



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE 8 SEPTEMBER 2005

Report of the Director of Policy

Summary of Community Cohesion Guidance

RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the attached summary of recent Local Government Association and Home Office guidance on Community Cohesion, and actions the Council is taking to meet the guidance.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2. The Local Government Association and the Home Office have recently published guidance to encourage local authorities to promote and deliver community cohesion in their areas. The papers attached at Appendix 2 and 3 summarise these publications and the measures the Council has put in place to meet the guidance.

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Background papers: Appendix 1 – Implications
List of appendices: Appendix 2 – Summary of recent Local Government Association and Government Guidance on Community Cohesion
Appendix 3 – Summary of Home Office document

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None.

Legal

2. None.

Personnel

3. None.

Equalities impact

4. The community cohesion guidance is primarily focused on the achievement of good race relations in local areas.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

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

MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Summary of recent Local Government Association and Government Guidance on Community Cohesion

Background

In 2002, the Local Government Association - LGA - published preliminary guidance for local authorities on community cohesion. That guidance was updated last year and outlines a series of practical steps that councils can take to promote and deliver community cohesion in their areas. The Home Office also this year published a document entitled 'Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society', which set out measures the government thinks are important for strengthening community cohesion. This briefing note summarises the main points of the LGA document and briefly highlights some things that are happening in Derby. A summary of the Home Office document is attached at Appendix 3.

LGA Guidance

The LGA document – *Community Cohesion – an action guide* – is set out under similar headings to the previous guidance. It re-states the original definition of a cohesive community as one where...

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, and
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

The document then goes on to set out some practical steps councils can take under these headings ...

Vision, Values and Strategy

Guidance

Use networks of local organisations and existing channels of communication to discuss and develop ideas on achieving community cohesion. Use all councillors and partners to help promote a strong vision of community cohesion. Make sure all consultation is accessible to hard to reach groups, and use the local media to promote diversity and cohesion locally. Make a public statement of values and promote those values proactively.

What is happening in Derby

The Council's vision and value statement includes a statement about valuing diversity – *to make Derby a modern, attractive city where people live safely, harmoniously and achieve their potential*. The Council has signed up to the

Equality Standard for Local Government and strengthened its commitment to promoting Equality and Diversity by publishing a three-year Equality and Diversity Action Plan to take forward that commitment. The Equality Standard Commitment charter, signed by the leaders of the three main political parties on the Council, covers Leadership and Corporate Commitment, Consultation, Community Development and Scrutiny, Service Delivery and Customer Care, and Employment and Training.

We have adopted a Consultation Strategy in 2002, which includes a commitment to consult hard to reach groups. The Advisory Committees are one aspect of how we consult equalities target groups. The Council takes as much action as possible to promote good race relations and community cohesion in the press, by promoting positive news stories. We also work as a key partner in Derby City Partnership, to join with our partners to promote Derby as a multi-ethnic and multi-faith city.

Measuring Community Cohesion

Guidance

Gain a clear understanding of the different communities within the local area and how they relate to each other. Develop a baseline so that community cohesion can be tracked over time. Make sure that both objective measures, such as the number of racist incidents, and subjective measures (such as how people feel about their area) are developed and tracked. Measure progress on a regular basis.

What is happening in Derby

We are collecting and tracking subjective measures of community cohesion through the Derby Pointer survey. We also collect and keep track of objective measures such as crime levels and educational attainment, including actions taken to narrow the achievement gap. We measure a range of statistics at neighbourhood level, so that we can see which areas need more support. We also collect a range of service information by ethnicity. The DCP Community Cohesion Steering Group is setting a baseline of subjective and objective measures, which we will collect and report on at regular intervals, to make sure progress is being made.

Working with Local Strategic Partnerships - LSPs

Guidance

Work with the LSP in your local area to develop a community strategy, which promotes a local vision and outlines steps being taken to promote the social, economic and environmental well being of the area. Establish a partnership group specifically to develop and promote community cohesion. Make sure that the partnership is inclusive of groups and organisations in the voluntary and community sector. Make sure that partnership funding is allocated in the area according to documented evidence of need.

