



MINUTES OF EQUALITY FORUM

MEETING DATE Thursday, 9 April 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Hasina Khan (Chair), Councillor Reverend Martin Cox (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Jean Cronshaw and John Dalton

OFFICERS: Sarah James (Head of Policy (Public Service Reform)) and Cathryn Filbin (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

PARTNER OFFICERS: Kiran Banati (Lancashire County Council), Stephanie Iaconianni (Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) and Jeanette Hickey (Lancashire Constabulary),

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Lily Abbott (Youth Council), Umer Aslam (Dosti Men's Forum), Mavis Abel (Learning Disability Forum Chorley & South Ribble), Shirly Babu, Anita Boon (Chorley Play Partnership), Megan Boon (Youth Council), Bradley (Youth Council), Sandra Brindle (Chorley Play Partnership), David Brown (Chorley Pensioners Association), Dawn Clarke (NHS Chorley & South Ribble CCG), Melville Coombes, Tiana Fear (Youth Council), Diane Gradwell (CAB), Sandra Holme, Paul Hoyle (CAB), Donna Hussain (CVCFSN), Alice Jones (DENW), David Jones (DENW), Suzie Jones (DENW), Samiya Kanwal (Saheliyoon Asian Womens), Samir Khan (Dosti Men's Forum), Shaistha Khan, Zafar Khan (Lord St Youth), David Kiddie, Frances Maguire, Aneesa Malek (Saheliyoon), Sabir Patel (Dosti Men's Forum), Neil Rushton (DENW), Rohail Sajid (Dosti men's Forum), Zohaib Sajid (Dosti Men's Forum), Daniyal Saleem (Dosti Men's Forum), Guy Simpson (CAB), Clare Smith (Youth Council), Nigel Stewart (Creative Network), Jeannie Stirling (Homestart VCFS), Kelly Swaby (YPS), Glenis Tansey (NHS Chorley & Soutgh Ribble CCG), Marel Urry (Hoghton Parish Council), Linda Walker (YPS)

15.EF.113 Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomes everyone to the meeting and introduced the top table.

15.EF.114 Minutes of meeting Monday, 20 October 2014 of Equality Forum

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Equality Forum held on 20 October 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and approved by the Chair.

15.EF.115 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 15 January 2015 of Equality Forum

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Equality Forum held on 15 January 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and approved by the Chair.

15.EF.116 Changes to Pensions

The Chair welcomed Guy Simpson and Paul Hoyle from Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux who gave a presentation on Pension Wise.

Members of the Equality Forum were advised that from 6 April 2015 a free and impartial government service had been introduced the purpose of which was to help people understand their new pension options.

The service is aimed at:

- people close to the age of 55 (ie within 6 months) or older
- people that had not had a guidance session before
- people that had a defined contribution pension scheme
- people looking for access/take benefits
 - some or all of their pension pot(s)
 - in the next 6 months; and
 - want to understand what their options are

West Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux has been chosen as one of 50 delivery centres. Officer of the Bureaux co-ordinates face to face Pension Wise appointment at the Bureaux as well as a number of other sites across Lancashire.

Pension Wise offers guidance, not advice, and as the user is only eligible to have one 45 minute appointment it was important that the user prepares for their meeting in advance.

Key messages for users were:

- Take time when making decisions
- Always shop around – find the best deal for them
- Ask about charges – think about tax implications
- Beware of scams
- Make sure pension lasts as long as user did

The Chair thanked Guy Simpson and Paul Hoyle for their presentation, who then took questions from the Forum.

15.EF.117 Chorley Older People's Forum

The Chair welcomed Councillor Jean Cronshaw who gave a presentation on Chorley Older People's Forum.

Members of the Equality Forum were told how the Forum was founded in 2006 with membership growing to between 200 to 300 members.

The Forum was an independent group run by volunteers. Membership was open to all residents in the Chorley area over the age of 50 and was completely free to join.

The aim on the Forum is to:

- make it easier for older people to make their views known to service providers and organisations,
- be the public voice and means of debate for residents over the age of 50, offering a means of debate,
- dissemination of information

Councillor Cronshaw advised that tea dances were held four times per year in the Lancastrian Room at the Town Hall, Chorley, with tickets cost £3 each to help raise money for the Forum.

To celebrate its 10th anniversary, a conference was being planning for 2016.

The Forum had many aspirations such as days out and more events but was limited to what they could do due to the lack funding and volunteers.

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer can attend a monthly planning meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at the Lifestyle Centre. Volunteers would also be able to claim Time Credits.

As well as funding and volunteers the Forum was also look for a new name, and suggestions should be forwarded to Councillor Cronshaw.

The Chair thanked Councillor Cronshaw for her presentation and asked members of the Equality Forum to put forward suggestions on how the Older People's Forum could increase its volunteers and funding opportunities during the networking break.

15.EF.118 Networking break

There was a short networking break.

15.EF.119 Chorley Youth Council

The Chair introduced members from the Chorley Youth Council. Before their presentation began members of the Forum were invited to take part in a short activity which asked them to consider that was important to them when they were young and what they felt was important to young people now.

Following a short feedback session, members of the Chorley Youth Council started their presentation the purpose of which was to challenge the stigma that surrounds young people, explain the aims of the Council and provided details on its current campaign on mental health.

Key points of the presentation included:

- Chorley and Lancashire Youth Council gave young people a voice and a say on what happens in their local communities and are often consulted on leaflets aimed at young people,
- in November, UK Youth Parliament voted on raising the minimum wage and increasing awareness of mental health,
- Chorley Youth Council elected mental health as their district campaign in 2014,
 - questionnaires were circulated to schools to ascertain what young people were being taught,
 - 2 out of 6 high schools were not being taught about mental health;
 - that the quality of mental health being taught in the other 4 high schools was poor and very little time was spent.
- Make Your Mark was the UK's largest youth consultation,
 - last year collected over 800,000 ballots, showing what young people wanted the UK Youth Parliament to campaign on.
 - 5799 of those ballots came from Chorley, the highest amount of ballots collected by a single district in Lancashire and the North West

Members of the Forum congratulated members of Chorley Youth Council for the work they did to engage young people in issues that are important to them and help make their voices count.

15.EF.120 Dates of Future Meetings

The next date of the Equality Forum will take place on 28 July at 6.30pm. The venue would be confirmed nearer the time.

Chair

Date