

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

### ETHNIC MINORITIES FORUM

**Note of meeting held on 21 October 1999  
at 1400 hrs within the Gateway Centre, Kilmarnock**

#### **Present**

##### **East Ayrshire Council**

Cllr David Macrae (Chair) (Cllr DM)

Cllr Harry Wilson (Cllr HW)

Cllr Alex Walsh (Cllr AW)

Fiona Lees (FL)

Graham Haugh (GH)

Kathy Logan (KL)

Donald MacVicar (DMacV)

Jim Maitland (JM)

John Crawford (JC)

Anne Basford (AB)

Alan Murray (AM)

John Butler (JB)

Sam McVie (SMcV)

Dave Hewet (DH)

Sharon Donohoe (SD)

Martin O'Rourke (MO'R)

Hugh Mitchell (HM)

Depute Chief Executive

Department of Corporate Services (Personnel)

Department of Corporate Services (Personnel)

Department of Corporate Services (Admin)

Department of Housing

Department of Community Services (Protective Services)

Department of Education (Network Support)

Department of Education (Community Education)

Department of Social Work (Children & Families)

Department of Development Services (Property)

Department of Development Services (Social Inclusion)

Department of Education (Community Education)

Department of Chief Executive (Best Value Unit)

Strathclyde Police Liaison Officer

##### **Ethnic Minority Representatives**

Mr Henry Ho

Mrs Malik

Mr Malik

KULOC Community Association

Chandni Asian Women's Group

Islamic Education & Cultural Centre

##### **Other Organisations**

Aaliya Seyal

Adrian Lui

Farrah Khan

James Easton

Lisa Maiolani

Inspector Jim Drennan (JD)

Ethnic Minority Law Centre

Ethnic Minority Law Centre

West of Scotland Community Relations Council

Employment Service

Employment Service

Strathclyde Police

##### **Apologies**

Cllr Thomas Farrell, East Ayrshire Council

David Montgomery, Chief Executive

Alan MacDougall, Department of Social Work

Helen McGhee, Department of Social Work

Sarah Craig, Ethnic Minority Law Centre

Mr Kenny Shek, KULOC

Mr Iqbal, Islamic Education & Cultural Centre

Mr Shafiq Nasir, Islamic Education & Cultural Centre

**Note of previous meeting**

Cllr DM welcomed everyone to the meeting.  
The note of the meeting held on 18 March was agreed as an accurate record.

**Matters Arising**

**Ethnic Minority Grants Scheme**

AM reported that a surgery session had been held on 26 May to assist in the completion of applications by KULOC and Islamic groups. These groups are not in a position to apply at this time but support will be given by Community Education in completing applications next year.

**Role of Ethnic Minority Worker**

Leaflet circulated re: Christine Tsang, Ethnic Minority Worker and her role in East Ayrshire. It is hoped that this information will be circulated widely within ethnic minority communities.  
Christine Tsang will hold surgery every Thursday between 1000 – 1200 hrs within the Social Work Office, Campbeltown Drive, Kilmarnock and is very keen to meet with ethnic minority representatives.  
MB will meet with Christine Tsang to discuss taking forward interpretation facilities. Recent trawl indicates willingness from people to translate community and international languages, although issue of payment was raised.  
It was reported that North Ayrshire Council is considering the appointment of an Asian Development Worker although funding has not yet been identified.

**Action**

**MB**

**Islamic Education & Cultural Centre**

SMcV reported that liaison is continuing with regard to finalising the lease agreement on the New Street property.  
The group wish to undertake internal alterations to the building which will require a building warrant. Water damage is being fixed at present.  
Mr Malik raised issue of insurance claim being settled before application for building warrant can be submitted. SMcV advised that this matter is being handled by Department of Homes and Technical Services.

**SMcV**

**Chinese School**

SMcV reported that there had been no further communication with the KULOC group since the last meeting since no suitable properties have become available.  
Discussion took place on the possibility of part of the former Technical Block at Kilmarnock Academy being suitable premises.  
This property is being marketed in the next couple of weeks and it may be that interest from the private sector could result in conversion of the building into office accommodation.  
SMcV to report back on progress to next meeting.

**SMcV**

**West of Scotland Community Relations Council**

Farrah Khan outlined her role and purpose within this organisation. A leaflet outlining the aims and objectives of the WSCRC was circulated to raise awareness of the support provided.  
Farrah's main responsibility is to support victims of racial discrimination, raise awareness in rural and suburban areas and to ensure that effective monitoring procedures are effectively operating within authorities. A meeting has been arranged with Directors of East Ayrshire in this respect.

