

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) capacity worker: Progress report. This note contains the information to keep Members informed of how the work has been delivered, the impact it has had, and plans for the future.

### **Why have a BME Capacity Worker?**

The post was created to enable minority communities to become more actively involved in local community development and regeneration issues and initiatives. The aim is to promote an environment where people from all backgrounds, faiths, and circumstances can live and work together. This demonstrates Cheltenham Borough Council's commitment to:

- Address inequalities
- combat isolation
- promote integration and cohesion
- build safer and stronger communities

### **What has been done?**

Set up and delivery of a varied learning and leisure activity programme. The aim was to bring a diverse range of individuals together to build capacity and increase their skills. E.g

- Living in Britain courses
- Ladies health sessions at Leisure @

The organisation, promotion and facilitation of partnership events attended by all communities e.g.

- Fiesta in the Park
- Bangladeshi play featured at the Cheltenham Literature Festival

12 volunteers (called Community Ambassadors) from a diverse range of communities have been recruited and trained to disseminate factual information to their respective contacts.

Identified new BME groups from the Sikh, Bangladeshi, Arab, and Gujerati communities.

Delivered activities that contribute to the Prevent Agenda. This is a government priority that is delivered by the Police. . The aim is to identify and support individuals that are vulnerable to radicalisation. Cheltenham Borough Council has a duty to demonstrate how they are contributing to the constabulary Action Plan.

### **What difference has this made?**

- Improved communication networks that have increased dialogue, consultation and participation of BME communities in resolving local priorities
- Built capacity and increased take up of services
- Enabled people from all communities and backgrounds to come together to benefit from leisure and learning opportunities
- Increased engagement and involvement in volunteering
- Effective partnership working, as agencies have a better understanding of the needs of BME communities

### **Priorities 2010 /11**

- set up and facilitate delivery of annual events and activities programme. This will involve working with partners such as, Adult Education, Health, Adult social care, Leisure @, CVCA, and community groups. Events include:
  - February –Chinese new year
  - March - Cultural Fusion, and BME Conference
  - April – Community Ambassadors Launch
  - May / June – Putting People first
  - July - Fiesta in the Park
- The Community Ambassadors Launch will take place at the Everyman theatre. It will include a short play, (based on discussions with the Ambassadors), about how language and cultural behaviour can create challenges to communication. This play will also be featured at the Cheltenham Literature Festival
- Promote the Grantnet to improve funding applications

- Target new groups e.g young people ( this will also compliment the Prevent agenda)
- New health and wellbeing activities programme at Leisure – focus on mental health

From April the post will be line managed by Richard Gibson, so there will be additions to the programme.