



Fairness & Equalities Board

Notes of the meeting on 3 September 2013

Present: Dianne Willcocks (Chair), Carole Zagrovik, Catherine Surtees, Rita Sanderson, Marije Davidson, George Vickers, Becky Tunstall, Cllr. Linsay Cunningham-Cross, Sue Holden, Emma Wilkins, Shaun Rafferty

In attendance: Charlie Croft, Denise Simms, Nick Sinclair, Jane Collingwood

Apologies: Angela Darlington, Lukas Njenga, Cllr Sonja Crisp, Lawrence Christensen

1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Dianne Willcocks, as Chair, welcomed members to the first meeting of this new board. She expressed confidence that with the talent around the table the board would be able to make a significant contribution to the city. She expressed the intention that the work of the board will be firmly evidence based and outcomes driven.</p> <p>Members who have not submitted pen pictures were invited to do so as these are proving useful.</p> <p>The Chair asked that members give their feedback to her after the meeting on how they felt it went.</p>	
2.	<p>Confirmation of Terms of Reference</p> <p>Charlie Croft explained the origins of the terms of reference as having been recommended by a sub-group of the former Inclusive York Board (IYB) working with Council officers. They are offered to the new board for consideration and are open to change. The terms of reference pick up from the remit of the former IYB but updated to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work of the Fairness Commission and the specific requirement for the board to take responsibility for the 'Fairness Principles'. • The One City Strategy, produced last year, with its three-fold 	

agenda: Equalities, Engagement / Active Citizenship, and Community Cohesion / good community relations

- The Council's 'York Equality Scheme' and the recognition that a strategic board is needed to drive the city's equality agenda
- The need to fit with the work of other boards, to have a distinctive agenda, and to avoid duplication of effort

The priorities offered in the terms of reference reflect the York Equality Scheme.

Debate on the terms of reference covered the following areas:

- It was noted that the role of the Board lies in both championing and challenging others. Whilst there is a potential conflict in this it was felt that both aspects are vital to making progress. It will be possible to both champion the Fairness Principles whilst challenging practice
- It was noted that it would be important to be clear about the data and other evidence that we will need in order to hold to account appropriate organisations, services and/or partnerships
- Clarification was sought about where challenge from the group goes, what power and influence the board has, and where the group reports to. Dianne Willcocks explained that the Board reports to Without Walls (WoW) and can be expected both to make routine reports and to raise items on its own initiative. She drew attention to the 'City Action Plan' and the role of this Board in delivery of this plan. The Board may also wish to engage with other partnerships that report to WoW.
- Care will be needed about the language in which the priorities are expressed; at the moment the actions are expressed in terms that make them look like Council actions. The Board's role may for example lie in developing tools for other agencies to use, and in influencing and encouraging
- The Board will need to discuss further which specific projects it takes on and in which areas it takes more of an overview
- It was felt that a more comprehensive vision is needed for the Board; it will not be adequate for the Board simply to fill gaps in others' agenda. This holistic view will undoubtedly

	<p>include the poverty agenda as any effective approach to equalities must address poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was felt that in a number of areas the proposed priorities were not sufficiently aspirational. For example, in the area of workforce, this should not just “mirror the city”: there should be an expressed aspiration to make York more diverse and welcoming. Also, in the area of diversity, this must cover more than the areas currently identified such as faith. <p>Action: Officers will bring updated terms of reference to the next meeting.</p>	CDC
3.	<p>Election of Deputy Chair</p> <p>George Vickers was nominated. It was requested that any further nominations are passed to the Chair by Friday 13th September. A vote by email will then be organised. It is important that the Deputy Chair is able to substitute for the Chair at the 25th September WoW meeting at 4pm.</p>	
4.	<p>Position Statement</p> <p>Denise Simms introduced the position statement drawing attention to two key gaps in the city’s agenda relevant to the Board’s remit: The Living Wage, and Community Cohesion.</p> <p>In debate it was recognised that the position statement needs to be amended to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The imperative that the Fairness and Inclusion agenda is at the heart of the city’s economic policy rather than being viewed as an add-on, and the need for a focus on people being able to be involved in building as well as accessing the resources of the city especially those in more vulnerable communities • The intention of the Board to pursue the ‘big picture / strategy’ rather than a piecemeal approach, for example considering how growth can impact effectively on poverty <p>Potential areas of focus were discussed in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Employment: joining up employers to encourage good jobs and ethical employment practices. <p>Action: An addendum paper to be produced for the next</p>	

