

***Black, Asian  
and Minority  
Ethnic Women  
Councillors'  
Taskforce  
Report***

***October 2009***

# Contents

<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2 THE TASKFORCE</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Aims	11
2.2 Objectives	11
2.3 Membership	11
2.4 Strategic partners	13
<b>3 WORK OF THE TASKFORCE</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 Events programme	14
3.2 Initial feedback	15
3.3 Speakers	16
3.4 Demographic profile of attendees	18
3.5 Profile of attendees' current involvement in public life	18
3.6 Media campaign and other activity	19
3.7 Development and support	20
3.8 Engagement with political parties	21
3.9 Statements of support from political parties	21
<b>4 INTERIM RESEARCH FINDINGS</b>	<b>26</b>
4.1 Key findings from evaluation forms	27
4.2 Knowledge and awareness	27
4.3 Future involvement in public life	27
4.4 Summary of feedback from focus groups	28
4.5 Expectations of the events	28
4.6 Impact of the event	29
4.7 Learnings from the event	30

<b>5</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>36</b>
	1. Taskforce terms of reference	37
	2. Biographies of taskforce members	39
	3. Taskforce partners and other useful contacts	43
	4. Events	48
	5. Summary of response rates by event	50
	6. Demographics	51
	Table i and ii – Ethnicity	51
	Table iii – Age	52
	Table iv – Religion	52
	Table v – Disability	52

# Foreword

The journey of making political change can, at times, be arduous and frustrating. However democracy is strongest when it is fully representative of all of society; only then can it fully understand and take action based on the lives of all those it seeks to serve. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women are currently under-represented at every level of public life – this is detrimental to BAME women, and detrimental to society as a whole.

Consider this: there are around 20,000 local councillors in England and 30% of these are women, yet less than 1% are BAME women despite the fact that they make up more than 5% of the population. To create a more representative picture the number of BAME women councillors needs to increase more than five-fold from around 149 in England (and none at all in Wales or Scotland) to nearer a thousand (LGAR survey 2008). At the current rate of change, best estimates suggest that without positive action it could take up to 130 years for this democratic deficit to correct itself. This is simply untenable.

The cross-party BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce was set up in May 2008 by Harriet Harman, Minister for Women and Equality to tackle this imbalance. Our remit was to help make local councils more representative of the communities they serve and thereby improve their decision-making processes. Initially, the taskforce was scheduled to last 12 months but was extended by two months, ending in July 2009. We set ourselves an ambitious and busy work programme exploring practical ways of encouraging BAME women to put themselves forward as councillors and become champions of their communities.



The taskforce was made up of 16 BAME women, all current or former councillors. We brought experience, determination and enthusiasm to our work programme, using our own experiences of the barriers, challenges and rewards associated with participating in public life to inform our approach and inspire others.

Our programme of practical action was based on the following key areas:

- Increasing awareness of the roles of councillors, reaching out into communities and building confidence among potential BAME candidates, through an events programme taking place across Britain that reached nearly 1,100 women;
- Reaching out into communities to encourage women to put themselves forward;
- Identifying and working to overcome the barriers that exist within political parties by working as a cross-party taskforce and engaging with political parties to garner their support;
- Supporting and developing potential BAME councillors through a training and development programme; and
- Instigating a media campaign to generate wider debate.

In delivering this action, we engaged extensively with our network of strategic partners, government, public and third sector organisations during the course of the year, and we are immensely grateful for all the support we have received. Particular thanks are due to our network of partner organisations and the many local women's and BAME women's groups whose expertise, experience, knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment to effecting real change have proved invaluable.

### ***The BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce***

# Executive Summary

The cross-party BAME Women Councillors Taskforce, launched in May 2008 by Harriet Harman, Minister for Women and Equality, set out to change the face of democracy by encouraging and inspiring more women from a BAME background to get involved in public life. Our ambitious programme aimed to tackle the long-standing under-representation of minority ethnic women.



Our work programme included events and support programmes to help break down existing barriers. We hosted some 16 awareness raising events across Britain, and reached nearly 1,100 women. Taskforce members spoke at numerous events, met with councillors and politicians and hosted meetings across the UK to promote our work and discuss practical ways of addressing the current imbalance. These speaking engagements were aimed at a wide audience, reaching the people able to effect real change at grassroots level. They were organised by a wide range of public, private and third sector partner organisations.



### **Key achievements:**

- Reaching nearly 1,100 high calibre, dynamic BAME women through our events programme, thereby dispelling the myth that BAME women are not interested in politics;
- Gaining a positive response to our event feedback survey. 70% of respondents said that they were more likely to consider becoming a local councillor, while 80% were more likely to consider putting themselves forward for other positions in public life;
- Presenting evidence to the 2009 Speakers Conference;
- Contributing to other work such as the Women and Recession Summit at No.11;
- Working with other organisations to improve the recruitment, training and support given to candidates;
- Establishing a mentoring scheme that attracted some 400 enquiries leading to 125 interviews – and two programmes covering 60 and 50 women respectively; and
- Instigating a media campaign that achieved overwhelmingly positive coverage including 88 printed and 75 online articles, and 30 radio and 13 television interviews or features.

Early results are encouraging and we are proud of our achievements. It is particularly rewarding that the overwhelming majority of delegates who attended the events felt they left with a better understanding of what being a councillor involves having had the opportunity to hear first hand of the experiences of existing councillors and other aspiring councillors.

Early feedback from our events programme suggested that development and training would be critical to ensure BAME women felt supported in taking their first steps into political life. Acting on this feedback, we developed a mentoring scheme. Our national mentoring scheme for BAME women councillors is the first of its kind and is being delivered by Operation Black Vote (OBV) supported by the Government Equalities Office (GEO). It will run in a number of local authorities across Britain. GEO and OBV have been overwhelmed by the response to this scheme and have carried out 125 interviews for 60 mentoring places. The First Certificate in Community Leadership qualification, delivered in partnership with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, is also on course to help equip 50 potential candidates with the skills and confidence they need to participate in public life.

Our dialogue with the major political parties has been productive and stands to help strip away many of the barriers currently facing BAME women wishing to put themselves forward as councillors. Their commitment is underlined by their respective statements of support, published as part of this report. We are grateful that this initiative has cross-party support, enabling us to tackle organisational, cultural and political barriers.

However, significant obstacles still exist, particularly when it comes to supporting more BAME women to get involved in the political process. We believe our recommendations deal with these barriers systematically and that together they amount to a practical plan of action that will clear the way for many more BAME women to step forward as councillors and offer them the support they need to achieve their ambitions. In doing this, our recommendations also stand to enrich local democracy.

Our recommendations are aimed at the government and strategic partners such as the Local Government Association (LGA). The equivalent Scottish and Welsh bodies are also being asked to engage in dealing with the recommendations. The actions we outline and the recommendations in this report should go some way towards breaking down existing barriers, and so make a positive difference to the representation of BAME women in public life.

# Summary of key recommendations

## Transparency and evidence

- The government and the LGA should agree to collect better, more regular, and more up-to-date data on the diversity of both local candidates and elected councillors in order to identify where efforts should be targeted to bring about a better representation of BAME women councillors. This information should be made transparent and available to communities and political parties.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) should map routes into national politics for different groups, including assessment of the extent to which experience in local government provides a stepping stone to becoming an MP.

## Political parties

- All political parties should instigate a plan of action to support and encourage BAME women to stand as candidates, gather information and produce a database of candidates standing by gender, race and religion.
- The government should also consider what else it can do to encourage political parties to recognise the benefits of greater diversity, and use its response to the Speaker's Conference as a platform for launching the changes required ensuring an increase in the number of BAME women councillors.

## Sustainability

- The government should ensure the work and lessons learned from the Taskforce are embedded into all its work programmes, and that initiatives such as the national 'Be a Councillor' campaign and the 'Take Part' pilots are used effectively to encourage more BAME women to get involved in public life.
- The government should encourage taskforce members to take up advisory roles on its work on civic participation and act as ambassadors by, for example, inviting them to galvanise support and interest in this important agenda through speaking engagements to support relevant campaigns and events.
- The government should consider what support is available to help local third sector organisations develop resources and initiatives to engage BAME women and support those wanting to participate in public life, identify where the gaps are and raise awareness of opportunities to access support as appropriate.
- The Local Government Association (LGA), Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and Leadership Centre for Local Government must also champion this important agenda by taking account of gender and diversity in all their own work programmes.

## Information and education

- The LGA, IDeA and Leadership Centre for Local Government should develop a new national 'one-stop shop' website as a resource for those who are interested in becoming involved in local democracy and wider civic participation.
- The LGA, IDeA and Leadership Centre for Local Government should make greater use of positive role models – including existing and former BAME women councillors and other women in public life – by recognising their achievements and thereby encouraging more BAME women to step forward.



# 1 Introduction

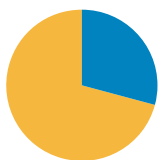
We know our democracy is stronger when it is fully representative. Diversity enriches the decision-making process, enabling decision makers at all levels to understand, discuss, and take action based on the lives of all men and women from all ethnic backgrounds, in all parts of our country.

However BAME women continue to remain some of the most under-represented in public and political life, at both a national and a local level. Too often BAME women are the missing voice from the decision-making process that nevertheless affects their lives, their families and their communities.

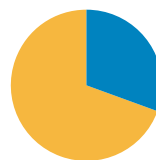
For example, at a national level only 15 out of 645 MPs are Black or Asian, two of whom are women. To be representative of the some 2.8 million ethnic minority women in this country, we should have more than fifteen times that number. There has still never been an Asian woman MP, although there are a number of Asian women in the House of Lords.

At a local level, women in general are under represented as councillors, and despite making up 51% of the population they represent only 30.8% of seats in England. However, for BAME women there is an even greater imbalance. BAME women account for less than one per cent of all councillors in England despite the fact they make up more than five per cent of the population. There are no BAME women councillors in Wales or Scotland.

