
Meeting of the Executive

22 April 2008

Report of the Director of People and Improvement

Social Inclusion Working Group - Membership Revisions

Summary

1. The report outlines proposed revisions to the membership of the Social Inclusion Working Group.
2. Members are requested to approve the proposed revisions and to recommend that the Council Executive approves them for implementation at the earliest possible opportunity.

Background

3. The Social Inclusion Working Group was established as part of the revised Council Constitution in 2006. Annex 1 outlines the purpose of the group. It was established following extensive discussion and consultation by the ad-hoc Scrutiny Panel on Inclusive Decision, to improve the effectiveness of the organisation in meeting the diverse needs of its customers. The Group first met in July 2006.
4. Since its establishment, the Group has been chaired by the Executive Member for Youth and Social Inclusion. In line with Constitution requirements about “the need to be proportional to the overall political proportionality on the Council” the group currently comprises:
 - a. 3 Members from the Liberal Democrat group, including the Chair (Executive Member for Youth and Social Inclusion)
 - b. 3 Members from the Labour group, including the Vice Chair (Shadow Executive Member).
 - c. 1 Member from the Conservative group

5. At its first Development Day on 25 February 2008 the Group reviewed its membership. The Development Day was attended by all existing members and co-optees on the group. Those present arrived at a number of recommendations regarding the representation of Elected Members on the Group. These were further discussed and agreed at the Group meeting on 12 March 2008. The decision made is summarised in the following excerpt from the draft minutes of the meeting on 12 March 2008.

“That Heather Rice and the Head of Legal investigate a possible reduction in the number of elected members on the Group, in line with comments made at the Development Day, and a report be brought back to the May meeting”.

Consultation

6. Community representatives and elected members jointly considered the topic of this report during the Group Development Day on 25 February 2008 and the meeting of 12 March 2008.

Options

7. Option 1: To change the number of elected members on the Social Inclusion Working Group to
 - a. 2 from the Liberal Democrat group
 - b. 2 from the Labour Group
 - c. 1 from the Conservative Group,

and increase representation from the six strands through inviting a number of non-voting Expert Witnesses to join the Group as agreed at the SIWG meeting on 12 March 2008.

8. Option 2: To maintain the current numbers of elected Members
9. Option 1 is recommended. Reason: This recommendation was arrived at following consensus after extensive discussion at Group Development Day on 25 February 2008 and the Group meeting on 12 March 2008.

Analysis

10. Whilst ensuring that meetings remain workable and as inclusive of community voices as possible, a reduction in the number of elected Members will also facilitate increases in the community representative body through inviting a number of Expert Witnesses as outlined in the minutes of the SIWG meeting on 12 March 2008.

Corporate Priorities

11. The recommendation will contribute to the promotion of inclusive and cohesive communities through supporting increased community inclusion and engagement in Council planning and decision making.

Implications

12. These are as follows:
 - **Financial** - None
 - **Human Resources (HR)** - None
 - **Equalities** – The recommended principles will 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

13. N/A

Recommendations

14. Request members to approve:

- a. The number of elected members on the Social Inclusion Working Group to be:
- i. 2 from the Liberal Democrat group (including the Chair of the Group),
 - ii. 2 from the Labour Group (including the Vice Chair of the Group)
 - iii. 1 from the Conservative Group,
- b. An increased representation from the six Equality strands through inviting a number of non-voting Expert Witnesses to join the Group as outlined in the minutes of the SIWG meeting on 12 March 2008.

Reason: To facilitate the business of the Group in 2008/9 and beyond though increasing community engagement and inclusion.

Contact Details

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**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:
Heather Rice**

Report Approved Date

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background papers – None

Annexes- Annex 1 – Purpose of the Social Inclusion Working Group

Annex 1 - Purpose of the Social Inclusion Working Group

It is the role of this group to advise the Executive on all matters relating to equalities issues .

It seeks to promote awareness of equalities issues and to ensure improved access and facilities for all service users .

It is concerned both with improving the Council's own services and facilities and, by adopting good practice, to encourage other service providers to improve their services.

In that context the group will:

- i. advise the Executive on major projects and initiatives on equalities issues and on equalities issues generally in the City of York Council
- ii. extend and build contact with groups and individuals in the area in order to facilitate input into equalities and provide opportunities for all citizens in the area.
- iii. provide a link with Ward Committees so that equalities issues which are raised can be taken further.
- iv. be chaired by the Executive Member for Social Inclusion and Youth.
- v. operate in accordance with the Protocol on Councillor Working Groups set out in Part 5 on page 369 of this Constitution