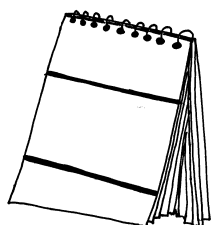


Equality Advisory Group

(This group looks at how all different communities in York can be given the same chances to take part in life and be included)



MINUTES



Date of meeting: 20 February 2012

Members of the Council who were at the meeting



**Sonja Crisp
(Chair)**



**Nigel
Ayre
(sub for
Councillor
Aspden)**



**Lynn
Jeffries**



**Chris Steward
(sub for
Councillor
Richardson)**



**Brian Watson
(sub for
Councillor
Barnes)**

People who were at the meeting representing community groups and as expert witnesses:



David Brown (York Access Group)

John Burgess (York Mental Health Forum)

Sue Lister (York Older People's Assembly)

David McCormick (Staff Equalities Reference Group)

Irene Mace (York Carers Forum)

Diane Roworth (York Independent Living Network)

Rita Sanderson (York Racial Equality Network)

Katie Smith (York Carers Forum)

Carolyn Suckling (Access Group)

Paul Wordsworth (Churches Together in York)

George Wright (Humanist)

1. Public Participation



A member of the public had asked to speak at the meeting. She said that there were problems with the taxi card scheme. The scheme in York was not as good as in other areas. The Chair said that she would look into this.

2. Minutes



The Group went through the minutes of the meeting of 24 November 2011.

3. Actions since last meeting



Details were given of the action taken after the last meeting:

Management Team

Meeting with the Council Management Team

EAG had met with the Council Management Team on 19 December 2011. The Group asked for a copy of the notes from the meeting. *(The notes are included with these minutes).*



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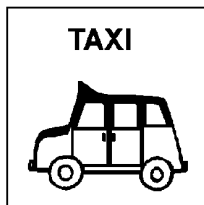


Bill Woolley
Director of City Strategy
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Older People's Champion



Members of the Group asked if Councillor Simpson-Laing was the new Older People's Champion. The Chair said that the Council had not appointed an Older People's Champion but Councillor Simpson-Laing was the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Adult Social Services. She would be the right person to contact for many of the issues that the Older People's Champion used to deal with.



Training for Taxi Drivers

The Group said that the disability awareness training for taxi drivers was too basic. The Group said that they would look at this matter at a future meeting.



Resources for YREN

The Group asked if the Cabinet had taken into account the comments made by YREN about funding. The Chair said that it had.



Choice Based Lettings

The Group was told that their comments about Choice Based Lettings had been forwarded to an Assistant Director at the Council. The Group would talk more about the problems at a future meeting.

4. Council Budget



The Group heard about the Council's budget.

The Council would set the budget for next year at a meeting on 23 February 2012. EAG's views on what was being suggested would be taken into account.



The Group was told that the following items were putting pressure on the budget:

- Pensions
- Waste
- Adult Social Care
- Children's Social Care



In 2012/13 Government funding to the Council would be cut. The Council would have to make big savings. It would also have to set its own policy on council tax benefits. It was proposing to increase council tax.



The Council wanted to make sure its budget protected vulnerable people and helped the economy to grow.



The Council had asked the community for its views on the proposed budget. There had been meetings with the voluntary sector, businesses and the Youth Council. The Council's managers had met with EAG. There had also been the chance to put forward views on-line. The Council would also take into account what the Fair Commission had said.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been completed on the overall impact of the budget proposals. EIAs had also been carried out for each proposal.

5. Group Work on the Budget Proposals

Workshops were held about the following budget proposals:



- Communities and Neighbourhoods proposed savings
- Fair Access to Care Services
- Future of sheltered employment

The feedback from the workshops is attached to the minutes.

6. Fairness Commission



The representative from York Racial Equality Network (YREN) said that YREN were pleased to meet with the Fairness Commission. However they were concerned that that the Interim Report from the Fairness Commission had not taken into account all that they had said. This was a problem because the Council would refer to the report when decisions were made about the budget.

The group noted that there would be another chance for YREN and other community groups to make their views known to the Fairness Commission.