



In this edition

Welcome to the Somerset Equality Officers Groups' newsletter for May 2018

In this edition we will be updating on the Somerset Diverse Communities project and the on-going work that is being undertaken by the public sector organisations in Somerset to work more closely together.

Somerset Diverse Communities project

The Community Council for Somerset (CCS) were approached to look at how the gap in provision for black and minority ethnic (BME) communities in Somerset could be overcome. Funding was provided by Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council and the Police Crime Commissioners Community Fund enabling the employment of a BME engagement worker for an 8-month project from June 2017 to February 2018.

The aims of the project were to

1. Investigate which BME community groups are active in Somerset and ascertain their support needs
2. Support 3 local community events, identified and led by the community
3. Facilitate a small grants scheme for BME community groups
4. Produce films to hear the voices of the community through media. Create an archive of images, reflective of the diverse communities in Somerset
5. Provide evidence if further support for BME communities is needed.
6. Help build unified, resilient and safe communities for all residents of Somerset
7. Help create a more empowered, visible and vocal BME community within Somerset

The **attached report** gives overview of the findings from this project together with an appendix showing the groups and support available to the BME communities in Somerset. The conclusion to the report shows the following support requirements for BME communities in Somerset:

- Additional funding to support activities
- Events to share, celebrate and learn
- A central point of contact and information within the County
- Capacity Building – training to build skills, how to apply for funding, formalising groups
- Language help with English

If there are other groups or support available that is not listed, please get in touch with Beccy, the BME engagement worker, at beccy@somersettrcc.org.uk.

Moving Forward with the Somerset Diverse Communities project

Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Mendip District Council, South Somerset District Council, and Avon and Somerset Police have funded a further £40,500 to allow the project to run for a further year, February 2018 to February 2019. Using the work already undertaken and the conclusions drawn, the second phase of the project is looking to

Capacity Building

1. At least 5 community members to take part in detailed shadowing opportunities and report they are better informed about either public bodies or how to get involved in community development work
2. 3 community events to share good practice in community development, funding opportunities and develop the evidence base for funding
3. A session with the County's Chief Executive's to discuss life within the BME communities

Project Development and Funding Support

1. Support 8 funding applications by community groups to other funders with at least a 50% success rate

Dispersing Small Grant Funding

1. Grant a minimum of 6 small grants which aim to improve community cohesion, integration and help empower BME communities

Finally the project in conjunction with partners within the Local Councils, are working on a bid to the Somerset Community Foundation, Hinkley Fund. This funding will allow the project to continue for 3 years with a second project worker being employed as well. Updates in future editions as to whether we have been successful or not.

Somerset Diverse Communities grant scheme

Somerset Diverse communities has a small grant scheme available to groups supporting BME communities in Somerset. A maximum of £300 per application is available. **The closing date for the first round of funding is 30th May 2018.**

Download documents here:

- [Funding Information](#)
- [Request for Funding Form](#)

Return all applications to Beccy at beccy@somersettrcc.org.uk. If you would like to discuss an idea or need help with an application, send her an email or call 07377363165.

Delivering Equalities together

In 2018, public sector partners including the Councils in Somerset, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Musgrove and Yeovil Hospitals and Somerset Partnership, will be working together to deliver a Single Equality Policy for Somerset with a set of collective equality objectives, together with a single Equality Impact Assessment process. The reasons behind moving to this approach include:

- All public sector partners have the same duties under the Equality Act 2010
- We are all delivering to similar groups of people
- There is decreasing capacity and resource across the County
- Ability to work together and independently where needed
- Improving knowledge, understanding of the issues and concerns facing the communities and groups representing these communities in Somerset, collectively looking at how to respond either collectively or individually

Joint Equality Objectives

The partners have agreed a draft set of Equality Objectives at a meeting in April. Partners will be looking to spend June until September/October consulting with VCS organisations across Somerset to see if the objectives:

1. Are the objectives organisations expected to see
2. If not, identify what objectives would have expected to see
3. What actions should be undertaken to deliver against the objectives
4. If there is anything else from an equality perspective, should be included

Over the course next couple of months, various members of the above organisations will be making contact with major equality organisations across Somerset, to organise meetings to have a look at the draft objectives. Further, a consultation exercise will be undertaken to across the whole of the VCS to ensure that all organisations will have the opportunity to respond to what is being proposed.

Avon and Somerset Police and Crime commissioner consultation on victim support services

Voscur and Somerset VCSE Strategic Forum have been commissioned by Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Office to link with the wider voluntary and community sector, to seek their views on the future of victim support services and how current services impact on their organisations. This is part of the ongoing engagement on the OPCC's Commissioning Intentions. We are particularly keen to

discuss this opportunity with potential providers who may be interested in bidding for these services.

You are invited to participate in a half day workshop on either of the following dates:

- Tuesday 22 May 2018, 1pm - 4pm at The Albemarle Centre, Albemarle Rd, Taunton, TA1 1BA
[Click here](#) to book your place on the Taunton event

There will be an opportunity at both events to hear from staff from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and to hear a summary of the recent needs analysis survey.

If you are unable to attend either event you can also read the Commissioning Intentions, Needs Assessment and contribute by completing the [Stakeholder survey](#).

TONIC has been appointed to work separately with the victims of crime and anti social behaviour. Victims can have their say by sharing their views via a confidential and anonymous [survey](#).

People can also take part in an interview with a researcher Dr Sarah Senker, text "PCC" to 07555 422 150 for more information.

SEOG members

Angela Farmer	Sedgemoor DC	angela.farmer@sedgemoor.gov.uk
Tom Rutland	Somerset County Council and Mendip DC	TXRutland@somerset.gov.uk
Helen Phillips	Taunton Deane and West Somerset Councils	H.Phillips@tauntondeane.gov.uk
David Crisfield	South Somerset DC	david.crisfield@southsomerset.Gov.Uk

Feedback

Pass on the newsletter to your members

SEOG need your help, as we will only ever get to a certain number of people and individuals within organisations. Organisations need to ensure that the changes and information that SEOG produces is passed to members and interested parties. The more information we get out there the more that we can support people and from this understand the other issues and concerns that people and organisations have.

So as newsletters are produced please, pass them on to other members of your organisation or to interested individuals. We welcome feedback and comments and if there are further issues or concerns then let us know.

Let us know of organisations who don't receive the newsletter

SEOG want to engage with as many organisations as we can. We keep a central list of all groups that we know and work with, and it is from that list that we send out a copy of the newsletter. Please let us know of any organisations who don't get a copy so that we can put them on the list and invite them to periodic events when they happen. Contact angela.farmer@sedgemoor.gov.uk