than a year has passed since a grant has been received.

## **9. AOB**

The Chair would like to place on record her thanks to Evereth Willis and her service as an officer at Merton, in particular her work for the JCC. Councillor Akyigyina seconded.

Keith Burns placed on record his thanks to Evereth Willis. A new draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is due to go to a Cabinet meeting in June prior to going out to formal consultation. The next JCC meeting is scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> June which is the week before this Cabinet meeting, so we are looking at options to ensure the JCC has a full opportunity to feed back on the strategy in plenty of time. He will confirm asap the approach being taken.