

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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| MEETING | SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP |
| DATE | 19 SEPTEMBER 2007 |
| PRESENT | COUNCILLORS ASPDEN (CHAIR), SUE GALLOWAY, GUNNELL (VICE-CHAIR), HEALEY, SUNDERLAND, KING (AS SUBSTITUTE FOR ALEXANDER) AND SIMPSON-LAING (AS SUBSTITUTE FOR POTTER) JACK ARCHER (OLDER PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY), SUE LISTER (OLDER PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY), PETER BLACKBURN (LGBT FORUM), RITA SANDERSON (BME CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM), DARYOUSH MAZLOUM (BME CITIZENS' OPEN FORUM), LYNN JEFFRIES (DISABLED PEOPLE'S FORUM) AND JAN JAUNCEY (YORK INTERFAITH) |
| APOLOGIES | COUNCILLORS ALEXANDER AND POTTER, AND KAREN ROBERTS (LGBT FORUM) AND PAUL WORDSWORTH (CHURCHES TOGETHER IN YORK) |

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair invited Members to declare at this point any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda, in addition to the standing declarations below:

Cllr King – as a member of the Access Group

No further interests were declared.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Social Inclusion Working Group held on 21 March 2007 be signed as a correct record and the “easy read” version be noted.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no registered speakers at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGY REFRESH

Members were given a brief background on refreshing the Community Strategy and were updated on an event to be held on 16 October 2007.

Members were informed that the Local Strategic Partnership links many different partnerships (e.g. Healthy City Board, Environment Partnership) in the City to improve public services.

Members were informed that the Community Strategy was now 3 years old and needed reviewing.

Members were invited to attend the City Conference on 16 October 2007 (2 repeated sessions – 3-5pm and 6-8pm). Officers handed Members information on the City Conference plus other methods of consultation such as an all household questionnaire, exhibitions at various places around the City and attendance at ward committees.

RESOLVED: That the information provided be noted.

REASON: To update the Working Group on the refresh of the Community Strategy.

5. FUTURE YORK REPORT

Members were updated on the Future York report.

Members were informed that the Future York Group was set up in response to job losses in the city in 2006. The report was published on 12 June 2007 and the Council was now responding to the report. Although the trigger for the report was economic, officers were keen to state that the Council's response would not only be about economic growth but would ensure a disparity in incomes would not widen as the economy expanded.

Social Inclusion Working Group (SIWG) split into 3 groups to look at three different recommendations from the report, to highlight issues and suggest what the Council could do. The following comments and questions were raised by these groups:

S2 – Employability

- *“Value previous experience as equal to a qualification eg. skills with computers but no certificate*
- *Value life experience not just formal qualifications*
- *Expand options for practical training*
- *Issues regarding ability to act on opportunities – how to get the message about jobs or training opportunities out to people e.g. advertising literacy courses via written information (posters, prospectuses) isn't helpful if you can't read.*
- *Play to our strengths e.g. tourism – do we equip local children with skills in this area?*
- *Marketing of jobs – change emphasis on the 'value' of jobs to society e.g. hotel industry, caring jobs*
- *Need to expand emphasis of Science City (just been recognised in the Corporate Strategy Refresh)*
- *Agency work in York – do we have a profile for how many workers, what jobs etc. Does it create instability?*

- *Workforce planning city wide - link to regional and national work and changes*
- *Tailor education to suit children and the jobs they could get into*
- *How do we work with parents to encourage and inspire children in terms of different job opportunities in York."*

S7 – Disparity of incomes

- *"Look to the future – what industries will be attracted to York? Demographic changes – ageing population (York older than average) = more jobs in care area which is low paid. How do we make this more attractive?*
- *Do temporary contracts prevent people from progressing and/or create unnecessary movement? How can we influence this? Change our own employment practices?*
- *Attract mixed economy of small, medium and large companies and self employed people. Rather than just attracting large companies; if one company closes down it has a big impact on the city.*
- *Encourage self employment and innovative businesses eg. green/carbon neutral businesses or grass roots organisations, co-operatives.*
- *Don't just focus on young people, encourage older people to start small businesses as well*
- *Micro-lending – lend small amounts of money to start small businesses.*
- *Re-skill and/or increase skills of current population (all ages)*
- *Affordable housing – workers need to be able to afford to live in York. Use large planning projects (York Central etc) for affordable housing and key worker accommodation."*

S10 – worklessness

- *"Break cycle of worklessness – targeted at most deprived areas of City – especially in families*
- *Understand who this is about – define worklessness, profile the City, identify partners who can contribute to this.*
- *More major employers working with schools eg, Westfield and Corus*
- *Support people so that they can get out of the benefits trap (earn more in benefits than by working therefore can't afford to work)*
- *Work to change perceptions/stigma around benefits eg school meals*
- *Act positively to support and maintain sustainability of organisations such as Remploy.*
- *Use council procurement to secure social benefits as well as economic (£) ones. Promote value to society to other key partners as well.*
- *Some BME communities concentrated in low income groups – specific difficulties in accessing private sector housing market. Targeted help required."*

RESOLVED: That the Working Group's comments be noted.

