
MEETING	SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP
DATE	16 JANUARY 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS ASPDEN (CHAIR), ALEXANDER, SUE GALLOWAY, GUNNELL (VICE-CHAIR), POTTER, SUNDERLAND, BROOKS (SUBSTITUTE), JACK ARCHER (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER), SUE LISTER (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER), RITA SANDERSON (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER), DARYOUSH MAZLOUM (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER), LYNN JEFFRIES (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER) AND PAUL WORDSWORTH (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR HEALEY, PETER BLACKBURN AND JAN JAUNCEY (NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS)

22. 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.

Councillor Potter declared a personal non-prejudicial interest as the Older People's Champion in relation to Agenda Item 6 Funding Requests 2007/08.

23. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Social Inclusion Working Group held on 21 November 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record and the 'easy read' version be noted.

24. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

25. WORK MAP - FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the objectives of the Social Inclusion Working Group and the work areas covered by the Group in 2006/07 and 2007/08. The community group representatives had been

requested to discuss the issues outlined in the report with their groups and feed any views back to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That any comments on the report from the community groups be considered at the Social Inclusion Working Group Development Day to be held on Monday 25 February 2008.

REASON: To collect and note the views from community groups to inform the discussion at the SIWG Development Day in February.

26. FUNDING PRINCIPLES 2008/09 - FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Members considered a report, which outlined the objectives of the Social Inclusion Working Group, details of budgets together with funding principles for projects in 2008/09. This annex had been produced to assist community group representatives in offering feedback from their various groups.

RESOLVED: i) That further consideration of the principles of SIWG funding be undertaken at the Social Inclusion Working Group Development Day to be held on 25 February 2008.

ii) That community group representatives undertake discussions with their groups on the principles and report back their views at the Development Day..

REASON: To collect and note views from community groups to inform the discussion at the SIWG Development Day in February.

27. FUNDING REQUESTS - 2007/08

This report considered the final requests for funding from the remaining Social Inclusion Working Group projects budgets for the 2007/08 financial year. It requested Members to consider the following funding for the various equality strands:

York Citizens' Advice Bureau (All/Inclusion) - £1,500

York Older People's Assembly (Age) - £1,600

York Interfaith (Faith and Religion) - £650

Disability Forum (Disability) – £520

York Racial Equality Network (Black and minority ethnic) - £912

Gender – £800

Members were informed that no specific project proposal had been received in 2007/08 relating to gender issues. It was felt that project applications relating to gender issues should receive priority consideration in 2008/09. A request had also been received for £2,000 for Disability Forum meetings and newsletters but as this group was in the process of

being reviewed and relaunched the Group felt that this was not the correct time.

The Group then considered the following options:

Option A: To approve amounts for each project with the exception of £800 for gender issues and £2,000 for Disability Forum meetings and newsletters as detailed in the report.

Option B: To distribute the remaining amount using a formulaic approach amongst all projects listed in part A of the table in Annex 3.

RESOLVED: i) That the following community group funding amounting to £5,192 be approved for the 2007/08 financial year:

York Citizens' Advice Bureau (All/Inclusion) - £1,500 in total
York Older People's Assembly (Age) - £1,600 in total
York Interfaith (Faith and Religion) - £650 in total
Disability Forum (Disability) – £520 in total
York Racial Equality Network (Black and minority ethnic) - £912 in total ¹.

ii) That priority consideration be given to applications from community groups relating to gender issues from the 2008/09 budget. ².

iii) That membership of the Social Inclusion Working Group, including gender, be discussed at the Development Day to be held on 25 February 2008.

REASON: To support the objectives of the Group and assist applicant groups to develop their Equalities and Inclusion related activities further in the future.

Action Required

1. Notification of funding to community groups. GR
2. Note that prior consideration will be give to funding applications relating to gender issues from the 2008/09 budget. GR

28. COMMUNITY FORUM REPORTS AND FEEDBACK

The Chair and Vice-Chair confirmed that they had met with ethnicity; disability and age related community groups and would aim to meet with faith and LGBT groups before the next SIWG meeting.

Lynn Jeffries updated the group on the work the volunteer unit at York University were doing to review and support the development of the Disabled People's Forum (DPF). This was part of a larger review of support groups for disabled people in York, which was hoping to conclude

in October 2008. The group was made up of university volunteers: post-graduate students and lecturers. It would be supported by a steering group made up of Councillors Aspden and Gunnell, Lynn Jeffries and Evie Chandler. Lynn requested that other community groups on SIWG should make a link to this project, especially the Older People's Assembly.

In the interim the DPF was commissioning a disability conference (scheduled for March/April 2008) to bring together individuals and groups that were involved in disability issues in York. The purpose would be to:

- consider how voluntary groups and individuals work together currently and how this can be improved in the future
- begin to identify key common issues and messages to be addressed to public service providers in the city

All the university volunteers would be invited to the conference.

The Chair confirmed that the Inclusive York Forum (IYF) and the SIWG minutes were now being exchanged and sent to each groups' members. The group requested the draft IYF minutes rather than the agreed minutes, which took longer to be published.

Cllr Potter circulated York People First's newsletter to the group.

YREN informed the group that they had moved offices. The phone and fax numbers and e-mail address remained the same. The new address was: 20 Falsgrave Crescent, York, YO30 7AZ. YREN were holding an "open house" forum at their new premises on 27th February between 12noon and 2.00pm. All members of SIWG were invited to attend.

YREN had also put together a working group to set up an ethnic elders social group (meetings held at YREN's new premises).

The Older Peoples Assembly reported that they had had a well attended (150 people) meeting recently looking at insurance, particularly travel insurance for older people, and bus passes.

