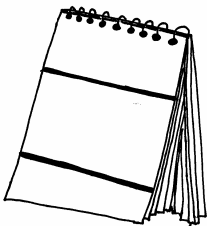


Social Inclusion Working Group

(Social inclusion means including everyone in society. The Social Inclusion Working Group has been set up to look 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: 13 May 2009

**Members of the Council who were at the meeting
(to be known as 'Members' in these minutes):**



People who were at the meeting representing community groups:



Sue Lister (Older People's Assembly)
Larry Hotchkiss (Older People's Assembly)

Sarah Fennell (LGBT)

Daryoush Mazloum (Black Minority Ethnic Citizens Forum)
Rita Sanderson (Black Minority Ethnic Citizens Forum)

Corry Hewitt (York Interfaith)
Paul Wordsworth (Churches Together in York)

David Brown (York Access Group)



Nicola Bedford (Higher York), Steve Rouse (Youth Service Equalities Team Leader), Maureen Ryan (Valuing People Partnership) and George Wright (Humanist) were also present as expert witnesses.

1. Minutes



It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 11 March 2009 were correct.

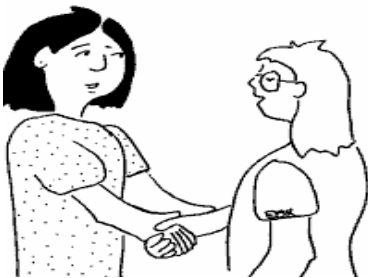
The Group asked officers to make sure that everything that they had agreed had been taken on board by the Council and by National Express.

2. Chair's Report



The Group looked at the "Help us to Get it Right Day" Final Report.

They looked at some of the Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs) - The aim of an EIA is to look at council services and identify any unintended discrimination against, or negative impact on, people from the six equality strands (race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief). The EIA also details the actions to be taken to avoid or minimise any issues found.



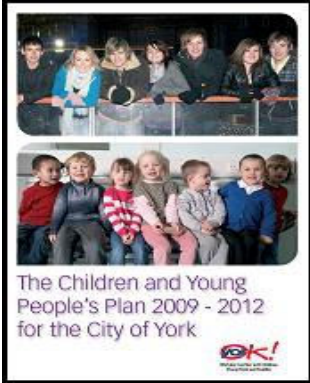
The Group made the following suggestions:

- The word "seek" should be replaced by "will"
- The Council should let the public know how it will meet their needs if they want to become a councillor. More people should be encouraged to stand for election.
- Information from the Council should include a note saying that the information could be provided in different languages and in ways that made it easier for visually impaired people.





- The Procurement Strategy (this is about how the Council buys things) should take into account ethical values.



The Group wanted to know if the Children and Young People's Plan took into account non-traditional families and the equality strands. They were given examples of how the plan did this. It was agreed to look at the plan at a future meeting.

3. Key Issues in the Community



Members of the Group raised issues about equality in relation to council services. They also reported on their organisation's recent activities.



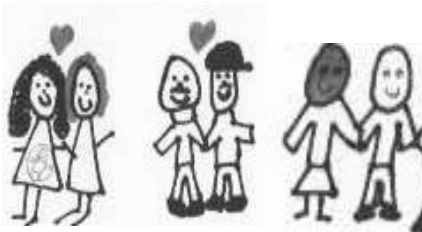
Community Cohesion

The Group's attention was drawn to the effect that the sending out of European Parliament campaign leaflets was having on some members of the community. There needed to be a named person at the Council who people could contact if they were concerned.

York and District LGBT Forum

A written report was circulated on LGBT issues and which detailed future events.

The Group wanted the Council to be more aware of trans equality issues in policy making. Training was available from Gendershift and other groups.





Online Fraud

The Group's attention was drawn to the number of online financial scams. Elderly and vulnerable members of the community were particularly at risk. www.getsafeonline.org was a good place to go for advice.



Higher York Students' Forum

The Higher York Students' Forum was carrying out a project to find out what it was like to be a student in York. A report on the project would be considered by SIWG at a later date.



