

Time commenced - 6.30 pm  
Time Finished – 9.10 pm

## MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE 16 SEPTEMBER 2004

Present: **Representing Derby City Council**  
Councillor Willitts (in the Chair)  
Councillors Gupta, Khan, Roberts and Richards

### **Representing Communities**

Jarnail S Birring – Indian Community  
Jack Butler – Irish Community  
Nezrine Hudson – Caribbean Community  
Ferid Kevric – Bosnian Herzegovina Community Association  
Shokat Lal – Pakistani Community  
Angella Mighty – Caribbean Community  
George Mighty – Caribbean Community  
Lloyd Newby – Caribbean Community  
Mohammed Sharief – Pakistani Community  
Zigashane Zigy – Amnesty Congo Support Group

### **Community Advisors**

Balwant Bubber - Indian Community  
Jangir Khan – Pakistani Community  
Asif Afzal – Pakistani Community  
Tony Walsh – Derby REC

### **Observers**

Kamal Amir – Somalian Community  
Abas Salihy – Kurdish Community

### **Council Advisors**

Sue Glithero - Director of Policy  
Pam Thompson - Consultation Support Officer  
Ann Webster – Equality Standards Manager  
Rajesh Lall – Education Officer  
Ann Walker – Senior Environmental Health Officer  
Nigel Groom – Team Leader Traveller Service  
Mick Connell – Assistant Director Community Care  
Mahroof Hussain – Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination  
Officer  
Mark Edwards – Corporate Training and Development Advisor  
Carol Mee – Public Relations Officer

Also in attendance: Councillor Hussain to speak on reducing health inequalities and Katy Abbott to speak on local crime community sentence.

## 16/04 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Burgess, Raj Bali, Mr Johal, Mr Javed, Mr Bappa and Muzar Syed.

## 17/04 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

## 18/04 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 19/04 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 20/04 Grants to Supplementary Language Classes 2004/05

A report of the Director of Education was considered, which set out a report considered by Council Cabinet at its meeting on 10 August 2004. The report had been referred to this Committee for comment.

**Resolved to ask Council Cabinet to look at increasing the budget for supplementary languages as part of the 2005/06 budget process.**

## 21/04 Services to Older People in the African Caribbean Community

A report of the Director of Social Services was considered, which set out a report considered by Council Cabinet at its meeting on 20 July 2004. The report had been referred to this Committee for comment. The Committee were concerned that the basic food hygiene training had not taken place, as older people were more susceptible to food poisoning.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 22/04 Proposals for Reception Area Standardisation

Sue Glithero reported that the Council were reviewing how welcoming the Council's receptions were. Shokat Lal said that interpreters should be available for people to use. It was suggested that there be a push button

system for people to get information in their own language, similar to one which was used at the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary. Sue Glithero asked that any further comments on the reception areas should be sent to Karen Squires who would pass them on to Sharon Jackson – Corporate Customer Services Manager.

## 23/04 Consultation on Draft Licensing Policy

A report of the Director of Corporate Services was considered which set out the Council's proposed draft licensing policy. The Licensing Act 2003, introduced a new way of dealing with alcohol, public entertainment and late night refreshment licenses. Local authorities would be responsible for implementing the Act from February 2005. Before implementing the policy, the Council was carrying out a consultation exercise, which was taking place throughout October 2004. The consultation involved a mix of meetings, displays, mail shots and exhibitions. Shokat Lal was concerned that cultural sensitivities should be taken into consideration when considering which premises should be licensed. It was reported that the public could comment and object to licences, even after they had been issued. Public notices would be published in the local press, as well as large notices displayed at the premises in question. Information was still awaited on club registration but it was anticipated that this would be similar to other licensed premises. Officers had received some training on the new Licensing Act and councillors would receive training during November 2004. Licensing policy packs were available for anyone interested in finding out more about the new Licensing Act.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 24/04 Consultation Leaflet for the BME Housing Strategy

A report of the Director of Policy was considered, which stated that within the Council's Housing Strategy 2002-2006 there was a commitment to produce Derby's first Black and Minority Ethnic - BME - Housing Strategy. The BME Housing Strategy Steering Group's primary role was to agree an approach to the delivery of this strategy and to co-ordinate the key tasks identified. Consultation on this strategy was taking place throughout the autumn. In order to ensure a wide-ranging and inclusive consultation, the Steering Group had agreed to produce a leaflet which briefly outlined the information in the strategy and invited members from different communities to take part in the consultation event. The text of the leaflet was attached to the report. It was generally agreed that the leaflet was very wordy and full of jargon and needed to be easier to understand and that asking specific questions was better than asking "what do you want?". The committee considered that they should have been consulted earlier not once the leaflet had been printed. It was suggested that the leaflet also be translated both into Kurdish and French. A request was made that more, readily understandable information be provided to help people understand, how the housing allocations points system worked.

## **Resolved**

- 1. To request the Director of Policy to report back on the outcome of the consultation.**
- 2. To ask the Director of Policy to look into the request for simpler information on the housing allocations points system.**

### **25/04 Community Representation on Minority Ethnic Communities Advisory Committee**

The Committee received an update on the latest position relating to community representation on the Committee. The Director of Corporate Services, had written to communities where representatives had not attended for three consecutive meetings without good reason, requesting them to nominate a new representative to attend the Committee. The two main communities within the Kurdish community had been invited to attend meetings as observers, with a view to agreeing between themselves who would be the community representative and who would be the advisor.