What is happening in Derby

We work as a lead partner in Derby City Partnership, our local LSP, which published Derby's first Community Strategy, the 2020 Vision, in 2003. It is a well-established partnership with a good track record of delivery of regeneration programmes. The Community Strategy explicitly highlights community cohesion as a priority, and the partnership Community Cohesion Steering Group was set up as a result. The DCP invites the Derby Community Network, which represents the voluntary and community sector, to have places on the Board and on all the major partnership groups. All the DCP funding programmes are targeted towards the greatest areas of need in the city, as identified in the DCP Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

As part of the DCP Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, local neighbourhood partnership networks are being developed in Sinfin, Normanton and Osmaston, with the objective to involve at residents as at least a third of the membership of the networks.

Conflict Resolution

Guidance

Make sure you are monitoring and responding to any incidence of community tension. Work with communities on the ground to get a feel for any tensions that may be developing. Work with the local crime reduction partnership to develop a partnership approach to dealing with community tensions. Make sure you establish good links with new communities in the area. Use community mediation techniques and strategies if necessary.

What is happening in Derby

The Council liaises closely with the Community Safety Partnership and the police to monitor community tension. There is a good track record in Derby of liaison, and also a good record of preventing very serious incidences of community tension such as have arisen in other areas. We have taken steps to welcome new communities by inviting their representation onto MECAC.

Working with black and minority ethnic - BME - communities

Guidance

Address the exclusion that many BME communities experience by monitoring the impact of projects and policies on those communities. Ensure access by BME communities to services and train staff in connection with race equality legislation and policies. Map existing provision for BME communities and identify barriers to BME participation.

What is happening in Derby

The Council monitors its workforce for participation by people from BME communities and has put in place positive action schemes to try to address any under-representation both in terms of numbers and seniority. Initiatives to increase the proportion of minority ethnic teachers in schools and to promote school governorship to members of BME communities are being developed. We also monitor a range of other services, including education and housing,

but we will be developing our monitoring systems more through our Equality and Diversity Action Plan. There is a plethora of strategies and plans for addressing inequality of access to services by people from different communities. Most of these strategies and plans are brought to MECAC for discussion on a regular basis. We use a variety of methods, including interpretation and translation, to help people from different communities access services. We undertake training of staff and have just launched a new e-learning package to train staff in equalities and diversity issues. A successful Foundation Certificate Course has been developed with Derby University to support teaching assistants/bilingual instructors. The overarching strategy for giving effect to the Council's statutory duty to promote good race relations, is the Equalities and Diversity Policy and Action Plan.

Working with Faith Communities

Guidance

Be aware of the different faith communities within the local area and regard them as an integral part of the voluntary and community sector. Support and maintain strong inter-faith links. Celebrate festivals associated with different faiths. Promote opportunities for inter faith dialogue and in particular learning among children and young people about different faiths.

What is happening in Derby

Derby has a good track record of education about different faiths, having supported the Open Centre, which specifically promotes inter-faith understanding, for many years. Faith groups are involved in activities such as regeneration and community development, alongside non-faith voluntary organisations. Derby is now home to the Multi Faith Centre. The Council and the partnership have provided funding for faith groups to deliver non-religious activities such as youth support and training. SACRE is well established and members are actively involved each year in the National Holocaust Memorial Day. SACRE members are involved as directors of the Open Centre and visit schools to observe RE teaching and to share something of their own faith with young people. SACRE has been involved in revising the Religious Education Agreed Syllabus.

Working with the voluntary and community sector

Guidance

Adopt a 'Compact' with the voluntary sector to guide the relationship between the council and the sector. Recognise that grant funding for the voluntary sector can be used to promote cohesion and diversity. Support the voluntary sector to deliver culturally sensitive services, which is difficult to deliver by mainstream agencies.

