

Appendix 1 - Brent Black Community Action Plan

The Brent Black Community includes (but not limited to) people of black Caribbean, African, other black, and black and white heritage.

1) Early intervention: children, young people and families

<p>Influencing school curricula to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support young black boys with developing self-esteem, self-worth and confidence in the classroom, and through coaching and mentoring in schools • ensure positive Black History is being taught. 	<p>Long Term (1 year +)</p>
<p>Recruitment drive for Black School Governors. This includes encouraging schools and Governor training to include unconscious bias and anti-racism training.</p>	<p>Medium term (up to 12 months)</p>
<p>Creating an assured way of life for young black people by enabling them to fulfil their ambitions and aspirations relating to education and work through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enabling young people to explore and express their aspirations, which will include making them aware of opportunities available to them. This could also include confidence building and making them feel ‘accepted’ and that they do not have to work twice as hard as their non-black peers to achieve the same levels of positive outcomes for themselves • supporting parents with their own aspirations and to understand aspirations of their families and children, and how they can enable their children to thrive • institutions, including FE colleges, reviewing their support to ensure it is enabling young black people to discover and achieve their aspirations and removing structural racism and unconscious bias and barriers. <p>Looking at the pinch points in a young person’s life (birth, starting school, transitioning from primary to secondary school, selecting GCSE subjects and beyond) we need to look at ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the institutions and individuals who are influencers in a young person’s life at various stages possess the cultural competence to understand and respond to the context, pressures and barriers young black people can encounter at every critical stage in their lives. Training will be essential. 	<p>Medium term (up to 12 months)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • young people are enabled and given the ability to prepare for and handle situations. This includes developing personal resilience skills and creating spaces to have difficult conversations, possibly in school. These conversations could be trauma felt or experienced, directly or indirectly • that institutions deploy trauma training for professionals working with young people to support them with trauma and other issues faced • space and opportunity for young people to act as leaders and influencers • opportunities for young people to learn about black history which can enable self-worth and aspirations to grow • opportunities to celebrate achievements, for example, through an annual Youth Pride of Brent Awards evening hosted by the Council. 	
2) Enabling and strengthening community leadership through capacity building	
<p>Enabling the voice of community leaders and representatives to influence local decision-making through a Leadership Programme. A potential leadership programme could include several offers. Some initial ideas for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a mutual mentoring and coaching scheme designed to ensure that both black community leaders/representatives and senior Council officers, particularly members of the Corporate Management Team, can learn from each other about how the different kinds of skills, knowledge and experience they have can be used to benefit local communities. • building cultural competence - Senior Council Managers matched up with local providers to spend time with black communities to get a better understanding of their lived experiences to assist with implementing changes • enabling access into positions of influence. This could include coaching into community positions such as being governors or trustees of local organisations as well as into lay Council positions or opportunities. • ensure these programmes are well resourced as core programmes. The Young Brent Foundation and John Lyon’s charity are developing a Cultural Competency framework for youth and community leaders that could be drawn upon. 	<p>Long Term (1 year +)</p>
3) Developing community spaces – run and managed by local communities	
<p>The council will support the development of spaces for community use e.g. for enterprise and young people. The Picture Palace, Morland Gardens and Leopold Centre are such current projects and the council will ensure that those putting in tenders to occupy the space have local community knowledge and ties.</p>	<p>Medium term (6 - 12 months)</p>
4) Supporting the black community and voluntary sector - grant funding to voluntary sector organisations and procurement	

