

Voice4Change England

A Year of Transition



SUMMARY
2012 -2013



Voice4Change England

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Ms Chandavarkar

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Mr Kirit Mistry

Director's Report



On joining Voice4 Change as a staff member, one of the first questions you confront is to explain to friends and associates what it does. The short answer is... it's an infrastructure support organisation for the BME voluntary and community organisations, the response to this assertion by those that reside outside the third sector, is usually the immediate reply 'What does that mean?' A perfectly reasonable response, to which this brief survey of some of the organisations highlights over last year seeks to answer visually, graphically and with a hopefully, a minimum of professional jargon.

Hard times features in every aspect of the community and charitable sector. NCVO in May 2013 relayed that future reductions in public spending are likely to happen primarily in areas which are key sources of income for charities – with local government expected to be particularly hard hit. If these cuts are passed on proportionately to charities, the sector's income will be £1.7bn (12 per cent) lower in 2017/18 than it was in 2010/11, a reduction that could end up being as large as (15 per cent)

Looking back over the last year, V4CE has certainly done its best to straddle the need to continue to implement its work programme branching out into sector areas, supporting other organisations through difficult times, while also looking to secure its own financial base.

We are currently in discussion with a number of potential partners with a view to exploring options for merging our respective operations. While it is still far too early to name the parties

involved, I can say that the reasons for going down this road have been debated in depth by the V4CE Board of Trustees and they in turn are clear that they will only conclude any agreement on the basis that it will strengthen and BME infrastructure support and grow V4CE membership long-term.

We'll keep you informed of developments and will be looking to get your feedback and views to inform our decisions in going forward. Please keep up with you emails, Facebook comments, tweeting and phone calls.

Keep in touch.

Kunle Olulode

Director Voice4Change

Our Activities



Alternative Perspectives Conference

In the build up to the launch of our policy document examining the argument for the continuation for the growth of specialist BME services, in April 2012 we organised a conference, 'Alternative Perspectives' in partnership with London Irish Centre, Federation of Irish Societies and the Afiya Trust on culturally sensitive health and social care services. This allowed organisations to come together and share best practice and policy issues for the sector across healthcare. This was attended by 67 people from 38 organisations.

At the end of August, former director Vandna Gohil published an article in 'Philanthropy in the UK' highlighting the changing relationship within BME communities, where the move from being recipients of charity is shifting to becoming significant donors— particularly in relation to sending money abroad. However, there was a desperate need for more research to establish the extent of BME giving something that so far nobody has taken the time to map with any serious research.



Red Tape Challenge

May 2012 the government review of the public sector equality duty set out to establish whether the duty was operating as intended and consider options and recommendations for changes, or improvements in the way the duty operates.

V4CE shared the view of partners NAVCA that the PSED is not red tape; 'we see an imperfect but crucial piece of legislation that ensures public services are fair and are fit for diverse communities. Although the duty is for the public sector, it also applies to voluntary organisations which are carrying out public functions on behalf of a public authority.' Stated in our joint press release.

For V4CE, good equality practice makes good business sense for private and for voluntary organisations. It makes them better employers, it improves their ability to meet the needs of potential customers, and it can help them to be better placed to deliver public services.

Our Activities



Parliamentary Events

In September 2012 V4CE was sad to see one of its founding Directors Vandna Gohil leave to join Voluntary Action Leicester. Vandna was a stalwart of V4CE development from its conception to becoming a national charity and a strategic support to the BME third sector.

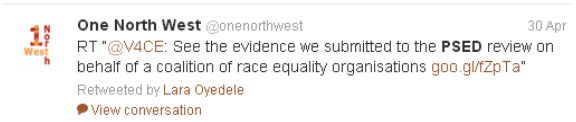
One of her last engagements took place at the House of Commons Sept 4th to launch our annual Parliamentary Event. Voice4Change brought together Members of Parliament, voluntary and community sector partners, policy makers and funders to discuss how public services can be delivered most effectively during these difficult economic times and launched two new publications on how this might be achieved. The first considered the notion of diversity in the range of providers that could offer a real choice and tailored services to our diverse communities. The second looked at the impact of recession on BME women’s employment opportunities.



