



Fairness & Equalities Board

Notes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016

Present: Dianne Willcocks (Chair), Karen Greenwood, Lesley Pratt (for Sian Balsom), Claire Townson, Maria Goddard, Marilyn Crawshaw, Supt. Adam Thomson, Tony Lindsay, Rita Sanderson, Peter Hart.

In attendance: Charlie Croft, Jan Kilmartin, Tracy Wallis.

Apologies: Carol Zagrovik, Sharon Stoltz, Sian Balsom, Cllr. Nigel Ayre, Cllr. Tony Richardson.

1.	<p>Welcome and introductions:</p> <p>Karen Greenwood of Aviva and Adam Thomson of North Yorkshire Police were welcomed to their first board meeting.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes and matters arising from the meeting of 15 June 2016:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 15 June were agreed as a correct record.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without Walls: Dianne Willcocks reported that she will be meeting Mary Weastell, CYC's new Chief Executive, shortly and will raise with her the question of reinvigorating the Without Walls partnership. • Refugees: It was reported that 4 families have now arrived in York. • Equalities Plan: Jan Kilmartin reported that the plan is now on the Council website: https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/11354/york_equality_strategy • Workplace Health: The board asked for more information about take up and it was agreed to ask Public Health colleagues about their knowledge of what other employers are doing around workplace health. • Membership: It was noted that an approach to York Professionals had not produced a nomination. Dianne has recently written to Nestlé seeking a nomination.
3.	<p>York Living Wage and In-Work Poverty Research Project:</p> <p>The board received a presentation from Professor Jo Swaffield, University</p>

of York. The presentation slides are attached.

The project partners were Joseph Rowntree Foundation / Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, City of York Council and York St John University and involved 500 workers across these organisations all earning at the least the Living Wage but less than £10 per hour.

Jo highlighted the following issues:

- The context of the project was a broader interest in an anti-poverty strategy.
- The project was in part concerned with wage rates but, in examining how effective is the Living Wage took a broader perspective, recognising that wage rates are only one aspect of an individual's income. For example, the number of hours worked is an important part of the equation. If most of the workers receiving the Living Wage are part time then the LW is not going to solve the risk.
- Family composition is also a key element relating to poverty.
- To avoid the risk of poverty a range of instruments are needed.
- Wage rates do not exist in isolation: there is a distribution. If you raise the rate at the bottom tiers of pay there is a risk that remuneration may no longer be linked to productivity. There are also real challenges around the distortion of pay scales. The challenge of Living Wage is therefore not so much around implementation as around sustainability. This may be seen as positive but depends on your view as to whether the Living Wage is effective in reducing in-work poverty.
- These challenges can be particularly evident for those employers who have up to 80% of the work force at or below the Living Wage, in the care sector.
- A sample of the 500 was passed to the Welfare Benefits Unit who assessed them against their circumstances to determine whether they were maximising their benefit uptake. Significant evidence of under-claiming was found.
- The researchers talked to the group about their lived experience of poverty and what their employer could do to help them as well as to respective HR leads and Chief Executives to get their understanding of the intentions of the organisations' wage policies.
- The Living Wage is a weighted average based on the needs of different people. It is also important to understand the 'wage' rate within a household poverty context
- Evidence of in-work poverty was found within the work forces of the

	<p>three organisations. So, given that these are Living Wage employers it is clear that, even after paying the Living Wage, the employer's work is not done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other issues important to people beyond the LW include: how overtime is allocated, the availability of sick pay, maternity pay, and other employee benefits. The researchers noted that many low paid workers cannot benefit from staff benefits offered by employers, e.g. through lack of IT access and do not engage with staff progression opportunities offered. It was noted, however, that YSJ are doing work to build confidence and support people to engage with career development opportunities. • A particularly important benefit that employers can offer is access to cheaper debt, e.g. through a credit union as well as helping individuals to maximise their benefit uptake.
4.	<p>Partner Updates</p> <p>Partner updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helena Nowell updated the board on the CCG's equality issues with respect to the organisations that it commissions. The CCG is working with the hospital trust on EDS2 (Equality Delivery System) which covers equality outcomes across patients and staff. Goals for this year are largely around data and information including creating a directory of services and access to those services. <p>The hospital is looking at data around hospital employees which they will look at in relation to potential inequalities.</p> <p>Dianne Willcocks reported that she has talked to the hospital's Director of Estates and Facilities who chairs their Fairness Forum about him attending this board next year to talk about progress with their fairness plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracy Wallis gave an update on review of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy. An extensive consultation process has taken place and the feedback has gone to the JSNA steering group to be reflected in the initial drafting. The new strategy will be high-level and underpinned by thematic strategies and an action plan sitting underneath. It will be organised by life stage, starting well, growing well, ageing well, etc. and will also have cross-cutting themes. <p>Formal consultation on this draft will take place in November and December and this board will be asked to respond. The aim will be to launch the new 5 year strategy in January.</p> <p>The board stressed the importance of using accessible means of</p>

	<p>consultation to ensure that the voice of vulnerable people is heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Greenwood informed the board about Aviva's diversity and inclusion ambition and how they will measure the benefits of the outcomes they expect to see for their employees. They have a Wellbeing plan with a monthly programme highlighting activities, e.g. learning at work week, mental health awareness week, work-life balance week. See slides attached. <p>Karen also informed the board about the launch of the Aviva Community Fund: http://www.aviva.co.uk/good-thinking/community-fund/</p>
5.	<p>Review of Work plan</p> <p>The board considered the report setting out potential work areas. The board noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of co-ordinating the workplan with other groups to avoid duplication of effort. Agreed: Charlie Croft to map out potential work areas in relation to other boards and bring back the plan in a more developed form. • The importance of engaging with meaningful data. Action: Jan Kilmartin to co-ordinate a data working group to establish common data standards. • The need to follow through on the York Fairness & Equality Strategy. Action: The strategy to be sent to the other WoW partnerships.
6.	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rita Sanderson circulated information on YREN's Comic Relief Empowered Voice Project.
7.	<p>Next Meeting: Wednesday 14 December at 3:00 pm.</p>