## Local women councillors in England

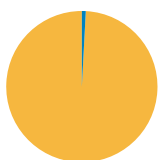


29.3% women councillors (2006)

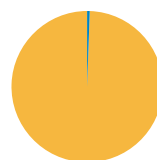


30.8% women councillors (2008)

## Ethnic minority women councillors



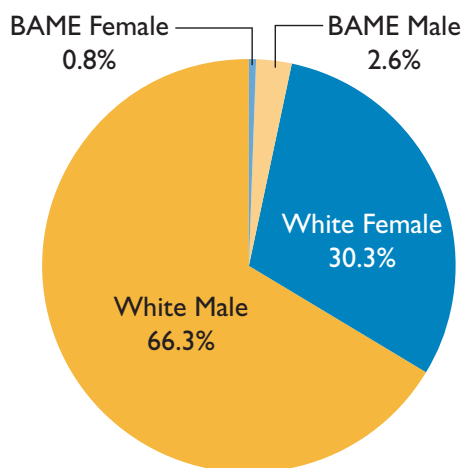
0.9% BAME women councillors (2006)



0.8% BAME women councillors (2008)

## Ethnicity of councillors in England

(Based on national census of local authorities in England in 2008)



The under-representation of BAME women in politics at every level is detrimental to democracy, but without positive intervention there is little hope of real change. It is important that our democratic institutions properly reflect the make-up of our society. If they do not properly reflect society, there is a risk that many parts of society may feel they do not have a voice or a stake in the decision-making process.

This imbalance concerns everyone, not just under-represented groups. Decisions about our public services are better made and better meet the needs of all parts of society if the people making those decisions bring diverse experiences to bear and are representative of the wider population.

To be fully representative, we know the number of BAME women local councillors must increase five-fold. But at the current rate of increase this could take more than 130 years. Something has to be done. Building on the findings of the Councillors Commission from 2007, which looked at the incentives and barriers to under-represented groups (including women) getting involved in local government, the government established the cross-party BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce in May 2008 to look at practical ways of encouraging BAME women to become local councillors and making councils more representative of the communities they serve.

Diversity can bring huge benefits in the work place and democratically. Diversity also enriches and informs the decision-making process and it is therefore vital that we ensure that everyone is included. It is not just a moral argument or about meeting and addressing legal obligations. Women, and in particular BAME women, for too long have not been able to demonstrate

their wealth of knowledge, skills and talents. Public governance needs to include different perspectives, ideas and processes that recognise and value the input from BAME women. Equality and diversity ultimately improve business decisions, improve customer service and therefore make good practical business sense in council chambers and board rooms across the country.

We set ourselves an ambitious events programme right across Britain. We engaged with the various political parties, along with the Office of the Mayor of London and other partners and stakeholders including organisations in both the public and third sector.

This report includes an interim summary of the research findings, which looks at the feedback from our events – a fuller evaluation report to include the Taskforce mentoring scheme and the First Certificate in Community Leadership Course will be available in late spring 2010.

## 2 The Taskforce

The taskforce was launched in May 2008 by Harriet Harman Minister for Women and Equality. We were set up to consider practical ways of encouraging BAME women to become local councillors and make councils more representative of the communities they serve.

Established as a cross-party taskforce, our remit included building on the findings of the independent Councillors Commission to ensure programmes were put in place to increase the numbers of BAME women councillors.

We were funded by the Government Equalities Office (GEO), which also provided secretariat support to this group. Additional support was provided by our strategic partners.

Full terms of reference for the taskforce are listed at Appendix 1.

### 2.1 Aims

Our high level aims were:

- To increase the representation of BAME women local councillors.
- To increase the number of BAME women put forward as candidates.
- To contribute to increasing the number of BAME women in public life.

### 2.2 Objectives

To realise these aims, we set ourselves the following objectives:

- To improve BAME women's knowledge and awareness of the roles and responsibilities of councillors, how to go about becoming a councillor, and the current under-representation of BAME women in public life;
- To build confidence and skills among potential candidates (e.g. through event workshops, mentoring, accredited training);
- To motivate and encourage BAME women to become candidates;
- To work to overcome cultural barriers within political parties that prevent BAME women being supported to become councillors; and
- To contribute to reducing stereotyping both within and outside communities through raising awareness of the benefits BAME women bring.

### 2.3 Membership

Chaired by Baroness Uddin, the taskforce was made up of 16 BAME women councillors and former councillors from across Britain. Our combined practical knowledge of the challenges and rewards of taking part in the local democratic process provided a valuable insight into the experiences of BAME women and a sound platform from which to begin to explore ways of securing greater participation in public life.

## BAME women taskforce members

<b>Chair Baroness Uddin</b>	<b>Lab</b>
<b><i>London</i></b>	
Cllr Lurline Champagnie (Harrow)	<b>Cons</b>
Cllr Maya de Souza (Camden)	<b>Green</b>
Cllr Meral Ece (Islington)	<b>Lib Dem</b>
Cllr Dr Anwara Ali (Tower Hamlets)	<b>Lab</b>
Cllr Lorna Campbell (Lambeth)	<b>Lab</b>
<b><i>South East</i></b>	
Cllr Humaira Khan (Windsor and Maidenhead)	<b>Lib Dem</b>
Cllr Mimi Harker (Chiltern District)	<b>Cons</b>
<b><i>South West</i></b>	
Carol Francis (Former Cllr, Gloucester)	<b>Lab</b>
<b><i>East of England</i></b>	
Cllr Sherma Batson (Stevenage and Hertfordshire)	<b>Lab</b>
<b><i>East Midlands</i></b>	
Cllr Manjula Sood (Leicester City)	<b>Lab</b>
<b><i>West Midlands</i></b>	
Cllr Salma Yaqoob (Birmingham City)	<b>Respect</b>
<b><i>Yorkshire and Humberside</i></b>	
Cllr Svetlana Rodgers (Scarborough Borough)	<b>Lib Dem</b>
<b><i>North West</i></b>	
Cllr Mia Jones (Chester City)	<b>Lib Dem</b>
<b><i>North East</i></b>	
Thea Khamis (Former Cllr, Derwentside)	<b>Lab</b>
<b><i>Wales</i></b>	
Cllr Yvonne Jardine (Swansea)	<b>Lab</b>
<b><i>Scotland</i></b>	
Neelam Bakshi (Former Cllr, Strathclyde)	–

## 2.4 Strategic partners

The taskforce established a network of strategic partners to support the delivery of our aims and objectives, and we are grateful for their support and insights. The contributions of these partner organisations and their expertise, experience and knowledge of local communities were critical to the success of our initiatives. In particular, the dynamism and enthusiasm the taskforce's strategic partners brought to the task has been inspiring. Their experience and expertise is a real asset and government should continue to call upon this valuable resource in their work on citizenship and diversity of local councillors.

### Strategic partners

- Centre for Women and Democracy
- Electoral Reform Society
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
- Fawcett Society
- Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)
- Local Government Association (LGA)
- London Councils
- National Association of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Councillors
- National Black Women's Network
- Operation Black Vote (OBV)
- Radar
- SOLACE Enterprises
- Women's National Commission (WNC)

Further details about these organisations are included at Appendix 3.



## 3 Work of The Taskforce

The taskforce undertook an ambitious programme of work designed to inspire BAME women to consider standing for public office and help them overcome the barriers they face. Our approach to achieving our goals was multi-faceted and rooted in collaboration and consultation. We wanted to ensure we drew on all the knowledge, skills and experience available to identify the most practical ways of helping more BAME women become councillors.

We identified several key ways in which the number of BAME women councillors could be increased. These were based on our combined experience of local government and the barriers existing for BAME women. Our programme of practical action was based on the following key areas:

- Increasing awareness of the roles of councillors, reaching out into communities and building confidence among potential BAME candidates;
- Identifying and working to overcome the barriers that exist within political parties;
- Supporting and developing potential BAME councillors; and
- Instigating a media campaign to generate wider debate.

### 3.1 Events Programme

*"I think what stood out was this was the first time that ethnic minority women were given some importance, that an event of this calibre has been organised, and it's been in all the major cities. Because we've been in England for a long time now, and we haven't seen anything like this." (Leicester)*

A regional events campaign aimed at BAME women was a key part of our programme of activity. This campaign was designed to inform and inspire BAME women, bringing alive the role of councillors and so encouraging more women to step forward. The events were led by members of the taskforce who shared their own experiences and views of the challenges and rewards of participating in public life. Taskforce members also joined delegates in workshops covering "Key skills needed to become an effective councilor" and "Becoming a community champion". The workshops were followed by question and answer sessions with speakers and facilitators.

A total of 16 events were held across Britain reaching nearly 1,100 women. We were delighted that many men also attended and contributed to these events. The Ministers for Women and Equality attended some events and delivered the keynote address. Similarly, MPs and local councillors (including council leaders) from across the various parties, and high profile BAME women community activists attended our events and spoke to delegates, offering them support and encouragement. A full list of speakers across the events is included in section 3.3; our thanks extend to all these people for the time, thought and effort they put into inspiring and motivating the delegates who attended our events.

Many of our events were held in council chambers to give delegates the opportunity to see and experience the surroundings of a council chamber. Where we could, we also organised tours of the Council. We are grateful to the many local authorities and local MPs who supported these events in a variety of ways – by opening their premises, providing catering services, and technical support, conducting tours, helping to promote the events to potential delegates in the local area, and providing support and a warm welcome on the day.



### 3.2 Initial feedback

We had a positive response to our events:

- Almost 1,100 women attended the events over the course of the year
- 569 women completed a feedback form (53%)
- 91% of attendees rated the events as either 'very good' (57%) or 'fairly good' (34%)
- 97% would recommend the events to friends or family
- 70% of those who completed feedback stated that they would be more likely to put themselves forward as a local councillor
- Over 90% of women said that the events succeeded in improving awareness of the role of a local councillor.