Policy change of long-term investments rather than short term or one off investments/grants into local projects.	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
<p>Review our grants and funding streams and producing options to enable black community projects to flourish including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reopen NCIL immediately for applications for communities adversely effected by inequalities • Ring-fencing of grants as long as there is compliance with regulations • Providing coaching and advisory support to applicants of grants and funding provided by the Council and those provided by other bodies such as the GLA or central government • Support joint strategic external funding applications between the council and community groups • Enabling collective community conversations about council funding criteria, for example, NCIL, so criteria guides what the community needs. This could be done through ensuring community representation on the NCIL decision making panel. Bring all the NCIL funded projects relating to black community projects into one programme. This will enable the collective pooling of existing resources to improve community outcomes • Providing match funding to existing funding streams for projects • Participatory budgeting where community groups and representatives are invited to decide how to allocate spending to projects. This would entail community leaders and representatives working together to negotiate with each other to arrive at a collective position. The voice of young people will be crucial. 	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
<p>Review the Council's procurement process to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proactively support black community groups of various sizes to make applications including providing training or briefings to help applicants understand the local authority procurement process. Complex application processes can deter small organisations with limited resources or experiences build capacity of black communities to respond to tenders and make bids. A clearer connection needs to be made between social enterprise and procurement with priority given to black communities. • that social value is built in and successful contractors are considering the needs of the black community. The cultural competency of providers should be tested. • that the council uses its purchasing power to commission local groups to provide local services. 	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
<p>Review the support given to black voluntary and sector community in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • space available to charities from the black community 	Long Term (1 year +)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • starting an informal engagement group for social businesses, social enterprises, co-operatives, and corporates who are looking for CSR opportunities • Supporting small voluntary and community sector organisations to join up and form local consortia to consolidate resources and expertise. 	
5) Support for employment and enterprise	
<p>Ensuring strong education employment and training routes for young people. Establish a local commission to review and develop the opportunities and routes to success available for young people aged 16-25 years.</p>	<p>Medium term (up to 12 months)</p>
<p>Review and understand the skills shortage and aspirations. Anecdotally, many young black people are more interested in starting their own businesses than jobs.</p>	<p>Medium term (6 - 12 months)</p>
<p>Commission a joint project with Julian Hall (Ultra Education) to advise and make young people aware about entrepreneurship opportunities and support available to them locally. Could be delivered in educational settings.</p>	<p>Medium term (6 - 12 months)</p>
<p>Create business opportunities for black people (or BAME) locally. Jobs of the future are increasingly going to be based in the tech world. The Council should use its levers and contacts to connect up black community entrepreneurs and start-ups to opportunities at larger with tech providers. The Moving on Up programme is a good example of a project where the council is linking young black men with employers and employment/training opportunities.</p>	<p>Long Term (1 year +)</p>
<p>Using the council's purchasing power to commission local organisations and businesses to provide services such as meals on wheels etc. The council can do more to enable local businesses to put in tenders such as by making them aware of tendering and commissioning processes.</p>	<p>Medium term (6 - 12 months)</p>
6) Accountability and engagement	
<p>Enabling communities to get involved in the work of the council and partner organisations through existing mechanisms such as through participating in scrutiny committee task and finish groups and the co-opting of community leaders/representatives on to Boards where possible. Knowledgeable and experienced community members should be commissioned as paid consultants and peer reviewers to provide local insights, help shape the council's agenda and hold it to account.</p>	<p>Medium term (6 - 12 months)</p>

Clearly demonstrating and reporting back impact to communities in a 'you said, we did' format including engaging in face to face (or virtual) meetings and on digital platforms to involve as many people as possible.	Long Term (1 year +)
Review of council corporate strategies (such as physical activity, health and wellbeing, stronger communities, equalities) and ensuring they include in-depth consultation with community leaders and groups. This entails working with local influencers (but being mindful of the 'usual suspects' and gatekeepers who are usually consulted with at the exclusion of others in the community) to understand the communities and their needs, and keeping a close connection between the council and community alive. The shaping of policy frameworks need to happen in partnership with the community and must be authentic.	Long Term (1 year +)
Putting in place long term mechanisms to engage with young black people in the borough in settings and ways that are convenient for them. Treating young people as stakeholders with a voice.	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
Creating a consolidated central preventative engagement function. This would include dedicated work with communities in localities – perhaps with a focus on areas such as Harlesden and Stonebridge.	Short term (0 – 6 months)
Draw on existing communication platforms in the community such as the Beat London radio station to convey messages and engage people.	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
<p>Convene a temporary community reference group to assist with the production and peer review of this action plan. The following people have expressed their interest in participating in follow-up discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer Ogole – Bang Edutainment • Julian Hall – Ultra Education • Sandra White – Ultra Education • Abdi Farah - Hornstars • Jasmine Dale – the Brent Factor • Chris Murray – Young Brent Foundation • Rose Ashton – Executive Head, Chalkhill Primary School • Tajean Hutton – young person from the CALM Project in Harlesden. 	Short term (0 – 6 months)
Convening a summer or autumn summit to convene a broader network of community leaders to review actions by the Council and continue the conversation.	Short term (0 – 6 months)

