

How you can submit to the Democracy Review (BAME)

Although the deadline for individual submissions on BAME Labour is January 12th, but democracy is also about people acting collectively, and CLPs and ethnic minority forums can still make submissions after that. This document gives some brief guidance to BAME activists seeking to express their views on BAME Labour via their CLPs. The first thing to remember is that CLPs across the country operate differently (and this might be something further proposals and discussions on BAME Labour might need to address). Some CLPs have an ‘Ethnic Minority Officer’ or a ‘BAME Officer’ while others do not. In some instances this is down to the demography of the CLP, but not always. Even those with dedicated Ethnic Minority Officers may not have an ‘Ethnic Minorities Forum’ or ‘BAME Forum’. This guide addresses some obstacles you have to submit to the Democracy Review on behalf of your CLP or Ethnic Minorities Forum.

We do not have a BAME or Ethnic Minorities Officer:

Contact your CLP Secretary (contact details on your membership card) and discuss how the CLP can engage BAME members. They may already be planning an event or consultation, or be happy to discuss how you can help put something on or develop an idea to engage BAME members

We have a BAME/Ethnic Minorities Officer:

Find out if your BAME/Ethnic Minorities officer runs an Ethnic Minority/BAME forum, find out when the next one is and if the Democracy Review is on the agenda – if not, ask if it can be.

I am the BAME/Ethnic Minorities Officer but we do not have an established BAME/Ethnic Minorities Forum:

Speak to your Executive Committee and ask to hold a meeting or develop a method for Ethnic Minority/BAME members to be engaged in the Democracy Review. It does not have to be a formal meeting, it can be just to put down the ideas and concerns how better the party can engage BAME members of the party.

You may decide to set up an Ethnic Minorities/BAME forum. If so, then you need to have these discussions with your EC as there are implications for the CLP (reporting of finances etc). You will also have to register your Ethnic Minorities/BAME Forum with your Regional Director (Chapter 14, Clause IV, section 5 of the Labour party rule book).

To check if your CLP already has a registered Ethnic Minorities/BAME Forum, check initially with your CLP Secretary. You don’t have to register each time your CLP restarts one.

As you are acting on behalf of your CLP you need to discuss and agree with your EC how you will ensure that what you submit on behalf of the CLPs BAME Members is approved to be sent. For example you may bring it to the EC /GC/AMM to be presented and agreed.

There should be no real objection to what you're submitting, but it is good practice that if you're sending something in the CLPs name, the CLP are aware of it before it is submitted. There could be things locally you can change to improve the engagement and experience of BAME members.

I am the BAME/Ethnic Minorities Officer and we do have an established BAME/Ethnic Minorities Forum:

Great, so you could hold a meeting or decide at your meeting different ways to engage with BAME Members (i.e. an online survey or telephone survey). If you do decide on other ways, then make sure you agree this at your meeting and have methods of democratic accountability (i.e. reporting back the findings and final submission prior to sending it in).

BAME/Ethnic Minorities Forums do have rules they have to abide by, for example notice period to call a meeting and a minimum of 10 members attending to make any of those decisions. For full rules check Chapter 14 of the Labour Party rulebook, although do note that your actual local BAME/Ethnic Minorities Forum may have slightly different rules which have been adapted to make it work for your CLP (for example 7 day notice period is required in some CLPs not the 14 stated in the rulebook or 10 members is not viable in an area that has a very small percentage of BAME residents).

You will probably agree to vote on the final submission at your BAME/Ethnic Minorities Forum.

As your BAME/Ethnic Minorities Forums are acting on behalf of your CLP, you should be liaising with your fellow EC members to keep them updated what you are submitting. As your BAME/Ethnic Minorities Forum has its own democratic structure, it should not require a EC /GC/AMM vote/agreement.

What if we are unable to organise anything?

Then consider asking your CLP Secretary to circulate the link to the Democracy Review to members to submit individual submissions.