At the end of each event, delegates were invited to complete a short feedback form. Full details of response rates for each event are contained in Appendix 5. This was a self-completion questionnaire and some attendees did not answer every question or return the questionnaire. As the number of completed feedback forms from any one event is too small to allow meaningful comparisons between events, aggregated data across all 16 events is presented here.

Feedback on the events themselves was overwhelmingly positive. The events clearly had an impact on delegates' knowledge and awareness both of BAME women in public life and about the role of local councillors, as well as influencing their intentions for future involvement in public life.

*"I found the day very inspiring. I had not ever given any thought to becoming a councillor. Today gave me a lot of food for thought."* (Newcastle)

*"I was really inspired and motivated to take part in my community and make a difference."* (Swansea)

The method of data collection used for the event evaluation could have resulted in a 'halo effect'. When asked to give an assessment of an event or an activity in which they had just participated, there is a tendency for respondents to select the highest rating (in this case, 'very good' or 'strongly agree'). This is particularly the case when the event or activity is felt to represent a 'worthy cause' and/or where the organisation putting on the event is held in high regard. We suspect that both these conditions apply here. This does not detract from the overall findings, however, which are very positive.

### 3.3 Speakers

We are grateful to the many speakers from local authorities, businesses and elsewhere, who took time out of their busy schedules to participate in our events. Many local MPs and councillors (both male and female) paid impromptu as well as formal visits and spoke at the events. They also agreed to lend their support to the women, offering advice and opportunities for coaching and mentoring.



## Speakers

Tower Hamlets: Cllr Dr Anwara Ali; Cllr Shirley Marshall; Cllr Lurline Champagne; Barbara Follett MP and Deputy Minister for Women; former Cllr Neelam Bakshi,

Birmingham: Cllr Salma Yaqoob; Francine Fernandes; Carol Coombes CEO; Cllr Karen Hamilton and Cllr Paulette Hamilton

Harrow: Cllr Lurline Champagne; Cllr David Ashton; Cllr Mimi Harker and Cllr Nana Asante

Swansea: Former Cllr Yvonne Jardine; Nia Griffith MP; Salma Abbasi; Mari Rees

Islington: Cllr Meral Ece; Cllr James Kempton; Cllr Jyoti Vaja; Cllr Anjana Patel; Cllr Ruth Polling; Cllr Bernice Vanier; Cllr Mouna Hamitouche

TUC event Central London: Sarah Veale; Dinah Cox; Cllr Anwara Ali and Cllr Lurline Champagne

Scotland: Former Cllr Neelam Bakshi; Angela O'Hagan; Cllr Paulette Hamilton; Loretta Mordi; Ann Henderson

Gloucester: Former Cllr Carol Francis; Cllr Barry Dare; Cllr Lorna Campbell, Lady Mavis Dunrossil; Parmjit Dhanda MP

Newcastle: Former Cllr Thea Khamis; Cllr David Faulkner and Cllr Lurline Champagne, Baroness Sandip Verma; Ranjana Bell

Leicester: Cllr Manjula Sood; Cllr Ross Willmott; Cllr Sarah Russell and Cllr Ramilla Shah; Sheila Lock CEO; Liz Reid-Jones and Anita Patel; [Keith Vaz MP]

Camden: Cllr Maya de Souza; Cllr Keith Moffitt; Cllr Geethika Jayatilaka; Dame Jane Roberts; Simon Wolley; [Frank Dobbs MP]

South London: Cllr Lorna Campbell; Cllr Nicholas Stanton; Cllr Eliza Mann; Cllr Mimi Harker; Cllr Dora Dixon Fyle; Dawn Butler MP; Harriet Harman QC, MP

Liverpool: Former Cllr Mia Jones; Cllr Warren Bradley; Cllr Anna Rothery; Amina Ismail; Maria Eagle MP

Chilterns, Maidenhead and Berkshire: Cllr Mimi Harker; Cllr Humaira Khan; Cllr John Warder; Cllr Meral Ece, Cllr Denise Headley; [Fiona MacTaggart MP]

Luton: Cllr Sherma Batson; Cllr Joan Bailey; Cllr Jacqui Burnett; Cllr Anjana Patel; Dr Nazia Khanum; Kate Belinis CEO

Bradford: Adeeba Malik; Cllr Dale Smith; Cllr Naveeda Ikram and Cllr Alison Lowe; Marcia Churley

### **3.4 Demographic profile of attendees**

**A full break-down of the demographic profile of those who attended our events is attached at Appendix 6.**

#### **Ethnicity (Tables i and ii – Appendix 6)**

The events attracted women from across all ethnic groups.

Just under half of attendees (47%) were of Black or Black British origin with women of Black Caribbean origin making up the single largest ethnic group (26%).

Thirty per cent of attendees were of Asian or British Asian origin of which those of Indian and Pakistani heritage made up the largest groups (12% each).

One in ten (10%) were of White origin (predominantly White British – 7%) and a further 7% were of mixed origin. Women of Chinese origin made up 1% of the sample and a further 4% selected 'other ethnic group'.

#### **Age (Table iii – Appendix 6)**

The age profile of attendees ranged from young women aged from 18 to 24 to those aged 65 years and above. The majority (93%) were aged between 25 and 44 years old. The events were particularly successful in attracting younger Asian women.

#### **Religion (Table iv – Appendix 6)**

Women from all of the main religions attended the events. Half (48%) described themselves as Christian, a quarter were Muslims (25%), 6% were Hindus, 3% were Sikhs and Judaism and Buddhism were both represented by 1% of the sample.

Some women were of no faith (9%), 5% did not wish to disclose their religion and a further 3% selected 'any other religion'

#### **Disability (Table v – Appendix 6)**

Around a tenth (11%) of the women who attended the events reported that they had some form of disability.

### **3.5 Profile of attendees' current involvement in public life**

Attendees were asked if they actively participated in a range of different organisations or groups and whether they were a school governor or a magistrate.

Nearly three-quarters of the sample (72%) said they were actively involved in some form of voluntary or community organisation and nearly half were involved in a sport/leisure or cultural group (45%) and/or a church or religious organisation (44%).



Several attendees (42%) were school governors and 26% were active members of a trade union or a business/professional organisation. Whilst 14% were involved with a local public body, 12% were actively involved in a political party and 5% of attendees were serving magistrates.

### **3.6 Media campaign and other activity**

A media campaign was developed to stimulate wider debate about the under-representation of BAME women in public life. This campaign included press articles and community radio and television interviews and features.

The coverage was overwhelmingly positive and included:

Print:	88 articles
Online:	75 articles
Radio:	30 interviews/features
TV:	13 features

As a result of securing this amount of coverage the media campaign was able to reach women from BAME backgrounds in all the key regions where the events programme took place, as well as securing some limited coverage on a national level. Interviews and discussion shows on the radio and TV ensured that a public discussion was held on the key issues being addressed by the taskforce, while feature and news articles in print media built awareness of the taskforce and its work.

The media campaign supported the events programme at three key stages:

#### **i) Pre-event media campaign:**

This built positive publicity around the events taking place and helped to attract potential delegates through, for example, interviews with local councillors and taskforce members. It also ensured that major issues of the events were being acknowledged and discussed before the event.

#### **ii) Media coverage on the day:**

Media attendance on the day of the events helped to further promote the Taskforce itself and helped acknowledge the important roles of the Taskforce members themselves.

#### **iii) Post-event coverage:**

To continue the work of the Taskforce and to further promote it, media coverage was secured in key media outlets, and in particular attendees from the events were quoted and interviewed.



#### **iv) Additional Opportunities:**

The success of the campaign ensured coverage in key media outlets. Members of the taskforce themselves have secured ongoing columns in popular ethnic papers and commentary pieces in mainstream media.

The media coverage highlighted important messages about the need for more BAME women to participate in public life and the support available to them. Key messages were:

- Women from BAME communities are under-represented as councillors and the BAME Women Councillors Taskforce has been set up to help more women from BAME communities become councillors;
- The taskforce is actively reaching out to BAME women at a local level through community events;
- The taskforce has cross-party support; and
- A mentoring scheme has been developed for BAME women wanting to become councillors and has attracted some 400 enquiries leading to 160 applications from which 125 individuals have been interviewed.

Other important activity was undertaken by the taskforce to engage important audiences and promote the case for supporting more BAME women play a greater role in public life. Specific initiatives included:

- A programme of speaking engagements reaching a wide audience at grassroots level. Public, private and third sector organisations were involved in organising many of these events;
- Inviting women's groups to visit the Houses of Parliament and engage with politicians; and
- Creating an e-newsletter to promote the work of the taskforce and to further engage and support BAME women interested in participating in public life, and providing an email address for enquiries from BAME women and others interested in this important agenda.

We have been encouraged that all the local and regional coverage of our work and the events programme has been largely positive. Media coverage has reached new groups of BAME women who were previously unaware of the issue and the opportunities available to them, and many taskforce members are still receiving enquiries and information from individuals.

### **3.7 Development and support**

Early feedback from the regional events suggested that development and training would be critical to ensure BAME women felt supported in taking their first steps into political life. Delegates were asked what ongoing support would be most helpful to them in their ambition to

become a councillor. Options they were asked to consider included a written guide, shadowing an existing councillor, mentoring and support from political parties as well as support from women's groups. The two most popular forms of support were mentoring (72%) and having the opportunity to shadow a councillor (66%). This led GEO, in conjunction with Operation Black Vote (OBV), to develop a mentoring/shadowing programme.

Our national mentoring scheme for BAME women councillors is the first of its kind and is being delivered by OBV supported by the GEO. It was launched on 24 April at the Camden event. It aims to ensure local councils increase the number of BAME councillors and promote BAME engagement with councils in all areas and at all levels of local governance. We were overwhelmed by the interest in the scheme which will commence in October 2009 for 60 BAME women.

