

**IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON EAST CAMBS BAME POPULATION**

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

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1.0 **ISSUE**

- 1.1 To consider the findings of the East Cambs COVID-19 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) survey and agree the recommendations.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) To approve the actions which were agreed by the COVID-19 Member Working Party at its meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> November. The recommendations are in response to the findings of the survey (as set out in 4.3 of the report) and are:

- To gather details of local and national support and information that is aimed at assisting BAME communities.
- Development of existing East Cambs COVID-19 Coordination Hub webpages to ensure that support and assistance is available to East Cambs BAME communities including information and links to internal and external support and services for BAME communities and access to information in a variety of languages and translation services
- Compile a database of local networks available for BAME residents for engagement and signposting purposes including engagement with existing networks including Community Leaders, to further explore the issues raised via the survey.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Following a Public Health England report, which identified the disproportionate effect that COVID-19 has had on the BAME community and the impact on existing health inequalities, the Council has sought to understand the effects of COVID-19 on the local BAME community.
- 3.2 To achieve this, the Council carried out a survey in November 2020 that intended to identify the views of BAME communities in East Cambs and obtain feedback on the impacts of COVID-19 on their lives, as well as understanding details of any support or services accessed or demands for any future support requirements.
- 3.3 The survey was conducted at the time of the government's announcement to commence a second national lockdown. Therefore, it was deemed important and timely to obtain feedback from communities and promptly provide members of the COVID-19 working party with suggested additional actions to address any issues identified. The survey ran between 3<sup>rd</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and survey questions can be found at Appendix 1.

3.4 The survey was promoted on a range of local websites and a variety of social media platforms; and press releases were issued before and during the survey period. The survey was also shared with the district's community infrastructure organisation for distribution to local community groups.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 There were 13 responses to the survey.

4.2 The key survey findings were as follows:

- 12 of the respondents advised that their lives have been affected by COVID-19. The most common impact identified was working from home followed by mental health issues (including panic, fear, depression and increased anxiety). Other impacts included job and income loss; accessing childcare and related services (such as baby groups); difficulties accessing medical appointments; socialising; caring for relatives; travel issues (finding alternative modes of travel as oppose to using public transport and not being able to travel abroad); and concerns about the behaviour of others (such as hostile behaviours and feelings of being discriminated against).
- Four respondents advised that they had accessed support services in response to COVID-19 including health services (such as GP, health visitor, COVID-19 test and psychological services); Universal Credit and online shopping.
- Nine respondents felt that additional services could be of assistance either now or in the future. Services identified included translations of webpages in different languages, better access to mental health and social care services, financial assistance towards the costs of working from home and travelling using private transport. One respondent identified that better health, dental and retail provision in villages could be beneficial. Another respondent advised that additional information on the impacts of COVID-19 on BAME residents would be helpful to them.

4.3 In response to the survey findings, the Council could assist BAME communities by ensuring that relevant and current information is available and accessible, and the following actions are proposed to achieve this:

- Gather details of local and national support and information that is aimed at assisting BAME communities.
- Development of existing East Cambs COVID-19 Coordination Hub webpages to ensure that support and assistance is available to East Cambs BAME communities. This could include information and links to internal and external support and services for BAME communities as identified by the survey findings including access to information in a variety of languages and translation services.
- Compile a database of local networks available for BAME residents for engagement and signposting purposes. This will include engagement with existing networks including Community Leaders, to further explore the issues raised via the survey.

4.4 These actions were approved by the Council's COVID-19 Members Working Party on the 25<sup>th</sup> November.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1 - BAME Survey Questions

6.2 Appendix 2 – EIA

6.3 Appendix 3 – CIA

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**Background Documents**

**Location**

The Grange  
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