

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

ETHNIC MINORITIES FORUM

Note of meeting held on 18 March 1999

Present

East Ayrshire Council

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|---------------------------|--|
| Eric Jackson (EJ) – Chair | Vice Chair of Policy & Resources Committee |
| Jim O'Neill (JO'N) | Councillor |
| David Montgomery (DM) | Chief Executive |
| Marion Kelso (MK) | Personnel Department |
| Jim Maitland (JM) | Housing Department |
| Helen McGhee (HMcG) | Social Work Department |
| Alison Smith (AS) | Community Services Department |
| Anne Basford (AB) | Education Department |
| Alan Murray (AM) | Education Department (Community Education) |
| Hugh Mitchell (HM) | Police Liaison Officer |
| Michael Thomson (MT) | Social Work Department |
| John Butler (JB) | Social Work Department |
| Sam McVie (SMcV) | Property Services |
| Irene Townson (IT) | Legal Services |
| Tom Williams (TW) | Education Department |

East Ayrshire Ethnic Minority Representatives

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|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Henry Ho (HH) | KULOC Association |
| Kenny Shek (KS) | KULOC Association |
| Shafiq Nasir (SN) | Islamic Education & Cultural Centre |
| Mrs Aslam (MA) | Chandni Asian Women's Group |
| Riaz Mian (RM) | Asian Community |
| M Fiaz (MF) | Asian Community |

External Interests

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Sarah Craig | Ethnic Minority Law Centre |
| Aaliya Seyal | Ethnic Minority Law Centre |
| Farkhanda Chaudry | Black & Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland |
| Maggie Chetty | West of Scotland Community Relations Council |

Apologies

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Irene Reeves | Councillor, East Ayrshire Council |
| Douglas Reid | Councillor, East Ayrshire Council |
| Katie Hall | Councillor, East Ayrshire Council |
| Graham Haugh | Personnel Department, East Ayrshire Council |
| Donald McVicar | Support Services Department, East Ayrshire Council |
| Alan MacDougall | Social Work Department, East Ayrshire Council |
| John Johnstone | Strathclyde Police |
| Mrs Malik | Chandni Asian Women's Group |
| Mr Malik | Islamic Education & Cultural Centre |
| Avril Harkness | Childcare Partnership Officer |

Note of previous meeting and matters arising

The note of meeting was agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising

Bilingual Staff

MB reported that a list has been compiled of staff within the education service and members of ethnic minority communities who would be willing to help with translation.
MB has circulated draft questionnaire and leaflet with main contact points – this will be produced in community languages - any comments should be forwarded to MB before publication.
A list of contact points for Council departments and ethnic minority groups represented at this meeting was circulated.

Ethnic Minority Grants Scheme

MB summarised the response from the Scottish Office on this matter.
MB reported on meeting with KULOC to discuss accommodation. AM is taking matter forward with KULOC. Successful bid by Dumfries & Galloway Council is being used as model for application. Assistance would be provided to the local Asian community if they wished to submit a bid for future funding.
AM reported that the Scottish Office will be holding roadshows in late May/early June to give advice on grant applications.
MC commented that the Lottery Small Grants Scheme provides similar grants for up to £5,000 and they are keen to promote more applications from ethnic minority groups and provide assistance with applications.
MB commented that the New Opportunities Lottery Fund can also be accessed by community groups. East Ayrshire Council is keen to support any groups who wish to make an application.
FC commented that NCLB would also be willing to provide assistance with applications and a visit to East Ayrshire is planned. AM will circulate dates to members of the groups when known.

Action

AM

Role of Ethnic Minority Worker

HMcG provided an overview of a report circulated which addresses the issues raised at the last meeting.
Contrary to the previous note of meeting, it was reported that East Ayrshire Council does not fund this worker but she does operate within this area. Funding is provided by North Ayrshire Council and the Health Board.
Funding for Asian Development Worker is being pursued, with no success as yet - HMcG will report back to next meeting.

HMcG

Islamic Education & Culture Centre

SMcV reported that, following submission of the planning application for change of use, neighbours had requested more details on the Centre.
EJ reported that he had just been advised immediately prior to the meeting that the planning issues have been resolved.
Legal Department will now draw up the formal lease as soon as possible.
Mr Malik commented that he is very pleased with the progress which has been made to date.

Legal

Chinese School

MB & SMcV reported on meetings with KULOC Association to discuss accommodation that is available within East Ayrshire – very few premises in central Kilmarnock.
SMcV reported that suitable premises had been identified behind Islamic Centre in New Street but access to main entrance is problematic.
KS commented that issues of accessibility and pedestrian approach routes have been raised by members of the Association.
The group is willing to wait until suitable premises become available but that discussions will continue with group re: New Street premises as these had not yet been finally ruled out.