#### **Resolved to note the report.**

### **26/04 Review of Hospital Car Parking Charges – Consultation**

Mahroof Hussain, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer, outlined a topic review which the Social Care and Health Commission were undertaking on car parking charges at hospitals. Shokat Lal asked, if the results of the topic review recommended that charges be scrapped, what influence the Council had to make this happen. It was reported that the findings of the Commission would be made public and the hospital informed of the outcome but the Council could not force the hospitals to take on board the recommendations. George Mighty asked what the money collected from car parking charges was used for. Councillor Hussain reported that the Commission could not look at the final implications but could draw public attention to the issues and make strong recommendations. Consideration needed to be given to people receiving benefits and whether there could be free, nominal charges or visitor passes for patients. A question was raised on whether impact assessments would be done in relation to the Race Relations Amendment Act. There was concern that if parking was free, spaces would fill up very quickly. It was suggested that it may be possible to have a phased charging system where, for example, the first hour of parking was free. Mahroof Hussain asked that any further comments be submitted to him.

#### **Resolved to note the report.**

## 27/04 Community Cohesion - Traveller Communities

A report of the Director of Education was considered, which stated that Romany Gypsies and Travellers of Irish Heritage were recognised minority ethnic communities, under the Race Relations Act 1976. Public bodies including local authorities were required to promote good race relations including the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and to ensure that these communities were integrated into race equality initiatives under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The report outlined the differences between Gypsy/Romani Community, Travellers of Irish Heritage and East European Roma. It then set out what the Education Service and others were doing in relation to community cohesion for Traveller communities. It was noted that the Education Service had a specialist worker who had formed close links with the Bosnian Roma community.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 28/04 Local Crime: Community Sentence

Katy Abbott from the Crown Prosecution Service and Balwant Bubber from the Derby Racial Equality Council gave a presentation on local crime: community sentence. This was a national project which was supported by the Lord Chancellor and aimed to raise public awareness about the magistracy and probation service and the effectiveness of community penalties. The training was provided by fully trained officers and involved giving people the details of a case, including a summary of facts, aggravating and mitigating circumstances and how the final sentence was arrived at. The training lasts for approximately one hour and ten minutes and was available to anyone requesting it.

It was also reported that the Probation Service were running a Diversity Week from 11 - 15 October 2004.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To note the presentation.**
- 2. To arrange a separate meeting to receive the training, if sufficient people express an interest.**

## 29/04 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

**Resolved to defer this item until the next meeting.**

## 30/04 Career Development Update – Positive Action

A report of the Director of Policy was considered, which stated that the Council was committed to achieving the Equality Standard for Local Government and had a legal duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of

different racial groups. Legislation encouraged positive action measures to address past unfairness in the work place environment. The Council recognised that under-representation of women, disabled and minority ethnic groups existed within the work force at certain levels. To address the issue, the Council had introduced various positive action initiatives such as mentoring, shadowing and work placements to help achieve targets that had been clearly set out in the Council's Best Value Performance Plan for 2004/05.

Shokat Lal was concerned that people may be developed but there may no be posts for them to move into. It was quite common to need to move to another authority to progress. There was ongoing support, career guidance and mentoring. It was suggested that the Committee track employees involved in the scheme. Mohammed Sharief was disappointed in the targets set and suggested that the Council consider what other authorities were doing. He felt that it was a paper exercise which contained nothing concrete on what would be delivered. Sue Glithero reported that all appointments were merit based. It was suggested that when a vacancy arose, potential candidates should be allowed to act up for six months to gain experience and then open up the vacancy to competition. This approach had been very successful in Birmingham.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. To request the Director of Policy to provide a report to a future meeting with concrete suggestions on a way forward.**

## **31/04      Equality Impact Assessment Form and Guidelines**

A report of the Director of Policy was considered, which stated that the Council, as a public authority, had a general duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to consider race equality in everything it did. This duty had been extended to disability equality, when the Disability Discrimination Bill becomes law in late 2005. There was also an indication it could extend to gender in the future. It was reported that the form had been trialled by a focus group of managers and it was felt to be quite complicated to use and that the form would now be redesigned. The Committee shared the view about the form being too complicated.

**Resolved**

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. To request that the revised draft be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.**

## 32/04 Extension of Meeting

**Resolved at 8.30pm in accordance with the Committee's working protocol, that the meeting be extended to complete the business on the agenda.**

## 33/04 Forward Plan

**Resolved to defer this item until the next meeting.**

## 34/04 Reducing Health Inequalities

Councillor Hussain gave a presentation on the Social Care and Health Commission's final report on reducing health inequalities. Shokat Lal said this was one of the most important reports ever to come to the Committee and there was now a lack of time to debate it. It was agreed that agendas should be shorter when there were major topics and that the Community's items should be taken first.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. To bring the responses to the recommendations back to the Committee when they were available.**

## 35/04 City Council Funding Arrangements for Community Organisations

George Mighty stated that there had been a number of restrictions on grant fundings to community organisations. Community groups were required to submit their grant applications much earlier and he was concerned to make sure that Derby did not face a situation similar to the one that had happened in Leicester recently where community groups had taken the Council to a judicial review.

**Resolved to defer consideration of this item until the next meeting to give time for a full debate.**

## 36/04 MECAC Newsletter

The Committee were asked to consider items for inclusion in the next MECAC newsletter. No items were put forward.

## 37/04 MECAC Work Programme

The Committee considered MECAC's latest work programme.

**Resolved to note the report.**

MINUTES END