

Equality Forum

Tuesday, 18 January 2011

Present: Councillor Greg Morgan (Chair), Councillor David Dickinson (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anthony Gee, Alison Hansford, Beverley Murray and Rosie Russell

Officers: Caroline Gee (ONS Census Area Manager - Chorley, Preston, Ribble Valley and South), Tracy Gibson (BSL Interpreter), Sarah James (Performance, Partnerships and Equality Manager), Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer), Chris Sinnott (Head of Policy and Communications), Paul Sudworth (Information Manager) and Victoria Witts (Customer Information Officer)

Partner officers: Mike Collinson (Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) and Sarah Palmer (District Partnership Officer, Lancashire County Council)

Also in attendance: Eileen Bee (Disability Forum Co-ordinator), Julia Berry (Heapey Parish Council), David Brown (Chorley Pensioners Association), Claire Dillon, Paige Hall (Chorley Youth Council), Matthew Hansford, Albert Jeffrey (Deaf Forum), Rita Jeffrey (Deaf Forum), E Johnson (Young Peoples Services), Maureen Kay (Deaf Forum), Ronnie Kay (Deaf Forum), Val Lawson (Chorley Youth Council), John Miller (LGBT Community), Joyce Morris (Creative Minds / Eccleston Parish Council), Barry Moss, Marilyn Porter (Crossroads), Geoff Smith (Chorley and South Ribble MIND), Jeannie Stirling (Homestart) and Marel Urry (Hoghton Parish Council)

11.EF.01 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Members and officers on the top table. Attendees were reminded to introduce themselves, state the organisation they represent and use the microphone when addressing the meeting.

11.EF.02 APOL OGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from David Naden (Linkability), Ginny Jones (Chorley Pensioners Association), Estelle Brown (Chorley Pensioners Association), Tom Watson

(PAiCE), Judy Daniels (Action for the Blind), Cindy Bolton (Chorley and South Ribble CVS), Diane Gradwell (Chorley Citizens Advice), Terence Reynolds (Disability Forum), Victoria Hansford (Chorley Youth Council)

11.EF.03 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Equality Forum meeting held on 6 October 2010 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

Matters arising

Minute 10.EF.93 – Town Centre Accessibility Action Plan

Sarah James reported that a further update report would be brought to a future meeting of the Forum.

Minute 10.EF.94 (b) – List of play areas with equipment suitable for children with disabilities

Chris Sinnott reported that the current list was only partially complete and work was now being undertaken to ensure that the list was fully updated and accurate. When it was finalised the list would be circulated in advance of the next meeting.

11.EF.04 PREPARING FOR THE 2011 CENSUS

Caroline Gee, Office for National Statistics, Census Area Manager – Chorley, Preston, Ribble Valley and South Ribble delivered a presentation on the forthcoming Census 2011.

The next census in England and Wales takes place on 27 March, and an explanation was given as to why the census is important. The census not only provides accurate information on the numbers of people, where they live and their needs, but helps to allocate funding for local services such as schools, hospitals and emergency services and where it is needed most.

All census information is securely protected and any personal information is kept confidential for 100 years and not shared with anyone, including local and central government.

Concerns were expressed around what safeguards would be put in place to ensure information was secure. It was explained that a number of rigorous security routines had been put into place to prevent the sharing of information and that staff were employed directly by the Office of National Statistics. An addendum followed the meeting to clarify these arrangements.

The deaf community sought assurances that measures would be put into place to ensure that any home visits made would be carried out by a qualified signer. It was explained that the Office for National Statistics were working with various organisations to identify the potential for visits to properties that would require the officers calling on the doorstep to have more specialised skills. An invitation was also extended to anyone who would be willing to volunteer their services from within these groups to help with the process. Guides are available on the Census website, and BSL video format.

Other specific arrangements were outlined that included:

- That forms would be available in large print in both English and Welsh languages,
- Work was being carried out with the Managers of Nursing and Residential Homes to ensure that all residents were correctly recorded in the Census.
- The issuing of contact telephone and text lines,
- The importance of identifying information from carers.

11.EF.05 CONSULTATION ON THE NEW CHORLEY COUNCIL WEBSITE

Vicky Witts, Customer Information Officer, Chorley Council delivered a presentation on the forthcoming new look to the Council's website. Technology had improved greatly since it was last refreshed in 2006 and the new website will provide an improved experience for all our customers.

Improvements would include:

- More services that would be available to be completed online, including most service requests and payments.
- Easier to find information – the new site will be more search driven rather than navigating your way around.
- A modern look and feel – the site will be visually improved.
- A more interactive experience – through the use of Facebook and Twitter applications.

