

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
STRATEGIC POLICY AND BUDGET

30 July 2013

Report of the Acting Chief Executive

Promoting good relations and awareness

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for expenditure to support a number of one-off projects aimed at promoting good relations and awareness.

2. Information and Analysis

The Public Sector Equality Duty expects public bodies to take action to help promote good relations between people who belong to a protected characteristic group and those who do not. The Council's current Policy for Equality and Diversity and its eight Equality Objectives express a commitment to improving relations through activities which raise awareness and challenge stereotypes and myths about communities.

In order to do this work has been taking place for some time to develop the participation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community organisations in helping to ensure that the authority's services can better meet the needs of different racial and ethnic minority communities in Derbyshire, and inform how the Council promotes cohesion and good race relations. One of the areas where groups have helped the Council's work is in relation to understanding the history, culture and experiences of BME communities living in Derbyshire.

Following last year's work to mark Black History Month/ Season, which takes place each October, the groups represented within the BME Forum expressed a wish that activities should focus on the local contribution of communities, and raise awareness of this with the wider population. The groups believe that by bringing people from different backgrounds together it is possible to improve understanding and build trust. Recent attacks on BME communities and the continued highlighting of immigration to the UK threatens the good community relations which already exist in Derbyshire.

As a result of these discussions a number of proposals have been received from Black and Minority Ethnic community organisations to help improve awareness and relations locally. The groups have asked if the Council can make a small financial contribution to help ensure that the events can proceed over the coming months. In each case the Council's financial support would

cover costs such as venue hire, publicity, catering and materials. The proposals received are as follows:

- **The African Caribbean Community Association (ACCA)** - ACCA is intending to hold a one-day event to mark the 40th anniversary of Grenada's independence, when they intend to raise awareness of the history, culture and contribution of the local Grenadian community in Chesterfield and north Derbyshire. The aim of the event is to improve cohesion and relationships between the Black and other communities. It is proposed to make a contribution of £250 to support this event.
- **The Asian Association of Chesterfield and North Derbyshire** – The group is planning to run a culturally based programme of activities to raise awareness of the history and culture of the Indian communities in the area. It will offer an opportunity for the Association to promote the work it does to support members of the community and to combat social isolation. It is proposed to make a contribution of £250 to support these activities.
- **Two groups representing the Chinese community** – The groups want to carry out a number of activities to bring Chinese and other people together, including the many Chinese people scattered across Derbyshire, often working in businesses in our towns and villages. They also want to complete a project to record the history and origins of the community in Derbyshire, by capturing the recollections of Chinese elders. It is proposed to make a contribution of £500 to support both types of activity.
- **The Chesterfield Muslim Association** – The Association want to improve understanding and awareness around the Muslim community and its faith, by hosting an open celebration for Eid, the large celebration held at the end of Ramadan. This will include opening up the mosque and other buildings to visitors as well as a celebration to give local people an experience of taking part in Eid. It is proposed to provide a contribution of £500 to support these activities and help ensure continued good relations between Muslims living in Derbyshire and other communities.
- **The Chesterfield Filipino Association** - The Association wish to host a sports competition event enabling all communities to come together to compete in sport, along the lines of a local version of the Olympic or Commonwealth Games. The Association already has the support of the other BME communities to participate in the event. It is intended to provide £500 in financial support for this event and to support the Filipino Association to enquire whether any further support may be

available from Derbyshire Sport, as this event has the potential to attract a higher level of participation across communities.

The Council's budget for equality and diversity has historically been utilised to help support the agenda through activities which improve awareness and cohesion, tackle discrimination and harassment, or facilitate equalities based learning and development activities, usually in partnership with service departments or community or employee groups.

3. Financial Considerations

The total cost of supporting these events and activities is £2,000 and can be met from the Council's Equality and Diversity budget.

4. Equality and Diversity Considerations

The body of the report provides an explanation of how these proposals could help the Council to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty and improve awareness and good race relations.

5. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

6. Key decisions

No.

7. Call In

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decision proposed in this report?

No.

Officer Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Approval is granted to provide a total of £2,000 in financial support to enable the groups to proceed with the events and activities outlined in the report.
2. Each Group is asked to provide monitoring information about who attends or takes part in their proposed activities to help measure

whether they have been successful in bringing people from different backgrounds together and helped build good relations.

Ian Stephenson
Acting Chief Executive