



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CABINET
22 FEBRUARY 2005

Report of the Director of Policy

Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy 2005-2008

RECOMMENDATION

1. To approve the Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

2. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 puts a legal obligation on all public authorities to promote racial equality and good race relations between different racial groups. The Black and Minority Ethnic Strategy shows the Council's commitment to providing equitable, accessible and culturally appropriate housing services and its commitment to complying with the Act.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council's Housing Needs and Market Study, 2001, identified a number of distinct issues of inequality in relation to Black and Minority Ethnic - BME - households and related gaps in housing provision, including primarily, but not exclusively:
 - BME groups are more likely to be living in housing which is unsuitable for their requirements.
 - Pakistani and Indian households are far more likely to be overcrowded than any other group.
 - BME households have far lower incomes on average than white households so are limited in their ability to remedy their housing problems.
- 3.2 The Council's Housing Strategy provides a commitment to produce Derby's first BME Housing Strategy, in order to tackle the issues highlighted in the Housing Needs and Market Study.
- 3.3 Following publication of the Housing Strategy, the BME Housing Strategy Steering group was established to guide the formulation of the Strategy. The group comprised a range of representatives from the Council, partner organisations, and the local BME community.
- 3.4 The Strategy has been written following extensive research and consultation with the local BME communities during 2004. A copy of the full Strategy can be seen on CMIS, <http://192.168.4.35/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=3037>.

- 3.5 The Strategy was considered by the Minority Ethnic Communities Advisory Committee – MECAC – on 3 February 2005. MECAC commented on the lack of car parking provision in Normanton, and the need to look at this as it was a matter of particular concern for local residents. MECAC pointed out an increase in the figures shown on the percentage of BME communities – this correction has been made. MECAC also asked that progress on the strategy be made available to a wider public on a regular basis. It was explained that a progress report would be published annually and also agreed that a progress report be submitted annually to MECAC.
- 3.6 The Strategy is focused around these key principles:
- to have action plans which are achievable and deliverable
 - complement the Council's Housing Strategy and overarching Equality and Diversity Policy
 - demonstrate our commitment to making sure BME residents receive fair, accessible and culturally appropriate housing services
 - be a key driver in developing positive and constructive relationships with BME communities
 - be shaped and monitored by the local community
 - respond to local needs and aspirations by providing services that are sensitive to cultural diversity.
- 3.7 The Strategy includes the following priorities:
- making sure that the Approved Development Programme - ADP - will enable the Council to meet the housing needs of Derby's BME communities
 - supporting the development of a refuge for Asian women fleeing domestic violence
 - bringing forward larger family accommodation in areas with high levels of BME need through grant programmes
 - developing low cost and shared ownership schemes in recognition that home ownership is particularly valued among some Asian communities
 - further researching BME communities' supported housing needs in recognition of their under-representation in current provision.
- 3.8 A summary of the key housing issues and priorities are attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.9 We are setting up a BME Housing Strategy Monitoring Group to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and we will report progress on each of the action points to the group on a six-monthly basis. From this information, the group will consider what further actions, research or consultation may be required.
- 3.10 We will publish a report on an annual basis outlining progress of the action plan and detailing the key achievements during the previous 12 months.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4. Through analysis of the Council's Housing Needs and Market Study and additional research and consultation with key stakeholders and BME communities, a range of issues have been identified in which the Council can improve its services to BME communities in the city. The BME Housing Strategy shows a clear commitment by the Council to tackle these issues. By not approving the strategy, the Council will not have a clear and overarching mechanism for improving housing services to BME communities in the city.

For more information**contact:****Background papers:****List of appendices:**

John Sheil 01332 258524 e-mail john.sheil@derby.gov.uk

None other than those already in the public domain

Appendix 1 – Implications

Appendix 2 – Key housing issues and priorities

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. Research and publication of the Strategy is being met from existing budgets.

