

# Report of the Bradford West Area Coordinator to the meeting of meeting of the Bradford West Area Committee to be held on 28 November 2018

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**Subject: Driving Cohesion Initiative**

## **Summary statement:**

This report provides an overview of the Driving Cohesion Initiative led by Bradford West Area Coordinator's office as part of the changing places (controlling migration) fund.

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**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

## 1. SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the Driving Cohesion Initiative led by Bradford West Area Coordinators office as part of the changing places (controlling migration) fund.

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Bradford West Driving Cohesion Initiative was created as a result of two key issues: Firstly the need to engage with Bradford West communities on conversations around the issues of migration and community cohesion as set out by the controlling migration fund. Secondly the need to create a greater sense of team in Bradford West coordinators office between the youth service, ward officers and wardens that transcends professional roles and creates a team underpinned by appreciation and support.

2.2 A team away day was organised in December 2017 for the Bradford West Area Coordinators office as whole. The theme was tackling cohesion and asset based community development. Staff were asked to look at both organisational strengths and those of the community to consider how we could work together to increase community cohesion. It was recognised that the strength of the team across all professions lay in place leadership. As a collective the Bradford West Area Coordinators team have years of experience of engagement working alongside individuals, communities and businesses and voluntary sector organisations. It was agreed that any project should be built on staff expertise at brokering and facilitating relationships with communities and use this to address issues of community tensions, concerns and complexities.

### 2.3 Consultation approach:

Established methods of community engagement were considered such as forums, café workshops, stalls at key location etc. However a more creative innovative approach was agreed that would engage a more diverse and representative audience. The Go kart idea was born out of the need to create a tangible experience for those involved in the consultation, and the need to create an initiative that you could not only take to communities and engage with them where they are situated, but also motivate them to then come together with other communities to race them, thereby sharing common experience and tackle barriers to community cohesion.

### 2.4 Outreach

Ward officers and youth workers identified a diverse mix of groups across the wards to work with through their network of voluntary and community sector networks. A workshop was then facilitated with all groups to discuss themes of identity and community while assembling and creating the Go Kart. The workshops were successful at creating an informal environment in which participants were able to express their point of view, debate discuss and share their feelings as well as express pride in their community through their art work on the Go Karts. Facilitators supported participants to focus on community strengths, and encouraging positive contribution about the common good. **Appendix 2.** Sessional plan.

*“As a Muslim woman I feel safe here in Bradford to be myself!”*

*“I don’t come here because I am a Christian or because I need to come here. I come here because I like the people, we are neighbours and they are family to me!”*

*“I don’t fit a box I am just me, get to know me and you might be surprised!”*

## **2.5 Driving Cohesion Event.**

All groups were then invited to participate in the ‘Driving for Cohesion’ community event in Lister Park in August this year. The theme of the event was community cohesion and groups were encouraged to take part in the Go Kart race. In addition residents took part in community games, picnic, craft sessions and the warm up activity, with 15 residents signing up to the Neighbourhood Ambassador Scheme. The event was a vibrant, intergenerational intercommunity fun experience.

## **2.6 Achievements**

We successfully created an engagement initiative that fostered a stronger two-way relationship between council and communities. By investing our resources in creative positive engagement and safe spaces to listen to residents, our relationships are less likely to sour, and the more likely they are to become more open and trusting.

- 27 2hr workshops took place in July and August engaging over 160 participants from diverse backgrounds across the constituency. **Appendix 1.**
- Over 120 residents attended the Driving for Cohesion event on the 18<sup>th</sup> August and took part in cohesion activities.
- 15 residents signed up the Neighbourhood Ambassadors scheme. **Appendix 3.**

*“Keep up the good work. Looking forward to next year!” St Margaret’s Church Frizinghall  
“We would love to be part of this again, how can we support next years event” Centre point.*

*“Lets have more of this, so great to see so many people together from different backgrounds enjoying themselves’ Upper Heaton Residents Group.*

## **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

n/a

## **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

Driving cohesion cost £4,000 to fund. To resource this project for 2019 will cost a similar amount as well staff time and commitment.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

n/a

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

n/a

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

Priorities supported will promote fairness and inclusion while supporting Bradford West Area Committee's commitment to equal opportunities for all, including those protected characteristics identified within the Equalities Act 2010

## **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

n/a

## **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

n/a

## **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

n/a

## **7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

➤ n/a.

## **7.6 TRADE UNION**

n/a

## **7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

➤ This project supported groups from all wards in the area to increase cohesion and participation.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

➤ None

## **9. OPTIONS**

That Bradford West Area Committee adopts the next steps outlined in the report

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

After a team debrief we agreed that it would be beneficial to build on this years event and repeat next year. The project has real potential and proven ability to break down barriers to community tensions and create space for consensus building. As a service the opportunity to hold an annual event that brings communities together has a positive impact on creating resilient relationships for ongoing problem solving and ward partnership work. The team agreed the following recommendations going forward:

- Expand the number of groups involved and target hard to reach groups such as refugees, Adults from Eastern European community and Black and Caribbean groups.

- Build this to be an annual event with additional targeted community cohesion activities that can compliment the Go Kart race.
- Empower staff, specifically wardens, to engage with the project and have a role in facilitating groups.
- Build sustainability through developing a partnership with community groups to source external funding and run the event long term.

## **11. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1. Groups involved

Appendix 2. Sessional plan for outreach

Appendix 3. Photos from the Day

Appendix 4. Neighbourhood Ambassadors

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- Background documents are documents relating to the subject matter of the report which disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based, and have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report. Published works are not included.
- All documents referred to in the report must be listed, including exempt documents.
- All documents used in the compilation of the report but not specifically referred to, must be listed.