

# Equality Forum

**Tuesday, 5 July 2011**

**Present:** Councillor Greg Morgan (Chair), Councillor David Dickinson (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Hasina Khan and Steve Murfitt

**Officers:** Chris Sinnott (Head of Policy and Communications), Sarah James (Partnerships Manager) and Cathryn Filbin (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**Partner officers:** Inspector Alison Barff-Lewis (Lancashire Police), Heather Corson (Chorley/South Ribble Borough Council) and Stephanie Iaconianni (Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)

**Also in attendance:** Eileen Bee (Disability Forum Co-ordinator), David Brown (Chorley Pensioners Association), Estelle Brown (Chorley Pensioners Association), Jean Cronshaw (Clayton Brook Together), Brian Curwen (Walking for health), Yvonne Curwen (Walking for health), Judy Daniels (Disability Forum), Paige Hall (Chorley Youth Council), Rita Jeffrey (Deaf Forum), Albert Jeffrey (Deaf Forum), Emma Johnson (Young Peoples Services), Ginny Jones (Chorley Pensioners Association), Maureen Kay (Deaf Forum), Ronnie Kay (Deaf Forum), Richard McCumskay (Chorley Youth Council), Geraldine Moore (Age UK Lancashire), Barry Moss, Terence Reynolds, Reverend E Saville (Diocesan Race Relations and Cohesion Officer), Geoff Smith (Lancashire MIND), Jeannie Stirling (Home-Start) and Marel Urry (Hoghton Parish Council)

## **11.EF.01 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those on the top table to introduce themselves. Attendees were reminded to introduce themselves, state the organisation they represent, if applicable, and to use the microphone when addressing the meeting.

## **11.EF.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies form absence were received from Councillor Alison Hansford, Councillor Catherine Hoyle, Alan Capstick

(Lancashire County Council), Mr Desi (Racial Equality Council), Rev Tim Wilby (Churches Together), Diane Gradwell (Chorley, South Ribble & Districts Citizens Advice Bureau) and David Naden (Linkability).

### **11.EF.03 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

### **11.EF.04 LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY CONSULTATION - THE FRONT COUNTER AND ESTATES ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW**

Inspector Alison Barff-Lewis attend the Forum to inform its members that following a review Lancashire Constabulary and the Police Authority were consulting interested parties on the recommendations to close some front counters within police stations across the County.

Members of the Forum were advised that Lancashire Police had to find £42 million of savings over the next four years. Over £38 million of savings had already been agreed. As a result, 800 posts would be lost, two thirds of these would be police officers and one third police staff, mostly from back office or support functions. The reduction in posts would be managed mainly through voluntary redundancies, ill health, early retirement and non recruitment.

They were now looking closely at police premises and in particular whether to close some of the less frequently visited front counters and police buildings. The review which had been undertaken was based on the footfall of these counters, which found that 81% of the total footfall of visitors across the county catered for by 17 of the front counters. The remaining 21 were dealing with 19% of the overall footfall and were therefore recommended for closure.

A consultation on the proposed recommendations was launched on 1 July which would run for 12 weeks, after which a final decisions would be taken.

In response to concerns raised, Inspector Barff-Lewis reassured members of the Forum that through its review, it was found that a number of police premises identified for possible closure were not open to the public, and many of those premises that were currently open to the public had their cells decommissioned some time ago. Presently a custody suite in Leyland was operational, however, this had also been identified in the review for possible closure. If the Leyland premises closed those in custody would have to be transported to Preston or Skelmersdale. Members of the Forum were reassured that prisoner transport would also be considered as part of the review.

In response to concern raised by members of the Forum, Inspector Barff-Lewis reassured members that there were numerous methods for someone to contact the police in place already (other than at the police stations) and that these would remain the same, and that the Emergency SMS” (E-SMS) project, was an update of type talk that allowed people who were deaf or had hearing impairment to report emergency incident.

Inspector Barff-Lewis advised that every department, process and procedure would be considered as part of the review to ensure sure a more business like approach. At the moment crime and anti-social behaviour in this area was on the decrease, however, should this trend reverse procedures would be put in place to address the increase.

Councillor Murfitt stated that the reduction in workforce would mean increased work loads, pressure and a reduced work life balance.

Inspector Alison Barff Lewis can be contacted on [Alison.Barff-Lewis@lancashire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Alison.Barff-Lewis@lancashire.pnn.police.uk).