The GEO will fund a further 50 women to receive training and a Certificate in Community Leadership. This course will be delivered by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

### **3.8 Engagement with Political Parties**

We have engaged with all the political parties to garner their support. The Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Green, Respect and Independent parties all provided named contacts for our events programme both nationally and regionally. They also recognised more was needed to enable BAME women to navigate party structures and all three major parties have indicated that they will do follow up work in this area. This may involve arranging events, inviting delegates to party conferences, producing leaflets highlighting the work of the Taskforce, awareness raising seminars and/or party mentoring schemes.

### **3.9 Statements of support provided by political parties**

#### **Conservative Party**

The Conservative Party actively engaged with the taskforce and the results of this dialogue have been encouraging, offering many BAME women new opportunities and support. Outcomes include:

- **38 new contacts made** and added to the mailing list for current and future events. All contacts were invited to the Conservative's "Voice" workshop and to attend party conference as guests
- **22 joined the party and attended the "Voice" practical workshop** on 11 July 2009. The workshop explained the applications process to join the list of prospective Conservative councillors, supplied the contact details for local associations, and highlighted key aspects of the official application form to make the most of the individual's skills and experience

- **22 attended party conference as Guests**
- A number have (or intend to) apply to stand for council. At least four have been **selected for local elections in 2010**. The Party is not able to provide a breakdown of the full local authority candidates list by gender or ethnicity
- Conservative councillor **information updated and supplied** to GEO taskforce for events, and Operation Black Vote for the shadowing scheme
- The Conservative Councillors Association held an outreach event in Birmingham on 2 April 2009.

### Continued support

- The party will continue to offer training and outreach events for women seeking to engage with the party or to stand for office
- The Conservative Councillors Association will continue to offer training for selected council candidates
- The Conservative Candidates Department will continue to offer training to those on the official Parliamentary candidates list (ie those approved by the Party's Parliamentary Assessment Board)
- The Conservative Women's Organisation will continue to run outreach events and policy forums for women.

### Green Party

The Green Party is pleased to have had the opportunity to play a part in the BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce. We are also pleased to have taken part in its outreach programme, aiming to persuade more BAME women to run for councillor positions and to persuade political parties to ensure they select a diverse range of candidates.

Equality and diversity have been fundamental to the Green Party since it began. We have had a male and female principal spokesperson for the party for many years. Our first leader, elected in 2008, is a woman – Caroline Lucas MEP.

We actively look for good candidates, of both genders, from all ethnic groups, for all elected positions, irrespective of disability and age, and from all classes and backgrounds. Our regional lists for the European elections in London and some other regions have fixed requirements as to gender balance: two out of the top five candidates must be female, and two male. We try to ensure the same degree of diversity in local elections and we are encouraging all our local branches to put in place gender balance provisions.

This year the party has produced new guidance for local branches as to selection of candidates for elected office. The importance of diversity amongst party officers as well as

amongst candidates for elected positions is emphasized. The party held a workshop at its Spring conference this year on building healthy and diverse local parties, and held a diversity training workshop at Autumn conference in order to continue to develop and promote a healthy inclusive culture. We have also made our policy on equalities and diversity one of the central elements of our policy. In this way, we intend to take forward the aims of the taskforce and continue to embed the principles of equality and diversity within the party

### **Labour Party**

The Labour Party fully supports the work of the BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce, and we are proud that it has been set up under a Labour government by a Labour minister. This truly reflects the level of our collective commitment to increasing the representation of BAME women in local government, and is part of our wider commitment to increasing diversity at all levels of public life.

Since the establishment of the taskforce, the Labour Party has re-examined what we are doing to both recruit BAME women into our party, and, moreover, the ways in which we can support BAME women members to stand for selection as Labour Party candidates. We have welcomed the range of events put on across Britain by the taskforce, and have taken the opportunity to produce materials for use at these events to encourage BAME women to consider standing to be Labour candidates. We have piloted supplementary meetings following on from Taskforce events, at which local BAME women members have invited friends and colleagues from BAME backgrounds to meetings with Labour politicians to discuss in more depth what being a Labour councillor involves.

We look forward to supporting the shadowing scheme that the taskforce is in the process of setting up, and are keen to involve as many Labour politicians as possible in this venture. We currently have an internal shadowing scheme, 'Winning with Women', for women who aspire to be Parliamentary candidates, and we will look to particularly target this scheme to appeal to more BAME women, as well as extend it to cover local government candidates.

We have also started to look at how we can support young BAME members and encourage them to consider standing for selection. The Labour Party has facilitated a series of meetings of young women and young BAME members to outline the selection process and encourage participation. We will continue to look at ways in which we can expand upon this and reach out to BAME women further.

The Labour Party would like to formally thank the BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce for the work it has done in putting the issue of chronic under representation of BAME women in local government on the agenda, and the work that has happened so far in trying to reverse this trend. We look forward to co-operating fully with the next stage of the taskforce's work, and remain committed to assisting the Taskforce in any way we can.

## **Liberal Democrat Party**

The Liberal Democrats welcome the work and the success of the BAME Women Councillors' Task Force. The work has been hugely inspiring and encouraging.

As a party we are committed to increasing the number of BAME women who wish to become councillors and take part in public life whilst also determined to do all we can to ensure that the barriers they face are removed. We are already working to put into place a number of measures to welcome, encourage and support more women, particularly BAME women to the party.

We believe the status quo is not acceptable and to this end we have recently established the New Generation Programme, where over 45 BAME men and women will be supported, encouraged, trained and invested in to ensure they take their rightful place in elected positions at every level of the Liberal Democrat Party. This programme builds upon the existing success of the party's 'Campaign for Gender Balance' (CGB) which already supports BAME women with preparation and support towards becoming a parliamentary candidate. Much of its work is centred around providing mentoring support, training, shadowing and delivery of Inspiration Events.

We are committed to encouraging new councillors by ensuring that existing BAME women councillors are given a high profile in the Party so that they become more visible as role models to new and aspiring members.

The party appointed a National Diversity Adviser in 2007 and recently strengthened its commitment by investing additional financial and staff resources to establish a new diversity team based at HQ.

## **Local Government Association (LGA) Independent Group**

The Independent Group at the LGA has welcomed the opportunity to learn more about, and make a contribution to the BAME Women Councillors' Task Force. Along with other political groups, the Independent Group recognises the benefit of ensuring more women enter politics over time. Because independent councillors work without the support of political parties it can be difficult for our group to find routes to reach women interested in becoming local councillors, so the BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce has been a valuable road map to engagement. What we have learned from attendance at taskforce events has been fed back to our executive group at the LGA, in order that we can ensure we focus on continuing to secure the interest and election of women in local government, and design our support processes in a way that will ensure more women are likely to make contact with the group for support and advice. We congratulate the taskforce on its work, to date, which is highly acknowledged.

## Respect Party

The Respect Party is pleased to have supported the work of the BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce. Addressing the under-representation of BAME women in local government is an important issue and the taskforce is to be congratulated for its contribution.

In addition to membership of the taskforce the Respect party has been committed to:

- Organising women-only events, which hundreds have attended, to encourage women to participate in politics
- Supporting BAME candidates to stand for election and providing them with training and practical support
- Arranging outreach visits to schools and colleges to encourage the next generation of women to become involved in public life
- Offering mentoring and shadowing to BAME women and young people so that they have the experience and confidence to participate.

A number of barriers have been identified which hinder the participation of BAME women in politics. One of these has been the abuse of the postal vote on demand system that has resulted in cases where many people, especially women, have been disenfranchised. I am pleased that a sub-committee of the taskforce has been set up specifically to investigate this issue.

Respect believes that important foundations have been set by the taskforce and it will continue to work to support initiatives of this kind to encourage more BAME women to get involved in public life.



## 4 Interim Research Findings

The GEO has commissioned evaluation to assess the impact of the taskforce's programme of work, in particular the events programme and the shadowing scheme. The evaluation is exploring the effectiveness of the taskforce and its work among a range of stakeholders, but specifically from the perspective of the delegates who attended the events. We are especially keen to follow up any progress made by delegates and mentees to become a councillor or more involved in public life.

The full evaluation report, due in spring 2010, will set out how the taskforce has affected women's intentions and progress in becoming a councillor or taking on a role in public life. It will summarise the work of the taskforce, what has worked and what has not, and help disseminate any good practice resulting from the taskforce. The evaluation will provide valuable evidence for the GEO to inform the future development of their policy on increasing representation amongst BAME women.

Feedback on the events programme from both the evaluation feedback forms and follow-up discussions, for example through focus groups, has certainly increased our understanding of the barriers that currently stop so many BAME women becoming councillors and highlighted how we can better help these women. We believe this work will inform future approaches and initiatives to help increase BAME women's participation in public life.



## 4.1 Key findings from evaluation feedback forms

As explained in chapter 3, the evaluation feedback forms showed the events clearly had an impact on delegates' knowledge and their awareness of BAME women in public life and about the role of local councillors. The events also influenced their intentions for future involvement in public life.

## 4.2 Knowledge and awareness

### Key findings

- 95% of attendees completing feedback questionnaires said that the event had made them more aware of the lack of BAME women in public life
- 94% reported that the event made them more aware of how they might benefit from becoming a councillor
- 91% said that the event had made them more aware of what a local councillor does
- 90% of delegates agreed that having attending the event, they now knew how to access information about how to become a councillor

Most delegates attended the events with little existing knowledge about what being a councillor involves or how to become a councillor. This was even true for those who had already put themselves forward for public life; a woman who had two days earlier been selected to stand as a councillor came along to find out more about the role. Some 95% of attendees reported that the event had made them more aware of the lack of BAME women in public life.

