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

Date: **10 December 2014**

Wards: All

Subject: **Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Voice – Update**

Lead officer: Kate Herbert, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships

Lead member: Councillor Edith Macauley, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Equalities and Engagement

Contact officer: Kate Herbert, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships (kate.herbert@merton.gov.uk)

Recommendations:

A. That members of the Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations (JCC) note the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) voice activity that has taken place since their last meeting.

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1   PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1.   To provide members of the Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations with an update on the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) voice activity that has taken place since their last meeting and discuss the next steps.

2   DETAILS

2.1.   At their meeting in March 2014 the Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations considered a proposal for a project to explore concerns about capacity within the BAME voluntary sector to support BAME voice and capacity building. The JCC expressed concerns about the need for an additional piece of research, stressing that sufficient information was already available, and requested that a public meeting be called to discuss the proposed project.

2.2.   An extra JCC meeting held on 23 July 2014 agreed that a community meeting should be held to bring together a wider group of representatives of the BAME community to seek their views on what is needed to promote BAME voice and capacity building in Merton.

2.3.   An event was held at the Positive Network centre on 9 September 2014 and was facilitated by Carol Campayne and Paul Anthony from Diversity Practice. An update of this event was presented to the JCC held on 24 September 2014.

2.4.   A further event was held on 11 November at the Positive Network centre and facilitated by Diversity Practice to continue the discussion on developing the BAME Voice in the borough.

2.5.   The event was attended by 31 people who explored the following themes:

What are we working towards?

In one year's time what will we have achieved as the BAME Voice?

Representation and full engagement

How do we ensure diverse representation -

- Who does that include?

- Whose voices have not yet been heard?

- What can we do to make sure those voices are heard?

- What are the areas of focus that require representation (e.g. housing, crime, health etc.)?

How do we get full engagement? - What do we need to do to bring young people on board?

Services Provided

What will we do and how will we do it?

Credibility and Reputation –

What do we need to do to establish the credibility of the new entity?

- How do we establish credibility?
- Who do we need to build relationships with?
- What do we need to pay attention to?

Resources -

As an organisation, what resources will the BAME Voice require?

What can you commitment to?

- Membership of the steering group?

Other ways you can support establishing the BAME Voice?

2.6.   The notes gathered from flipcharts and discussions of these themes are provided at Appendix I.

2.7.   There was a great deal of energy, commitment and enthusiasm for developing a strategic BAME Voice. A number of commitments were made including the council agreeing to initially provide seed bed funding for two years to support the new organisation to develop an infra structure and become sustainable.

2.8.   It was agreed that a steering group was needed to take matters forward and develop a framework and terms of reference. It was suggested that the community representatives who had worked with the council to arrange the public meetings should be part of the steering group and others be encouraged to join. The steering group members are outlined in Appendix II.

2.9.   Those present at the event acknowledged that great effort needed to be made to increase participation from the South Asian community. All present were clear that the BAME Voice needed to be as representative and inclusive of the Merton's diverse communities as possible.

2.10.   It was agreed to present an update to the JCC and encourage other community representatives to consider joining the steering group.

3   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1.   Community members could choose not to take this work forward but this would lose the momentum and commitment of those involved to date.

4   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1.   The event was publicised through the council's website, Merton Connected website and newsletter, and various community mailing lists held by the council.

5   APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Appendix I – Notes from the BAME Voice event on 11 November 2014
- Appendix II – Steering group members

6   BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1.   None

Notes from the BAME Voice event on 11 November 2014

What are we working towards?
In one year's time what will we have achieved as the BAME Voice?

- Why have a conversation about a new structure when Merton Unity Network was not fully supported?
- Establish an independent organisation to represent BAME issues
- BAME organisation to support residents
- A BAME group established
- More stable partnerships
- Generate income – grants/sponsorship
- Website and social media
- Recognised as an organisation
- Good governance structure
- Premises/venue
- Foundations of activity
- Bring diverse communities into the new body
- Marketing and promotion

What are the tree actions we can take immediately to make this happen?

- Recruit volunteers with expertise and plug the skills gap where necessary
- Visibility – the organisation needs promoting – to make sure people know it is there
- South Asian community need to be engaged
- Agree mechanism/structure (Terms of reference, action plan, Individuals to lead)
- Form a committee
- Regular meetings and get all BAME involved
- Get mechanism set up and regular meetings happening
- Form committee and agree funding with the council
- Make contact with BAME groups
- Founding committee with money/resource to development
- Constitute to drive actions
- Recruit staff

Representation and full engagement
How do we ensure diverse representation -
- Who does that include?
- Whose voices have not yet been heard?
- What can we do to make sure those voices are heard?
- What are the areas of focus that require representation (e.g. housing, crime, health etc.)?

How do we get full engagement? What do we need to do to bring young people on board?

