



Cabinet
6 April 2021

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive

Streamlining of the Brent Black Community Action Plan

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	Three Appendix 1: Delivery Progress Summary Appendix 2: Streamlined Black Community Action Plan Appendix 3: Year One Delivery Plan
Background Papers:	None
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1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To present a streamlined version of the Brent Black Community Action Plan (BCAP) for review. The proposed plan has incorporated ongoing feedback and recommendations from the recent LGA Peer Review.

1.2 To also present a Year One Delivery Plan, that has been established to outline the priority areas to be delivered within the next financial year.

1.3 In conjunction with the delivery of the year one priorities, medium and long-term delivery plans will be developed to ensure that the streamlined BCAP is futureproof.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To note the contents of this report.

2.2 To note in particular and comment on the following appendices:

- Appendix 2: Streamlined Brent Black Community Action Plan;
- Appendix 3: Year One Delivery Plan

3.0 Detail

Streamlined Brent Black Community Action Plan

3.1 The BCAP was endorsed in July 2020 and activity has since taken place to put in place delivery vehicles to support the implementation of the plan. This largely refers to the nine thematic steering groups that are currently in operation.

3.2 Following ongoing feedback, namely from the 'Time to Talk about the Brent Black Community Action Plan' event and the recent LGA Peer Review, it has become apparent that the original action plan needs to be smartened.

3.3 The streamlined BCAP can be found in Appendix 2, but a summary has been provided below to highlight the key changes to the initial action plan.

Key changes:

- Key achievements highlighted. A full summary can be found in Appendix 1.
- Duplication amongst points has been removed.
- Timescales have been reviewed and amended to reflect a 10-year commitment to the plan.
- Recommendations from the LGA Peer Review have been incorporated and are highlighted in green text.

LGA Peer Review Recommendations

3.4 In January, the LGA carried out a Peer Review to investigate the council's commitment to equality diversity and inclusion for Black communities. This was carried out through a variety of workshops and interviews with council staff and representatives from Brent's Black communities.

3.5 Clear recommendations emerged in relation to the BCAP, which have been incorporated and are summarised below.

3.6 In relation to developing the plan further, the LGA Peer Review team recommended:

- Having a publicly designated Cabinet Lead for BCAP.
- More partnership and joined up working to support the BCAP.
- The council should revisit procurement so that the requirements reflect the needs of local communities.
- Better support for VCS organisations to apply to council funding.
- More co-production and co-design with Black communities.
- Considering a 10-year ambition with short, medium and long-term goals.
- Developing a multi-agency early intervention strategy for Black British boys of Caribbean heritage, aged between 6 and 12, building on the innovative family wellbeing centres initiative.
- Commissioning academic research into intersectionality and intrasectionality in Brent, to design and deliver better services and tackle inequalities.

Year One Delivery Plan

3.7 Whilst the proposed streamlined BCAP reflects the council's 10-year commitment, the Year One Delivery Plan highlights the key actions that will be delivered within the next financial year.

3.8 The next phase of delivery is taking a more focused approach and sets out to deliver outcomes in relation to:

1. Early intervention: children, young people and families
2. Building sustainable community capacity
3. Supporting Black-led organisations

3.9 The above areas cut across many of the themes in the BCAP, and have emerged as priorities through various thematic steering group discussions as well as from the recent LGA Peer Review.

3.10 In addition to this, a range of short, medium and long-term actions will be developed to address the targets in relation to health inequalities, which will be linked to wider aims within the Borough Plan 2021-2022 and the development of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

3.11 To continue holding the council to account, the thematic steering groups will remain in place but will be rationalised to three core groups to reflect the three priority areas. These groups will be reviewed to ensure they continue to remain effective in supporting the delivery of the overall action plan.

3.12 The wider community reference group, which consists of community leaders who attended the initial council meeting in June, will continue to meet bi-monthly, and will be reviewed to ensure it remains inclusive and reflective of Brent's Black communities.

- 3.13 Alongside the Year One Delivery Plan, a Communications plan will be developed to ensure reporting back to the wider Black community continues.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The financial implications for each of the 2020/21 actions are set out Appendix 3. Overall, most of the actions are of the nature that they can be contained within existing departmental budgets. This being the case, the 2021/22 budget agreed by the Council set out additional funding to support the delivery of the Black Community Action Plan.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Where it is reasonably thought that persons who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic; and/or persons who share that characteristic have needs that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and/or participation in an activity by persons who share that characteristic is disproportionately low, then section 158 of the Equality Act 2010 permits positive action where it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim of enabling or encouraging persons who share the protected characteristic to overcome or minimise the disadvantage, meet specific needs or enable or encourage persons who share the protected characteristic to participate in that activity.
- 5.2 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Statutory Code of Practice in relation to services, public functions and associations provides further clarity in relation to the positive action provisions in the Equality Act. It explains that these enable service providers to take proportionate action to achieve fuller and more effective equality outcomes for members of groups that are socially or economically disadvantaged or excluded, or who otherwise face the consequences of past or present discrimination or disadvantage. Positive action can include, for example, providing additional or bespoke services, separate facilities, accelerated access to services, targeting resources or induction or training opportunities to benefit a particular disadvantaged group. Provided the action is within the parameters laid down in the Act and meets the test of proportionality, it will not amount to positive discrimination under the Act, which would be unlawful.
- 5.3 The Statutory Code also recommends that in order to identify possible causes of disadvantage, different needs and under-representation, and to develop appropriate positive action measures, service providers will benefit from the involvement of staff and members of groups sharing a relevant protected characteristic and such groups should also be involved in the evaluation of positive action measures which is in accordance with the council's approach as set out in this report.

6.0 Equality Implications

6.1 The council, as a public authority exercising public functions, is subject to a general public sector equality duty (PSED) under section 149 Equality Act 2010 (EqA). The PSED requires public authorities to have “due regard” to:

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA.
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
 - Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding.

6.2 This report and action plan will support Brent Council to continue to meet its public sector equality duties.

7.0 Any Other Implications (HR, Property, Environmental Sustainability - where necessary)

7.1 None.

8.0 Proposed Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

8.1 Consultation with the community reference group and majority of thematic steering groups has taken place and the groups are in agreement with the proposed streamlined plan and the priorities put forward for delivery in year one. They will continue to be consulted as the plan continues to be delivered.

Report sign off:

Shazia Hussain

Assistant Chief Executive