*The people at grassroots level keep saying, 'why don't you become a councillor?' because some of them have been dissatisfied with what's going on. So I thought, 'let me go and have a look at what it is.'* (Leicester)

## 4.3 Future involvement in public life

### Key findings

- 70% stated they would be more likely to put themselves forward as a local councillor
- 80% felt it had made them more likely to consider getting involved in public life in other ways

Attendees were also asked whether or not they felt that the event had had an impact on their likelihood of becoming a councillor and/or putting themselves forward for some other position in public life. Some 70% of women reported that the event had made it more likely that they would consider becoming a councillor, while 79% of women had previously thought about becoming a councillor. 80% of women were more likely to think about getting more involved in public life in other ways.

*“The events strengthened my resolve to run for a council seat. I also realised how important it is for the face of politics to change so that parties can really serve the people they represent. The public need to see people who are like them involved in politics.” (Bradford)*

Only a very small number of women had been put off public life through attending an event. Only 5% reported they were less likely to consider becoming a councillor and just 2% were less likely to consider other roles.

#### **4.4 Feedback from focus groups**

This summary feedback is based on four focus groups and one in-depth interview with attendees at each of the following events:

- South London
- Camden and Islington
- Bradford
- Leicester

A total of 23 women took part in the focus group discussions which lasted two hours.

Three-quarters of the participants were Black Caribbean or Black African and a quarter of Asian heritage (both Indian and Pakistani). Most were in their 40s and 50s and if they had children, they were either fairly independent or no longer at home. A small number were young women in their 20s. A large proportion worked in the public or third sector while a few worked in businesses that focused on helping BAME women in achieving their goals. Several had considerable experience of establishing community and business initiatives. We cannot be sure that these women were representative of all those who attended these events; they may have been more motivated to come along to the focus groups because they were some of the more confident, articulate and/or interested attendees or because they had particular views that they wished to share.

#### **4.5 Expectations of the event**

Initial findings from research show that the women who took part in the focus groups had attended the events in order to find out more about participation in public life. Most attended the events with little existing knowledge about what being a councillor involved or how to become one, but were keen for practical advice, support and information.

*“That’s what I was hoping for, that it would be something practical. How are they going to help women practically, on the ground, that if you want to become a councillor, these are the lines of help that are available for you.” (Bradford)*

Generally, the motivation for attending was to acquire the knowledge to help the women appraise their own skills, qualities and capacity to make the required commitment and help them decide whether being a councillor was something they might consider now or in the future. Part of this was seeing the calibre of the other women who attended and comparing their own experience with theirs.

A few were also keen to inform themselves so that they could then encourage and inform other BAME women and a few had brought others along to the event for this reason. Some were open-minded about how they might play a role in public life and serve their community, and hoped to find out about other opportunities too.

The fact that the event was taking place was viewed very positively (it was long overdue for some women) and it was generally felt to have raised awareness of the need for greater representation by BAME women and to have provided a glimpse of what might be possible to address this.

*“I thought it was an excellent idea, I think it’s the first time that black women have been encouraged into political life.” (South London)*

The women were impressed and excited by the quality of the women attending – many of whom were very active in their communities. The networking opportunities were therefore much appreciated as was the high level of energy and motivation created by the event in bringing such women together.

*“That, for me, was definitely a stepping stone ... for me, it was seeing that people like myself who had made a difference, just seeing so many people who were all so interested. I didn’t feel like a lone voice, there’s a load of sisters out there of all nationalities who really want to make a difference and I felt a sense of community and belonging.” (North London)*

Overall, on the basis of the feedback gained in the focus groups, the events were motivating and even inspiring (as captured at the time in the event feedback questionnaires), but for women in three of the four groups, hopes and expectations were not completely fulfilled by both the events themselves and what came after. A number felt that they left the events without the information they were seeking and not knowing how things would be progressed, or were disappointed with the amount of follow-up activity that ensued post-event.

#### **4.6 Impact of the event**

The follow up focus groups found that following the events, a few of the women had gone on to progress their interest in becoming a councillor, through applying for the GEO mentoring/shadowing scheme, approaching national political party contacts, going to political meetings, considering joining a political party or speaking to local councillors. Other women were considering other roles in public life.

Participation in the event had a broader impact in terms of women spreading the word and inspiring others – friends and family – to consider greater involvement in political life.

*“So I’m more than happy to encourage my sisters to stand in solidarity and become councillors.”*

(North London)

*“So seeing them, the young women, I’m over 50 and as a result I can’t class myself as a young woman anymore. So as a result, seeing my daughter, she is 30 years old, so somebody like that who I would love them to come forward because they have a lot of skill, experience, who can help other women and I was passionate to see so many young Asian woman because you know, it’s like what they used to say that the place of women is in the kitchen, crossing that barrier that so many people are afraid to cross, that actually impressed me and that satisfaction is enough for me, that day.”* (Bradford)

A hope was expressed that the events had had an impact on local councillors who might see that there was a need to take notice of the agenda and seriously consider BAME women for selection.

*“It was motivating because it’s brought the agenda to the surface and it’s made people start thinking. Hopefully, it’s also made the local politicians start thinking as well, and at the local level, the selection level – made them start thinking that, ‘if the government is wanting to do that, we’ll have to start doing it. And if people have raised issues, we need to do something about it.’ So I’m really hoping something positive comes out of it.”* (Leicester)

Some of the women spoke about how the event had brought home to them how difficult it was for women to become councillors and to find the support that would enable them to succeed once elected. It was useful therefore in either increasing their determination or making them rethink their personal goals.

#### **4.7 Learnings from the events**

The focus group discussions provided some clear pointers for future events including key content, the experience and qualities of speakers and facilitators, the importance of including opportunities for interaction and networking, the need for a call to action and for expectations to be well-managed so that women know what support they can expect and what they need to do for themselves.

The focus group participants felt that events should focus on the step by step process for becoming a councillor, clearly spelling out remuneration and the less tangible rewards of being a councillor, as well as the challenges and the support given to councillors in doing their work.

The experiences of participants who had taken some tentative steps in progressing their ambitions also suggested that more needed to be done in preparing the ground by political parties and ensuring a more welcoming attitude from party members and office holders. A number had the clear impression that more practical help was needed to support women in being selected and once they are in post:

*"I think it's good, positive, there needs to be more of that sort of thing, more encouragement. But unfortunately it can come from the central government up top. What happens locally is different."* (Leicester)

Participants felt that it was important to reach out and encourage two distinct groups to get involved – those who are already active in their communities and feel confident about their role in society, and those women who are less involved and aware of the opportunities. They felt the two groups should be targeted in different ways – for example using existing networks to contact the more involved group, while it was felt that a broader campaign based on local newspapers, street posters, local radio and outreach into the communities was probably needed to reach the second group who probably have a more latent interest in becoming engaged.

*"It would be nice if everyone had this inbuilt awareness, they could be a councillor but I don't think we're anywhere near that level now so it's going to have to be a little bit kind of grassrootsy and talent spotting..."*

*... It's not the kind of job you see in careers advice, is it? So it's not one that you automatically think about. So I think it's something that's got to be top down and bottom up, because I think it's something that you've got to get MPs to look at. I think people have got to lead by example, by doing shadowing schemes themselves, going to places, going to the big churches, to the mosques or temples where they are going to get that group of people and saying, making a cry out to people that it's genuine because people can spot a fake if it's just about numbers."* (North London)

Several women (especially those who saw themselves as mentors for younger women) offered themselves as channels for reaching into communities and publicising future events. There was also a feeling that local women could usefully help plan and organise such events since they know what local women need, and they have the connections in the area to bring them in. Indeed, the comment was made that GEO now has a very useful contact list of BAME women who are working actively in their communities that could prove to be a very useful resource.



# 5 Recommendations

The evidence gathered through our programme of events, engagement with our strategic partners and discussions with the political parties suggests that there is a real and growing appetite for change. We must harness this enthusiasm and take positive action to ensure BAME women have the opportunity and resources to play an active role in local democracy.

Our recommendations fall into four main areas:

- They aim to build a **better evidence base** about the experiences of under-represented groups;
- to **galvanise the main political parties** into taking effective action to identify and support potential BAME candidates;
- to ensure the work of the taskforce is taken forward as part of a **wider work programme**; and
- to ensure BAME women have access to the **information and education** they need to put themselves forwards as councillors.

Our recommendations are aimed at the government and strategic partners such as the Local Government Association (LGA). The equivalent Scottish and Welsh bodies are also being asked to engage in dealing with the recommendations.

## Transparency and evidence

There remains insufficient information and evidence about the numbers and experiences of under-represented groups entering elected office at a local level. To understand fully where barriers exist in the current system, and to break these down effectively, it is essential that we develop a stronger evidence base.

- 1 **The Government and the LGA should agree the most effective way to collect up-to-date data on the diversity of both local candidates and elected councillors, giving an insight into where efforts should be targeted to increase the numbers of BAME women councillors. This information should be made transparent and available to communities and political parties.**  
This kind of data would allow communities to understand better who serves them and how representative they are. Operation Black Vote, for example, published research that suggested that Black and minority ethnic voters would be more likely to turn out if there were more BAME candidates. Electoral Commission research shows that having more female elected representatives increases participation rates amongst women generally. Further work needs to be done on the best way to collect this data – for example through an annual Local Government Analysis and Research (LGAR) census survey instead of the current biannual one, through a registration system for newly elected councillors or by better monitoring of candidates being put forward, either by political parties collecting data or by placing a duty on Returning Officers.



- 2 **The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) should map routes into national politics for different groups, including assessing the extent to which experience in local government provides a stepping stone to becoming an MP.**

### Political parties

Our work made it clear that political parties have much more to do. The fact that so many women attending our events expressed a desire to get involved in local politics shows there is no shortage of BAME talent available. However, these women are still not being asked, selected or elected.

