

**Action Notes of the Equalities and Communities Theme Group held on
Wednesday 20th May 2009**

Present:

Jenni Venn, Alison Quigley, Laura Slegg, Paul Wells, Sarah Perry, Barbara Hay, Alison Porter, Leonie Walls, Steph Keeble, Grace Forrester, Phil Dunn, June Morley, Rajo Saira, Jody Gordon and Debbie Briggs

In Attendance:

Marc Harder, James Lawrence, Kevin Coughlan

Apologies:

Sue Bent, Cllr Kevin Foster, Jim Titley, Chaman Verma, Charley Gibbons, June Jeffrey, Lora Morris, John Payne, Bill Hall, Balbir Sohal, Surindar Nagra and Moirah Priestley

1. Notes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising		
<p>Jenni Venn opened the meeting and welcomed the new members to the group. The group then went through the notes of the last meeting.</p>		
<p>Auschwitz Visit Alison Quigley reported that due to the exam period she has not yet arranged for the students involved in the trip to Auschwitz to come along and report back. It was agreed that Alison would let Debbie know when this was ready to come back to the group.</p>		
Action	Timescale	Who
Alison Quigley to contact Debbie when she is ready to report back to the group on her recent trip to Auschwitz.	After the exam period.	Alison Quigley
<p>Involvement and Consultation Further to the discussion item at the last meeting regarding the Coventry Partnership Involvement and Consultation Strategy, Debbie reported that Helen Shankster is arranging a meeting to take this forward. An update will be brought back to the group in due course.</p>		
<p>Destitution Conference June Morley briefed the group about the Destitution Conference which is taking place on 2nd June 2009. The conference will recognise good practice and look at how to improve things in Coventry. An action plan will come out of the conference and this will be brought back to this group.</p>		
Action	Timescale	Who
If anyone would like to attend the Destitution Conference and has not previously received an invitation, please contact June Morley.	2 nd June 2009	ALL
<p>Embedding Equalities and Cohesion into the Community Safety Theme Debbie Briggs reported that the information that the group had requested at the last meeting relating to which groups victims/offenders are from and where geographically crime is taking place is not yet available, due to the fact that the Strategic Assessment has not yet been finalised. Debbie will pass this information on to the group once it becomes available.</p>		
<p>Longer Term Integration between Refugee Week and other Work June Morley reported that John Payne has had a conversation with her in relation to this following the last meeting. Work is happening to ensure better co-ordination for next year and this will also involve other groups, e.g. CEMAP.</p>		

2. Embedding Equalities and Cohesion into the LAA – Children and Young People's Theme

Jenni welcomed Marc Harder, James Lawrence and Kevin Coughlan who had come along to lead this discussion.

Marc took the group through his presentation and gave some background about the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and its structure.

James Lawrence then showed the group a DVD about the Communities that Care Survey and talked about the background and some of the key equalities issues that emerged from the survey. James talked about discrimination and the survey showed that 9 in 10 young people have not been discriminated against because of their colour or race. However, 3% of boys and 2% of girls are 'picked on' weekly because of their race/skin colour, and dual heritage Caribbean young people are five times more likely to be 'picked on' because of their colour/race than the white population.

James then went on to talk about young people with disabilities in Coventry, who are:

- Twice as likely to be bullied often or very often than other young people
- More likely to experience family rows, experience bullying and never/rarely enjoy school
- Equally likely to smoke, drink and take drugs
- Less likely to have bullied someone else, be involved in family decision making and enjoy spending time with their father.

James then talked about newly arrived young people. The survey showed us that young people who had been in the country for between 1 – 2 years were more likely to be bullied and young people who had been in the country for between 6 months and 5 years were more likely to be 'picked on' because of their race or skin colour.

James said that he welcomed discussion, particularly in relation to the following points:

- Whether questions relating to sexual orientation and/or religion should be asked in the next survey
- How better to engage with and support SEN young people

Barbara Hay asked whether pupils in mainstream schools who may have a special educational need were supported to complete the questionnaire. James conformed that support was offered but that this was not taken up by all schools.

Steph Keble said that 10% of young people will be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans (LGBT) and research shows us that these young people are more likely to be bullied at school, and also have higher incidents of drug and alcohol abuse. It is therefore very important include questions about sexual orientation in the survey.

James said that the advice from Stonewall had been that it was not appropriate to ask about sexual orientation in this survey as the participants were aged between 11 – 16. In addition there was concern that not all schools would take part if questions around sexual orientation were included. Jenni Venn confirmed that any questions around sex, contraception or any related topic were problematic to some schools. James confirmed that this is definitely an area that will be considered again in the future. Laura Slegg also said that this data would be useful to help us to target resources in the city.