The group asked Evie Chandler to investigate the City of York Council's collection policy for bus passes – where people can collect passes, if and how people can collect passes for other people. Evie to communicate results to SIWG members.¹

Paul Wordsworth updated the group on the ArcLight Central building due for completion in June 2008. Paul stated that he would like the group to promote the ArcLight project as a 'centre' rather than a 'hostel' to address negative connotations. He confirmed that there was a need to specifically reflect this in future versions of key documents, such as the Council's corporate strategy.

Action Required

1. Details of bus pass collection to be sent to SIWG members.

GR

29. VERBAL REPORTS FROM CONFERENCES

Councillor Aspden reported back on the Diverse Britain Conference and Councillor Gunnell on the Social Inclusion Conference on Engaging and Communicating with Hard to Reach Groups.

30. BLACK MINORITY ETHNIC (BME) STAKEHOLDERS SEMINAR, OCTOBER 2007

Consideration was given to the report, which outlined the key findings from the BME Stakeholders' Seminar held in October 2007. Members were requested to allocate time at a future meeting to fully consider the final findings alongside responses from key stakeholder organisations.

It was reported that the key messages were currently being considered by a number of stakeholder organisations in the city and that responses to the key messages from stakeholders were still being gathered.

Rita Sanderson stated that the working group that organised the seminar were due to meet at a later date for a de-brief. It was confirmed that Heather Rice was the key link in the City of York Council. The Chair and Vice Chair confirmed that they would also like to be involved in the de-briefing meeting.

RESOLVED: That further consideration of the key messages from the BME Stakeholder' Seminar, in particular what the Group and the Council can do to promote solutions, be undertaken at the SIWG meeting in May (1hr to be allocated).¹

REASON: To give proper consideration to the key messages and provides feedback to key stakeholders.

Action Required

1. To add to the agenda for the SIWG meeting scheduled for GR 14 May 2008.

31. CITY OF YORK COUNCIL CORPORATE PRIORITIES 2007-2011

This report informed members of the group representing community organisations of the contents of the Council's Corporate Strategy 2007-11.

Heather Rice, Director of People and Improvement gave the group an overview of the council's updated Corporate Strategy. Heather pointed out that many of the priorities in the Strategy were working to tackle exclusion, for example improving the economic prosperity of people in York with a focus on minimising income differentials; improving the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city and responding to the changing population of York.

32. GROUP DISCUSSION: WITHOUT WALLS ANTI POVERTY STRATEGY

At this point, the meeting broke into small groups for discussion on key aspects of the Without Walls Anti-Poverty Strategy to enable a response to be made to the Inclusive York Forum.

Group feedback on the Anti-poverty Strategy and what the council can do to support the key areas for actions.

Group A – Maximise incomes of individuals in poverty

1. Benefits Take up

- Council has regular benefits campaigns
- Councillors discuss benefit take -up issues at surgeries and when they work out in the community
- Council offer financial support to bodies which offer benefits take up advice and advocacy

2. Education and Training

- "Worklessness ethos" / the value of employment/ the poverty trap should be explored within school citizenship curriculum

3. Employment

- Targeted Council job fairs in city areas of economic and social deprivation
- Better support for people coming off benefits in preparing them to find and keep a job
- When Council employs people who come off benefit pay them weekly not monthly so as to help them maintain a sustainable cash flow
- Look at how and where Council advertises for jobs. Think about advertising in "specialist" press such as BME and newspapers and newsletters, disability group's publications, etc.
- Consider changing the accessibility of our current jobs bulleting like the size of the font on the internet

4. Minimise barriers

- Council should do more to help people on the fringe of poverty to find and keep jobs, before their position becomes critical.
- Look at providing more affordable housing for workers on low income or people on benefit. Stop selling existing Council houses/flat. Build new ones.

Group B – Minimise the cost of living in York and increase take up of available services

- Develop innovative approaches to tackle issues like unaffordability of affordable housing – esp. for older people, people from BME communities
- Increase supply of affordable housing
- Prioritise investment in schemes which support inclusion e.g. transport schemes

- Develop targeted initiatives to facilitate take-up by excluded groups – to address “downward spiral”
- Promote and target financial literacy (for example budgeting, use of credit) for excluded communities – credit union, in particular, needs to be promoted and supported to help this
- Citizenship in schools should be focussed around this agenda
- Proactive initiatives to support people in tackling fuel poverty
- Consider ways in which key services (which may be inaccessible for some) can be integrated into other Council service delivery streams (for example, dentistry through children’s centres)

Group C – Improve partnership working and organisational responses to poverty.

- Make links to community events such as the Older People’s Assembly information fair held twice a year to publicise legal and debt advice.
- Focus information and advice to very specific low-income areas of the city – this can be specific streets.
- Lots of information and advice is available on-line or via leaflets/ brochures, but not everyone has computer access or can read. Information also needs to be available verbally via advice centres, phone and in local places people visit e.g. doctor’s surgeries/health clinics, libraries, post offices.
- Training courses on managing a budget or getting out of debt. Link to Future Prospects.
- Fund outreach work to isolated communities e.g. some Ward Committees give funding for a Age Concern worker to visit local older people, other Ward Committees are not sure what the need is.

The overall messages from the group were that the City of York Council can play a key role in this work but that they cannot do it in isolation and that partners and other groups need to take responsibility too.¹

Action Required

1. Details of the SIWG's response on the Without Walls Anti- GR Poverty Strategy be forwarded to the Inclusive York Forum.

CLLR K ASPDEN, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.31 pm and finished at 8.30 pm].