50+ Festival

The SIWG Diversity Day project would take place as part of the 50+ Festival. Groups were encouraged to take part by organising displays or arranging events. Details were given of other events which members of the group were invited to attend.



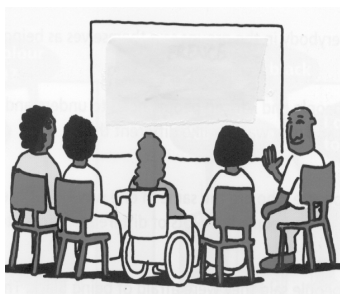
Access Group Directory

The Access Group were writing a guide which would include useful contacts.



York Humanists

The representative from York Humanists said that it was important that everyone in the community had a say when policies were made.



Valuing People Partnership

The Group heard about the "Valuing People Now" strategy. More information about the strategy would be given at a future meeting.

Details were given of a "Hate Crime Conference" that was to be held in Harrogate on 13 July 2009.



City of Faiths

A "City of Faiths" survey was taking place and was available on the Council's website www.york.gov.uk

4. Gender Issues and Engagement in the Social Inclusion Working Group



A project had been carried out by the Council on gender equality issues in the city. The Group looked at the report. Discussion took place regarding two key issues:



Domestic Violence

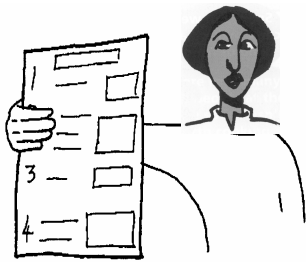
The Group heard about the work of the Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS). This organisation had previously been called "Women's Aid" but now helped services to both men and women although most of their clients were women. It was suggested that a representative from IDAS should become a member of SIWG. More consideration would be given to this idea at the SIWG Development Day.



Family Friendly Policies

The Group heard about the importance of family/child friendly policies in the workplace. The Council could play a role in developing this type of policy. The Group suggested that the Inclusive York Forum should be asked for their views on the report.

5. Collecting Information About the Needs and Views of People from the Equality Strands



The Council was looking at the information it collected about the gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age and religion and belief of the people it served and employed.

The Group was asked for its views on the questions that the Council wanted to ask. Some members of the group thought that the questionnaire was too long. Other members of the Group said that they already collected this type of information from people who used their services and it was very helpful. The Council had to collect some of the data by law.



The Group were asked to contact Evie Chandler by 5.00 pm on 30 June 2009 if they had any more comments about the questionnaires.

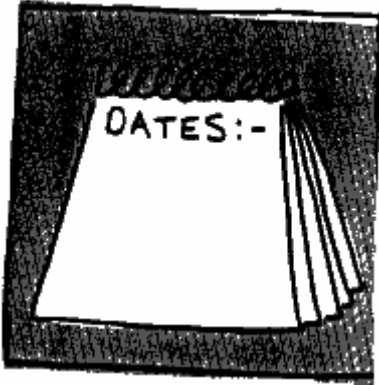
6. Council Equality Strategy and Schemes 2009/12



The Group looked at the plans and actions that the Council would be carrying out between July 2009 and July 2012 to ensure that it was a fair and inclusive service provider and an employer.

As time was running out it was agreed that the Group would look at the plans in more detail at the SIWG Development Day.

7. Dates of Future Meetings



Dates of future meetings of the SIWG:

- Thursday 2 July 2009 at 6.30 pm
- Thursday 24 September 2009 at 6.30 pm
- Wednesday 2 December 2009 at 6.30 pm
- Thursday 28 January 2009 at 6.30 pm
- Wednesday 17 February 2010 at 6.30 pm
- Tuesday 20 April 2010 at 6.30 pm

SIWG Development Day - Wednesday 20 May 2009
from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

8. Chair and Vice-Chair



Councillor
Vassie

Councillor
Looker

Councillor Ayre and Councillor Crisp would be taking over from Councillor Vassie and Councillor Looker as Chair and Vice-Chair.



Councillor
Ayre

Councillor
Crisp

The Group recorded their thanks to Councillor Vassie and Councillor Looker for the work that they had carried out.