



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

## MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES EQUALITIES FORUM 16 NOVEMBER 2006

Report of the Director of Policy

### **BME Housing Strategy 2005 – 2008 Action Plan Update**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 To note the updated BME Housing Strategy Action Plan.
- 1.2 To note the 2<sup>nd</sup> round consultation report document
- 1.3 Agree to proposed promotion event in October to promote update of the BME Housing Strategy Action Plan

#### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The BME Housing Strategy was launched in May 2005. Consultation was carried out with the Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and African-Caribbean groups in the city.
- 2.2 In March 2006 we reported to MECAC that we had just completed our 2<sup>nd</sup> round of consultation with the new and emerging communities in the city. These groups were:
  - Iraqi – Kurdish
  - Afghani
  - Somali
  - Iranian/Persian
  - Polish
- 2.3 The attached full report gives details of the findings of the research carried out.
- 2.4 It is requested that MECAC note the attached report giving details of findings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round consultation and give comments on the updated Action Plan.
- 2.3 The issues highlighted mainly related to lack of advice and information on their housing situation and was largely due to poor translation and interpreting services being available. Overcrowding was also a big problem amongst all the groups we spoke to and often up to 8 people were sharing bedrooms.

- 2.4 The consultation carried out with the new and emerging communities in the city highlighted that there are a number of issues around the provision of housing advice. In all the focus groups carried out the same sorts of issues were apparent to all groups.
- 2.5 From this research additional realistic targets have been incorporated within the Action Plan to specifically look to meet the needs identified
- 2.6 In addition it is also proposed to go back to the Community Organisations we worked with to carry out this research and give them details of our findings and how we propose to address them through the Action Plan.
- 2.7 An event is being planned to update the BME Housing Strategy in late October/early November to show commitment to ensuring that better access to services is provided and that issues of language barriers in people receiving information are dealt with.
- 2.8 The existing Action Plan has been updated with new targets for the next 12 months.

A range of these objectives include;

- To ensure that all service users are given advice appropriate to their needs regardless of language barriers, cultural background etc
- Ensure training and updates on issues affecting refugees and migrants is given to both newly appointed and experienced housing advisors so they are fully aware of the needs of people recently arriving in the UK
- To ensure that service users from both older and newer BME communities are left in no doubt about the Homefinder system and the processes involved in accessing social housing and their realistic chances of achieving tenancies within public sector housing and RSL's
- To give service users from BME communities more choice in their housing options
- To continue to pursue opportunities to develop sheltered housing schemes specifically for older people from BME communities

- 2.9 **For more information contact:** Leigh-Anne Hilton 01332 255635  
**List of appendices:** Appendix 1 – 2nd round report  
Appendix 2 - Updated BME Housing Strategy  
Action Plan`

## IMPLICATIONS

### Financial

- 1.1 Funding opportunities are currently being explored to help deliver the Action Plan

### Legal

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Under the general statutory duty, the Council must make sure access to information and services is provided in a way that promotes race equality.
- 2.3 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 puts a legal obligation on service providers to make information available in a range of formats

### Personnel

- 3.1 There are no additional resources required

### Equalities impact

- 4.1 To further promote equalities throughout our diverse communities.

### Corporate objectives and priorities

- 5.1 The proposal comes under the Council's objectives of providing **healthy, safe and independent communities and a shared commitment to regenerating our communities.**
- 5.2 The proposal furthers the priority **working in partnership to achieve socially cohesive communities**