Bedford Diversity Network
Minutes
23 June 2010, St Andrews Church Hall, Bedford

Present:
Teresa Boyle (Advocacy for Older People)
Brian Cunningham (BRASS - Bedford Refugee Asylum Support Service)
Ros Graham (Livability Lifestyle Choices) – BDN Chair
Victoria Hilliard (BRASS - Bedford Refugee Asylum Support Service)
Sheila Holderness (Bedford Council of Faiths)
Anona Hoyle (Bedford Borough Council)
Felicia Mahowo (Upenyu Nerwamanawand)
Paidamoyo Mahovo (Upenyu Nerwamanawand)
Barnaby McConnell (Advocacy Alliance / Understanding Us)
Sarah McCulloch (ACCM UK)
Stuart O'Dell (Bedford Borough Council, Planning & Housing)
Cllr Pat Olney (Bedford Borough Council, CVS, BRCC - Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, Oakley Day Centre)
Glenis Orkisz (BREC – Bedford Race Equality Council, Bedfordshire Women's Forum)
Neslyn Pearson (Faith in Queens Park)
Anthea Stark (Bedford Borough Libraries)
Vera Nwapa (BREC – Bedford Race Equality Council)
Jasmin Nessa (SEPT, Bedford Bangladeshi Women's Association)
Cass Howles (Spiritually, Faith and Social Justice Centre at University of Bedfordshire)

Attending:
Joella Hazel (Bedford Borough Council), David Brewer (Bedford Borough Council)

No	Item	Action
1.	**Welcome, introduction and apologies** RG welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. RG explained the group is an open forum where all are welcome to contribute to discussions. The group, which is administered by Bedford Borough Council, provides opportunities to raise issues and request speakers / contact from relevant service areas from within the Council. Apologies were received from Wendy Anderson-Welsh, Sheila Bissell Rachael Chou, Terry Darlow, Peter Martin, Adam May and Janet Ridge.	
2.	**Minutes / matters arising** Ivy Salim (BREC) attended the last meeting. Attendance list to be amended to include IS. **Page 1** Item 2 (2) - Equality Act has now received Royal Assent. Item 2 (4) – AH to check whether BDN can provide members to the Carers Partnership Board **Page 2** Item 3 – JN noted that changes were made to the Children & Young	**JH** **AH**

	People's strategy following the presentation from Leanne Long (Bedford Borough Council, Children's Services). It was agreed minutes must reflect where BDN has influenced policy / strategy development to record the impact and reach of the network.	
3.	**Bedford Borough Council equality and diversity update** **(i) Introduction Equality & Diversity Officer** JH gave a summary of her role within the Policy team in Policy, Performance, Partnerships and Communications Group (PPPC). It includes developing and supporting processes for equality impact assessments, supporting the Council to progress against the equality framework for local government and facilitating BDN. **(ii) Borough Council Equality & Diversity priorities** JH advised the Council's priorities for equality and diversity are to: • Embed and drive forward a robust equality impact assessment structure • Prepare the Council for achieving 'excellent' on the equality framework for local government. The priorities are outlined in the Corporate Plan, the Council's key strategic document outlining how the Council will achieve the goals in the Sustainable Community Strategy. It can be found on the Council website at http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/key_plans_and_strategies.aspx JH provided a brief overview of the equality framework for local government, a performance framework to help mainstream good equality and diversity practice. It is based on 3 levels of achievement - developing, achieving and excellent, which are measured against 5 areas of performance: 1. Knowing your communities 2. Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment 3. Community engagement and satisfaction 4. Responsive services and customer care 5. A modern and diverse workforce Key discussion points included: • Current performance level of the Council • Assessment process and the role of external scrutiny in determining the performance level achieved • Importance of BDN fully understanding the framework • Linking BDN terms of reference to the framework **Action** • JH to provide a more detailed presentation on the framework at a future meeting.	**JH**
4.	**Review of network** **(i) Terms of reference** The terms of reference have not been reviewed since April 2006. It was agreed that:	

	• The broad principles of the existing terms of reference were still relevant but that these needed to be focussed and set within a more current context • The network should provide a forum for members to engage with all public authorities involved in the Bedford Partnership Board and delivering against the work of the Sustainable Community Strategy • The terms of reference should include how it will achieve its aims and possibly a mission statement • BDN should retain a Bedford Borough focus **Action** • JH to develop an initial draft for discussion at the next meeting. **(ii) Membership** The existing membership list (circulated previously) was discussed. It was agreed membership should nominally be one per organisation but more would be welcomed at the discretion of the Chair. **Action** • Members to provide JH with an update on the membership list including up to date contact details and information on the different groups / organisations / networks they represent • Members to inform JH of any groups / organisations that should be invited to join BDN • Membership list to be revised to be organisational led rather individual led	**JH** **All** **All** **JH**
5.	**Bedford Borough Partnership update – David Brewer** DB circulated Bedford Borough Partnership structure (attached). BDN was noted as a critical body within the structure. To use this critical position, DB advised BDN members raise questions and issues at thematic partnership meetings and ask for these to be minuted. In addition, BDN can request Janet Ridge, Chair of Social Inclusion, Community Cohesion and Culture thematic partnership raise relevant issues at Partnership Board meetings. DB highlighted key achievements of the Partnership that BDN has been involved in. These included Bedford Borough Diversity Day, attended by over 1000 people; the voluntary sector led Borough Assembly; and the Athletic Kenya visit, facilitated by Bedford Kenyan group.	
6.	**AOB** (i) Bedford Borough Council Transport Policy team would like to engage BDN in the development of their strategic plan to be launched April 2011 (attached) (ii) BREC is hosting a meeting to discuss Black History Month, 7pm 7 July All Saints Church (attached) (iii) Carers in Bedford BME event, Mount Zion Church Midland Road	
7.	**Dates of future meeting:** 15 September 2010, 1-3pm. St Andrews Church, Kimbolton Road Bedford.	