What is happening in Derby

The Council has adopted a Compact with the voluntary sector and the Compact Forum meets quarterly to develop and monitor it. The Forum includes representation from BME groups. The Compact has agreed a Funding code, and is in the process of developing a BME code. The Council

also provides grants to the voluntary and community sector, and requires all organisations it funds to promote and deliver equal opportunities. We have recently changed the criteria for the Community Grants Budget to give it a more explicit focus on strengthening communities. A recent review showed that 25% of social care grants to the voluntary sector are provided to BME organisations, enabling us to meet specific minority community service gaps. During 2005/06, grants were given to 10 supplementary language classes to support the education and cultural development of children from BME communities.

Working with the media

Guidance

Develop a good working relationship with the local media, and promote positive messages about community cohesion through the local media. Be proactive about getting positive stories into the media. Encourage the local media to actively support community cohesion.

What is happening in Derby

The Council works proactively to build and maintain good relations with the local media – including hosting a mayoral event for local and regional media. We issue press releases which promote good news about Derby and its communities. We make sure that we provide accurate and timely information so that news stories can be based on facts and not speculation. The Council cannot control what appears in the local media, but we do try to influence it to support good community relations across the city. We have recently appointed a Head of Communications and Consultation, because we recognise the importance of good communications and media relations.

Embedding community cohesion in delivering services

Guidance

Consider the community cohesion consequences of all your key decisions and encourage your partners to do the same.

What is happening in Derby

All reports relating to key decisions considered by the Council Cabinet are expected to have considered equalities implications. All new and revised policies will have equality impact assessments done. All service business plans incorporate both equalities and crime and disorder implications and relevant activities. In our Equalities and Diversity Action Plan, we identify all the key policies and strategies on which we will be carrying out equalities impact assessments over the next three years.

Working with the Police and the Fire Service

Guidance

This section of the document highlights the various statutory responsibilities of the police and fire authorities and services. It encourages councils to work closely as members of these authorities to promote community cohesion. It

encourages councils to work with these partners in crime reduction partnerships, to monitor and promote community cohesion.

What is happening in Derby

Derby has a pioneering Community Safety Partnership, involving the council, the police, the fire service and other partners. We have a good track record of close working to prevent community tension and respond to racist crime and anti-social behaviour. The Council, the Community Safety Partnership and the police are all involved in the DCP Community Cohesion Steering Group.

Housing

Guidance

Housing is a key area for the prevention of community tensions which can undermine community cohesion. Segregation of communities through housing allocations can lead to lack of contact between people from different communities. Failure to address the housing needs of asylum seekers and refugees, can also cause tensions. It is important for tenants to be fully involved in housing management decisions, and the council should encourage them to value diversity. Housing management organisations should be encouraged to respond to community tensions.

What is happening in Derby

We have just completed the Black and Minority Communities Housing Strategy, which comprehensively identifies housing need among BME communities and how we are going to address those needs. This has been the subject of a report to and discussion in MECAC recently. We also require Derby Homes, who manage the Council's housing stock, to monitor access to Council housing by BME communities. Derby Homes works closely with the Community Safety Partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour and racial incidents. Derby's housing service has experienced pressure because of the influx of high numbers of asylum seekers and refugees recently, which has also been the subject of discussions in MECAC.

Regeneration

Guidance

The guidance focuses primarily on the tensions that can arise in an area when different communities perceive that other communities have had more access to regeneration funding than themselves. The guidance suggests that councils and partnerships should foster links between communities adjacent to regeneration areas, to promote understanding about why special funding is necessary.

What is happening in Derby

Derby has not experienced major community tensions arising because one or two areas have been perceived as receiving 'more than their fair share'. The identification of communities in need of special funding has been made by DCP, and based on robust statistical information about deprivation and levels of factors such as crime and unemployment. The top four priority

neighbourhoods were identified by the partnership as Normanton, Derwent, Osmaston and Sinfin, and all have had regeneration funding in the last few years. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy identified an additional nine key neighbourhoods, all of which have been eligible for some Neighbourhood Renewal Fund as a result. Tension does occur *within* areas receiving regeneration funding, because there is often an expectation that special funding should be doing more than it is able to. We are using NDC and NRF to develop partnerships in the top four neighbourhoods, to try to develop a longer term approach to addressing the needs of those communities through mainstream provision, not just special funding.

