

# Diversity and Equality Steering Group

Note of DESG meeting  
Held in Committee Rm 3  
CnES, Sandwick Rd  
On 19 April 2012 at 11 am

PRESENT  
Gayle Findlay - CnES (OHCPP)  
Isobel Mackenzie – CnES  
Gordon Thomas – Lewis Access Panel  
Kathryn Maciver – NHSWI  
TK Shadakshari – NHSWI  
Mary Maclean – NHSWI  
Kathryn Barron – LCC  
Carmen Morrison - SHC  
Roddy Mackay – Northern Constabulary  
Lena Morrison - CnES  
Mandy Macleod - Crossreach

APOLOGIES  
Lucy Macdonald - HDAP

**Welcome and Introductions**  
Lena Morrison (LM) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Introductions were given by those in attendance.

**Apologies**  
Apologies were noted.

**Minute of Meeting of 20 January 2012**  
The minute of the meeting of 20 January was approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**Matters Arising**  
**Membership**  
Following the discussion at the January meeting where it was noted that the circulation list that existed was too large for the purpose of the meeting, with many individuals not attending meetings, an email was received from the NHS confirming who would be representing NHSWI at DESG (Calum Russell and in his absence Murdo Macleod). It was suggested that whilst there was a need to reduce the circulation list, Officers with a relevant and valuable input to DESG may be missed. It was agreed that Officers whose work relates to Equality and Diversity should continue to be invited and attend as appropriate (for example, Learning Disability Collaborative Manager, Health Promotion representatives, etc).

**Consultation with Faith Groups**  
It was noted at the January meeting that consultation with Faith groups had not taken place to date. Gayle Findlay (GF) had made enquiries with other CPP's and there was nothing specific set up in other authority area's, there was a multi faith forum established in Glasgow that was loosely linked to the CPP.

TK noted that historically it was difficult to find one individual who would represent faith groups across the authority area. Mina Shepherd was recognised by the Spritual Care team as representing all non-christian faith groups.

LM noted that within the authority area that Chrstian's would not be considered a minority group and are proactive in participating in various Equality related consultations, they are proactive in making their views and concerns known.

It was agreed that further discussion would be required in the area and direction sought from management of the public authorities.

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## Poverty Action Group

The Poverty Action Group has been established by the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership to consider poverty in the Outer Hebrides, improving access to benefit advice and support and the Welfare Reform. The group will serve as a lobbying group for those likely to be affected by poverty.

## DESG Remit

LM presented a draft revised remit to re-establish the purpose, membership and responsibilities of the group. The responsibilities of DESG were discussed and the draft remit was amended. It was agreed that the revised DESG Constitution would be presented to the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership for approval.

## Engagement/Consultation Groups

LM circulated a proposed list of local groups which the public bodies could engage and consult with in relation to Equality matters. The groups identified should enable the authorities to cover all the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act. It is recognised that the authorities may still have to seek advice and views from recognised National Bodies. Furthermore, an individual(s) still need to be identified locally for the Religion/Faith group.



DESG consultation  
Groups

## Shared Roots Project Information

Mary Maclean, Health Promotion Officer, provided the group with an update on the Shared Roots Project which has been established as a Community Engagement tool. The strategic aim of the project is to improve community relations and understanding of health and social issues through engagement and dialogue, in particular with ethnic minority communities in the Western Isles. Shared Roots has held its first event which was a 'Celebration of Culture and Learning' which used food, dress and the arts as a vehicle for raising awareness and understanding of the various communities health and social needs within the Western Isles. More information regarding the 'Shared Roots' project – Model of Community Engagement with Minority Ethnic Families in a Rural Setting is appended to the minutes.



Shared Roots  
Community Engagement

## Partners Update

### Western Isles NHS

TKS advised that a review of the 3 Equality Policies was underway to produce a Single Equality Scheme in accordance with the legislation.

The Equality Impact Assessment toolkit had been revised and updated and is now identified as a 'Fairness Assessment'.

Training had been undertaken by employee's with regard to changes in the Equality Legislation.

KM advised that within the area Learning Disability work had been undertaken with regard to the Adult Mental Health Capacity Act.

### Northern Constabulary

RM advised that the launch for the Autism Alert Card was scheduled to take place on 22 May 2012. A similar launch has

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already taken place in the Highland area with positive feedback.

KB (LCC) advised that a similar scheme operated within the College for Dyslexia and to date it has been noted as being successful across the University.

## **Lewis Access Panel**

GT advised that the Access Panel were currently concentrating on recruitment. A new leaflet had been printed to raise awareness. Membership currently stands at 10 members with 4 members attending regularly.

The panel had been addressing issues with Calmac regarding access for wheelchair users who can't climb the stairs to the upper level. Negotiations are taking place to enable disabled people to reserve recliner seats in the cafeteria area.

GT circulated information regarding the 'Annual State Benefits Information' for 2012/13.

Date of Next Meeting 23 August 2012 at 11am in the Comhairle Offices