

**LEICESTERSHIRE TOGETHER (LOCAL STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIP) BOARD**

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

**BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC CITIZENS' JURY**

**REPORT OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update to the Board on the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Citizens' Jury project.
2. To request that Board members use their position within their respective organisations to actively implement the relevant sections of the Citizens' Jury Action Plan.

**Action Plan – Context**

3. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> July Leicestershire Together Board meeting, the Summary Action Plan was formally approved. The full Action Plan was then circulated to all Board members.
4. The full Action Plan was also circulated to Citizens' Jury members, service providers, local BME community groups and organisations, national bodies (e.g. Commission for Racial Equality) and other interested parties.
5. Feedback was requested and received. Responses have been collated and noted with respect to content and prioritisation. This ongoing process has included a workshop at the Leicestershire Together Conference on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October.
6. This process has not, however, prevented practical work from being undertaken in relation to Action Plan areas.

**Action Plan Areas – Updates**

The following are some examples of work undertaken during the last quarter.

**Awareness**

7. Email and information distribution service has been established with regular communications circulated to service providers, local groups etc. Examples include job vacancies, employment and mentoring/shadowing initiatives, information on specific local organisations, Black History Season and Refugee Week. Interest has been considerable, with practical assistance given to people and organisations wanting further information or opportunities to get involved.

8. Contact information on local, county, regional, national and international BME and faith organisations has been collected to increase awareness and knowledge and assist in community engagement processes. Information has been circulated and tailored to service providers upon request.
9. An Interfaith and International Calendar for 2007 has been produced and circulated.
10. A database of local, national and international news updates has been formulated and circulated quarterly. This details news items, initiatives, statistics and other sources of information relevant to areas and themes within the broad areas of race equality.

## **Community Engagement**

11. Service providers have received assistance with regard to community engagement. Such assistance has included sign-posting as well as active intervention in getting local people/BME groups linked up with service providers. Examples of service providers include Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, Youth Offending Service, Children's and Young People's Service and Leicestershire Constabulary. Advice has also been given on methods and techniques of specific engagement with BME and faith communities.
12. Collaborative work with Age Concern Leicestershire in organising the official Launch of the Minority Ethnic Forum at County Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> August.
13. Collaboration with the Black Future Network in the organisation of a Citizens' Jury and Question Time event scheduled to take place at County Hall on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Capacity Building**

14. Specific assistance has been given to a number of BME organisations, e.g. Black Future Development, Somali Afro-European Media Project (SAEMP), Leicestershire Gypsy Council Liaison Group (LGCLG), African Caribbean Citizens' Forum (ACCF). Such assistance has taken a variety of forms – project management, promotion and information circulation, sign-posting, funding research and specific funding for a regional conference on Gypsy/Traveller issues which took place on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November.
15. Practical assistance and support has also been given to specific local projects, e.g. Toc H Asylum Seeker and Refugee project, Multi-faith Crematorium.
16. Background work has been undertaken on the formation of a specific body tasked with monitoring and scrutinising progress and developments in relation to Citizen Jury Action Plan areas and the Action Plan itself (including prioritisation), but also with a view to offering guidance, advice and practical assistance to service providers on these matters. It is intended that the body will serve a steering mechanism for the Citizens' Jury project and also a way of involving a wide variety of BME and faith communities.

## **Research**

17. Specific background research has begun on issues related to European Union (specifically Eastern European) migration, with a view to more systematic quantitative and qualitative research being undertaken in Leicester and Leicestershire. Papers have been delivered at events organised by Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Partnership (LEMP) and Charnwood Racial Equality Council.
18. Related to point 17 is the issue of Community Cohesion. Whilst this will continue to be a specific component of the Citizens' Jury Action Plan, care will need to be taken to ensure effective involvement in, and liaison with, other related pieces of work. Clarification on this matter and the future direction of community cohesion work in Leicestershire is needed.

## **Citizens' Jury members**

19. Continuing engagement with Citizens' Jury members. This involves regular correspondence and individual support. A meeting of the Citizens' Jury took place on the evening of Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October.

## **Recommendations**

### **It is recommended that the Board:**

- a) notes this report;**
- b) ensures that all partners develop and implement their own Action plans using the Citizens' Jury Action Plan as a generic framework;**
- c) seek assistance and support with this process from the Citizens' Jury Lead Officer;**
- d) act as champions for the Citizens' Jury Action Plan.**

## **Officer to contact**

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