

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE WITH ETHNIC MINORITY ORGANISATIONS

5 JULY 2017

19.15- 21.10)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Edith Macauley (in the Chair),
Councillor Latif, Councillor Bush

Mr Savage, Mr S U Sheik, Dr Arumugaraasah, Mr Morgan-Thorne, Mr Din, Mr M S Sheikh, Mr Islam, Ms Razak, Mr Mirza, Mr Hall, Mr Hancock, Ms Baker, Ms Richmond, Revd Mrs Neale, Mr Aulia, Mr Thurlow

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 1)

None.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies were received from Mr Nawaz, Councillor Chirco and Councillor Simpson.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes were agreed.

4 MATTERS ARISING (Agenda Item 4)

Correction to be made to a typing error –it should read ‘Scooter’ Park.

5 MERTON IMPROVING ACCESS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES (IAPT) ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING BME COMMUNITIES ACROSS MERTON , DR KATE BEXLEY, THINKACTION SURREY AND MERTON IAPT (Agenda Item 5)

Abbas Mirza introduced the item and informed the meeting that he is the engagement lead for the CCG. He gave details of a course for those with long-term illness that BME residents are being encouraged to access. He also stated that much work is being done on Autism and recently Siobban McDonnagh had made a statement in parliament. Merton Mencap is holding an event on 12 July at Eagle House and he is keen for the BME community to be involved.

Ms Baker and Ms Richmond from Thinkaction presented an overview of Merton Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (MIAPT). MIAPT is commissioned by Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and is based at Cricket Green Surgery and works across the borough in surgeries and community locations.

Following assessment clients receive a treatment option adaptable to their needs. A stepped care model of mental health service is offered to treat mental illnesses like Anxiety, Depression and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Clients are treated during 6 to 16 sessions via guided Self-help on the phone, groups or workshops. Clients may also be referred to the Community Mental Health.

In Leeds there is a pilot study where CBT is adapted to use in the Muslim community.

In 2015 20% of the referrals were from a BME background in 2016 25% were BME (the target has been met), however outreach work needs to be done to make the service more accessible.

Questions/comments

How many referrals have been made? Ms Richmond replied that 1000 referrals are made each month from GPs and self-referrals.

What is the success rate? National guidance on performance, the target is 50% and Thinkaction is slightly above the target.

Mr Abbas emphasised that MIAPT wants to promote the service and wants more BME residents to use it. Also there is a need to reduce the stigma of mental health in society and in BME communities.

What is the Leeds Pilot? The University of Leeds is looking at ways of engaging with minorities for treatment. The pilot has adapted CBT for the Muslim community.

The numbers are small because of the history of mental health and the BME community, what about other cultural traditions? What other studies are being done? Ms Richmond replied that she is only aware of the Leeds study.

How much consideration is given to client's cultural background? This is taken into consideration as much as possible and forms part of the discussion when defining the boundaries. It is limited to focusing on helping people to engage with their families and communities.

Having an interpreter is not sufficient – it is more effective when there is a native speaker. Polish and Tamil therapists are employed. Mr Abbas added that cultural understanding and mother tongue speaker are important. However it is key to get people to see the good work and positive outcomes to encourage more people to access the service.

Ms Richmond said that Thinaciton is keen to attend the organisations represented by the JCC.

6 HATE CRIME STRATEGY, NEIL THURLOW, HEAD OF SAFER MERTON (Agenda Item 6)

Neil Thurlow and Alexander Hancock presented an overview of the Hate Crime strategy. The four year strategy was developed through extensive consultation and is in line with the Mayor of London and Home Office. There are four strands: Prevention, Protection, Engagement and Enforcement.

Safer Merton works closely with Victim Support. Mr Thurlow informed the meeting that there is a focus to work with communities. There is under reporting of hate crime and this may be because it is stigmatised because of the personal nature. During National Hate Crime Week 2016, Safer Merton led activities/events and engaged with 300 people face to face and 1000 via social media.

The terrorist events has prompted the borough to be more focused on hate crime. Hate Crime is higher in Merton in other boroughs. It initially increased post Brexit but has reduced.

Mr Hancock informed the meeting that in May there were 26 offences and in June there were 38. There was not a large increase following the terror attacks or the general election.

In May the incidents were racially motivated and the religious crimes largely related to Muslims. In June they were mainly racially motivated and the faiths affected were Jewish and Muslim. However some of the crimes also related to disability and homophobia.