Arts, sports and other cultural services

Guidance

The guidance encourages councils to develop cultural strategies, including sport, which are inclusive and which promote inter-cultural understanding.

What is happening in Derby

The Council has sponsored the Cultural Diversity event on an annual basis for some years. Responsibility for this has been mainstreamed into the Development and Cultural Services directorate, who are reviewing how best to promote diversity.

The Cultural Diversity Arts Officer will be creating an identity for culturally diverse events and projects – ‘Heritage’. A separate and non-corporate identity / logo is presently being designed alongside a brochure which should be available by midsummer. The first season’s exciting programme includes a visual arts project delivered by local African and Asian artists, an African history season at the Metro cinema, an African-Caribbean dance company engaging in workshops at Derby Dance centre, and Divali celebrations, as well as supporting various other community projects.

The Sport and Leisure service works with School Sport partnerships in all Derby Schools and in the community to encourage wider participation in physical activity, as part of the current development of the Physical Activity strategy.

Education

Guidance

Make sure that schools are encouraged to promote inter-community and inter-faith understanding as part of citizenship education. Promote measures to tackle racial harassment and bullying. Make sure disparities in educational attainment between groups are being measured and addressed. Actively involve parents from different communities in pre-school activities and out of school activities. Use adult learning to promote greater awareness and participation amongst a range of groups.

What is happening in Derby

The quality of attainment data has been improving nationally and locally since the introduction of the Pupil Level Annual School Census. A report outlining the performance of minority ethnic pupils was submitted to MECAC in 2004 using the new ethnicity categories. Initiatives to raise standards across the Education Service are outlined in the Education Development Plan and the Education Service Strategic Plan.

Four local Sure Start programmes, particularly Rosehill, work to support and engage the very diverse population in the area including more recent asylum seekers/refugees. This includes support related to childcare and schooling, health, family support and benefit issues. The new neighbourhood nurseries opening across the city have staff who reflect the cultural needs of local families and this will be a continuing development as Children's Centres are created over the next few years. The Adult Learning Service provides courses for around 8,000 Derby residents. In 2003/04, 43% came from minority ethnic backgrounds.

There is a clear expectation that schools should record and respond to racist incidents. Comprehensive guidance has been issued, including the implications of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 for schools.

Children and Young People

Guidance

The guidance focuses almost entirely on measures relating to young people. Proposals include making sure young people are consulted about and involved in services, that young people are actively and positively promoted, and that community cohesion and cross cultural understanding is promoted within the youth service. Encourage initiatives to develop the leadership potential of young people and promotes values of tolerance and respect between communities.

What is happening in Derby

The Council's Youth Service actively supports working with young people in relation to promoting cross cultural understanding. Work is focused on young people in communities of greatest need. The youth service works with the Community Safety partnership on a community cohesion and young people project in Normanton. The Council has a young people's consultation officer which supports the Youth Forum, where representation from young people from all Derby's communities is encouraged. Each year, we manage the election of Derby's representatives on the UK Youth Parliament, and have been successful in attracting candidates from different communities. A network of participation workers across Derby's key agencies and the voluntary and community sector work to ensure that vulnerable young people participate in consultation, and the inclusion of children from BME communities is key to this.

Citizenship/PSHE education continues to contribute to a range of training activities including peer mentoring/mediation techniques in targeted schools

supported by Derby REC aimed at reducing bullying and racism in their schools and communities. All Derby secondary schools, and over 50% of our primary schools, now have a School Council. These are very effective forums for young people to discuss issues that concern them and their school communities including issues of bullying and racism.

A review is currently under way of the Children in Need service to children and young people from BME communities.

Older People and inter-generational cohesion

Guidance

Make sure the needs of the ageing population are planned for and that older people are consulted about key services. Take steps to ensure that all services take older people's needs into account. Highlight and promote opportunities for inter-generational understanding.