SMcV

Social Inclusion

MB provided an overview of the Social Inclusion bid, which has been approved for funding by the Scottish Office.

DM commented that East Ayrshire's own Social Inclusion Partnership approach would cover the whole of East Ayrshire and would seek to protect groups of disadvantaged people wherever they lived in East Ayrshire. Council departments will be working together, looking at local areas and communities looking at issues to see how best they can be taken forward.

EJ commented that this is good news for East Ayrshire as a whole.

A further progress report on this issue will be provided at the next meeting.

MB

West of Scotland Community Relations Council

MC gave an overview of the services provided by WSCRC, including details of:

- Joint working
- Employment
- Reasons for Monitoring
- Lack of reporting
- Annual Statistics

Sections of the Race Relations Act 1976 were outlined and scenarios relating to sections of the Act were described.

Cllr JO'N commented on the public perception survey recently circulated by Strathclyde Police. No questions about race in this survey and a key question for the future should possibly be "How do ethnic minority communities perceive the Police?"

How do ethnic minority communities make contact with WSCRC – small staffing structure makes it difficult to cover every community - through organisations or by word of mouth.

Personnel issues – EAC does not receive enough applications from minority ethnic people – it is hoped that recruitment drives will help to encourage applications.

Marion Kelso will liaise with departments to take this forward.

HMcG commented that perhaps the Council should look at being more proactive at reporting incidents of racial matters.

FC commented that many members of the community who had been involved in a racial incident, although they did not want to go forward to the Police or Council they did want to speak to someone about their experience and this could be done through community organisation.

Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland

FC outlined the main purpose and activities of BEMIS and her role of Race Equality Development Officer within this organisation.

She commented that the discussions today relate well to the work on infrastructure development. "Connect" magazine was circulated to those in attendance and names will be added to mailing list for future editions.

AM commented that messages coming through indicate that a close link would be worthwhile.

FC was invited to attend a future meeting of this Forum to give an update on the work going on.

Valuing Diversity

JB summarised the main headings of this Scottish Office document on children's services.

DM commented that there is a gap in East Ayrshire Council's information in relation to ethnic minority families who would be available to provide fostering or respite care in a home setting for ethnic minority children. It was suggested that the Social Work Department would consult with representatives on this group to discuss how best we can get across to local ethnic minority communities information on how to express an interest in this valuable work. This will be reported on a future meeting.

MT reported on the 3 main points raised at the Conference held recently on Valuing Diversity:

- staff having appreciation and understanding of issues
- ensuring information is collated properly and understanding of issues to be included in policies and strategic plans
- ensure staff collate details of background of children going into care to ensure children's needs are identified

Any comments on the Children's Service Plan should be submitted to JB.

JB

Assessment of Bilingual Children

TW reported on the key findings of a working established to develop approaches to assess bilingual children with special educational needs. Comprehensive guidelines have been produced for Chinese pupils for use by teachers but it is intended to produce procedures for other ethnic minority groups in the future. East Ayrshire would be willing to share this information with other authorities. A leaflet summarising key issues will be issued to parents in ethnic minority communities.

Childcare Strategy

MB gave an overview of the guidelines issued to authorities on the development of a Childcare Strategy and how East Ayrshire is taking this matter forward. The Strategy includes:
- Extension of pre-5 education to include 3 years olds
- Extended day care
- Extended after school care
At present, an extensive audit is being undertaken to ascertain what parents in East Ayrshire require. A questionnaire was circulated – those who have difficulty in completing should contact MB. MB will arrange for researcher to contact parent representatives of ethnic minority groups to discuss their childcare needs. A fuller presentation on East Ayrshire's response to the guidelines will be given at future meeting.

MB
MB

AOCB

Ethnic Minority Law Centre

Aaliya added that the Law Centre had received another year's funding from the Scottish Executive - Ethnic Minorities Grant Scheme taking the project into its third year. Continuation of services is now possible- informal discussions will be held to develop this.

Police Issues

HH raised issue of difficulty with contacting police with regard to recent incident – HM will discuss further after this meeting. HM will feed back to senior police colleagues from this meeting. HM to write to ethnic minority representatives giving details of procedure and help that can be offered. HM to arrange for police representatives to attend next meeting to discuss areas which are not being addressed.

HM

Licensing Issues

IT, Legal Department reported that East Ayrshire Licensing Board is interested in opening dialogue with representatives from ethnic minority groups to provide assistance with aspects of licensing The Scottish Licence Trade Authority would also wish more representatives from ethnic minority communities. IT to write to ethnic minority representatives to confirm these points and report back on consultation with groups at next meeting.

IT

Date and time of next meeting

September/October 1999 – date, time and venue will be advised in due course.

AGENDA