REASON: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

6. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP - 1 YEAR ON

Members considered improvements that could be made to the Social Inclusion Working Group (SIWG), one year on.

The group requested that a male representative from the Disabled People's Forum attend SIWG meetings.

It was agreed that community groups could send substitutes to SIWG when a permanent representative was unable to attend. Community Groups were to identify substitutes and report back at the next meeting.

- RESOLVED: (i) That a male representative from the Disabled People's Forum be invited to attend SIWG meetings;
- (ii) That Community Groups be asked to identify substitutes and report back at the next meeting.

REASON: To improve the effectiveness of the Working Group.

7. CYC EQUALITIES CONFERENCES

Members received a verbal update on the City of York Council's Equality Conferences held in June and received copies of the newsletter sent to all delegates.

Members were informed of the positive publicity this had received in the press. Cllr Gunnell stated she had attended the disability conference and thought it was a very good event.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

REASON: To inform the Working Group about the Equalities Conferences.

8. USE OF BUDGET 2007/08

Members considered ways of using the Group's budget of £7,240 for 2007/08 to meet the Group's aims or support work that improved social inclusion in the Council.

Members received a list of draft ideas and agreed that the conference idea would not be appropriate but that the others would be considered alongside ideas put forward by community groups. Cllr Aspden agreed to pursue the possibility of using an existing Member training budget for the conference.

Community groups were asked to send budget use suggestions to Heather Johnson (heather.johnson@york.gov.uk or The Guildhall, York, YO1 9QN)

before the next meeting. The suggestions would be discussed and agreed at the next meeting.

If any representatives requested further funding, Heather Johnson agreed to e-mail the SIWG Funding Form to community representatives for them to complete.

Community representatives who received extra funding from SIWG last year (LGBT Forum, BME Forum, Older People's Assembly) would be giving Members an update at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That budget use suggestions be submitted for discussion at the next meeting.

REASON: To ensure the budget is used effectively.

9. FORWARD PLAN

Members considered items for the forward plan.

Members agreed that an item on York's Anti-Poverty Strategy should be added to the forward plan and covered at the next meeting.

Sue Lister raised the issues of climate change and transition cities. Cllr Galloway stated the council had produced a strategy responding to climate change issues. Heather Johnson agreed to send a copy of the strategy to Sue Lister.

Community groups were asked to get suggestions for the forward plan to Heather Johnson before the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That an item on York's Anti-Poverty Strategy be added to the forward plan and covered at the next meeting.

REASON: To update the Forward Plan.

10. COMMUNITY FORUM REPORTS AND FEEDBACK

Members received a verbal update and notes/minutes from meetings of the community forum's involved in the Group's work.

Interfaith Forum highlighted two events on the calendar of events included in the agenda papers. The international meal on 27 October 2007 (bring a dish from your culture, everyone welcome) and the Ebor lecture on 7 November 2007 by the former Bishop of Bradford on living and caring in an interfaith community.

The Older People's Assembly distributed a programme and press release for the 50+ festival taking place from 29 September 2007.

BME Forum distributed a Joseph Rowntree leaflet on modern slavery in the UK.

The Disabled People's Forum reported that the forum was having some problems and needed some support. Other community groups offered to give advice and Cllr Aspden and Cllr Gunnell offered to meet Lynn Jeffries outside of SIWG to discuss these problems and a way forward.

Lynn Jeffries reported that a small project group of people with learning difficulties were working with Future Prospects to make a film about barriers and successes in living in York with a learning disability.

RESOLVED: That the feedback be noted.

REASON: To update the Working Group on the activities of the Community Forums.

11. OTHER COMMENTS

Written details were distributed about the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (government inspection of the council) focus group on 5 October 2007 to which SIWG members are invited to attend.

The group were informed that Evie Chandler was joining the Equalities Team on 1 October 2007 for 6 months to carry out some equalities focussed projects.

Cllr K Aspden
Chair

[The meeting started at 6.31 pm and finished at 8.25 pm].