



EAST OF ENGLAND FAITHS COUNCIL

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FAITH REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (LSP) BOARDS

February 2010

Every local authority in England must have a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). LSPs bring together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors at local level and their aim is 'to improve the quality of life of the local population by promoting partnership working and co-ordinating activities'. Although LSPs are not themselves statutory bodies many of the partners on an LSP do have a statutory duty to work together to develop and deliver the Local Area Agreement. All partnership organisations represented on an LSP should be aware of, and committed to, the LSP's policies, directions and undertakings.

Not all LSPs have a faith representative. It is the aim of the East of England Faiths Council (EEFC) to promote the value of faith representation; work towards such representation on every LSP; support representatives and their nominating inter faith bodies where these exist.

These guidelines on the role are intended to be useful to people representing faith communities on LSPs in the East of England. They are not meant to be prescriptive and will need to be adapted to your local context and regularly reviewed to take account of local changes. Individual LSPs may themselves offer induction packs and/or training for new representatives and these will be an invaluable aid to understanding your LSP's structure and operating practices.

Additional help can be given by the EEFC; contact Jenny Kartupelis or Priscilla Barlow on 01223 421606, email eefc@cambcatalyst.co.uk

Role and Responsibilities

The Faith Community Representative should:

Represent to the best of his/her ability and without bias the interests and concerns of all people of faith in the Local Authority area covered by the LSP, aiming to ensure that all faiths in the area are represented equally and fairly

Speak on behalf of faith groups on broad issues, and act as an facilitator for faith groups to speak for themselves on specific issues

Assist faith communities to develop and articulate their views and concerns and communicate these to the LSP

Keep him/herself well informed about issues of local interest and concern

Give regular feedback to, and receive input from, his'/her Local Inter Faith Organisation (LIFO)

Where such an organisation does not exist, establish, maintain and develop good contacts and channels of communication with local faith communities in order to seek their views, advice and support

Provide information and feedback to faith communities about the agenda and work of the LSP, via the LIFO if there is one

Ensure that the LSP takes the views and concerns of faith communities into consideration during its discussions and decision-making processes and contribute to decision-making on behalf of faith communities as appropriate

Receive and read all papers relating to the LSP and its work; attend its meetings (or arrange a substitute if appropriate and possible); operate within its policies, priorities and procedures

Play an active and constructive role in the work of the LSP, offering expertise and advice where appropriate and building relationships and mutual understanding with other LSP members

Participate as resources permit in theme groups, other sub-groups, task groups, consultations/events organised by the LSP and any reviews or evaluations of the LSP's performance

Promote the activities of the LSP and foster goodwill and support for it within faith communities

Liaise with the LSP supporting officers as appropriate

Maintain confidentiality and act with probity at all times.

Person specification:

Nomination by, and/or support of LIFO, where one exists

Respected by majority of faith communities, or willing to take the time to build knowledge and respect

Interest in community cohesion and local government

Understanding of the contribution faith communities can make to the establishment of sustainable communities

Good communication skills, with the ability to both listen and question

Relationship-building, 'bridge building' and networking skills

Willingness to apply personal experience/expertise to LSP activities

Ability to bring examples of good practice within faith communities to LSP activities

Ability to respect difference while promoting common ground