- 3 **All political parties should develop a plan of action to support and encourage BAME women to stand as candidates, gather information and produce a database of candidates standing by gender, race and religion.** The data gathered would be used to raise awareness and understanding of the roles of councillors and MPs; to examine selections, elections and representation across councils and public life; to set up networks and organise seminars and training and development events; and to offer shadowing and mentoring opportunities.
- 4 **The government must also consider what more they can do to encourage political parties to recognise the benefits of greater diversity, and use its response to the Speaker's Conference as a platform for launching the changes required to ensure an increase in the number of BAME women councillors.** The Conference will report by the end of 2009 and a government response is expected in early 2010.

### Sustainability

It also became clear that for the taskforce to have a lasting impact on the numbers of BAME women considering involvement in public life, our work must be sustained beyond our lifetime.

- 5 **The Government should ensure the work and lessons learned from the Taskforce are embedded into all its work programmes, and that initiatives such as the national 'Be a Councillor' campaign and the 'Take Part' pilots are used effectively to encourage more BAME women to get involved in public life.** Following the evaluation of the national BAME women shadowing scheme, for example, the Government should consider facilitating further mentoring schemes with local authorities for under-represented groups.
- 6 **The government should encourage taskforce members to take up roles as advisers and ambassadors in its work on civic participation by, for example, inviting them to galvanise support and interest in this important agenda through speaking engagements to support relevant campaigns and events.** The government should also review the impact of the work of the taskforce at set intervals. Taskforce strategic partners should also continue to work with the

government to achieve PSA 15 targets around citizenship and diversity of local councillors – for example working to design and implement effective approaches around enabling more people to be involved in local democracy.

- 7 **The government should consider what support is available to help local third sector organisations develop resources and initiatives to engage BAME women and support those wanting to participate in public life, identify where the gaps are and raise awareness of opportunities to access support as appropriate.**
- 8 **The Local Government Association (LGA), Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and Leadership Centre for Local Government must also champion this important agenda by taking account of gender and diversity in all their own work programmes.** This might, for example, take the form of considering the work of the taskforce within the context of what councils should be doing around the Duty to Promote Democracy; ensuring there is a real drive to train more accredited peers and to establish the number of BAME peers. Accredited peers are councillors and officers who have shown they are able to support, mentor and advise others. It would also be beneficial to develop a support structure for newly elected BAME women councillors with a view to developing a leadership academy programme for BAME communities. This might include a network to facilitate exchanges of experiences and views, hosting an annual reception/event etc. This would ensure that newly elected councillors' progress is tracked as their careers develop.

### Information and Education

Finally, we know from the feedback from participants who attending our events that education and information is critical to helping more BAME women become councillors.

- 9 **The LGA, IDeA and Leadership Centre for Local Government should develop a new national 'one-stop shop' website as a resource for those who are interested in becoming involved in local democracy and wider civic participation.** This could appeal to those, for example, interested in volunteering, becoming a school governor or a magistrate. The website would pull together relevant information from existing sources and ensure any gaps in information available were filled. This clearly links to the proposed duty on local authorities to promote democracy, which will require them to provide and promote co-ordinated information about how to become a councillor and take on civic roles as well as opportunities to influence decision making.
- 10 **The LGA, IDeA and Leadership Centre for Local Government should make greater use of positive role models – including existing and former BAME women councillors and other women in public life – to encourage more BAME women to step forward.** This might involve promoting the work of these councillors in the regional and national press, making good use of case studies, inviting them to speak at high profile events, celebrating success etc.

## 6 Next Steps and Conclusion

Much has been achieved during the lifetime of the taskforce, but to effect real and lasting change it is essential the initiatives of the past year continue to be built upon. In addition to the recommendations set out in chapter 5, this will involve the ongoing commitment and engagement of taskforce members, councillors, our strategic partners and the other organisations who have shared our commitment to improving representation of BAME women in local government.

The taskforce's programme of work has been far-reaching. With the continued commitment of central and local government and the support of political parties it will leave a lasting legacy. The active involvement of political parties is key, and their commitment to this agenda going forward is essential. The continued support from each of the main parties is testament to the desire to effect real change.

Through our programme of events we have directly reached nearly 1,100 women, giving them a greater understanding of the challenges and rewards being a councillor brings and inspiring 70% of those completing the feedback questionnaire to say they were more likely put themselves forward as a result of attending an event.

Through the taskforce, Operation Black Vote is running a councillor-shadowing scheme in partnership with councils, involving 60 women being mentored by current councillors and given skills training. A further 50 women are studying Community Leadership. Women who participate in the shadowing and community leadership schemes will become community advocates and champions, inspiring other BAME women to step forward.

To further embed the work of the taskforce, GEO is developing a toolkit which will be available on-line to enable public and third sector organisations to organise BAME gender specific events to raise awareness and encourage more women to get involved in public life. The pack will include a format and a variety of templates such as an agenda/programme, presentations and a description of the process used to reach BAME women and get them to attend events. This should be made available on the GEO website and others interested in hosting this information.

Despite the fact that our formal work programme is complete, the taskforce intends to remain a group for a set period of time on a voluntary basis. Much has been achieved, but to effect real change and ensure BAME women have the opportunity to contribute to public life it is essential the various actions and initiatives continue to be built upon. We will, therefore, make ourselves available to engage with key government departments – such as GEO, Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Communities and Local Government (CLG) – on issues around civic participation. We will also review the impact of taskforce initiatives and recommendations at set intervals.

All these measures will help ensure work continues on increasing BAME women's participation in public life after the official lifetime of the taskforce. A full evaluation of our work is scheduled for Spring 2010.

Over the past 17 months, we have been privileged to meet with so many motivated, ambitious and passionate BAME women with the potential to contribute a wealth of experience and ideas to public life. We cannot continue to squander this talent. We must all work together to improve BAME women's representation in public life. Our democracy will be much the richer for it.

# 7 Appendices

- 1 Terms of reference
- 2 Biographies
- 3 Taskforce partners and other useful contacts
- 4 List of events
- 5 Summary of response rates by event
- 6 Demographics
  - Table i and ii – Ethnicity
  - Table iii – Age
  - Table iv – Religion
  - Table v – Disability

# Appendix 1

## **Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Women Councillors' Taskforce**

### **Terms of reference**

#### ***Objective***

1. To increase the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women local councillors.

#### ***Rationale***

2. BAME women currently make up less than 1% of councillors (approximately 168). To be more representative of the population this should be nearer 1000. The taskforce will aim to make councillors more representative of the communities they serve.

#### ***Mechanism***

3. The taskforce will be cross party. It will take account of the findings of the independent Councillors Commission to ensure programmes are put in place to increase the numbers of BAME women councillors.
4. It will consider practical ways to increase awareness through outreach activities; build confidence and skills; encourage more BAME women to step forward to become local councillors; improve the culture of political parties; and reduce disadvantage and stereotyping from within and outside BAME communities.

#### ***Strategic partnerships***

5. The taskforce will establish a network of strategic partners to support the delivery of its aims. This will involve working closely with Local Government Association, local authorities, IDeA, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Trade Union Congress, Fawcett Society, Operation Black Vote, Electoral Reform Society and the Women's National Commission.
6. Ex officio support will be provided by the Fawcett Society, Operation Black Vote and the office of Baroness Uddin.

#### ***Support and governance***

7. The taskforce will last for 12 months, with an option to review and extend this.
8. The work of the taskforce will be supported by a secretariat based in the Government Equalities Office. The Chair of the taskforce will report regularly to the Ministers for Women and Equalities and agree the taskforce work programme. A cross GEO, CLG and MoJ project sponsorship board will be set up to provide governance.

9. The taskforce will produce progress reports after 6 months, and 12 months to outline achievements made in delivering its objectives.

***Taskforce membership criteria***

- Expertise in local politics and decision making, including holding or having held office as a local councillor;
- Available to attend regular (at least quarterly) taskforce meetings for a period of 12 to 18 months;
- Ability, time and opportunity to champion the need for more BAME women councillors, and to mentor and offer advice;
- Ability to identify and engage with relevant stakeholders within and outside the Government Equalities Office;
- Time and willingness to take forward and drive actions from these meetings;
- Ability to act with integrity and respect the confidentiality of the information supplied to and discussed by the taskforce.

***Budget***

10. A budget will be allocated. It will include travel and subsistence claims, fees for the Chair and an outreach programme. Additional support will be provided by the strategic partners.

# Appendix 2

## Biographies of taskforce members



### ***Baroness Uddin – Chair***

A staunch advocate for social justice, human rights and equality for more than two decades, Baroness Uddin began her professional career as a community worker in the East End of London, supporting vulnerable women and children. In 1990 she was elected as a Labour councillor to Tower Hamlets Council where she served for eight years, becoming deputy leader in 1992. Since entering the House of Lords in 1998 as the first female Muslim peer, Baroness Uddin has continued to support projects and initiatives which promote women's participation in civic society and community cohesion. Baroness Uddin has served on the Select Committee on European Affairs and chaired several governments Task Forces. Born in Bangladesh and brought up in England, she is married to Mr Komar Uddin, they have four sons, one daughter and a grandson.



### ***Carol Francis – former Labour councillor, Gloucester City Council***

Carol Francis was the first black woman to be elected to Gloucester Council and served for seven years holding a number of roles including chair of the scrutiny committee and vice chair of the Labour group. She currently works part-time for Gloucestershire County Council as well as being a local magistrate and one of the directors of a local community radio station aimed at the BAME community. Carol is Black British.



### ***Councillor Dr Anwara Ali – Labour Party, London Borough of Tower Hamlets***

Councillor Anwara Ali is a full-time GP and since 2006 has been an elected member of Tower Hamlets council where she has held a number of roles including Cabinet Member for Equalities, Employment and Skills. She cites, as one of her major achievements, helping to ensure Tower Hamlets receives a fair share of the opportunities generated by the Olympic Games. Councillor Ali is a British woman with parents of Bangladeshi heritage; she is married with her young son.