The increase in numbers means we are getting better at giving confidence – people are therefore more willing to report incidents. Alexander reported that that MOPAC has an online Hate Crime Hub. There is also a specialist Hate Crime Officer in the borough.

The borough commemorated IDAHO Day on 17 May. 8th to 15th October is Hate Crime week Mr Thurlow asked the JCC to get involved and also help to promote the week's activities.

Questions/Comments

Which faiths experience hate crime? Mr Hancock replied that most victims are Muslim so the faith tends to be Islam. In May 4 victims were Muslim and in June 3 victims were Muslim.

What is the reason for the increase? There are numerous reasons for the increase but there was no significant increase after the elections. Mr Hancock encouraged the JCC representatives to ensure that members of their communities report incidents to the Police and get the available support.

Are schools signed up to the strategy? Yes – schools have a Police Officer who engage with young people. The aim of the strategy is to encourage reporting as hate crime will not be tolerated in the borough. Where a perpetrator is found enforcement action will be taken.

16 to 25 year olds experience hate via social media, how is this tackled as it is impossible to Police the internet? Mr Hancock replied that the Police look at hate crime on the internet. Social media can be difficult as it can be used anonymously if the perpetrator is abroad it is difficult for the UK Police to tackle. There are thresholds – the online threshold is very high, it has to be grossly offensive. It is better for the social media companies to tackle.

It was suggested that a collaborative approach with the mosques is required.

Is it a crime not to report hate crime? No it is not – you don't have to report it if you witness it.

Does the Police know that hate crime takes place within communities? There is a flag for crimes, e.g. honour based crime. The Police will look at crime perpetrated with the community.

A request of the crime types was made and also the locations. Are the numbers low in Merton? No they are statistically higher by proportion compared to London. The data is from the Police and is sensitive. There is information available on the Met website and the Home Office also has details.

How many convictions have there been? May 3 people charged and 9 cases are in progress. In June were charged and 12 are in progress. Perpetrators receive fines and community service, custodial sentences – sentencing guidance is used .

7 VOLUNTARY SECTOR AND VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY - JOHN DIMMER, HEAD OF POLICY, STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS (Agenda Item 7)

John Dimmer gave an overview of the Voluntary Sector and Volunteering strategy. The State of the Sector survey (available on Merton Voluntary Services Council's website) informed the strategy.

There are more voluntary sector organisations than in the past and more volunteers but more people are relying on the organisations because less is being provided by the councils. It is financially troubling for some of the organisations. 4% of voluntary groups have been going for more than 21 years.

There was partnership between MVSC and the Council in developing the strategy. There are 5 highlights:

1. On 3 July 2017 Cabinet agreed to extend the Strategic Partnership Grants for another three years.
2. A package of support for smaller organisations is being developed by MVSC. The support will be ring fence and will target more excluded communities.
3. Wilson Hospital – a community hub is being developed to provide peer support.
4. The council is developing a website that will provide statistical information about the borough that voluntary sector organisations can use to inform their funding applications.
5. Social Value is to be included in the commissioning process, e.g. considering using local people to deliver contracts

Questions/comments

What is the hub and what about funding for smaller organisations? John replied that the hub is a website that can be used to inform funding applications by providing demographical information. Overall funding has fallen by 40 % but Strategic Partnership funding is still being provided. There are no central grants, contact John, Evereth Willis or MVSC for more information.

Asian Elders provides valuable services to the Asian community and is not funded by the council and has to rely on donations – is there anything that can be done? The organisation is helping people's wellbeing. John replied that there have been cuts to services but the demand for adult social care is increasing. Investment in prevention is important but statutory need for funding takes priority. MVSC can advise the organisation further.

Councillor Macauley added that there is a difficult budget situation, with Adult Social Care having the largest budget and is a challenge nationally – there was a £10

million overspend last year. We have an aging population and this contributes to the increased demand for services.

8 SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD UPDATE - ABAYEH SAVAGE
(Agenda Item 8)

Mr Savage informed the meeting that SNB meeting was held earlier that day (5 July). The deadline for bids has now passed. BME communities are not reporting crimes which may be why some hate crimes go unpunished.

Questions/comments

What is the size of the Neighbourhood Watch? Mr Savage was not sure but would contact an officer of Safer Merton to clarify and report back.

How often do Ward Panels meet and do they set targets? They are held quarterly. Location Boards set targets for the areas.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 9)

Sieren from One You Merton promoted the service and asked to attend the next JCC