



Newsletter

Issue 4, April - June 2010



GREATER MANCHESTER BME NETWORK

www.greatermanchesterbmenetwork.org.uk

The Greater Manchester BME Network website is now online and fully accessible; offering detailed information on the Network in a range of languages, including our aims and objectives, outcomes, Steering Group and Partners. You can sign up to our newsletter and subscribe to RSS feeds for the latest information on events and training, or find out more about infrastructure organisations in your district. As the GM BME Network develops so will our website and we hope that it will become a useful resource tool for LSDO (Local Support and Development Organisations) and grassroots organisations across the sub-region.

Visit www.greatermanchesterbmenetwork.org.uk and let us know what you think!

Greater Manchester BME Network Oldham Road Show



On Thursday 24th June 2010 we held our Road Show at the Honeywell Centre in Oldham. It was our third Road Show this year and the last event to be held in our first year priority areas - Oldham, Stockport and Trafford.

The event was held in partnership with Voluntary Action Oldham (VAO) and hosted 15 different stalls including Big Lottery Fund, Community Foundation for Greater Manchester, VAO and Volunteering Oldham, plus various other council and public bodies. There was also a workshop run by Oldham Partnership, the local strategic partnership, on how residents and organisations could get more involved in the partnership.

The Road Show was attended by over 30 people, with almost 20 of these taking part in the workshop. Feedback on the event was positive with attendees reporting feeling more knowledgeable about services available to them in their area. Both attendees and stallholders felt the event was a great opportunity for networking and forging connections with other individuals and organisations.



'Creating a Greater Manchester BME Network'

Our Stakeholder Event, 'Creating a Greater Manchester BME Network' was held at the St. Thomas Centre in Manchester on Tuesday 8th June 2010. The aim of this event was threefold: to give stakeholders an overview and update on the progress of the project in the first year; to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to give input on the future delivery of the project; to establish a Greater Manchester BME Network. The 22 stakeholders who attended discussed the need for a Greater Manchester BME Network and considered the structure and role such a network would take, who should be involved and what would be the most effective way to engage them. We then heard from Vandna Gohil, Director of Voice4Change England, who gave a talk on the current policy landscape and best practice on developing a BME network.

The feedback received on the network and the event was mostly positive, extremely helpful and will help to inform our work and delivery over the next two years. We will be compiling a report on the project and the evaluations made at our Stakeholder Event which will be circulated in due course.



REFUGEE COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Conference: Refugee Communities & Representation

In partnership with Refugee Action and Manchester Refugee Support Network (MRSN), Greater Manchester BME Network is organising a conference themed: 'Refugee Communities & Representation'. This full day event will take place on Wednesday 21st July at Cross Street Chapel, Manchester. The aim of the conference is to: increase the confidence of Refugee Community Organisations' (RCOs) to participate in local decision making, explore what representation means and contribute to ongoing communication between the voluntary and statutory sectors.

In order to achieve these aims, there will be a guest speaker, workshops, panel and audience debate concluded with a way forward discussion. Organisations delivering sessions include: Refugee & Migrant Forum Manchester, Refugee Action's TRIO Project and the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA).

Booking forms must be completed and returned at least two days prior to the event. Please also note that there is a maximum of 60 spaces, therefore a first come first booked policy will apply. Travel expenses for members from RCOs can be reimbursed within reason.

For booking forms please contact gmbmen@mccr.org.uk
or visit: <http://www.greatermanchesterbmenetwork.org.uk/events.asp>

Refugees into Teaching

Refugee Council is encouraging people to get involved in their project, Refugees into Teaching. It is a national project providing support and advice for refugee teachers. The scheme works with a range of schools and other organisations to support refugees' access into training, events, work placements and employment.

To find out more information and register, please visit <http://www.refugeesintoteaching.org.uk/>

NOTICEBOARD

The coalition government and its impact on the voluntary sector

The new Conservative-Liberal Democrat government has set out its plans for its 'Big Society Programme' which will be headed up by the newly formed Office for Civil Society, replacing the Office for the Third Sector. Nick Hurd will be heading up this new department as the new 'Minister for Civil Society'. The term 'third sector' has even been banned by this new department. The idea behind the Big Society agenda is to create a climate in which local people and communities feel empowered. The key policies outlined in the agenda include;

- Giving communities a greater say over their local planning system and saving local services
- Using funding created from the payment of futurebuilders loans will be a programme to create a new generation of community organisers, who will be trained to support the creation of neighbourhood groups and encourage giving and philanthropy
- This funding stream will also be used to continue to provide neighbourhood grants to community groups in deprived areas and will be the successor to 'grassroots grants'
- Encouraging volunteering and involvement in social action, including launching a national 'Big Society Day'
- Piloting a new National Citizen Service, which aims to give 16 year olds the skills needed to be active and responsible citizens and start getting involved in their local communities
- Support mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises and giving them a greater role in delivering public services
- Establishing a Big Society Bank with funds from dormant bank accounts, which will provide finance for neighbourhood groups, charities, social enterprises and other non-governmental bodies
- Changes to the levels of funding to the Big Lottery Fund, however this should not affect the amount of funding given to the voluntary sector as staff cuts and no longer allowing local authorities to gain lottery funding, should allow for the deficit

It is still unclear how far the Big Society idea will be embedded once public sector spending cuts start to have an impact upon local authority spending and potentially on the amount of funding given to the voluntary and community sector. One way of easing the pressure on local authorities is to de-ringfence funding once set aside for specific things so that the money can be directed to what are seen as more essential services. This might have a detrimental impact upon voluntary sector services as local authorities might not see the services as being essential. It is therefore important that the voluntary sector find ways to show how their services are essential to their clients and the communities they work in.

CONTACT

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The BASIS 2 e-newsletter will include the latest news and events from across the region as well as news relevant to stakeholders and organisations, including information on training opportunities.

The e-newsletter is quarterly and free to subscribers, if you would like to subscribe please contact Marna Motteram.

If you would like an article to be included in the next e-bulletin please forward any articles to Marna Motteram. Articles should be around 200-250 words maximum – and preferably contain a picture or logo (attached as a jpeg).

This newsletter is available in large print. Please email gmbmen@mccr.org.uk or phone 0161 227 0675 for a copy.