### ***Councillor Humaira Khan – Liberal Democrat Party, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead***

Humaira Khan was first elected to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in May 2003 and sits on committees concerned with Maidenhead development control, crime and disorder and licensing. She was attracted to standing as a councillor to become the voice of her community, to deliver change and to act as a positive role model. Humaira is also a magistrate and works as a social support worker in the field of mental health. Humaira is a British Pakistani.





***Councillor Lurline Champagnie – Conservative Party, London Borough of Harrow***

Lurline has been a councillor in the London Borough of Harrow since 1986. She was the first black councillor in a council chamber of 63 and was Mayor in 2004/05. Recently, she was one of the Conservative nominees for the Mayor for London. Now retired, Lurline was previously a director of a health care company, a consultant nurse specialist and the proprietor/manager of a residential care home for the elderly. Lurline is British Caribbean.



***Councillor Maya de Souza – Green Party, London Borough of Camden***

Maya has been a councillor on Camden Council for two years. Her keen interest in social and environmental issues and belief that local government has an important role to play in dealing with these attracted her to the role. She has championed proposals on sustainability; for example, proposing that Camden retrofits some existing properties to zero-carbon standards. She works full time as a senior manager in the civil service. Maya is Indian Kenyan.



***Councillor Meral Ece OBE – Liberal Democrat Party, London Borough of Islington***

Meral Ece was elected to Hackney Council in 1994 – the first Turkish woman to be elected a councillor in the UK – and served for 8 years. She has been an Islington councillor since 2002 and has been awarded the OBE in the New Year Honours for her services to local government. Meral was Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care 2002-6, and has been Islington Council's Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee since 2007. She was appointed by Party Leader Nick Clegg MP, as Special Adviser for Community Cohesion, and BME Communities. Meral has worked in the public sector for many years. She is now a consultant working with local councils.



***Councillor Mia Jones – Liberal Democrat Party, Chester City Council***

Mia Jones has been a Councillor since 2000 until 2009 and was a Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing in Chester. She stood as parliamentary candidate in the 2005 General Election and is a mentor to others who wish to stand for office. The rewards of being an elected member of a council for Mia included the ability to influence decisions and drive forward issues which benefit the community. Mia is self employed in PR and marketing and her ethnic background is Chinese.



***Councillor Mimi Harker – Conservative Party, Chiltern District Council***

Mimi Harker has been a Councillor since 1999 and is Conservative Group Chair on her district council but calls herself the 'accidental politician'. She never had any intention of entering the world of politics but after a successful campaign against a developer which ended in victory in the High Courts of Justice, she was urged to stand for election. Mimi says her biggest challenge as a Councillor came from not having

had experience in politics and so having to learn new concepts and deal with elements of bureaucracy. She is a strong advocate of more women entering public life, particularly those with BAME backgrounds. Mimi is of Indian descent.



***Councillor Salma Yaqoob – Respect Party, Birmingham City Council***

Salma has been a Councillor since 2006. She became active in local politics after being involved in the anti war movement. Being an Asian woman and a mother of three young children she is very visible in her locality. She recognises that she can also act as a positive role model for many younger Asian women who, sadly, see too few women like themselves in decision-making positions. She is really keen that young people and women get their voices heard. Salma has postponed work on her PhD so that she can dedicate herself to her demanding councilor's role and her extended family. She is British Pakistani.



***Councillor Svetlana Rodgers – Liberal Democrat Party, Scarborough Borough Council***

Svetlana Rodgers was first elected as a Councillor in May 2007. She stood for election because she wanted to change people's thinking about local politics and, in particular, about a woman's place in politics. Svetlana was born in mid Russia and first arrived in the UK in 1997 to study English, meeting her future husband. They married in 1999 and moved to Scarborough where she worked in human resources for a large hotel group. Her daughter, Alexandra, was born in 2003. Svetlana is currently undertaking a 3-year degree course in Business and Management at Hull University as a full time student.



***Neelam Bakshi – former Labour councillor, Strathclyde Regional Council***

Neelam was a Councillor on Strathclyde Regional Council from 1990 until local government reorganisation in 1996. During that time she chaired a number of committees as well as groups on race and recruitment and women and decision-making.

Neelam was formerly a civil servant; she currently works freelance as a coach and training consultant, and holds two public appointments: non-legal member of Employment Tribunals and non-executive director of NHS Health Scotland.

Her ethnic background is Indian.



***Thea Khamis – former Labour councillor, Derwentside District Council***

Thea was a Councillor for 12 years, from May 1987 to May 1999 and stood for election because she wanted to work to turn the local council into a more open, more responsive and more accessible organisation. Unfortunately, balancing work and council duties eventually proved impossible for Thea. Thea works full time in Further Education and is a University and College Union branch officer. She describes her background as Palestinian Arab.



***Yvonne Jardine – former Labour councillor, Swansea City and Borough Council***

Working with the Minority Ethnic Women’s Network and other organisations in the voluntary sector, Yvonne gained a good insight into the needs of women and local people. When her children grew up and left home she realised her passion for helping others and became a Councillor, serving on Swansea City and Borough Council between June 2004 and May 2008. Yvonne is of Afro-Caribbean background and came to the UK from Antigua.



***Councillor Lorna Campbell – Lambeth Borough Council***

Lorna has been a Lambeth Councillor since 2006. She is a Councillor for Princes Ward in the north of the borough with current additional responsibility as Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing. She was involved in the development of Black Londoners Forum and served on executive for two years and on the council of London Civic Forum. She has also been Chair of Governors for a Lambeth Primary school. Her working background is in communications and customer services. Lorna became involved in politics in the late 90s when she became sabbatical Student Union President for Lambeth College and hasn’t looked back since.



***Councillor Manjula Sood – Leicester City Council***

Manjula Sood was elected to Leicester City Council in October 1996 and is currently Deputy Mayor of the city. She stood following the death of her Councillor husband when she was asked to consider standing for his seat on the council. Her achievements as a role model for other women were recognised when she became the first Asian female to receive the Leicester and Rutland Women of the Year Award for 2006. Prior to her political career, Councillor Sood was a school teacher for almost 20 years. She motivated her son to get involved in local democracy. Her ethnic background is Indian.



***Councillor Sherma Batson MBE DL – Stevenage Borough Council***

Sherma Batson has been a County Councillor since 2001 and a Borough Councillor since 2004. She is Chair of her Local Area Committee, a member of the Planning Committee at Stevenage Borough Council and a member of Stevenage Local Strategic Partnership Board. Sherma is keen to encourage more women and people from minority groups to consider standing for councils but wants to help demystify the process. She was not a natural politician herself and she believes that anyone who cares wants to make a difference can enter public life with help and genuine ongoing support from experienced mentors and role models. Sherma is of Caribbean descent.

# Appendix 3

## **Taskforce strategic partners and other useful contacts including political parties**

### **Taskforce strategic partners**

#### ***Fawcett Society***

[www.fawcettsociety.org.uk](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk)

Campaigns for equality between women and men in the UK on pay, pensions, poverty, justice and politics.

#### ***Improvement and Development Agency for local government***

[www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)

National adviser to councils on equality and cohesion.

#### ***Electoral Reform Society***

[www.electoral-reform.org.uk](http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk)

Campaigns for electoral reform to deliver a fairer, more responsive political system for women in the UK.

#### ***London Councils – ‘Be a Councillor’ Campaign***

[www.beacouncillor.org.uk](http://www.beacouncillor.org.uk)

Working with Capital Ambition and the Leadership Centre for Local Government on the *Be a Councillor* Campaign which is about making people more aware of the work of their local council, and councillors, with a view to encouraging more people to consider standing in the 2010 elections.

#### ***Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)***

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

Working to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality, protect human rights and to build good relations, ensuring that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.

#### ***Local Government Association (LGA)***

[www.lga.gov.uk](http://www.lga.gov.uk)

The LGA exists to promote better local government, working with and our member authorities to realise a shared vision of local government that enables local people to shape a distinctive and better future for their locality and its communities.

#### ***Centre for Women and Democracy (cfwd).***

[www.cfwd.org.uk](http://www.cfwd.org.uk)

The Centre for Women & Democracy is an independent, non-partisan organisation working to increase the representation of women at all levels of public life.

***National Association of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Councillors (NABAEMC)***

[www.nabaemc.org.uk](http://www.nabaemc.org.uk)

A Cross-Party-Association for BAME Local Councillors throughout the UK; supports members with training, seminars, national conferences and networking opportunities.

***Operation Black Vote (OBV)***

[www.obv.org.uk](http://www.obv.org.uk)

The home of black politics.

***RADAR (the disability network)***

[www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk)

National organisation run by disabled people. Bookshop, mailing list and email chat service. Links to other disability sites.

***Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Enterprises***

[www.solaceenterprises.com](http://www.solaceenterprises.com)

SOLACE Enterprises delivers a comprehensive range of tailored and integrated consulting and resourcing services to the public sector.

***National Black Women's Network***

[www.nbwn.org](http://www.nbwn.org)

The NBWN is a non-profit organisation dedicated to raising the status and position of black women in all walks of life.

***Women's National Commission***

[www.thewnc.org.uk](http://www.thewnc.org.uk)

An independent, advisory body that aims to ensure that women's views are taken into account by the government and are heard in public.

**Other useful contacts**

***National Muslim Women's Advisory Group***

Set up by the Department of Communities and Local Government, this group is running a civic participation project targeting those already involved in civic society as well as those considering it. More information can be found on their website.

***Appointments Commission***

[www.appointments.org.uk](http://www.appointments.org.uk)

Specialise in the recruitment, training and appraisal of people for board level public appointments to NHS bodies, ministerial advisory bodies and other arm's length bodies in England.

### ***Connecting Communities Plus***

[www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk)

The £18m Connecting Communities Plus grants programme (running from April 2006 – March 2009), is an integral part of the government's funding for activities which encourage and promote race equality and foster strong community relations.