	<p>meeting.</p> <p>The Press Poverty Supplement was noted. The potential for stimulating a further supplement on another equality area was discussed as well as a follow-up on the poverty one.</p> <p>Action: Officers to enquire about the impact of the supplement and any plans for the campaign.</p>	<p>CDC/ DS</p> <p>CDC</p>
5.	<p>Local Plan Consultation</p> <p>The inaccessibility of the consultation process was noted. The Chair reported that she has raised this with the Council. The consultation response circulated with the agenda was not the final one.</p> <p>Action: Officers to circulate the correct final version.</p>	<p>CDC</p>
6.	<p>JSNA Refresh</p> <p>Nick Sinclair outlined the process for refresh of the JSNA.</p> <p>In order to facilitate an effective response from the Board the Chair asked for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some content against each of the 5 headings that can be discussed at the next meeting • The negotiation of a first week in December deadline for submission of the Board's input <p>Action: Charlie to negotiate with Paul Edmondson-Jones on behalf of the Board. Nick Sinclair to attend the next Board meeting on 25 November.</p>	<p>CDC NS</p>
7.	<p>Living Wage Campaign/Week</p> <p>Jane Collingwood introduced the proposal seeking the Board's advice on the most effective way to engage with businesses on this campaign.</p> <p>The Board's main observations were that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is more effective to engage with businesses on their own territory rather than to invite them to a special event. The Chamber of Commerce dinner, the Enterprise event at the Racecourse, and Science City York's engagement activities were offered as potential examples 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be critical to sell the business benefits of the Living Wage to businesses • The Living Wage must be presented within the broader context of anti-poverty measures. Employers should be invited to consider a broad range of actions. Some may not be in a position to pay the Living Wage but may be able to take other effective actions, for example provision of transport for employees or access to childcare <p>The Living Wage also applies to procurement with accreditation dependent on organisations requiring contractors working on their premises to pay the Living Wage within 6 months.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Discussion regarding the equalities issues of partner organisations</p> <p>Linsay Cunningham Cross (CYC): The Council launched the York Equality Scheme last year. This sets out the Council’s equalities priorities and its detailed equality objectives. Whilst the scheme is distinctively for the Council, by the very nature of the Council’s business, the priorities will be of relevance to the city as a whole. The scheme contains many objectives that the Council will get on with; however, one of the motivations for establishing this board was to consider whether the city might coalesce around the pursuit of 2 or 3 key priorities for the city.</p> <p>The three objectives of the scheme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Fairer York - Narrowing the gaps - focussing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Income inequality ○ Child Poverty ○ Unemployment ○ Affordable Childcare ○ Fuel Poverty ○ Housing and Homelessness ○ Affordable and accessible transport ○ Health and Wellbeing for all ○ Improved access to information and services. • Respecting and celebrating diversity – aiming to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Foster good relations between different communities living in York ○ Promote mutual respect and understanding 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Celebrate our different cultures and histories ● An enabling, positive, diverse and inclusive council workforce – making sure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People working for the council (both staff and whenever possible contractors) mirror the communities who live in our city ¹ ○ Our workers (and people who work for us) understand and respect our different communities and support them to influence, design, and deliver public services where appropriate <p>Sue Holden (York Teaching Hospitals): York teaching hospitals have moved from a transactional approach to equalities to mainstreaming it. An equality and diversity group has led in producing a vision and strategy which is now making equalities everyone’s business. Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sessions run for the board on unconscious bias, addressing the question, “where are we blind?” ● Involving local communities in supporting translating services, recruiting volunteers who are able to provide more effective interpreters than the commercial agencies ● An initiative in “values based recruitment” which has proved very successful and has reduced turnover <p>Emma Wilkins (York St John University / HR Directors Group): Emma fed back on YSJ’s Equality and Diversity Strategy and the thrust to achieve ownership of this throughout the organisation. Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Putting in place champions across the organisation ● Tackling student behaviours as “good citizens” ● Addressing low representation of BME communities in the workforce ● Working with the LGBT community to understand that community’s issues ● Addressing the wider poverty agenda and its implications beyond implementation of the Living Wage <p>Shaun Rafferty (JRF): Key issues that JRF are working on</p>	
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¹ In light of the debate Linsay noted that a position with regard to diversity that is more aspirational than “mirroring” is desirable.

	<p>include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BME representation in the workforce • Sexuality • Age: notably young people working within care facilities • Being a dementia friendly city • Digital exclusion • Research within the Leeds City Region on why economic regeneration activity does not translate into impact on people living in poverty <p>At the next meeting we will look at issues within the Voluntary Sector.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Work Programme and Priority Actions 2013-14</p> <p>The work programme was discussed in light of the foregoing debate on the Board’s terms of reference. It was agreed that this should be a focus of the next meeting. It was felt that the Board needed a structure reflecting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision • A set of domains for the Board’s work • Two big areas of work. Potential areas of work were identified as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Poverty ○ Housing ○ Employment ○ Inclusive economic growth ○ Access, including to services ○ Fairness with respect to social class ○ Revisiting and following through the York Equality Scheme ○ Making the city centre accessible and welcoming for everyone ○ Educational, cultural and employment opportunities being more fairly distributed beyond the city centre 	
	<p>Date of Next meeting</p> <p>Monday 25th November at 4:00 at West Offices</p>	