

EQUALITIES PANEL 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006

## **MATTERS ARISING**

### **Item 2 / 2 : SF actions**

Newcastle City Council information circulated with 27.11.06 meeting papers.

Recommendation that next knowledge and skills audit be undertaken by new Independent Chair.

### **Item 3**

Letter drafted and checked by Interim Chair of Panel, and sent to ONS. No response received. Further information about Census consultation from ONS has been circulated to Panel members.

### **Item 4**

#### **Encouragement of Political Parties to Improve Representation within Candidates' Selection of Minority or Disadvantaged Groups**

Members' Services produces a booklet "Would you like to be a City Councillor?" This is revised every year, and contains all of the basic information, from the perspective of Cambridge City Council, from which any member of the public would benefit in considering whether to stand for election. This booklet was distributed at the Annual General Meeting of the Black and Minority Ethnic Community Forum. The up-take of this and the interest in it was greater than in previous years.

Members' Services participated again this year in the national "Local Democracy Week" initiatives from the Local Government Association. We held an "Open Day" at the Guildhall, and we staffed a publicity stand in the corridor of the Lion Yard Shopping Centre. As well as placing notices in all of our usual, public, media, information out-lets, a dedicated information email was issued, and our Black and Minority Ethnic Groups' contacts were specifically included in the distribution of this.

Following advice from a party agent, our annual Prospective Candidates' Briefing was moved from being held in February to being held in November. The principal means which we used to advertise this was an email both to present Members of the Council and to Party Agents. A public notice was issued to all of our usual, media, information, out-lets, and, again, this information was forwarded to the Black and Minority Ethnic Groups' contacts.

A supply of our "Would you like to be a City Councillor?" booklet was provided, for display and for distribution, at the recent Pink Picnic.

“Speaking Up” is a voluntary organisation which enables people who experience learning difficulties, mental ill health or other disabilities to find their voice and shape their own lives. It creates positive choices for disabled people, by helping organisations to understand their needs and representing their views or supporting them to speak up for themselves, and it leads society towards recognising disabled people as equal and valued citizens with the same choices and opportunities as everyone else. Towards the end of the last calendar year, Members’ Services hosted a group from the local branch of “Speaking Up” for half a day. With his back-ground in education and teaching, the Mayor at the time, Councillor John Hipkin, made a significant contribution to hosting these guests.