### ***Councillors Commission***

[www.communities.gov.uk/councillorscommission](http://www.communities.gov.uk/councillorscommission)

Independent Commission on the role of local councillors, looking at the incentives and barriers to serving on councils.

### ***DirectGov***

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

Provides guidance on taking up public appointments, becoming a local councillor and becoming a school governor.

### ***Fabian Women's Network***

[www.fabianwomen@fabian-society.org.uk](mailto:www.fabianwomen@fabian-society.org.uk)

Promotes awareness of how political systems work, political education and networking of women interested in roles in public life.

### ***One Stop Shop for School Governors***

[www.sgoss.org.uk](http://www.sgoss.org.uk)

A small, highly successful charity, which recruits volunteers to become governors in schools across England.

### ***Public Appointment Vacancies***

[www.publicappts-vacs.gov.uk](http://www.publicappts-vacs.gov.uk)

Public appointments are open to everyone, from all backgrounds and every walk of life. This website provides details of vacancies in England and for public bodies that operate throughout the UK.

### ***Women Take Part (Changes)***

[sue.gorbing@changesuk.net](mailto:sue.gorbing@changesuk.net)

Research to establish practical ways in which grass roots women can become engaged in governance and decision making, in both community and public life.



## **Political contacts**

### ***Conservative Party***

Caroline Spelman MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA  
[caroline@carolinespelman.com](mailto:caroline@carolinespelman.com)

Theresa May MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA  
[mayt@parliament.uk](mailto:mayt@parliament.uk)

Liz St Clair  
Tel: 020 7984 8083  
[Liz.StClair@Conservatives.com](mailto:Liz.StClair@Conservatives.com)

### ***Labour Party***

Sarah Mulholland  
National Women's and Equalities Officer  
[sarah\\_mulholland@new.labour.org.uk](mailto:sarah_mulholland@new.labour.org.uk)

### ***Independent Party***

Maggie Sullivan (Independent)  
Tel: 0207 664 3206  
Fax: 0207 664 3323  
[independent.group@lga.gov.uk](mailto:independent.group@lga.gov.uk)

### ***Liberal Democrat Party***

Simon Hughes MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA  
[simon@simonhughes.org.uk](mailto:simon@simonhughes.org.uk)  
[hughess@parliament.uk](mailto:hughess@parliament.uk)  
[info@simonhughes.org.uk](mailto:info@simonhughes.org.uk)



Cllr Meral Ece  
[Meral.ece@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Meral.ece@islington.gov.uk)

Issan Ghazni  
National Diversity Adviser  
Tel: 020 7227 1319  
Mob: 07989568885  
[Issan.ghazni@libdems.org.uk](mailto:Issan.ghazni@libdems.org.uk)

Vicky Booth  
Co-ordinator Campaign for Gender Balance  
(Parliamentary candidates)  
Tel: 020 7340 4992  
[vicky.booth@libdems.org.uk](mailto:vicky.booth@libdems.org.uk)

***Green Party***

Jean Lambert MEP  
[jeanlambert@greenmeps.org.uk](mailto:jeanlambert@greenmeps.org.uk)

Caroline Lucas MEP  
[carolinelucas@greenmeps.org.uk](mailto:carolinelucas@greenmeps.org.uk)

Cllr Maya de Souza (Green Party)  
Tel: 0207 974 2792  
[mayadesouza@hotmail.com](mailto:mayadesouza@hotmail.com)

***Respect Party***

Cllr Salma Yaqoob  
Tel: 07739 043 531  
Council Tel: 01213 031 111  
[Salma.Yaqoob@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Salma.Yaqoob@birmingham.gov.uk)

# Appendix 4

## List of events

Host and Speakers	Date, Venue & Nos. Attended
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Dr Anwara Ali</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Barbara Follett MP and Deputy Minister for Women; Neelam Bakshi, Cllrs Shirley Marshall and Lurline Champagnie.</p>	<p>23 July 2008 Rich Mix, Tower Hamlets: 37</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Salma Yaqoob</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Francine Fernandes; Carol Coombes CEO; Cllrs: Karen Hamilton and Paulette Hamilton</p>	<p>17 October 2008 City Centre Suite, Birmingham: 139 <b>6.00pm – 8.30pm</b></p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Lurline Champagnie</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllr David Ashton; Cllrs: Mimi Harker and Nana Asante</p>	<p>21 November 2008 Harrow Civic Centre: 57</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Former Cllr Yvonne Jardine</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Nia Griffith MP, Salma Abbasi; Mari Rees;</p>	<p>12 December 2008 Guildhall, Swansea: 48</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Meral Ece</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllrs James Kempton; Jyoti Vaja; Anjana Patel; Ruth Polling; Berenice Bernice Vanier; Mouna Hamitouche</p>	<p>9 January 2009 Islington Town hall: 109</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Sarah Veale</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Dinah Cox; Cllrs Anwara Ali and Lurline Champagnie</p>	<p>3rd February GEO/TUC London Congress House: 42 <b>(6.30pm – 9.00pm)</b></p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Former Cllr Neelam Bakshi;</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Angela O'Hagan; Cllr Paulette Hamilton; Loretta Mordi; Ann Henderson</p>	<p>13 February 2009 Office of Lord Provost, Glasgow: 50</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Former Cllr Carol Francis;</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllrs Barry Dare; Lorna Campbell, Lady Mavis Dunrossil; Parmjit Dhanda MP</p>	<p>19 February 2009 Gloucestershire City Council: 50 <b>(6.00pm – 8.30pm)</b></p>

<p><b>Host:</b> Former Cllr Thea Khamis</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllr David Faulkner; Baroness Sandip Verma; Ranjana Bell; Cllr Lurline Champagnie,</p>	<p>20 March 2009 Newcastle Town hall: 41</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Manjula Sood</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllr Ross Willmott; Sheila Lock; Liz Reid-Jones; Anita Patel; Cllrs Sarah Russell and Ramilla Shah</p>	<p>17 April 2009 Leicester Town hall: 77</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Maya de Souza</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllr Keith Moffitt; Dame Jane Roberts; Simon Woolley; Cllr Geethika Jayatilaka</p>	<p>24 April 2009 Camden Town hall: 63</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Lorna Campbell</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllrs Nicholas Stanton; Eliza Mann; Mimi Harker; Dora Dixon Fyle; Dawn Butler MP; Harriet Harman QC, MP</p>	<p>21 May 2009 South London, Harris Academy, Peckham: 116 <b>(6.00pm – 8.30pm)</b></p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Former Councillor Mia Jones</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllrs Warren Bradley and Anna Rothery; Amina Ismail; Maria Eagle MP</p>	<p>29 May 2009 Liverpool Town hall: 51 <b>(6.00pm – 8.30pm)</b></p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllrs Mimi Harker and Cllr Humaira Khan</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllrs John Warder; Meral Ece and Denise Headley</p>	<p>26 June 2009 Chiltern District Council with Windsor &amp; Maidenhead: 68</p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Cllr Sherma Batson</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllrs Joan Bailey; Jacqui Burnett; Anjana Patel; Dr Nazia Khanum; Kate Belinis CEO.</p>	<p>17 July 2009 Luton Town hall: 75 <b>(6.00pm – 8.30pm)</b></p>
<p><b>Host:</b> Adeeba Malik</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b> Cllrs Dale Smith; Naveeda Ikram and Alison Lowe; Marcia Churley</p>	<p>22 July 2009 Bradford Town hall: 52</p>

# Appendix 5

## Summary of response rates by event

Event	Date	Nos. Attended	No. Feedback Forms	% Completing Feedback Forms
Tower Hamlets	23 July 08	37	25	68%
Birmingham	17 Oct 08	139	50	35%
Harrow	21 Nov 08	57	38	47%
Swansea	12 Dec 08	48	35	73%
Islington	9 Jan 09	109	59	56%
TUC	3 Feb 09	42	25	60%
Glasgow	13 Feb 09	50	22	47%
Gloucester	19 Feb 09	50	29	63%
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	20 Mar 09	41	26	67%
Leicester	17 April 09	77	45	61%
Camden	24 April 09	63	24	41%
South London	21 May 09	116	59	48%
Liverpool	29 May 09	51	30	63%
Chilterns	26 June 09	68	21	32%
Luton	17 July 09	75	48	66%
Bradford	22 July 09	52	33	65%
<b>Total</b>		<b>1075</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>53%</b>

# Appendix 6

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Table i and ii: Ethnic group

What is your ethnic group?	No.	%
Asian or British Asian	168	30
Mixed	38	7
Chinese	8	1
Black or Black British	261	47
White	55	10
Other	23	4
Do not wish to disclose	7	1
<b>Base = 560</b>		

What is your ethnic group?	No.	%
Asian or British Asian	168	30
Bangladeshi	24	4
Indian	69	12
Pakistani	65	12
Asian Other	10	2
Mixed	38	7
White & Asian	5	1
White & Black African	9	2
White & Black Caribbean	16	3
Mixed Other	8	1
Chinese	8	1
Black or Black British	261	47
Black African	103	18
Black Caribbean	147	26
Black Other	11	2
White	55	10
White British	39	7
Irish	1	0
White Other	15	3
Other	23	4
Gypsy	2	0
Other ethnic group	21	4
Do not wish to disclose	7	1
<b>Base = 560</b>		

**Table iii: Age**

What is your age group?	No.	%
18–24	28	5
25–34	109	21
35–44	157	30
45–64	221	42
65+	8	2
<b>Base = 523</b>		

**Table v: Disability**

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	No.	%
No	465	82
Yes	60	11
Do not wish to disclose	40	7
<b>Base = 565</b>		

**Table iv: Religion**

What is your religion?	No.	%
Christian	229	48
Muslim	119	25
No religion	45	9
Hindu	28	6
Do not wish to disclose	22	5
Sikh	16	3
Any other religion	12	3
Buddhist	4	1
Jewish	3	1
<b>Base = 478</b>		