

Diversity and Equality Steering Group

Minute of Meeting

Held at Western Isles Hospital on 17 February 2010 at 14.00pm.

Present

Helen Froud	Improvement Forum (Chairperson)
TK Shadakshari	NHS Western Isles
Lena Morrison	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Donnie White	Lewis Access Panel
Gordon Thomas	Lewis Access Panel
Roddy MacKay	Northern Constabulary
Denise Symington	NHS Western Isles
Mandy Macleod	Crossreach
Karen France	NHS Western Isles
Carmen Morrison	Scottish Health Council
Jenni Williams	NHS Western Isles

Apologies

Lucy Macdonald	Harris Access Panel
Alan Ross	Harris Access Panel
Martin Malcolm	NHS Western Isles
Calum Russell	NHS Western Isles
Iain Mackenzie	Third Sector Hebrides
Norma Morrison	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Minutes

The Minutes of Meeting of 11 December 2009 were approved subject to a correction at page 2 of the minute. The minutes will be published on the DESG pages of the Comhairle website.

Matters Arising

Hate Free Hebrides Website – Roddy Mackay advised this was raised at the Community Safety Partnership meeting on 26 January 2010. As with all public sectors money is tight at present which makes it difficult to approve new initiatives. The potential for a website was discussed with the chair and will be followed up at the next meeting. RM advised that an evaluation of the 'Hate Free Highland' website had been completed and would be useful for the group to review in considering a way forward.

Domestic Abuse Guidelines – Calum Russell was not present at the meeting therefore the chair was unable to confirm if the copies of the new Domestic Abuse Guidelines had been received and distributed. To be followed up at the next meeting.

Update from DEWG and REWG

TK confirmed that there had been no further meetings of the DEWG since December. The next meeting date will be agreed and distributed in early course.

Lena confirmed there had been no further group meetings since she visited the learning shop in December. LM had sent the ESOL worker information which may be useful to the group if it was translated into different languages depending on demand and need. LM to contact the Learning Shop to establish if the LEADER funding bid was successful which would allow the ESOL work to be retained and the services offered developed.

Access Panel Update

The Lewis Access Panel attended a meeting with employees from the Technical Services department of the Comhairle regarding the change of use Perceval Square car park. The change of use from a car park to a civic centre means the disabled parking bays present in the car park need to be moved. The plans were shared and discussed at the meeting. The Lewis Access Panel members present at the meeting were satisfied with the proposed changes.

** The plans are now accessible on the planning portal via the Comhairle website <http://planning.cne-siar.gov.uk/PublicAccess/default.aspx>. The planning reference is 10/00093/PPD.*

The Access Panel have also produced a leaflet with the assistance of SDEF and hope to get funding to distribute it which will help raise awareness of the Access Panel and get more people involved in the work of the Access Panel.

Outer Hebrides Local Housing Strategy

Isobel Mackenzie was absent from the meeting however the information she provided was shared with the group and is self explanatory. The chair noted that consultation starts 1 March 2010 and ends 31 May 2010. It was agreed that it good opportunity to get a head start and the group could represent a voice for the islands. The Strategy will be advertised and published on the Comhairle website. Lena will send a link to the strategy to all DESG members on the distribution list.

LGBT Group

As discussed at previous meetings, the LGBT group is not officially represented on the islands. Two women from the Lesbian community on the island attended a meeting of The Equality Network community project called 'Speak Out Highlands and Islands'. The women attending the event are keen to proceed with setting up a LGBT group. It was noted that this was a step forward and will provide a route to channel information and provide a voice regarding equality issues. Helen Froud, as DESG Chair was asked to convene the first meeting of the group and sought agreement to do so from those in attendance. Those present agreed that they were happy for the

group to be set up and happy for the first meeting to be convened. It was noted that all communities of interest (i.e. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people) are represented at the first meeting.

Newsletter

A draft of the newsletter was circulated. Deadline for contributions was agreed for 25 February with the completed newsletter to be distributed in early March.

Action Plan

The action plan was reviewed. It was agreed to add the LGBT group to item 5 of the Action Plan. Discussion took place around the establishment of an Age working group. It was thought the needs of the equality stand could not be met through one group (would need a group to consider the needs of the elderly and another one to consider the needs of the young). HF to contact Ella McBain to see if some of the work is already being completed through the 'Elderly Forum'

AOCB

International Woman's Day – aiming for the 6th March 2010 at the college. Concentrating on young women with children & those on a budget. The agenda is available at www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/IWD.

College contacts – Lena had email Dave Matheson and asked for the DESG agenda to be forwarded to the officer who is leading on equality issues for the college. Lena to pursue this.

Course running for self management of long-term health conditions - Donnie White advised the group of this free course that is running for anyone with a long-term health condition. Full details are available in the DESG newsletter.

Volunteer Policy - Denise Symington advised the group that the Health Board's Volunteer Policy is out for consultation and welcomes a review of the policy.

X-Ray Department plans - TK advised that the Access panels should be contacted by the X-ray department regarding adaptations that are going to be made to make it more disable friendly. The chair asked TK to liase with the X-ray dept to ensure an invite was extended to the Access panels.

The chair closed the meeting and thanked those in attendance.

Next Meeting

21 April 2010

Classroom, Education Unit, Western Isles Hospital