### **It's Better to Listen : Corporate Complaints Procedure**

MO'R outlined the purpose of the Council's corporate complaints procedure which aims to seek views of customers and ensure that there is an effective channel of communication which allows customers to raise comments, suggestions or complaints.

Stages of the procedure were outlined : (1) first point of contact (2) formal response by department (3) review by departmental Director (4) Chief Executive (5) Local Government Ombudsman. Staff training on customer care and the corporate procedure is underway. Staff guidelines have also been issued.

This leaflet will be produced in the 3 main community languages.

The outcome of the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry will be taken into account in the procedures.

MB commented that a system for reporting and monitoring incidents of racial abuse currently operates within the Education Department.

### **Head of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) Scotland**

Letter circulated for information advising that the Commission has appointed Dharmendra Kanani to head up its Scotland office in Edinburgh.

### **Advisory Leaflets – Domestic Refuse Collection Service**

JC reported that the response from the public has been very positive. Cost of translation is an issue. Cllr DM commented that information of this type is very helpful. Mr Malik asked if it would be worthwhile producing this leaflet in Arabic.

Cllr AW asked if a similar leaflet has been considered for commercial and trade premises owned by ethnic minorities. JC commented that owners of these premises are not obliged to use Council premises for these purposes.

MB reported that a draft leaflet has been prepared in the 3 community languages on the assessment of bilingual pupils.

### **Social Inclusion**

DH gave a presentation on:

- Social inclusion and exclusion
- summary of the national perspective
- outlined the commitment to social inclusion in East Ayrshire and summarised the current position regarding the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership

A copy of the presentation is attached to this note of meeting.

A wide range of mechanisms will be put in place to ensure community involvement.

A representative of the Ethnic Minorities Forum will be invited to be represented on the Coalfields Communities Federation.

DH

### **"Making A Positive Difference" : Children's Service Plan Review**

JB outlined developments which have taken place with regard to the Children's Service Plan Annual Review.

The consultation process is continuous and therefore comments are welcome at any time.

### **Positive Help for People with Disabilities**

James Easton gave an overview of the schemes and services which are in place to increase awareness and help people with disabilities overcome difficulties they come across when seeking employment.

The Employment Service wishes to form stronger links with ethnic minority communities and to develop employment opportunities.

Employers are being encouraged to display the "Disability Symbol" to encourage people with disabilities to apply for posts.

## **Employment Service**

Lisa Maiolani gave a presentation to increase awareness of the services provided by the Employment Service and outlined improvements which have taken place within the last 3 years and special facilities which are available within Job Centres to encourage more people to use the service.

Leaflet circulated for distribution within ethnic minority communities.

GH commented that East Ayrshire Personnel Services are available, as the largest employer in the area, to discuss employment opportunities.

GH will discuss issues re: youth unemployment with Mr Malik at the end of the meeting.

## **Ethnic Minorities Law Centre**

Aaliya Seyal reported that 16 cases in East Ayrshire are being dealt with this year, not including telephone enquiries. 75% of these enquiries are immigration matters.

In East Ayrshire there is a great diverse of nationalities which have approached the Law Centre.

Meetings have been arranged with communities in East Ayrshire.

Issues of funding which ends in March 2000 were discussed. MB will organise an early meeting with the Law Centre to discuss funding opportunities.

Cllr AW raised issue of possibility of funding through possible social inclusion bid. FL commented that all avenues of funding will be considered at the meeting.

MB

## **AOCB**

### **Representation on Local Committees/Forums**

Cllr AW raised issue of ethnic minority representation on Local Committees/Forums and re-emphasised the importance of attendance. DMcV will make contact with representatives to provide further information.

DMcV

### **West of Scotland Community Relations Council – Millennium Poster Competition**

MB reported that the artwork for the above competition is being judged on Monday 25 October. Two ethnic minority representatives have been invited to join the judging panel.

### **Anti-Racist Song Initiative**

A letter has been circulated to Principal Teachers of Music seeking interest in this initiative.

### **Community Councils**

Cllr HW commented that Community Councils are keen to have representation from ethnic minority communities.

Mr Malik commented that work commitments do not always allow representatives to attend meetings.

### **Adult English Classes**

AB reported that adult English classes are held every Tuesday from 1000 – 1200 hrs within the Carers Centre, Foregate, Kilmarnock. This was organised in response to requests made through the Bilingual Service and Community Education.

### **Social Inclusion : Ethnic Minority Worker**

AB asked if there could be a bid through Social Inclusion for funding for an Ethnic Minority Worker for these areas.

FL commented on funding available to areas outwith the Coalfields area. This bid will be flagged up at meeting.

### **Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held in April 2000. The date, time and venue will be notified in the new year.

**AGENDA**