

Time commenced – 6.30pm
Time Finished – 8.40pm

MINORITY COMMUNITIES DIVERSITY FORUM 27 MARCH 2008

Present: **Representing Derby City Council**
Councillor Roberts
Councillor R Khan

Representing Communities

George Mighty – DWICA
Leonie Moukodi
Ragbhir Singh Taggar – Indian Community Centre
John Pearson – Derby Irish Association
Chrysantus Tagne – Cameroon Community (D.A.I.)
Mwalja Karahsani – Refugee Action
Zbignirw Wojcik – E-Mac
Vinnie Sanghera – Derbyshire Police (BPA)
Julian Mushuku – Community Arts
A. Johnson
Ferid Kevric – Bosnian Community
Tony Walsh – Derby Irish Association
Mohammed Yaqub – Pakistan Community Centre
Jahanzaib Safdar – Pakistan Community Centre
Shokat Lal – Pakistan Community Centre
Kirit Mistry – Derby REC
Hazel Simpson – FWA
Nezrine Hudson – DWICA
L.G. Newby – DWICA
John Pearson – Derby Irish Association
Jayesh Jani – Derby Millennium Network
Matthew Allbones - CVS

Council and Other Officers

Ray Cowlshaw – Derby City Council
Rod Wood - Derby City Council
Ann Webster - Derby City Council
Mick Seller - Derby City Council
Andrew Auld - Derby City Council
Hazel Lymbery – Derby City Council
Pamela Thompson – Derby City Council

51/07 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jennings and Dhindsa, Balbir Singh Sandhu, Jalbir Khan, Mohammed Shareif, Nasreen Iqbal, Father O’Sullivan and Farhad Kamal.

52/07 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

53/07 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

54/07 Update on Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

Ann Webster, Equality and Diversity Manager, presented the Forum with the updated information regarding Equality Impact Assessments that had been carried out by the Council. The team were in the process of reviewing the three year Equality and Diversity Plan, and the assessments would form an important part of the review. Members of the Forum who had previously helped with the assessments were thanked for their assistance, and all Forum members were invited to help with future reviews as it was reported that the representatives knowledge of the local communities would be invaluable. Written contributions to reviews were also welcomed.

The Forum also received an update from Ann Webster on the Employment Statistics report presented last September Each Council Directorate had studied the statistics and agreed a series of initiatives to increase the diversity within their own Directorate. The initiatives also included the work being done with JET to increase the representation of Pakistani people in the workplace. These would be monitored through the Directorates' Senior Management Teams and the Equality and Diversity Task Group, as well as the Assistant Director Group. Ann would bring an update to the Forum in September. The statistics would now be put on the Council's Equality web pages

Noted

55/07 MCDF Work Programme

The Forum considered the Work Programme for upcoming meetings.

Noted

56/07 Engaging Young People

The Forum received a report from Andrew Auld, Head of Communication and Consultation and Hazel Lymbery, Head of Partnership, Performance and Participation. It was reported that there had been a lot of work on Youth Engagement, and that there was a Youth Shadow Board called Voices in Action, which was made up young people from different schools, youth groups, specialist

support groups, community groups and also individuals. It was reported that locality was a key strand of work for this group, and that there was a good representation of all types of neighbourhoods in the group, although emergent communities were under represented.

The Forum also considered the Council's participation strategy for young people. It was reported that various participation models were emerging throughout the city, and the participation strategy aimed to offer a consistent approach to participation.

Noted

57/07 School Admissions, Exclusions and Addressing Underachievement

The Forum considered a report from Mick Seller, Assistant Director for Learning, on School Admissions, Exclusions and how the Council addresses underachievement. The report highlighted the key 'at risk' groups in the city, and outlined the key issues and action being taken for each group. It was noted that new and emergent communities were not equally spread around the city, as the children moving in-year had to attend the schools that had spaces available.

The Forum highlighted concerns that the figures for Black and Caribbean children were not improving. These concerns were reflected in the Children and Young People Directorate, and they were looking at possible solutions, which included possible curriculum revisions to bring in more vocational subjects, without losing any of the core subjects. There were also concerns that school catchment areas caused integration problems within the city. It was reported that school admissions was a difficult problem, and at the moment there seemed to be no solution that would suit all parties.

Noted

58/07 Community Development and Capacity Building

The Forum received a presentation from Matthew Allbones and Susannah Towne from Derby CVS. It was reported that Derby CVS worked with a variety of community groups to help them engage in society. As a result, it was hard for CVS to assess the impact of their particular work as their results could only be assessed by how well the groups they supported work on battling inequalities. CVS membership was open to any voluntary body who would like to join, subject to approval from the Board. It was reported that a review was being held of the membership process to try and reconnect with the members.

The Forum expressed concerns that CVS were not able to support some of the member groups effectively as they were not able to offer continued intensive support. It was reported that CVS would like to review membership to try and support groups in the way that was most appropriate for them. However, it was reported that as CVS was also reliant on funding to survive, it could impact on the services they could provide.

The Forum also received an update from Jayesh Jaini, Derby Millennium Network on the work of the Network. It was reported that the Network tried to complement the work of CVS but focussed on BME communities. They provided a drop in centre

for all forms of advice and also worked in partnership with the PCT to deliver healthy living programmes.

Noted.

59/07 Consultation on Bemrose School

The Forum received information on the proposals to convert Bemrose School into an academy under the Building Schools for the Future project. Governors at Bemrose had rejected these proposals and instead were seeking Foundation School status. The Forum expressed concerns that the difference of opinion between the school and the Authority may have a knock on effect for the children of Bemrose School. It was reported that the City Council felt that the only way to get Bemrose School out of its current situation was to follow the academy route.

The Forum expressed concerns about the standard of teaching in the schools earmarked to be academies. It was reported that the Authority worked hard to ensure that all teachers received adequate training and support to enable them to achieve their targets.

Noted

60/07 Open Discussion

The Forum were informed of an upcoming event from the Derby for Africa Initiative, to raise awareness of the problems in Africa which would be held on 16 June 2008.. Forum members were asked for their support of this event.

Noted.

61/07 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting and pre-meeting would be confirmed to the Forum at a later date.

Noted

MINUTES END