

PRESENT

Chair: Toni Ainley

Councillors: Lynn, Shah, Smith and Walker

Staff Members: Jackie Hanson, Bridget Keady and Christine Leonard

Public Members: Norah Al-Ani, Graham Lewis, Sigrid Fisher and Nicky Wrigley

Presenting papers: Sally-Jane Papworth, Manager, Ditchburn Place and Stanton House; Deborah Simpson, Head of Human Resources; Paula Rae, Strategy Officer and Trevor Woollams, Head of Strategy and Partnerships

In attendance: Vicki Davidson, Organisational Development Manager and Anette Grinsted, HR Diversity Adviser.

1 ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOME

and

2 Introductions took place and the Chair welcomed all those present.

Apologies were received from Nacer Dali

Cllr Shah declared a personal interest as he is a member of Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum and a Director of CINTRA.

3 MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2009 will be signed outside the meeting with the following additional wording to item 6: The Council continues to be committed to Diversity Days at the highest level subject to officer and member availability.

Domestic Violence and No Recourse to Public Funds: This matter is being progressed at a County level by Simon Kerss (County Domestic Abuse Partnership Manager) through the County wide strategic partnership.

Equalities Newsletter: This has been completed and will be circulated very soon by Paula

PR

Single Equalities Scheme & Equalities Action Plan: This was considered by the October Strategy and Resources committee and will be available on the website very soon.

PR

Feedback from staff groups: Staff groups are uncomfortable about sharing their discussions as they are intended to be support groups and some of

the issues they discuss are confidential. However, it might be possible to capture the themes of discussions and report these back to the Panel. Anette to pursue.

AG

4 60+ PROJECT: MANAGING SUPPORT IN HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The Manager of Ditchburn Place and Stanton House, outlined the 60+ project and progress so far. The project has developed as a response to funding challenges that the service faces. There is an acknowledgement that there are residents living in sheltered housing and automatically receiving a support service which may exceed their needs. At the same time there are elderly people living in the community whose needs are not being met. The service has identified a potential to target resources more efficiently. For every ten residents of sheltered accommodation who relinquish the support service until such time as they may need it, and additional five individuals could be supported in the community.

The initial phase of the project has been targeted at City Homes tenants using the Community Alarm Service. Further work is needed on what services will be offered and at what cost. The potential to pool resources and for a multi agency approach will also be considered at a later date. The initial intention is to keep the service small until the funding is secure and the level of demand has been mapped.

SJP then detailed some case studies where low level support had produced a marked improvement in the quality of life for individuals.

5 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FROM THE JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT (JSNA) ON MIGRANT WORKERS

TW introduced the report. Members asked about the intended audience of the report and who will be taking action on the recommendations. This work is on-going and action is being taken at County level by Cambridgeshire NHS and partners. Detailed information about the JSNAs can be found on the NHS Cambridgeshire website. Further work is needed on the quality of housing in multiple occupation and work is on-going with landlords.

PR is working with employers to gain a better insight into the accommodation offered to migrant and seasonal workers and linking this to other initiatives.

TW outlined the work of "Making Cambridgeshire Count". Making Cambridgeshire Count' is a new initiative designed to transform partnership working and public services across Cambridgeshire. Its aim is to make each pound spent by the public sector count. There is a need to create the right culture in order for the partnership to work together to find improved ways of delivering services for communities.

6 EQUALITY MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK (EHRC)

PR introduced the paper for discussion. The viability of additional measures of equality in future were discussed. At present there is no clear picture of how such information would be gathered. TW is working on area profiles which will help to give a picture of equality issues at a local level in the future.

Members agreed that individuals are now much more comfortable divulging information on issues such as religion or sexuality.

7 EqIA PROGRAMME

TW introduced the report. EqIA's will need to be carried out when changes are planned to services. Members considered holding an interim equalities panel meeting to review some EqIA's with the view to the panel being a critical friend. Members would like to see evidence of the entire process from initial EqIA through the action plan and an end result with measurable results.

GL suggested that there is still some way to go in some services in equalities awareness. He was invited to a City Council tenant consultation event and complained that this had been poorly thought through in terms of timing. It was a Friday lunch-time during Ramadan and therefore excluded some faith groups and those who are in employment.

TW invited panel members to recommend two or three priorities from EqIAs for the Equalities Panel to focus on in future. The panel could act as a critical friend for departmental EqIAs. Panel Members to let Trevor know the 2 or 3 EQIAs that they would like to see reviewed by the Panel. Trevor will then arrange for the 3 EQIAs with the most 'votes' to be brought to an interim Panel meeting where those Panel members who were interested could give their views.

ALL

TW

8 MOD CONSULTATION PAPER: THE NATION'S COMMITMENT TO THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY – FOR INFORMATION

TW introduced the paper for discussion. Officers within the Council had been consulted on the MOD's proposals but they didn't think this would be a particularly significant issue for Cambridge. Panel members felt better joint working was required between local authorities and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) as the current/former employer of armed service personnel; to cover a broad range of issues, one of which being the disadvantages service personnel face concerning housing allocation. A response has already been submitted to MoD's 'The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans' paper, but an additional response on behalf of the Equalities Panel was suggested, even though the deadline for responses

had passed. This could set out a view that any additional costs incurred by local authorities should be met by the MOD.

SF questioned if military service personnel should get special treatment over other groups of workers such as miners?

It was agreed that PR should draft a statement from the Panel which will be circulated to the panel for comment. If there was agreement to the text, this would be sent to the MOD on behalf of the Panel. PR will also check the original MoD response from the Council was shared with Councillors.

PR

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Before considering the next item on the agenda, Chair of the Equalities Panel explained the need to exclude members of the public from this part of the meeting on the grounds that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of information defined as exempt from publication by Category 2 as defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

11 HR REPORT / MONITORING DATA

Panel members noted the Officer's confidential report on employee numbers broken down by age, gender, ethnicity and number of people declaring disabilities. Apprenticeships and exit questionnaires were also discussed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Panel members noted that GL had served three terms on the group and expressed their thanks for his efforts to date. Membership will be reviewed in future to ascertain if a vacancy will arise for a public member of the panel.

Date of next meeting TBC, but May/June 2010 proposed with a Diversity Forum.

The venue may change from Browns Field Community Centre.

Chair