

**CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,  
EQUALITY AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S ISSUES  
12th March, 2012**

Present:- Councillor Hussain (in the Chair) and Councillor Burton.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Beck.

**E53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest to record.

**E54. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13TH FEBRUARY, 2012**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Equality and Young People's Issues held on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, were considered.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

**E55. POLICY CONTEXT OF FAITH WORK**

Waheed Akhtar, Community Engagement Officer, and Gill Haggie, Rotherham Inter-Faith Group, gave a powerpoint presentation on the Government's Integration Strategy and the work of the Rotherham Inter-Faith Group:-

The Government has released its Integration Strategy (which was originally expected to be published last year), entitled "Creating the Conditions for Integration". An overview of the document was given which included:

- The Government believed that an integrated society was vital to building strong, prosperous sustainable communities. It argued that the challenges facing today's local communities were too complex to be addressed by broad, nationally-defined programmes or by singling out specific groups for special treatment. Integration required Government to create the conditions for everyone to play a full part in national and local life
- The document embraced Government commitments to rebalance activity from centrally-led to locally-led action and from public to voluntary and private sectors. It challenged everyone to integrate action to support the creation of an integrated society in all that they did
- Nationally, the Department of Communities would lead on integration with contributions from the Home Office and the Departments of Education, Business Innovation and Skills and Work and Pensions. The Strategy complemented related commitments to equalities and social mobility in particular the Equality Act 2010, Equality Strategy and Social Mobility Strategy. The approach was specific to England

Integration in England Today

- The Strategy argued that England was well placed to meet the challenges of integration today. It pointed to a strong sense of shared history and core values, a long tradition of migration that had enriched local and national life;

- and a strong commitment to tolerance and belief in treating all people fairly
- It perceived some particularly acute challenges over the last decade, international travel and an expanded European Union had seen an unprecedented and sometimes difficult pace of change for local communities
  - It argued the need to protect and promote core values including democracy, the rule of law, equality of opportunities, freedom of speech and the rights of all men and women to live free from persecution of any kind

The Strategy identified 5 key factors which it believed contributed to integration

- Common ground - a clear sense of shared aspirations and values which focussed on what people had in common rather than their differences
- Responsibility - a strong sense of mutual commitments and obligations which brought personal and social responsibility
- Social Mobility - people able to realise their potential to get on in life
- Participation and Empowerment - people of all backgrounds had the opportunities to take part, be heard and take decisions in local and national life
- Tackling Intolerance and Extremism - a robust response to threats, whether discrimination, extremism or disorder that deepened division and increase tensions

Government Approach to Integration

- Integration required changes to society, not changes to the law, nor was it a job for Central Government. It required collective action across a wide range of issues, at national and local levels, by public bodies, private companies and civic society

Government Action

- Common Ground - nation-wide events such as the Big Lunch, community music day and reforms to immigration and settlement rules
- Responsibility - focus on support for young people and their families, volunteering and community activism
- Social Mobility - included initiatives to extend access to education, new Work Programme for job-seekers and entrepreneurship support
- Participation - Utilising mechanisms through the Localism Act 2011, funding to support faith and inter-faith initiatives
- Extremism and Intolerance - revisions to the Prevent Strategy, improvements in tackling hate-crime, new teaching standards to support British values

A Year of Service - Volunteering Days

- 12 Days of Volunteering throughout 2012 as part of a 'Year of Service'

Rotherham Inter-Faith Group

- Early beginnings
- 'not interested in meetings'
- Shared activities
- Rotherham Show
- Tree planning

- Community Garden
- RIG launched September, 2011
- Charter of Compassion
- Litter picks/spring clean

Discussion ensued on the presentation with the following points raised:-

- o The Group met on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 5.00 p.m. in the Unity Centre.
- o A further litter pick to be held on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> March in Eastwood.
- o The more that was known about people's religions the more tolerance there would be.
- o Government wanted responses from local areas.
- o Engagement in the activities under the One Town One Community theme.
- o Support to activities and publication/notification of events on relevant websites.

Resolved:- (1) That Waheed Akhtar and Gill Haggie be thanked for their informative presentation.

(2) That information be forwarded to Waheed Akhtar for inclusion on the relevant websites.

(3) Inter-faith action to be integrated into the One Town One Community Action Plan.

## **E56. MEMBERS' COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND**

Shaun Mirfield, Area Partnership Manager, presented a report on the current position with regard to the Community Leadership Fund 2011/12.

The budget for the 2011/12 financial year was £63,000 plus £23,000 carried over from 2010/11 giving a total budget of £86,000.

The principle of the carry over facility had been approved by Cabinet in 2007 and had operated each year since giving Members the option to carry forward up to £1,000 each into the next financial year. At the end of the 2010/11 financial year, 82% of Members had chosen to carry forward monies, the majority in the £200-£300 range.

The total spend for the current financial year, as at 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2012, was £55,000, 63% of the total budget available. Historically, spend was very high during the last 2 months of the financial year with £25,000 spent during February and March, 2011. Based on this, it was likely that there would be approximately £10-11,000 carry forward.

Discussion ensued on the issue of carry forward with the following issues raised/highlighted:-

- Funding was sometimes reserved for a project the following year
- Useful facility that enabled small funds to be given to local groups
- Alternative mechanism for distribution

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- No automatic carry forward unless a stated commitment to a particular project/organisation
- Stipulate a maximum amount of carry forward

Resolved:- That the Cabinet Member be provided with a detailed breakdown of spend prior to a decision being made.

**E57. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That a further meeting be held on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, commencing at 11.30 a.m.