

Social Inclusion Working Group Membership

Summary

1. This report summarises the discussions that members and community representatives had regarding membership of the Group during the Group Development Day on 25 February 2008.
2. Members are requested to note the discussions.
3. Members are also requested to approve the suggestion to have expert witnesses involved in future SIWG meetings at the discretion of the Chair. Community groups and organisations from which expert witnesses can be drawn are as listed in paragraph 11 below.

Background

4. At its Development Day on 25 February 2008, the Group considered SIWG membership issues. Key points arising are included in Annex 1 below.

Consultation

5. Community representatives and elected members jointly considered the issue of improvements and additions to group membership during the Group Development Day on 25 February 2008.

Options

6. Option 1: To invite expert witnesses as recommended
7. Option 2: Not to invite expert witnesses as recommended
8. Option 1 is recommended. Reason: The list of expert witnesses suggested here was arrived at following discussion at Group

Development Day on 25 February 2008. These witnesses will bring specific knowledge and experience to the Group.

Analysis

9. The role of “expert witnesses” is to provide information and knowledge about specific issues .
10. Expert witnesses will be invited to meetings in 2008/9 at the discretion of the Chair, for relevant agenda items.
11. Suggested witnesses and reasons for inviting them are as follows:
 - a. York Travellers Trust, to inform traveller issues
 - b. York Humanists, to inform non religion/belief issues
 - c. Young people invited in consultation with and supported by Steve Rouse, the youth worker who is currently commissioned by SIWG to work with young people, to inform specific issues such as intergenerational projects.
 - d. User representatives from Valuing People Partnership and York People First to inform learning disabilities and mental health issues
 - e. People from York Access Group to inform mobility issues
 - f. Representatives from Higher York to progress higher education student inclusion
 - g. Following investigation to identify relevant groups in the City, invite representatives from women’s groups, men’s groups and transgender groups to assist with gender issues.
 - h. Representatives from the Primary Care Trust and Education services to assist with and inform service issues arising in these areas.

Corporate Priorities

12. The recommended action will contribute to the promotion of inclusive and cohesive communities by helping members of the Social Working Group explore specific issues in detail and in light of direct experience.

Implications

13. These are as follows:

- **Financial** - None
- **Human Resources (HR)** - None
- **Equalities** – The recommendations contribute to the promotion of inclusive and cohesive communities and to Council Equalities aims and objectives.
- **Legal** - None
- **Crime and Disorder** - None
- **Information Technology (IT)** - None
- **Property** - None
- **Other** - None

Risk Management

14.N/A

Recommendations

15. Note the contents of this report.

16. Approve the attendance of expert witnesses, to be invited to meetings in 2008/9 at the discretion of the Chair for relevant agenda items.

Reason: To facilitate the business of the Group in 2008/9 and beyond.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:
Heather Rice
Director of People and Improvement

Report Approved



Date

3 March 2008

All



Wards Affected:

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background papers – None

Annexes- Annex 1 – SIWG Development Day 25.2.2008: Key points from Membership Issues session

Annex 1 - SIWG Development Day 25.2.2008: Key points from Membership Issues session

Group discussions were guided by questions as below.

Q. Do we have the "right" people around the table?

- Need travellers as a specific group. Invite Travellers Trust.
- Invite Humanists to represent non-religion/belief.
- Disability is too big to be covered by one/two reps. We need "expert witnesses" from learning, mobility, mental health, and sensory sub-strands. Invite witnesses from York People First and York Access Group.
- Need other expert witnesses to be invited as needed, especially from young people groups, health and education
- Need representation from the student population. Someone from Higher York to be invited.

Q. Is the gender mix right?

- Current arrangement of "one-woman/one-man" from each of the 5 other strands is not working as some groups only have one representative . We need to encourage all groups to put forward one-man/one-woman.
- We need gender issue reps, including transgender
- Invite women from Women Without Walls and the International Women's Week steering group
- Do not lose sight of the fact that we need men's issues reps too

Q. Is the balance of elected members, community reps and officers right?

- Too many elected members. Need 2-2-1, or 4 only (i.e. one from each party)
- Need more community reps

Do we have enough voices around the table?

- Current strand community reps have a responsibility to actively engage and bring to the table the voice of other community groups concerned with issues relating to that strand.
- Community reps should receive support from SIWG budgets to produce a joint SIWG newsletter to be sent to various groups in the city.
- The role of expert witnesses will help add to voices as needed.

Q. How long should co-optees serve?

- This should be reviewed annually by the community groups selected to send representatives to SIWG.
- Co-optees should continue to serve so long as their groups elect them annually.