



Community Cohesion and Social Inclusion: Strengthening Partnership Working Between Local Authorities and Voluntary and Faith Groups

A Public Policy Exchange Symposium

Wednesday 11th December 2013

10:15am – 4:30pm

Central London

Public Policy Exchange holds regular interactive seminars which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate and networking. These special events offer local practitioners, civil servants and other stakeholders not only an insight into current policy thinking, but also the opportunity to feed into future development across all areas of public policy.

Community Cohesion and Social Inclusion:

Strengthening Partnership Working Between Local Authorities and Voluntary and Faith Groups

Overview

The Equality Act 2010 and the subsequent publication *'Equality strategy: building a fairer Britain'* highlighted Government aims to devolve power to local communities and promote greater participation and inclusion within a public, political and community context.

It is hoped that this will underpin the Government's policies on the Big Society, integration and localism. Furthermore, with 'religion and belief' included in the Equality Act, there is a greater impetus for councils to work in partnership with voluntary and community sector organisations (VCS) and faith based organisations (FBOs) to achieve mutual policy goals, service delivery, social action objectives, as well as tackling the macro government agendas on partnership, community empowerment and countering violent extremism.

Taking the lead from this, in August 2012 the Local Government Association (LGA) published *'Faith and belief in partnership - Effective collaboration with local government'*, which summarised key strategies and methods of effective partnership and engagement used by councils and faith and humanist partners in four English case study areas.

The LGA report also acknowledged that although Christianity remained the major UK religion, the UK as a whole was recognised as having a greater diversity of world religions than any other European Union country. Whilst there are challenges, the opportunity to partner and engage with the VCS and councils mixed with the right attitudes can enable us to better deal with societal goals as well as enhancing participatory and representative democracy.

This special symposium provides an invaluable opportunity for local authorities, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and other statutory partners to examine the Government's strategy on community cohesion, integration and engagement and discuss the future of partnership working between policy-makers, practitioners, faith groups and VCS to promote social inclusion and achieve wider societal goals.

“Religious and belief issues have become increasingly significant for councils and their partners in recent years, in part due to the inclusion of 'religion and belief' in the Equality Act as well as government agendas on partnership, community empowerment and preventing violent extremism. The coalition Government's policies on localism, the Big Society, integration and deficit-reduction suggest a continued, if not increased, need for councils to work in dialogue and partnership with the voluntary, community and faith sectors...”

- *'Faith and belief in partnership - Effective collaboration with local government'*,
Local Government Association, August 2012

Accommodation

Through our partnership with HotelMap, we are able to offer our delegates heavily discounted hotel rates at a wide range of London hotels. To view hotel availability and rates and to book online, visit www.HotelMap.com/M5NUZ/



Alternatively, if you would like to book your accommodation by phone, you can call **Daniel Spinner at HotelMap**, on **020 7292 2335** quoting **Special Reference Code M5NUZ**.

Why Attend?

- ✓ **Explore effective partnership working between councils, secular VCS organisations and faith groups in the context of resources, capacity and support**
- ✓ **Discuss how local authority officers can best identify and engage with those well placed within the VCS, faith and belief communities**
- ✓ **Consider the recommendations from the LGA report 'Faith and belief in partnership' including the role of VCS infrastructure organisations**
- ✓ **Examine how to achieve policy goals without alienating those of no religious faith**
- ✓ **Assess the future direction of the relationship between councils and faith and belief groups from its current dynamic**

Who Should Attend?

- Local Authorities
- Local Authority Officers and Councillors
- Relevant Government Departments
- The Advice Sector
- Voluntary Organisations
- Charities
- Community Organisations
- Faith Based Organisations
- Family Support Officers
- Community Development Teams
- Community Involvement Officers
- Community Engagement Officers
- Customer Involvement Managers
- The Police
- Community Cohesion Officers
- Equal Opportunities Officers
- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Practitioners
- Race Equality Councils
- Race Equality Practitioners
- Community Relations Advisers
- Refugee and Asylum Support Officers
- Social Inclusion Officers
- Neighbourhood Renewal Officers
- Campaigning Organisations
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- Hate Crime Units
- Third Sector Practitioners
- Welfare Rights Organisations
- Citizen's Advice
- Academics and Researchers

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Programme

- 09:30** Registration and Morning Refreshments
- 10:15** Chair's Welcome and Introduction
- 10:30** **Panel Session One:**
Partnership and Engagement – Overcoming Barriers to Deliver Social Action Goals
- Identifying who to engage within the VCS, faith and belief communities – ensuring local authority officers use the right criteria and have access to the best data
 - Engaging with secular groups and overcoming the challenges which this entails
 - Initiating contact and building trust – exploring effective strategies which are currently used
 - How do you achieve policy goals without alienating those of no religious faith?
 - Resources, capacity and support – sharing best practice on the difficulties of effective partnership working between councils, secular VCS organisations and faith sectors
- 11:15** Morning Refreshments
- 11:30** **Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel One**
- 12:30** Networking Lunch
- 13:30** **Panel Session Two:**
Community Cohesion and Social Inclusion – The Future Role of Policy-Makers, Practitioners, Faith Groups and VCS
- National government – explore opportunities and challenges in the present policy context for councils and their partners
 - Discuss the role of local authority leaders, councillors and officers
 - Assess the future direction of the relationship between councils and faith and belief groups from its present dynamic
 - Consider the recommendations from the LGA report 'Faith and Belief in partnership' including the role of VCS infrastructure organisations
- 14:15** Afternoon Refreshments
- 14:30** **Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel Two**
- 15:30** Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
- 15:40** Networking Reception
- 16:30** Close

Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice

Marketing and Exhibition Opportunities

We offer a range of opportunities to enable your organisation to raise its profile and communicate with key decision makers in the public sector.

For further information please contact **Parvin Madahar** on **020 3137 8630** or email **parvin.madahar@publicpolicyexchange.co.uk**

Event Details

- Date:** Wednesday 11th December 2013
Time: 10:15am – 4:30pm
Venue: Central London

Forthcoming Events

The Future of Local Libraries and Cultural Services
5th November 2013

Transforming Accident and Emergency Services: Shaping a Framework Fit for the Future
6th November 2013



Transforming Early Years Settings: The New Inspections Framework
7th November 2013

Improving Road Safety: Saving Lives and Protecting Responsible Drivers
12th November 2013

Zero Tolerance: Eradicating Female Genital Mutilation
13th November 2013

Sustainability in Housing: Bringing Empty Properties Back into Use
19th November 2013

Preventing Deaths in Police Custody
21st November 2013

Strengthening the Role of Careers Guidance in Schools and Colleges
21st November 2013

Fairness and Transparency: Clamping Down on Rogue Bailiffs and Debt Collectors
26th November 2013

Mental Health and Young People: Implementing the Suicide Prevention Strategy
27th November 2013

Recruiting Non-UK Nationals through the Points Based System: Ensuring Your Organisation is Compliant
27th November 2013

Improving Responses to Rape and Sexual Assault: Delivering a Victim-Centred System
28th November 2013

Meeting the Challenge of Dementia: Raising Awareness and Improving Care Standards
28th November 2013

Raising Animal Welfare Standards at the Time of Slaughter or Killing
3rd December 2013

The Future of NHS Commissioning: Implementing the New Structural Framework
4th December 2013