Accessibility would comply with the government accessibility guidance WAI Level AA Standard. At present anyone requiring more specialised access, are dealt with on an individual basis.

A request was made to improve on the links to the Parish Council websites. This was agreed to be followed up by Vicky Witts and Sarah Palmer.

11.EF.06 OPEN FORUM TO DISCUSS ANY ISSUES FOR EACH EQUALITY STRAND

(a) Age

No issues were raised.

(b) Disability

No issues were raised.

(c) Ethnicity

No issues were raised.

(d) Faith

No issues were raised.

(e) Gender

No issues were raised.

(f) Rurality

- Mariel Urry, Hoghton Parish Council, wanted to discuss the transport difficulties with Lancashire County Council, that the residents of Brindle and Hoghton were having and what options were available to them.

Sarah Palmer, District Partnership Officer – LCC, advised that all the relevant information would be made available and that she would facilitate any discussions.

The Chorley Pensioners Association also commented that they were to attend a conference on travel in London, on 8 February and would report back to the next meeting.

(g) Sexuality

John Miller, NHS Central Lancashire asked three questions:

1. An update report was requested on the work being done by Chorley Council to achieve the Navajo Charter Mark status for LGBT Services.

Sarah James reported that the Council had consulted with other local authorities that had obtained the charter, like Blackpool, Flyde, Preston and Wyre and was now in the process of developing an action plan.

2. What Equality and Diversity training was currently given to Council officers, including managers and staff that completed Equality Impact Assessments.

Sarah James explained that all new employees, received training on equality and diversity in their Induction sessions, all other staff received online training and were assessed to a certain standard. Every manager obtained further related training through the Council's Organisational and Development programme and any officer that was required to complete an Equality Impact Assessment was given one to one training.

Mr Miller asked if an overview of training delivered to staff could be presented at the next meeting. It was commented, that more emphasis needed to be given to the empathy side of particular situations.

Julia Berry, Heapey Parish Council added that an inspection had highlighted a need for training in mental health awareness for staff in the Contact Centre and asked what provision had been made to address this.

Sarah James said that this information would also be included when reported on at the next meeting.

3. Mr Miller also enquired if any monitoring of sexual orienteering of Council employees was carried by Human Resources.

Chris Sinnot agreed to find out and report as part of the presentation at the next meeting.

11.EF.07 NOTICES / FEEDBACK / PUBLICITY

- Eccleston Parish Council reported that the Intergenerational Project continued in Eccleston. However plans to develop the scheme in West Lancashire schools had been cancelled.
- Eccleston Over 60's Club are holding a second Eccleston Pancake Day on Wednesday 9 March 2011 at 3.00pm at Eccleston Scout Hut.
- Arrangements are being made to revive the Eccleston tour de Village during Bike Week. This would be a combined promotion with South Ribble Junior Cycle Club and more information would be available soon.
- Due to budget cuts in the Public Health department at NHS Central Lancashire it was reported that there would be less support available to the LGBT community due to the closure of the helpline.
- The annual Holocaust Memorial Day Service was to be held at the Cenotaph in Astley Park on Saturday 22 January 2011 at 10.30am.
- Chorley CVS were holding a Fundraisers Event on Wednesday 26 January 2011, where help and advice on applying for funding would be given. Anyone attending needed to book an appointment in advance.
- Chorley and South Ribble and Blackburn MIND had changed their name to MIND Lancashire as the areas of Blackpool, Flyde and West Lancashire were now to be covered.
- The Young People's Service drew members attention to a forthcoming consultation exercise that would take place in February. Young people in schools, colleges and who were

involved in various youth groups and projects would be consulted on the issues and services that affected them.

- H Factor – a free, fun, health and well being event for the whole family is being held for the third year running at Chorley Town Hall on Saturday 5 March 2011, 10.00am to 3.00pm.
- Chorley Council and NHS Central Lancashire have launched a one stop health shop, which is now open on Cleveland Street, Chorley for people to drop in for a free mini-MOT by health experts and get help and advice on a wide range of health issues. It is open each Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 10am – 4pm, each Friday from noon – 6pm, and alternate Saturdays until April 2011 initially.

11.EF.08 RECEIVING OF AGENDAS

Some attendees reported that they had either not received the agenda for the meeting or had on the day of the meeting.

The Democratic Services Officer assured everyone that the agenda papers had been sent within the required deadlines and assured those individuals that checks would be made to ensure that their relevant contact information was on the system.

11.EF.09 NETWORKING BREAK

At the conclusion of the meeting the Chair encouraged members to take part in the networking session.

Chair