Public Sector Equality Duty

June 2012 V4CE put out a call for evidence to its members and relating to the effectiveness of the PSED. V4CE has been instrumental in maintaining a collective voice of concern on the issue of the PSED.

As a follow up , we also ran an excellent ‘media masterclass’ for organisations, led by Joseph Harker, Guardian Assistant Commissioning Comment Editor. The aim of the event was to give advice on engaging media in policy campaigns.



Our Activities



Membership in the Arts

Almost immediately after our last AGM we began to consider how to refine our membership offer through and with our on-going relationship with national arts infrastructure organisation Voluntary Arts UK, an organisation dedicated to amateur arts. V4CE established this partnership to look at how we could support each other and disseminate information about our freely available activities and services. By April 2013 plans were firmly laid to launch the partnership alongside Hackney's Black & Ethnic Minority Arts (BEMA).



Voice4Change England @V4CE 6 Jun
#apeoplesart why are BME arts orgs important? How can @V4CE and @voluntaryarts help you? come share your thoughts on our magic whiteboard!
Expand



Voice4Change England @V4CE 6 Jun
Great to see such a broad range of organisations & performers here, from amateur classical musicians, to spoken word artists
#apeoplesart
Expand



Strengthening Voices

Initiated under V4CE Strengthening Voices programme and stemming from a desire to establish a coordinated approach to race equality, we continue to host the BME Race Equality Coalition at V4CE. Recently renamed as CORE. This alliance of organisations was brought together by Voice4Change England for a 2 day summit meeting at Selsdon, Croydon, in April 2011. There it was able to thrash out basic principles of understanding and a basic policy structure to address immediate concerns. Through its development over the last year it has also continued to engage in campaigning and research activities.

In February 2013, funders Joseph Rowntree Community Trust, Esmee Fairburn and Barrow Cadbury agreed to fund a new development stage of CORE with a view to establishing the network formally in the autumn of 2013 with a complete structure and business plan.



2012 London Olympics

The excitement and drama of 2012 London Olympics surpassed even the most optimistic expectations. The good feelings of unity and confidence lasted long after the closing ceremony. It also cast an important light on the role of volunteers and the dedicated, selfless contribution of voluntary organisations in shaping a successful games and perhaps equally important medal winning athletes. V4CE hosted with one of the great icons of track and field and the 1960 Civil Rights Movement, Tommie Smith. On Saturday 11th August, Voice4Change England presented a Return to Mexico City, featuring a first time screening in London of Return to Mexico City and Tommie Smith in a live Q&A session. Return to Mexico City is an award winning documentary narrated by actor Kiefer Sutherland about the lives of Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who shot to global fame during the 1968 Olympics for making a 'Human Rights protest' against racism in America.

Tommie spoke eloquently to the audience about the peaceful protest that himself and John Carlos performed. This was intended to show that Black people were no longer content to be subordinate

in a society that was still divided along racial lines. Tommie described this not just as a black power salute, but rather an anti-injustice salute,... one of people affirming their dignity.....a 'silent cry for freedom'. The power this image still holds today was evident through the reaction of those gathered in the presence of this symbolic legend.

Other Projects/Programmes

- The City Bridge funded Modelling Fair and Equitable Collaborations Project is now in its second year—as well as producing a report on Barriers to Collaboration we have been supporting groups who are looking to partner up and will producing further Guidelines and Framework documents in the new year.
- We have been working with Joseph Rowntree Foundation to run in-work poverty workshops and disseminate their research.

Looking Ahead

The long term future for V4CE will be determined in the early part of 2014. We are working hard to fund raise and bring in the necessary resources that we need continue with our aims. We believe there are exciting possibilities in redesigning infrastructure by moving closer to frontline service delivery, refining our membership offer, tailoring its content and being more sensitive to training development and support needs. We aim for:

- A better understanding of how the sector is changing for BME VCOs
- Financial consolidation
- Greater BME awareness of social enterprise opportunities particularly targeting young people
- Explore possibilities for merger

The Future for Voice4Change England



- Understanding how the sector is changing beyond problems of finance and resources
- Financial consolidation
- Push for greater awareness of social enterprise project amongst young people
- Possibilities for merger



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