



BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS Code of Practice

1.0 Background and Context

- 1.1 North Yorkshire has a black and minority ethnic (BME) population of approximately 10,358 (2001 Census), making up 1.1% of the population (compared to 7.2% of the population in England and Wales). BME communities tend to be concentrated around Scarborough, Skipton and Harrogate. This population is continually changing as global migration and labour flows change and large numbers of Eastern European migrant workers have been arriving from the A8 countries since their accession to the EU in 2004.
- 1.2 The generic term 'BME' encompasses a wide range of communities, all unique and diverse in their own right, with different histories and experiences of life in the UK. These communities include the resident populations, gypsies and travellers, migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers and members of some faith communities.
- 1.3 Currently, no specific framework exists within North Yorkshire to develop the BME voluntary sector and this is something that needs to be considered by the voluntary and community sector and the public sector. The existing frameworks that supports voluntary sector groups has had few approaches from BME communities but it is recognised that it needs to develop the cultural awareness required to be able to support BME communities.
- 1.4 At the present time, there are very few formally constituted BME groups in the voluntary sector in North Yorkshire – the communities that exist have not formed into identifiable groups, with the exception of some faith groups. The mainstream voluntary and community sector will jointly support the BME communities as they develop, including the provision of support for groups that wish to become constituted.

2.0 Aims

- 1.1 This Code of Practice aims to give specific focus to the needs of the BME communities in North Yorkshire and to make a positive impact on the relationship between BME communities, the established voluntary and

community sector and the public sector in North Yorkshire. It aims to establish a framework to:

- a) Enhance joint understanding and awareness of BME communities across North Yorkshire;
- b) A joint commitment to taking forward race equality, including sharing best practice and promoting good relationships;
- c) Strengthen relationships between the public sector agencies, the community and voluntary sector and BME communities;
- d) Create the right environment to support and empower the BME communities to be able to recognise and communicate their own needs and to engage in community development to influence policy, strategy and funding decisions;
- e) Enable BME communities to contribute to policy development and service delivery in North Yorkshire on an equal footing with other agencies;
- f) Improved quality and quantity of consultation and participation with BME communities.

3.0 Joint Undertakings

3.1 All partners to the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership are aware of an increasing BME population in North Yorkshire and seek their involvement in and acceptance of stronger partnership working. All partners to the NYSP are committed to working together to continually improve the effectiveness of relationships between the public sector, wider voluntary and community sector and the BME communities, and undertake to:

- a) Recognise the ever-changing diversity of the BME communities in relation to race, culture and faith as well as other issues;
- b) Recognise the developments that have been achieved in developing a partnership approach to taking forward the Government's strategy for achieving race equality and community cohesion by promoting and sharing best practice and celebrating success and continue to take this forward;
- c) Promote and support compliance with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and other equalities legislation which promotes civil society, in the organisations to which such legislation applies. The voluntary and community sector will need to understand any potential implications of the legislation when working with the public sector;
- d) Promote joint working initiatives, which improve the policy and implementation outcomes for BME communities at a local level;

- e) Contribute to initiatives to promote understanding and learning between the sectors, such as joint training and development days, and awareness raising seminars;
- f) Encourage and support volunteering by and within BME communities;
- g) Consider the needs of North Yorkshire's BME communities in the course of all activities.

4.0 Public Sector Undertakings

4.1 The North Yorkshire Compact public sector partners undertake to:

- a) Value the work, knowledge, experience and expertise of BME individuals and communities across the County;
- b) Recognise that BME individuals and communities need appropriate support, resourcing and information in order to effectively work with public sector partners;
- c) Support capacity and organisational development within the Voluntary and Community sector and the specific role of infrastructure organisations;
- d) Ensure that BME individuals and communities have appropriate, fair and equal access to resources;
- e) Ensure that public sector bodies and practices do not discriminate against BME communities;
- f) Consult with BME communities in relation to policy and strategy developments – as per the Compact Code of Good Practice on Consultation;
- g) Improve the employment and learning opportunities available to BME communities;
- h) Recognise the independence of BME communities, and their right within law to challenge institutions' policies and practices, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist;
- i) Ensure all public sector partners are meeting the obligations under existing and forthcoming race legislation;
- j) Ensure that equality and diversity is embedded into all policies, procedures and functions of the public sector partners' work;
- k) Ensure compliance with national standards such as the Equality Standard, Best Value and other inspections.

5.0 Wider Voluntary and Community Sector Undertakings

5.1 The Local Infrastructure Organisations and the wider VCS sector agree that it will support the BME communities in the following ways:

- a) Work with the wider communities to be inclusive and encourage development of links and support with BME individuals and communities in the communities they live in;
- b) Support the BME communities and any groups that might emerge;
- c) Assist BME communities and groups to participate fully in the life of the wider communities in which they live;
- d) Ensure that the identified needs of the BME communities and groups are raised at and addressed at all appropriate partnership meetings that they participate in;
- e) The Local Infrastructure Organisation (LIO) will provide generic infrastructure support services to BME communities which may wish to establish a BME group and will also provide such support to any group that is established;
- f) The LIO will ensure that the wider VCS sector in the area served by the LIO is aware of the needs of the BME communities in that area and will encourage the VCS to respond to these needs;
- g) Both the LIO and the wider VCS sector in any locality will raise wider issues that emerge from the BME communities with all appropriate organisations, statutory, private, or voluntary.

6.0 Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Undertakings

6.1 We recognise that BME communities in North Yorkshire are currently developing and evolving. Without wishing to impose any directives and recognising the level of resources that a particular group may have we are inviting a commitment to this Code of Practice and suggest that the following practices be taken into consideration.

- a) Working in partnership with statutory and mainstream voluntary sector agencies to identify demographic trends and monitor the changing needs of BME communities, and offer solutions in response to those needs, including those of the new communities, refugees and asylum seekers;
- b) Aiming to take part in consultation wherever possible in order to inform and present community concerns to Government, local statutory bodies and other partners;

- c) Striving to achieve proper governance of organisations, adopt appropriate quality standards and apply best practice in management and service delivery within organisations;
- d) Playing a full and active part within the wider voluntary and community sector in fulfilling the significant undertakings in the Compact, this Code of Good Practice and other Compact Codes of Good Practice;
- e) Continuing to promote the understanding and awareness of ethnicity, culture and religious diversity;
- f) Encouraging cooperation, collaboration and joint working amongst the diverse groups that make up the BME communities;
- g) Participating in training and learning opportunities;
- h) Working to the principles of open and dynamic organisations providing opportunities for voluntary and community activity by a diverse range of individuals regardless of issues such as disability, gender or sexual orientation.

6.2 These are examples only and need further consultation with the communities concerned before they can be formally adopted.

7.0 Monitoring & Review

7.1 Monitoring and review is especially significant as this work grows in importance, and the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership (and its constituent agencies) should take a lead in monitoring this. It is hoped that the BME communities will develop the capacity and interest to be able to take on the monitoring role in future. This Code of Practice will be reviewed on an annual basis to enable changes in the development of BME communities to be reflected and so that progress can be reported and the Code adapted accordingly.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (such as large type or audio) and other languages – please contact North Yorkshire County Council on 0845 872 73 74

For more information, please contact:

Kay Ritchie at North Yorkshire County Council:

Post: Room 36, North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD

Email: kay.ritchie@northyorks.gov.uk