Using Brent Connects forums to engage with communities directly with a focus on wards such as Harlesden and Stonebridge initially but eventually across all wards.	Short term (0 – 6 months)
7) Internal review of processes within the Council	
Review the Equalities Analysis process the council uses to assess the impact of decisions on the black communities. Reform the process so black communities are co-production partners in decisions. The council will draw on organisations such as YBF who have existing members who have the skills to undertake appreciative inquiries into the Council’s policies and programmes to check we are getting the outcomes right for the black community.	Short term (0 – 6 months)
Ensure there is appropriate and timely learning from complaints and feedback from the community. Demonstrating and communicating changes made to systems as a result to black communities. The creation of opportunities to have community based space for open and frank discussions about experiences can help inform the learning process.	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
8) Homes and homelessness	
The council needs to work with the community to expand this area of work but initial areas to explore include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with our RSLs and local community organisations such as Crisis to look at the housing agenda and bringing them into a forum to look into issues to do with the black communities. Holding RSLs to account and being involved in the community and the issues. The elderly and care – older black communities who are isolated because they do not go into and care in the communities. 	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
9) Tackling health inequalities	
Covid-19 threw a sharp and painful relief on health inequalities, caused by structural inequalities. BAME communities are disproportionately affected by the pandemic in terms of contracting the virus, mortality rates and other life effects. The council, along with local and regional partners, will examine the full impact and plan for actions to reduce the disproportionate impact on BAME communities as well as identifying and addressing the structural reasons for the inequalities.	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
10) Embedding equality and diversity within the Council workforce	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run a series of ‘Let’s Talk About Race’ webinars to enable staff at all levels to engage in open and frank discussions about lived experience in relation to race, racism and remedies for racial inequality. Making unconscious bias training mandatory for all but with a more practical focus on front line staff such as social workers, housing and customer services colleagues. This training needs to be accompanied by a review and reform of underpinning systems that could perpetuate bias. An example could be in recruitment where applications put to recruitment panels are made anonymous. 	Short term (0 – 6 months)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer Unconscious Bias training in classroom and virtual form covering anti-racism, racial competencies, privilege and fragility. Review of online unconscious bias training to be updated immediately and ensure annual reviews to be carried out with staff. 	
Ensuring senior management reflects the communities the Council serves and ensuring greater black representation in senior roles across the Council. This is will be an ongoing piece of work with a target for it to be fully achieved by 2024.	Long term (1 year +)
The Council Management Team should develop an understanding of the types and impact of inequality. This could be done through reverse mentoring for CMT and senior manager with a black colleague (with clear terms of reference to ensure it is beneficial for both parties e.g. shadowing opportunities for the mentor).	Medium term (6 - 12 months)
Staff networks should continue to be supported with coaching and mentoring. The Council should also set up a Black Staff Forum with a separate budget for events and training. Race champions and allies who empathise with the experiences of black people. Champions should receive training and support to undertake their roles.	Short term (0 – 6 months)
Ensuring clear talent spotting and progression processes are in place and are communicated regularly to staff. In tandem, ensuring supportive structures for black progression are in place.	Short term (0 – 6 months)
The Council should commission the Local Government Association, or other appropriate organisation, to carry out an independent review of its approach to delivering workforce equality, diversity and inclusion. The review should also take into account key findings and recommendations of previous work done in this area in the relatively recent past including the Pavey Review (2015) and the Business In The Community focus group report on the experience of BAME employees at Brent Council (2019).	Short term (0 – 6 months)
Ensure Black Lives Matter remains on the agenda, particularly when media focus and political pressures cease. Add BLM to the next set of staff Forward Together sessions.	Short term (0 – 6 months)
A detailed work programme for all of the above will be put together in consultation with the Council’s Cultural Diversity (staff) Network and Black Staff Forum.	Short term (0 – 6 months)