

BTEG

BLACK TRAINING & ENTERPRISE GROUP



Empowering Your Community

capacity
builders

Starts with YOU...

Before you read any local authority papers about improving services or opportunities in your community ask yourself the following questions:

- 1: What issue or problem is the paper addressing and do you agree with the way this issue or problem is presented? Does the paper include sufficient **EVIDENCE** about this issue or problem, including evidence relating to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities?
- 2: What **ACTIONS** are being proposed to deal with this issue or problem? How will these actions improve the situation for BME communities?
- 3: How have BME groups been **INVOLVED** in developing the policy or strategy?
- 4: Are race equality **TARGETS** and outcomes included?
- 5: What **OPPORTUNITIES** are there for BME groups to undertake the proposed actions (e.g. through delivering services)?
- 6: What **RESOURCES** are being made available to implement or deliver the proposals and is any of this ring fenced for the voluntary and community sector? How will these resources reach BME communities?
- 7: How will BME groups be involved in **MONITORING AND EVALUATING** the effectiveness or impact of the proposed actions (e.g. through advisory groups)?
- 8: Has a race equality **IMPACT ASSESSMENT** been done? If so, where has this been published?

What other actions can you take to empower your community?

- 1: **Submit written responses to government consultations.**
- 2: **Take part in consultation events (and conferences, seminars, workshops etc). Make your points during the event and in the feedback forms.**
- 3: **Write to your Member of Parliament (MP) or local councillors; go to the 'surgeries' of MPs or local councillors to express your views.**
- 4: **Organise a petition and submit this to the relevant government department, government minister, your local authority, or your local MP.**
- 5: **Produce a short, easy to read leaflet or booklet which sets out your points and backs them up with evidence from your own work. Keep it up to date. Be able to hand or e-mail copies to anyone who shows an interest.**
- 6: **Contact the local or national media (radio, TV, newspapers, magazines). Send them a one page summary of what the issue is, what action you think should be taken, and who should be responsible for this. Include a case study from your own work. They might take up your story.**
- 7: **Contact agencies who represent BME views to make sure that they are representing your views and experiences.**
- 8: **Join a network or forum which has a place on a policy making body e.g. the Local Strategic Partnership.**
- 9: **Apply to become a member of one of the public bodies which develops or implements policy. Public appointments are advertised on the government's website www.publicappointments.gov.uk.**
- 10: **Stand for election as a local councillor or a Member of Parliament, either as an independent candidate or through a political party.**

Top Tips For Influencing Local Decisions

1: DEFINE YOUR POLICY MESSAGE

Be clear about what policies should be changed and what changes should be made to them.

2: TARGET YOUR POLICY MESSAGE

Be clear about who is responsible for policy making in this area. Is it a local authority responsibility or a national government department?

3: BACK UP YOUR POLICY MESSAGE WITH EVIDENCE

What evidence do you have that the existing policy isn't working, or that new policy is needed in this area? You need to have facts and figures to back up your case.

4: WORK WITH AND THROUGH EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS, NETWORKS AND REPRESENTATIVE BODIES.

Many of these will already have close links with the policy makers you may be trying to reach. These partnerships and networks are set up, and may be receiving public funding, to represent your interests. So make sure that they know what your views are.

5: DON'T EXPECT INSTANT RESULTS

Changing policy, or seeing new policies introduced, can be a very slow process when you are working from the grassroots upwards. Don't be discouraged by the slow pace of change.

The Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG) is a national organisation working to improve opportunities and outcomes for black and minority ethnic (BME) communities. We believe that full and effective BME involvement in making policy and delivering public services are essential steps to achieving this.

For a copy of BTEG's How to Influence Policy Guide see www.bteg.co.uk.

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