

Equality and Diversity Case Studies
Directorate: Resources
Service: Partnerships and Area Working

Title: Kingsway event to celebrate community diversity – September 2010.

Introduction: Councillor Adrian Walmsley was approached by members of the BME community in Kingsway, Chester who said that they felt isolated in the Kingsway and Newton community. Councillor Walmsley took up this request with the Chester Area Working Team (Cheshire West and Chester Council) and the Cheshire Asian and Minorities Communities Council - CAMCC (formerly Chester Asian Council). Between them it was decided to put on an event in Kingsway that would attract local BME families, celebrate community diversity and bring in service providers to highlight what support they can offer.

Challenges: A limited budget and timescale to work to. The need for good publicity and activities to attract people along. The timing of the event was felt to be important and a Friday evening was chosen to try to target a family audience.

How the challenges were overcome: Councillor Walmsley was able to contribute some funding from his Member budget to pay for activities such as henna hand painting, accommodation costs and catering which was provided by a local Indian restaurant. From Cheshire West and Chester Council the Equality and Diversity team were able to arrange for the translation of publicity through the Big Word translation service and Chester Area Working organised the printing of colour flyers. CAMCC designed the flyer and organised for their outreach worker to target distribution of these to BME families at venues such as at the local primary school. Partner organisations were invited along to have information stands and despite being on a Friday evening (out with the usual working week) the uptake was very good from agencies.

Outcomes: Over 65 residents attended the event held at St Michaels Church and enjoyed the activities on offer. There was food, henna hand painting, face painting for children and a range of information stands including Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Chapter (mental health) charity, Benefits advice and the University of Chester's People and Planet Society. Staff from CAMCC took the opportunity to carry out a questionnaire with people on the night and from this have gathered information on the needs of the local BME community.

Following from the event CAMCC have set up a BME women's group in the area and have organised English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes. A multi agency steering group has also been set up to ensure partners continue to work together to listen and respond to the needs of the BME community.

What we could have done better: More activities for children and/or a separate crèche.

Further information: N/A.