Legal

2. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 puts a legal obligation on all public authorities to promote racial equality and good race relations between different racial groups.

Personnel

3. None.

Equalities impact

4. To further promote equalities throughout our diverse communities.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 5.1 The proposal comes under the Council's objectives of **strong and positive neighbourhoods**, and **protecting and supporting people**.
- 5.2 The proposal furthers the priorities of **enhancing our community leadership role through partnership working and listening to and communicating with, the public**.

KEY HOUSING ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

Housing and Advice Services

- 1.1 Introduce improved performance targets for allocations to BME groups and, in particular, Pakistani households.
- 1.2 Review and monitor allocations to make sure that BME households are offered representative proportions of new housing schemes.
- 1.3 Develop advice and support services for smaller and emerging BME communities to make sure that refugees leaving National Asylum Support Service - NASS - accommodation are able to access mainstream services and housing.
- 1.4 Make sure that welfare benefit advice to lower income Black and Pakistani households is accessible and that their incomes are maximised to help sustain housing and heating costs.
- 1.5 Ensure that energy efficiency measures are promoted among BME households.
- 1.6 Continue to undertake further, more detailed consultation with BME communities on their housing needs and aspirations.
- 1.7 Develop existing services such as Care Link to be sensitive to the needs of BME elders with the aim of increasing awareness and interest in sheltered housing.

Culturally sensitive housing management services

- 2.1 The provision of culturally sensitive housing management services that take into account the particular needs of various client groups. A specific focus needs to be given to the provision of housing services in the areas where BME communities live and want to live, because of their family links and social infrastructure.
- 2.2 The provision of information to service users in an accessible and meaningful way, including information being available in appropriate languages. A review of existing services will need to be undertaken.
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- 2.4 Make sure that effective policies are in place to deal with incidents of racial harassment and anti-social behaviour, including the development of best practice and joint working protocols.
- 2.5 Encourage and promote BME-led Registered Social Landlords to meet the needs of BME communities and provide culturally sensitive housing services in both design and management.
- 2.6 Promote existing sheltered and supported housing services to BME elders and increase awareness of their housing needs and aspirations to inform the development of appropriate and sensitive schemes.

Housing development and regeneration

- 3.1 Make sure that the ADP will enable the Council to meet the housing needs of Derby's BME communities as part of its strategic enabling role.
- 3.2 Support the development of a refuge for Asian women and their children fleeing domestic violence.
- 3.3 The need to develop large family accommodation - three bedrooms plus - in areas with high levels of BME residents, in particular Indian and Pakistani households to alleviate overcrowding among these groups.
- 3.4 Incorporate 'design' elements in new build schemes which are sensitive to the cultural requirements of the BME communities they aim to house.
- 3.5 Target low cost shared ownership and affordable rented housing schemes at BME groups, and in particular at Pakistani and Black households, who have significantly lower annual income levels than other ethnic groups.
- 3.6 Review how Derby City Partnership's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy will meet the physical and social needs of Derby's BME communities, including a consideration of combined physical and social regeneration programmes.
- 3.7 The prioritisation of larger family housing to meet the needs of larger BME households in identified areas for residential development.
- 3.8 Continue to research the needs of Chinese elders and explore the provision of specialist services for small minority ethnic groups, which may include specialist supported housing and floating support services in the city.
- 3.9 A general recognition that BME communities remain under represented in supported housing and floating support services, for which further research and analysis is required.
- 3.10 Continue to work with specialist agencies to assess demand and identify potential for service development.
- 3.11 Make sure that the support needs of BME groups are appropriately met and that the Supporting People programme identifies priorities for future development.
- 3.12 Make sure that the Council's Housing Renewal Programme is publicised locally and in appropriate languages in areas with a large BME population.
- 3.13 Continue to address issues of ill health among BME households, including asthma and other respiratory illnesses known to be exacerbated by cold, damp housing, through energy efficiency measures and the Affordable Warmth Strategy.