

**Minutes of a meeting of the Wiltshire Improvement Partnership Equality  
and Diversity Capacity Building Project Steering Group held on 11<sup>th</sup>  
June 2007 at PACT Centre, Pewsey.**

**1. Present**

Mary Cullen (WCC, Chair, Project Manager on behalf of WIP))  
Brad Fleet (KDC)  
Lisa Hayes (WWDC)  
Debbie Lardner (NWIlts DC)  
Amber Skyring (Salisbury DC)  
Graham Partridge (Consultant IDeA)

**2. Apologies**

Di Parkin (IDeA), (train had broken down)  
Pam Brookes (WCC)

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

**4. Matters Arising**

**Translation and Interpreting**

MC indicated that she had been unable to get and update how the Customer First Partnership was progressing with this agenda.

LH indicated that she had spoken to Wayne Smith, Customer Services Manager at West Wilts DC, who is on the Customer First Managers group. He indicated that the partnership was currently looking at possible service providers for translation services and that this would be discussed further at the next Customer Services Managers meeting. LH said that each authority would probably have a representative on this group.

Members agreed that it was important that this group had sight of specifications and input into standards and an opportunity to discuss this further with the Customer First Partnership. MC said that she thought that North Wilts DC was the lead on this project and asked DL if she could find out who was the contact at North Wilts.

Agreed to invite Wayne Smith or the identified project lead to the next meeting of this group to enable this group to have an input into any service that is identified. **ACTION MC , DL and LH**

Members discussed the recent announcement from Ruth Kelly that the focus for government and local authorities should be encouraging people to learn English rather than widespread provision of translation services.

Members highlighted however the fact that ESOL training currently was not sufficient to meet demand and this was an area which needed to be addressed in Wiltshire. Members also highlighted that there was a need for an emergency provision for migrant workers who come to the area and also that any service provision should pick up the need for the production of documents in Braille, or the assistance of sign interpreters.

## **5. Salisbury Diagnostic Report and Gap Analysis**

GP presented a report on the diagnostic work undertaken at Salisbury DC.

This showed good practice in terms of systematic analysis of equalities impact assessments and mainstreaming in performance management systems.

Equality and Diversity was well embedded in HR and was a strong focus in Community Development activity e.g. with Migrant Workers. However achieving wider buy-in remained a challenge for this authority.

As in other authorities, GP noted that the agenda was being driven by a few committed staff members.

Challenges included achieving buy-in from members and developing further training opportunities for staff, to supplement current computer based training.

AS broadly welcomed the findings however indicated that staff had not had the opportunity to discuss the findings in any detail and still needed to provide an official response. She asked for clarification on the timescales for this.

MC confirmed with other members that they had about one week to get comments back and suggested that this also apply to Salisbury DC.

**ACTION AS, to arrange meeting to discuss findings and feedback conclusions to GP, within one week if possible.**

**It was noted by DL that North Wilts had requested and agreed a further amendment to their Diagnostic report.**

AS queried the next stages from the gap analysis produced.

MC and GP confirmed that the initial focus of the work had been gap analysis to the declared level and identification of areas for joint working across authorities, Di Parkin will be producing action plans further to this to enable authorities to get to the next level of the equalities standard.

## **6. Equalities Impact Assessment Workshops and other Phase 2 proposals**

AS introduced for information, an EQIA template used by the hospital which she felt had considerable merit, elements of which could be incorporated into our final model.

MC queried whether it would be useful also to liaise with Police, fire and other authorities to get further examples and also to look at perhaps greater consistency of approaches.

Members thought this would be useful. **ACTION MC to discuss with Di Parkin.**

MC passed on information from Di Parkin regarding Equalities Impact Assessment workshop dates and the decision to go for the 3<sup>rd</sup> July and run another workshop in September.

The venue has been booked at the PACT Centre. Members were asked to provide names of those attending, 3-4 from each authority were needed.

**ACTION all to get names to Di Parkin for 3<sup>rd</sup> July workshop, and to forward current EQIA templates to her.**

AS requested that Equalities Impact Assessment workshops be postponed until September as Salisbury DC had not yet geared up to get people to the workshops, for varying reasons.

BF however, indicated that Kennet was anxious to proceed as soon as possible with workshops as this was an area of work which needed urgent progression in that authority.

MC felt that the workshop should proceed as planned and she undertook to feedback to Salisbury DC and make provision for passing on training information to them if urgently required.

She felt that it was unlikely that Salisbury DC would fall behind as they already had fairly well developed impact assessment work as highlighted by GP. Salisbury DC could also have first call for the September workshop.

## **7. Good Practice Showcase Event**

Di Parkin had provided proposals for a Good Practice Showcase, MC had asked for greater detail around outputs and Di had produced a note which was circulated.

