



Warwick District Black and Minority Ethnic Forum
1st October 2009
Ahmadiyya Muslim Association

The Warwick District Consultation Forum took place on the 1st October 2009 at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association. It was attended by individuals and representatives from the local community as well as participants from statutory and voluntary organisations.

A presentation from Warwickshire Fire & Rescue (WFRS) was given. The presentation concerned the possible closure of fire stations across Warwickshire. WFRS reassured the community that the closures would not have a detrimental effect on the services they provide. If individuals are worried about the closures they are welcome to come and meet with WFRS and participate in their consultation regarding a fitter, stronger Fire and Rescue Service. Please visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fireandrescue or telephone 01926410410 for further information.

The four workshops which ran in the evening included:

1. Probation & Community Sentences

Facilitated by Assistant Chief Officers Donald McGovern and Thomasina Chapman

2. Access to Services (Health)

Facilitated by Carolyn Parker (PALS Coordinator)

3. Policing & Community Safety (Prevent Agenda)

Facilitated by PC Jillian Atkinson and PC Roni Koshi

4. Local feedback

Facilitated by Iyaaz Matadar (Chair of BME Youth Council)

Probation & Community Sentences

Although the Probation team are not visible in the same way as Warwickshire Police, it is important that the work they are involved in is understood by local communities, for example they work with police who take offenders back to prison. The team supervise offenders and work alongside the Criminal Justice Agency to set sentences and enforce action on repeat offenders. The 'Community Payback Scheme' an initiative that Probation is leading on, supports organisations to fulfil certain objectives such as the removal of graffiti or support with projects if required. The scheme will not take on work which would take over from paid employment.

There are certain members of the public who are not receptive to offenders or the work they do in the community. The probation service also has an input into a judge's decision whether an offender goes to trial or not. In addition they can also enforce certain licences. Young people aged 18 and under are linked into the Youth Offending Service. Individuals on probation are seen on a weekly basis for the first sixteen weeks and then more frequently depending on the circumstances of arrest. If they fail to see their probation officer they will be reported to the courts. There is no supervision for offenders who serve a twelve month sentence or less. Under the Community Payback Scheme a risk assessment is conducted and offenders work with local communities to ensure work required in the community is completed. MAPPA, a multi agency body, is lead by the Police, Health and Probation and works well in partnership together to work with offenders.

There are some white young males and their families which create problems in the area and are well known to the Police. However no actions are taken against these individuals. It would be a positive move if these individuals could access skills training and qualifications given by providers.

Children Centres are also being broken into. A placement officer will visit the centre to assess the damage.

Access to Services (Health)

There was an interest in getting health promotion on prostate cancer.

Some individuals in Gypsy and Traveller communities have literacy and numeracy issues and are therefore dependant on the workers who liaise with them. If they could access information on CD or easy read versions, this would support with the dissemination of information. Information is also required in Urdu as second and third generation are continuing to speak and read in Urdu.

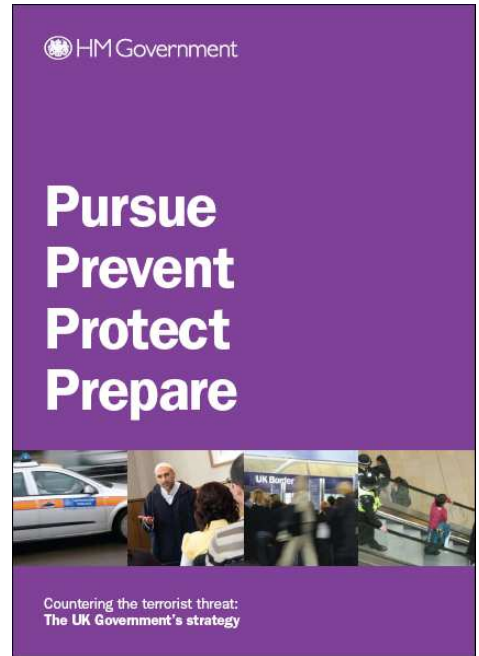
There were queries about the time it would take to obtain a translator if someone needed to see a Doctor. This was especially important if it was an urgent appointment. A number of Doctor Surgeries have provided interpreters for their patients; however this level of good practice is not concurrent across all health providers.

If an individual is working illegally they cannot access the health service. Some Polish individuals prefer to receive medical support from Poland rather than access health services in the UK. A card with key health related numbers printed on the back may be useful for those unsure of which health services they are able to access. In addition a sentence stating that you are able to access interpreters from a GP surgery should be translated into different languages. There should also be better services for the South Asian Indian community regarding diabetes, health, diet and primary needs.

Policing & Community Safety Prevent Violent Extremism Agenda

The main objectives in delivering this agenda are to:

- Develop community awareness of violent extremism and radicalisation
- Actively engage and support local communities and institutions
- Promote a strong understanding of faith, culture and history
- Improve everybody's capacity to identify vulnerable individuals
- Develop and implement a range of interventions and programmes
- Build community capacity
- Develop leadership
- Encourage debate - identify and address grievances
- Work with partner agencies to ensure a joint approach



Warwickshire's Police role is to help communities to understand their work and embed 'Prevent' into daily Policing. The police will engage and support communities to feed in community intelligence to Safer Neighbourhood and will work with all their partners to ensure a joint approach.

Local Issues

The elderly service users of the Milan Group feel intimidated by the homeless in Leamington Spa.

The Youth Offending Team is involving the younger generation in the decision making process, for example involving young people on the panel of referral orders. This opportunity could be advertised to young people from BME communities. The Police also have a youth forum. Young people from minority ethnic backgrounds do not engage with services and are therefore more isolated and vulnerable to street crime. The perception is that discrimination is an issue in Warwick District but is less of a frequent occurrence than in other areas.

BME individuals are experiencing a lot more problems than are reported to the Police. It has been expressed by members of the community that the Sydenham area of Leamington Spa is rife with discrimination and prejudice. Again in central Leamington, the area leading to and behind the church is where young people meet, get drunk and intimidate others with racist and verbal abuse. This is believed to be caused by alcohol and substance abuse. Youths create a perception of anti-social behaviour and should be productively employed elsewhere. The visibility of Police Officers is very important and more Officers should be based around this area in Leamington. Individuals have let the Police know about drug dealers operating in areas where they live.

Organisations should go out to meet the community and understand the issues BME people face in local areas. The Irish community is being constantly missed out and do not receive as much support as they would like. Irish men in particular suffer from a lack of education and not knowing what support is available to them. Until approximately two months ago the Irish Community did not have a dedicated worker. The community have been living in Leamington for a number of years and have learnt to help themselves. The infrastructure and external community support is not available and accessing educational support has been problematic. The community is predominantly catholic and those over 50 also have specific concerns. The community is very close knit and meet at the Irish Club every Tuesday from 9.30 – 4pm.

The South Indian communities are also being ignored. There are 7000 South Indian communities living in South Warwickshire. Perhaps better services and information should be delivered to communities through schools.