
MEETING	SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP
DATE	14 MAY 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS ASPDEN (CHAIR), ALEXANDER, SUE GALLOWAY, GUNNELL (VICE-CHAIR), HEALEY, KING (AS SUBSTITUTE FOR POTTER) (EXCEPT FOR AGENDA ITEM 9), JACK ARCHER (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER), SUE LISTER (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER), PETER BLACKBURN (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER), RITA SANDERSON (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER) AND DARYOUSH MAZLOUM (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER) (FOR AGENDA ITEMS 1-6 & 8)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS POTTER & SUNDERLAND, KAREN ROBERTS, JAN JAUNCEY, LYNN JEFFRIES AND PAUL WORDSWORTH (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS)

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

43. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Social Inclusion Working Group held on 12 March 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record and the “easy read” version be noted.

44. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council’s Public Participation Scheme.

45. DISABLED GO

Members received an update from Anna Borthwick, General Manager, and Kimberley Dixon, Partnership Co-ordinator, of Disabled Go on the work of this organisation.

Disabled Go ran a website providing access information on towns and cities, including York, for disabled people and their carers. They had recently redesigned their website and the research questionnaire used to gather information, and had launched new services covering university and college buildings, and job advertisements from inclusive employers.

The information on York had recently been updated to account for changes at existing venues and to add new ones. The York pages had received 140,000 hits in 2007, which represented 40,000 unique users. Members were encouraged to disseminate information about the website to anyone who may wish to get involved as part of a local steering group.

Members suggested that the Council should become a partner on the job section of the site and also suggested that Oaklands Sports Centre and Acomb Library should be included, if they were not already on the site. They also commented that it would be useful to know how many of the users of the York pages were from outside of the local area.

The representatives of Disabled Go were thanked for their presentation and attendance at the meeting.

RECOMMENDED: That the update on the work of Disabled Go be noted.

REASON: To inform the Working Group.

46. SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP - MEMBERSHIP REVISIONS

Members received a report which outlined revisions to the membership of the Social Inclusion Working Group.

It was reported that the Executive, at their meeting on 22 April 2008, had resolved that the number of elected members on the Working Group be reduced, at the Annual Council meeting, to 5 (in proportion 2:2:1).

It was clarified that expert witnesses from the six equality strands could be invited to participate at specific meetings where items of interest were being considered, but could also attend any meetings as observers.

Members queried whether the co-optees on the Working Group could have voting rights and were advised that this was not possible whilst it remained a formally constituted Council body, although this status could be reviewed.

RECOMMENDED: (i) That the changes to membership agreed by the Executive be noted;

(ii) That it be noted that an increased representation from the six equality strands could be achieved by inviting expert witnesses to meetings.

- REASON:
- (i) To update the Working Group;
 - (ii) To increase community engagement and inclusion.

47. WORK PLAN (FORWARD PLAN) FOR 2008/09

Members received a report which considered the Social Inclusion Working Group's work plan, referred to as "the Forward Plan" and attached as Annex 1, and requested approval of the Plan for the first six months of 2008/09.

With regards to the item on proposals for Working Group funding for 2008/9, scheduled for 8 July, it was noted that this would be a discussion item.

RECOMMENDED: That the contents of Annex 1 be approved as part of the Working Group's Forward Plan for the period June 2008 to November 2008.

REASON: To facilitate the business of the Group in 2008/9.

48. COMMUNITY FORUM REPORTS AND FEEDBACK

Members received verbal updates, including reports about the use of Social Inclusion Working Group grants, from members of the community forum's involved in the Group's work.

The update from the Older People's Assembly included their use of Working Group grants, discussions taking place on refreshing the Equality Strategy, nominations for a new Older People's Champion and plans for the 50+ Festival.

The update from the LGBT Forum covered plans for the York Pride Picnic in the Park, production of a survey questionnaire, female representation on the Working Group and plans for an Older LGBT Forum in North Yorkshire.

The update from the BME Citizens' Open Forum (York Racial Equality Network) included use of grant funding for developing a website, details of new premises and feedback that a funding application to the Equality & Human Rights Commission had been unsuccessful as no evidence was available to prove that it was needed. The Working Group expressed concern regarding this latter point and the Chair reported that he had already written to the Commission about this and would circulate the letter to Members.

The LGBT Forum and the BME Citizens' Open Forum were both congratulated on their receipt of North Yorkshire Police Awards.

RECOMMENDED: That the updates be noted.

REASON: To update the Group on the work of the community forums.

49. DISABLED PEOPLE TOGETHER DAY - 28 MARCH 2008

Members received a report which informed them of key findings from the Disabled People Together Day held on 28 March 2008. They were requested to note the findings to date and await a further report in late Autumn 2008.

The programme from the day was attached as Annex 1 of the report and key findings were detailed in Annex 2. It was noted that the second page of Annex 2 should refer to the Wilberforce Trust, not the Wilberfoss Trust.

Two researchers from the University of York project regarding developing a joint voice for disabled people attended the meeting. They provided an update on progress with the project and confirmed that the findings and suggested next steps were expected to be reported to Members in the late Autumn 2008.

The University researchers, and in particular the research group leader, were thanked for their input into the Disabled People Together Day.

RECOMMENDED: That the contents of the report be approved and noted.

REASON: To facilitate the study currently undertaken concerning the promotion of a joint forum for disabled people in York.

50. WORKSHOP ON KEY MESSAGES FROM THE BME STAKEHOLDERS' SEMINAR 2007

Members received a report which offered information for discussion at a workshop, in response to the Group's agreement, at its meeting on 16 January 2008, that further consideration of the key messages from the BME Stakeholder Seminar, in particular what the Group and the Council could do to promote solutions, should be undertaken.

The feedback from the group discussions was as follows:

Group A – What the Council Could Do

- Work through the Local Strategic Partnership and Local Area Agreement;
- Encourage the University to undertake and lead research;
- Collect data, both internally and externally, to supplement the statutory monitoring processes and outdated census information;
- Ensure the city was welcoming in terms of behaviour, as well as policy;
- Further explore the concept of emotional cohesion;

- Produce welcome packs or guides, whilst avoiding duplication with existing information;
- Hold further discussions around building bridges between groups;
- Further develop the Open Forums;
- Provide training for Members and officers;
- Identify best practice and develop new initiatives.

Group B – What the Community Groups Could Do

- Produce publicity creating a positive image of diversity;
- Educate people, particularly the very young;
- Focus on commonalities, not differences;
- Share data;
- Encourage volunteering;
- Support families and children;
- Respond better to other groups when they reach out;
- Collect data from events by using a brief and concise registration form.

RECOMMENDED: That the feedback on what the Council and community groups could do to promote solutions to the key issues be noted.

REASON: To give proper consideration to the key messages.

51. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

The Chair announced that both himself and the Vice Chair would not be continuing in their current roles in the next municipal year. They thanked the Group for their support and commented on how much they had enjoyed their time in the roles.

Members of the Working Group recorded their thanks to the Chair and Vice Chair, and also any other Members leaving the Group, for their hard work.

CLLR K ASPDEN, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 8.50 pm].