- Different communities come together in a business way
- Brought groups together; African, Caribbean, Polish, Asian
- Collaboration delivers legacy
- One organisation that represents groups – formal governance structure
- More young people involved in leading and running things
- Meet and congregate
- Tap into Muslim community groups – so they see BAME Voice as representing them too
- Ownership
- Accessible location
- Leadership – inclusive and culturally competent, not representing any single organisation
- Marketing and communication – How do we do this?
- Work with JCC - nucleus reach out more to people
- Bring together organisations
- Map and list of those organisations
- Define common goal
- Health/Employment – find simple, general things that link us together
- Find out what people want
- Identify group of young people that we can start working with
- Clarify MVSC role vs BAME Voice
- Better access to other BAME organisations – understanding and collaboration
- Publicity in papers etc.
- Better access to East European groups
- Equal representation from different BAME organisations – equal voice
- An organisation – BAME Voice – will exist
- The organisation is a forum made up of members that represent the different BAME organisations/groups
    - Members paid to attend
    - Clarify whether staff are volunteers/paid

What are the three actions we can take immediately to make this happen?

- Spread the word – publicity, include contacts
- Steering committee that represents all groups – invite all groups to join
- Council clarify total funds available as influences what can be created
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Services Provided - What will we do and how will we do it?

- Sign post to advocacy – make sure BAME community gets access
- Support/advice to BAME groups
- Critical Friend
- Education on BAME community issues

- Resource Centre information
- Discussion Forum
- Research
- Enable consultation
- Information/advice/advocacy
- Provide advice and guidance
- Case work on race hate needed
- Discussion forum to provide information about services and changes
- Critical friend to challenge employment statistics – not enough senior BAME staff in the council
- A body is needed for people to go to in a crisis
- Need mechanism for monitoring and recording race crime statistics
- Volunteers and services for volunteers
- Advocacy and advocacy training
- Champion specific health issues (Lupus, Sickle Cell and Diabetes) – look further afield Africa/Caribbean – Ebola, Chicken-V
- Resource centre – information signposting
- Communication and outreach
- Discussion forum – regular meetings
- Critical friend to LBM and other services e.g. CAB
- Supplementary education, e.g. mentoring, tutoring, bright children excluded/excluded children with disabilities

What are the tree actions we can take immediately to make this happen?

1. Get base – delivery point
2. Identify priorities for intervention
3. Commence one activity with staff/volunteers

- **Credibility and Reputation** - What do we need to do to establish the credibility of the new entity? How do we establish credibility?
- Who do we need to build relationships with?
- What do we need to pay attention to?

- Good policies and procedures
- Respecting all communities
- Credibility needs to come from council and people
- Build relationships with those communities who have not been involved
- Get message out to reach out to other communities
- Relationships with council/police/NHS/Job Centre Plus and other similar groups in other boroughs
- Good governance and financial management needs attention
- Pay attention to ensuring range of views are heard and voiced
- Pay attention to signpost to BAME Voice by Council/VCS/Community Association
- Credibility will come through real influence and impact affecting change

Actions

- LBM/VCS/HWM/MVSC use this organisation as route to engage
- Monitor and deliver engagement (data to improve work)

Growth/Stability/investment

Resources - As an organisation, what resources will the BAME Voice require?

- Moving venue where forum meets
- Access to dedicated communication vehicles: social media/website/leaflets/Telephone chain etc.
- Team of volunteers
- Funding
    a) Council seed monies
    b) Self sufficient funding

What are the three actions we can take immediately to make this happen?

- Identify and source venues and rotate round
- Advertise/ask for volunteers e.g. libraries, face to face
- Fund raising events – friends of BAME Voice

What can you commitment to?
- Membership of the steering group?
- Other ways you can support establishing the BAME Voice?

- I will clarify the funding available
- Prayer
- Support from other BAME groups
- Unity and engagement across all the   other groups
- Sign posting to people
- I would like us to be one voice in this
- Working together as a team
- My volunteering support
- You can bring other people together
- By putting across the BAME voice in areas we enter into
- More advertisement , using the libraries and leafleting
- By publicising it to other organisations and communities (put in our posters)
- Advertising by word of mouth
- Do fundraising for the organisation
- Keep the new group in one place
- MVSC help recruit volunteers from BAME communities to help
- Engage on health issues , i.e. Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia

- Fundraising
- Communication with other communities
- Public Health will work in the background to provide support if needed
- Attend events
- Attend meetings
- Invite relatives and friends to events
- Give support and advice on the new structure
- Inclusiveness – bringing everyone together, i.e. from a different background
- Motivate people to join the new organisation
- Assist the new organisation in writing the new constitution
- Promote the visibility of the BAME voice and services
- Encourage young people from South Asian and Pakistan Communities

BAME Voice steering group members

Fitzroy Dawson	Merton Unity Network, Merton Oasis, Merton Community Transport
Hannah Neale	African Educational Cultural & Health Organisation
Grace Salmon	Positive Network
Edward Maliki	Power Centre Church, Wood World Missions
Lola Barratt	Merton Voluntary Services Council, Grenfell Housing, Merton Unity Network
Patricia Anderson	Merton Unity Network
Slawek Szczepanski	Polish Family Association

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