What is happening in Derby

The Council has an older people's consultation officer who works with the Seniors Forum and older people's groups. We have launched a proposal to develop a 'Vision for Ageing', which will be a strategy for making sure all services plan for an ageing population. The annual partnership 'Liberation Day' is Derby's showcase event for consultation with older people, and we have been successful in the last two or three years in increasing overall attendance and attendance by older people from some BME communities.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Guidance

Raise awareness of refugees and asylum seekers in a positive way. Encourage mutual understanding between new and settled communities through a variety of initiatives. Set up a local multi-agency forum to address the needs of asylum seekers and refugees. Provide new arrivals with information relating to the local area and local services. Work with local voluntary organisations and self-help groups to encourage effective service delivery for refugees and asylum seekers.

What is happening in Derby

The Council chairs the multi-agency forum on asylum seekers and refugees, which involves all relevant services and sectors in responding to need. An welcome pack for new arrivals has been produced through Community Legal Services partnership funding. We have produced a draft Multi –Agency Asylum Seekers Strategy. The Education service has played a key role in integrating a broad range of pupils from asylum seeker or refugee families quickly and smoothly.

Gypsies and Travellers

Guidance

Make sure that services are accessible to gypsies and travellers where appropriate. Make sure you have channels of communication with voluntary organisations representing the interests of gypsies and travellers.

What is happening in Derby

The Council has a specific Traveller Education project, which makes sure the children of gypsies and travellers have access to education. We promote a fair approach to the needs of gypsies and travellers, respecting their traditions but requiring them to take the needs of other communities into account. We also liaise regularly with the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group. We will be considering specific needs of this community in the revised Homelessness Strategy.

Home Office Strategy

The Home Office Document – *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society* – does not include guidance on community cohesion but sets out the government's track record and strategic priorities in this area. The document is primarily focused on promoting racial equality and understanding between different racial groups – it is not so wide ranging as the LGA approach.

The document highlights the key areas where the government has made progress in improving the life chances of BME communities, and where further action will be taken. These are...

Education

Actions include the better targeting of Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant, the planned expansion of early years' services, improvements in the teaching of English to children for whom it is a second language, and the increase by at least 9% of people from BME communities training as teachers.

Labour Market

Actions include further targeting of jobseeker support on the most disadvantaged groups in the labour force, the improvement of literacy and numeracy of at least 1.5 million adults, and the better use of government procurement to promote diversity and equality in organisations that supply goods and services to public bodies.

Health

Actions include targeting Asian women's access to cervical cancer screening, and the improvement in mental health services for BME communities, as well as tackling specific illnesses such as high levels of heart disease among South Asian people. The chair of the CRE will scrutinise progress in improving the representativeness of NHS staff and addressing the health needs of BME communities.

Housing

Actions include bringing all social housing up to Decent Homes standard by 2010, and provide more help for home improvements for vulnerable owner occupiers and private tenants. The government proposes to publish a new comprehensive action plan to address BME housing needs later this year – they have just published the consultation draft.

Policing and the Criminal Justice system

Actions include further encouragement to police forces to improve the diversity of the workforce, better support and training for prison officers in diversity issues, and development of a Community Panel to scrutinise the use of stop and search powers.

A Cohesive Society

The document also sets out six key action areas to promote and develop a more cohesive society ...

1. Young people from different communities grow up with a sense of common belonging.
2. New immigrants are integrated.
3. People have opportunities to develop a greater understanding of the range of cultures that contribute to our strength as a country.
4. People from all backgrounds have opportunities to participate in civic society.
5. Racism is unacceptable.
6. Extremists who promote hatred are marginalised.

The document states that local government has a particularly important role to play. The Audit Commission will be assessing local authorities on their ability to create safer and stronger communities from this year. This assessment will contribute to councils' overall Comprehensive Performance Assessment – CPA – rating. The LGA will be providing updated guidance on community cohesion in order to help councils achieve this, later this year.