Members in discussion felt that the timescale was too short for a high quality event to be planned and delivered and that securing the involvement of Member portfolio holders and senior officers often needed at least a three month lead-in.

It was felt therefore that this would be better planned for later in the year, particularly given the unitary status submission and potential issues in terms of getting people to focus positively on this agenda.

Members also agreed with MC that greater clarity was needed around objectives, learning outcomes, timescales for planning the event, a programme of how the event would run and what would be covered, how the work would be taken forward after the event, (given that capacity in authorities for spending time on mentoring was very limited).

Members also felt that they wanted exposure to the best practice, and that sharing fairly good practice from another local authority would not necessarily be of maximum benefit to them or take the aims of WIP further forward.

It was also felt that and invitations to providers of good practice from elsewhere would be useful.

### Summary

A high quality, well planned event was needed, later in the year, with promotion of good practice locally, examples of good practice from elsewhere and action planning workshops where a start could be made on taking the agenda forward.

GP undertook to liaise further with Di Parkin around this and whether Di was available to push the dates back on delivery of this element of the contract.

It was suggested that a handbook of good practice might be an outcome however GP felt that this probably already existed somewhere. He will research further and feedback to the group

### **ACTIONS GP**

### **Consultation Event**

Following discussion around the targets in the Local Area Agreement and the responsibilities on this group to take this work forward, it was agreed that this event was the priority with the good practice showcase event to be held at a later date.

It was acknowledged that these two events were intrinsically linked and that as good practice was developed around consultation, this could be highlighted at the showcase event.

Again however, members felt that a high quality event was required, a longer lead in time was needed and that considerable planning was required around objectives, learning outcomes, benefits, stakeholders, invitees and how the event would be run and structured.

GP queried whether the event should focus on consultation with one or two equalities groups in order to best explore the principles.

Members felt that they needed an overview of current consultations, methods, techniques, issues, groups and gaps, and that perhaps mini-workshops could explore consultation with specified groups. Attendees could go to which ever workshop best met their needs.

The aim of the event however was to secure some agreement around a Wiltshire Wide Approach to consultation and this needed to be achieved as the key outcome.

**ACTION GP to feedback and discuss with Di Parkin to develop proposals in greater detail.**

### **Procurement Event**

Members felt that this was a needed event but were unsure how best to engage and secure buy-in of procurement officers.

It was discussed and agreed that the objectives and benefits of the workshop needed to be set out more clearly, and then members would take to their Corporate Equality and Diversity Steering groups for approval and buy-in.

**ACTION GP and DP to develop proposals and set out issues and benefits more clearly.**

### **Equalities Network**

Not discussed in detail

MC to send out latest paper from Di Parkin

**ACTION ALL- FEEDBACK TO MC.**

### **8. Mapping Exercise**

MC circulated the new template and approach to mapping equality and diversity initiatives forwarded by Di Parkin.

Members approved the new template and agreed to take to Equalities Steering Groups/Officers for completion subject to

- a mocked up version being also available
- guidance notes on what an equalities initiative is, with examples

**ACTION MC to slightly modify wording and feedback to Di Parkin**  
**ACTION GP and Di Parkin to develop mocked up version and guidance notes**

**ACTION MC to circulate template, mock up and notes when received, by e-mail**

**ALL to ensure forms are completed with through equalities steering groups or lead officers.**

## **9. Links with Lift SW**

Agreed as ongoing, Di Parkin to feedback further at next meeting

## **10. Member Development**

MC indicated that she had been unable to contact Sue Pangbourn at North Wilts (who is on leave) regarding the member development programme and links with this project. She will try again and report back to the group.

Di Parkin had received a query from Salisbury DC concerning the programme, concerns were expressed that that the member development training on equality and diversity was based on paper exercises which was felt to be insufficient.

MC indicated that to her best knowledge, the training programme incorporated face to face training around equality and diversity with additional training being available through distance learning etc. to suit different learning styles.

MC read out the equality and diversity workshop programme which members felt to be quite thorough.

MC will still liaise with Sue Pangbourn for further information and evaluation of the training and to ascertain whether there is anything this group needs to pick up on. Members also wondered if someone/several people from this group could sit in on one of the workshops. Members also wanted information, if possible, on numbers of members participating from each authority AS , also wanted to be e-mailed a copy of the workshop programme for further information.

## **ACTION MC**

## **11. A.O.B**

None

## **12. Date and venue next meeting**

The next meeting will be on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007, 12.30-2pm, Committee Room 1A, Kennet District Council Offices, Browfort, Devizes.

MC undertook to give Di Parkin a lift from Trowbridge or alternatively she could meet GP in Bristol for a lift.