Should you require to recall someone using Type Talk (facility to assist the deaf/hard of hearing) ring 0800 731 1888 and an operator will assist or email – [Lancashirepolice@lancashire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Lancashirepolice@lancashire.pnn.police.uk)

## **11.EF.05 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

The Chair introduced an additional agenda item at this point and invited Phil Davies, Chorley Council’s Electoral Registration

Manager to inform Forum members of the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006, which was a formal review that needed to be completed every four years.

As part of the official review the Council were undertaking a consultation exercise inviting local political parties, Members of the Council, MP's and electors within the borough of Chorley as well as such persons as may have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.

The review will commence on the 18 July 2011 and end on 12 September 2011.

Although the review was of polling districts and polling places it was accepted that polling stations are inexorably linked to the review and comments are invited for those stations currently used and any suggested alternatives.

Councillor Murfitt had stated that the community should have a wide variety of methods to cast their vote.

Information about the current polling districts and places will be available at the Town Hall, Market Street, Chorley; from Phil Davies or alternatively from the Council's web site at <http://www.chorley.gov.uk/pollingstations> from the 18 July 2011.

Representations should be sent in writing to the Acting Returning Officer at the very latest by 18 August 2011.

Phil Davies can be contacted by email [phil.davies@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:phil.davies@chorley.gov.uk).

## **11.EF.06 ONE BIG VOICE CONSULTATION FEEDBACK - CHORLEY YOUTH COUNCIL**

Members of the Chorley Youth Council attended the Forum to present their findings of the 'One Big Chorley Voice' consultation which had been commissioned by Chorley Children's Trust Board. The consultation took place over three months from February to April 2011. The purpose of the consultation was to give the young people in Chorley an opportunity to say what was important to them.

A total of 1197 young people took part in the consultation, which included young people from POUT (LGBT YPS Youth Project), Shaftesbury House and the Prince's Trust Group, the Young People with Offending Behaviour Lancashire Attendance Centre, Young People in Care Focus Group, Travelling Community Focus Group, Young Homeless Focus Groups (The Bridge and Cotswold House), Young Mum's Focus Group and Young Carers Focus Group.

The young people were asked a number of questions relating to:

- the most important things in their lives
- personal appearance/eating/weight/being healthy
- their dream job and what support would they would need to get it
- safety
- what would make their area better for young people
- Volunteering

Young people from the Youth Council submitted the results for the consultation to the Children's Trust for them to consider and it had been agreed that they would meet with them to discuss the findings further and the actions that would be taken by the Children's Trust in response.

A summary report of priorities identified by the young people had been produced and would be circulated with the minutes. The report also contained facts, figures, ideas and suggestions that young people have made to help shape their local area in the future.

To contact Chorley Youth Council please contact Emma Johnson on [emma.johnson2@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:emma.johnson2@lancashire.gov.uk).

## **11.EF.07 CHORLEY VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR (VCFS) FORUM**

As requested at the last meeting, Geraldine Moore gave a presentation on the development of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) Forum.

Following a review of Chorley Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and its thematic groups the VCFS was formed. The purpose of

the VCFS forum was to provide a forum for all voluntary, community and faith sector organisations in Chorley, enabling them to share information, good practice and work together for the benefit of Chorley's communities. It would seek to influence other sectors and become a single point of access for those engaging in the local area.

A consortium of 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector organisations (which included Age UK, CAB, Faith Sector, Rotary and Home Start), were awarded £9, 000 of LSP money, as a one off amount of funding to do the work, subject to monthly monitoring.

The aim of the VCFS was to develop a network that was owned and run by the sector. A Committee had been set up and the first two meeting had been scheduled for 19 July and 12 September both at St Joseph's Church Hall, Harpers Lane, Chorley. Membership was open to all VCFS organisations.

In response to questions raised by Members of the Forum, Geraldine advised if any member of the Forum wanted to attend but had special requirements such as transport issues are required the need of an interpreter, to contact either Geraldine or Sarah Boocock to make arrangement.

If you are interested in attending the meetings contact Sarah Boocock at Chorley Citizens Advice Bureau, 35-39 Market Street, Chorley or email [finance@chorleycab.cabnet.org.uk](mailto:finance@chorleycab.cabnet.org.uk).

Geraldine Moore can be contacted on tel: (01257) 479006 or email [gmoore@ageconcernlancs.org.uk](mailto:gmoore@ageconcernlancs.org.uk).

## **11.EF.08 TASK AND FINISH GROUP - SUGGESTIONS FOR TOPICS**

Members of the Forum were invited to suggest future topics they would like to consider as part of a task and finish group. Past task and finish groups included the Chorley Town Centre Accessibility and Rurality.

A review of topics would be completed before the next Equality Forum meeting, with a view of choosing a topic and creating a group at the October meeting.

