

Meeting	Social Inclusion Working Group
Date	24 September 2009
Present	Councillors Ayre (Chair), Aspden, Brooks, Crisp (Vice-Chair) and Gunnell  Non-Voting Co-opted Members: David Brown - York Access Group Becca Cooper - York People First Sarah Fennell - LGBT Forum Corry Hewitt - York Interfaith Sue Lister - York Older People's Assembly Daryoush Mazloum - York Racial Equality Network Fiona Walker - Valuing People Partnership Paul Wordsworth - Churches Together in York  Expert Witnesses: Sandra Gillpin - York People First Andy Pollin - Valuing People Partnership Maureen Ryan - Valuing People Partnership George Wright - Humanist
Apologies	Peter Blackburn - LGBT Forum Rita Sanderson - York Racial Equality Network John Bettridge – Mental Health Forum

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## 9. **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.

## 10. **Minutes and Matters Arising**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Group, held on 2 July 2009, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

In accordance with the Group's request that their recommendations were tracked to ensure that they were being

actioned, an update was given on matters arising from the previous minutes:

- In view of the number of items on the agenda, the proposed attendance of a representative from First York had been deferred (minute 3).
- Members of the Group were pleased to note the decision of the West & City Centre Area Planning Sub-Committee not to approve plans to install barriers at York Station (minute 3). It was noted that the company could appeal against that decision.
- Feedback on the Equalities Impact Assessments for Democratic Services would be an item for the SIWG meeting on 2 December 2009 (minute 3).
- Members of the Group were asked to notify the Chair or Vice-Chair of any hate incidents. If requests for information were received from the media regarding this issue, the City of York Council's Marketing and Communications Team would be able to advise on formulating a response (minute 3).
- The SIWG Workplan would be presented to the Group at the meeting on 2 December 2009 (minute 3).
- It was proposed to hold an additional SIWG meeting to consider "More for York" equality issues. "More for York" is a project to help council services improve. Possible dates for the additional meeting were circulated and members of the Group were asked to indicate their preference (minute 4).
- With the agreement of the Chair, rather than sending a letter to the Planning Department on the issue of promoting accessibility to buildings when making planning recommendations and decisions, it was proposed to invite an officer from the Planning Department to attend a future SIWG meeting to address the Group's concerns regarding this matter (minute 4).
- It was reported that the cost of producing the Corporate Strategy leaflet was 1p per resident (minute 7).

## **11. Public Participation**

There were no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## 12. Chair's Report

The Group noted that, following the resignation of Mr Hotchkin, York Older People's Assembly had offered to relinquish one of their places as a non-voting co-opted member of SIWG. It was proposed that Higher York would share the representation of age issues on the Social Inclusion Working Group with the York Older People's Assembly and the City of York Council Youth Service. Higher York were currently expert witnesses on SIWG. They had been invited to give an introduction to their work but unfortunately a representative from the group was not present and hence this item would be deferred to a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Social Inclusion Working Group supported the proposal that a representative from Higher York be nominated to serve as a non-voting co-opted member of SIWG<sup>1</sup>.

### Action Required

1. Higher York to be asked to nominate representative for consideration by the Executive EC  
***(Higher York have confirmed their representative to be Claire Newhouse)***

## 13. Equalities Impact Assessment Workshop - New Council Headquarters and York Customer Centre Project

A presentation was given on the new Council Headquarters and York Customer Centre Project.

Officers explained that it was important that the new council headquarters met the needs of employees and of the people who used the services provided by the Council.

It had become necessary to move to new accommodation as the current buildings were outdated, had poor accessibility and did not meet modern day standards. The new building would include a York Customer Centre, which would enable services to be accessed via a single point of contact. The building would be welcoming and secure, provide a wide variety of spaces and present a unique opportunity to support a diverse community and workforce. The new accommodation would also have to be able to adapt to Council changes and customer requirements.

Two options were being considered:

- Yorkshire House on Rougier Street
- West Offices on Station Rise

Consultation had taken place with staff and with service users. Questionnaires had been circulated to all York householders and a public exhibition on the scheme had been held at the Mansion House.

The final proposals were expected in the next few weeks. This would be followed by a thorough evaluation of the schemes before a recommendation was made to the Executive at the end of the year.

Work had already started on the Equalities Impact Assessments. The views of the SIWG were sought as to the design of the building and the management of the building once it was complete. Further consultation with SIWG would continue as the project developed.

The Group formed workshops to consider and comment on the initial findings of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and to shape the final recommendations for action arising from this EIA. The key issues that were identified are attached as Annex 1 to these minutes.

**RESOLVED:** That the comments from SIWG (as detailed in Minute Annex 1) be taken into account by the board overseeing the project.

**REASON:** To inform the project board's decision-making on issues in respect of inclusion.

#### **14. Accessible Information Workshop**

The Valuing People Partnership Board – Accessible Information Task Group gave a presentation on Accessible Information (Minute Annex 2). They explained that accessible information was key to fair access to council services and employment opportunities and they talked about the way in which the task group was looking to work with the Council and other organisations to improve the information that was produced.

Examples were circulated of information that had been produced by the Council. The Group discussed how the information could be improved. A summary of the discussions is attached at Minute Annex 3. The feedback would help council services and their partners to move towards developing common approaches to providing accessible information.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the Social Inclusion Working Group supported the work that the Valuing People Partnership Board Task Group were carrying out to make information accessible to all.
  - (ii) That the views of the Social Inclusion Working Group (as detailed in Minute Annex 3) be taken into account when services were advised on how information could be improved.

REASON: To help the council and its partners ensure that information offered to the public is as accessible as possible within existing resources.

Cllr Ayre, Chair

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