Sarah James can be contacted on 01257 515348 or email [sarah.james@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.james@chorley.gov.uk).

## **11.EF.09 OPEN FORUM TO DISCUSS ANY ISSUES FOR EACH EQUALITY STRAND**

### **(a) Age**

- Geraldine Moore asked that in light of recent Government cuts, that older people issues were not disproportionately affected in Chorley. Although older people's services for Chorley were predominately provided by Lancashire County Council, Geraldine urged the Council to prioritise its older people's issues.
- Estelle Brown reported the difficulties she had experienced as an older person with a disability which included a reduction in care provision, rising costs for services rising and asked for reassurance that she would not become more worse off.

Geraldine Moore advised that Lancashire County Council were holding a Stakeholder Visioning Event on 27 July at County Hall, Preston, and that it was important the Estelle's views were fed back.

- Marel Urry suggested a task and finish group to look at social isolation, and look at ways to provide information on voluntary services and activities available in the borough for people to meet new friends.
- Albert Jeffery advised that there was a Chorley deaf club every Tuesday.
- In response to a comment made the Chair advised that most funding and issues related to older people were the responsibility of Lancashire County Council and that the comments raised at the meeting would be reported to them.

### **(b) Disability**

- Eileen Bee was concerned that the whole of the Equality Act may be potentially scrapped as it was one of the Act's identified on the Government's red tape challenge website, the purpose of which was to give suggestions of legislations and regulations thought unnecessary. Sarah

James reassured the Forum that the Council had implemented the general duty of the Equality Act 2010 and would still abide by the Act until told otherwise.

- Barry Moss raised concern that the disabled swing replaced on Devonshire Road was not appropriate for wheelchair users. Chris Sinnott understood that the swing was to be a like for like replacements and that he would contact the relevant officers for information.
- Judy Daniels asked for an update on the enforcement powers relating to A boards and street cafes. Chris Sinnott advised that Lancashire County Council's statutory powers for enforcements could not be easily transferred and that the County Council had to delegate their powers to the Council which was not a simple process. However, the Council would continue to work with the County Council on this issue. The Chair assured the Forum that officers would put pressure on to the County Council to speed up the process.

#### **(c) Gender Reassignment**

No issues were raised.

#### **(d) Pregnancy and Maternity**

No issues were raised.

#### **(e) Race**

No issues were raised.

#### **(f) Religion and Belief**

No issues were raised.

#### **(g) Rurality**

Marel Urry enquired as to what was happening to the library services offered in rural communities following a cut in the number of hours the trailer library service operated which had been reduced from 12 hours on a weekly service to 3½ hours on a fortnightly services.



**(h) Sex**

No issues were raised.

**(i) Sexual Orientation**

No issues were raised.

**11.EF.10 NOTICES / FEEDBACK / PUBLICITY**

- Ed Saville was looking for 100 to 200 volunteers (including families) from all of the equality strands to take part in an emergency exercise scenario on 25 September 2011 from 2.30pm until 5.00pm. To be registered for the event contact Ed Saville on 01254 503275 or email [ed.saville@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:ed.saville@blackburn.anglican.org) by no later than 10 August 2011.

At the Chairs request, officers of the Council to publish this event wider than this Forum meeting.

- Eileen Bee announced that the annual REACH Disability Awareness week would be in August. Notable dates included:
  - a) 11 August – ‘Disability in the Age of Austerity’ was a full day conference being held in Leyland, and open to residents in both the Chorley and South Ribble areas.
  - b) 12 August – ‘Information Day’ will be held in Chorley Town Centre. A few stalls were available and could be booked by contacting Eileen Bee on 01772 518000 or email [csr@disabilityforum.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:csr@disabilityforum.freeserve.co.uk).
- Jeannie Stirling advised that Home-Start had moved premises to 112A Market Street, Chorley. The new premises offered meeting rooms which were available for hire and office space available to rent.
- Yvonne Curewen expressed her disappointment that the Chorley Smile magazine for this quarter had not been published on time, and that the events scheduled at the beginning of July would not have been adequately publicised. Chris Sinnott apologised for the delay which had been unavoidable and but confirmed that the magazine would be available on 6 July.

- A leaflet was circulated to anyone wishing to join the Chorley Older People's Forum. The Chair asked that a copy of the leaflet to be circulated with the minutes.
- Councillor Murfitt would like to encourage more members of the different equality stands to attend the meeting.

### **11.EF.11 NETWORKING BREAK**

At the conclusion of the meeting, Forum members were encouraged to take part in the networking session.

Chair