Rajo Saira said that one of the biggest challenges schools face is around high incidences of homophobic bullying. Jenni said that there is a lot of good work around this in Coventry and Coventry City Council is extremely aware of this as an issue. Laura said that sometimes local authority policies relating to issues like this so not reach teaching staff and this is something

we need to work on.

Steph Keeble said that the Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIREs) has also produced a toolkit looking at tackling trans bullying in schools which is another huge issue that will need to be addressed under the Equality Bill. Steph quoted some research that said that 30% of LGBT young people attempt suicide due to homophobic bullying in schools and we need to ensure that all the good work that is happening in Coventry is filtered down. Marc asked whether the survey quoted was done in schools and whether we could take any learning from how this is done. Steph said that it was done through youth groups and anonymous surveys and not in schools.

Barbara Hay asked whether any work had been done to look at multiple deprivation, for example, looking at disabled black young people. Jenni said that this may be problematic due to the sample size. This is something that the Equality Bill is likely to move towards and Jenni said that we may be able to look at BME disabled young people but not, for example, Bangladeshi disabled young people as this would be a very small group.

June Morley said it would be useful to break down the top 10 issues for newly arrived communities.

Steph asked whether there were any questions around dating violence as a recent NSPCC survey showed that 1 in 4 young women experience this. Jenni confirmed that there was not a specific question about this, although there were questions about violence more generally.

Phil Dunn said that this needs to be used in conjunction with other data and in the context of what we already know. Phil has recently been involved in a data day and there was really good input from young people. There is a key opportunity to involve young people in our discussions about how to take this forward.

Marc said that the Children's Plan sets out the priorities for the coming year and includes bullying and domestic violence. Focus groups will also take place involving groups of young people over the coming months and this is part of an ongoing process.

Jenni asked if there had been any overall analysis of the questionnaire in relation to ethnicity and disability. James said that he has done a top line analysis for disability and this shows that the issues are largely similar with the key areas of difference being around family and school life. James agreed to carry out a broader analysis around ethnicity and new communities.

Laura said that there is a pot of money available in Coventry to provide activities for disabled young people to give parents and carer's a break from caring responsibilities. This is called 'Aiming High for Disabled Children'. Alison Porter said that more could be done to individualise the Short Breaks scheme and looking at what disabled young people want to do.

James thanked the group for their comments. If anyone has any further questions about the survey, James can be contacted on james.lawrence@coventry.gov.uk. Jenni thanked James for attending the meeting.

Marc then continued with his presentation looking at equality and cohesion issues relating to children and young people. Marc took the group through the LAA targets for the Children and Young People's theme and focused on the following indicators:

- NI 117 – Young people aged 16 – 18 Not in Education, Employment or Training
- NI 75 – Pupils achieving %+ A* - C including English and Maths
- NI 99, 100, 101 – Achievement of looked after children.

Jody Gordon asked whether NEETs are broken down to look at young people from different ethnic backgrounds. Marc confirmed that this is done and that the top line headline information shows that the group at most disadvantage is white boys from working class areas of the city, and a funding bid has been submitted around raising aspirations of young men in key neighbourhoods. Teenage parents also form part of this group.

Kevin Coughlan said that good progress has been made in relation to the attainment of looked after children in the 2008 academic year.

GCSE results are broken down by gender, special educational need and ethnicity. Jenni said that the figures for Pakistani and Bangladeshi young people are often presented together and the information Kevin presented was very interesting as it showed that there is a clear difference between the two with Bangladeshi young people performing well above the city average (57.1% achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* - C including English and Maths compared to a city average of 42%) and Pakistani young people performing below the city average (38.2%).

NI 108 shows the attainment of BME young people has significantly improved in the 2008 academic year. This is in response to specific interventions which have supported BME pupils and Kevin summarised these for the group.

Marc then moved on to talk about social class and the impact that this can have on academic achievement. Feinstein's Research (2003) shows us that initially low achieving children from higher socio economic backgrounds tend to out-perform initially high achieving children from lower socio economic backgrounds by the age of 6. Social class and economic advantage have long-lasting impact on children's life chances and large social effects continue to impact children's development after they have started school.

This research is borne out in Coventry as demonstrated by the number of young people achieving 5 A* - C GCSEs including Maths and English broken down by ward, with the highest achieving ward being at 75.9% (Wainbody) and the lowest achieving ward being at 26.3% (Radford).

It was agreed that this is really interesting and that the group would like an opportunity to discuss this in more detail. Marc and Kevin agreed to come back to the next meeting to talk about this further. As the presentation is very large it will not be possible to email it round with the notes of this meeting. Debbie therefore agreed to post a copy of the presentation out to all those members of the group who were unable to attend today's meeting.

Janni asked the group to think about the questions they would like to ask Marc and Kevin in advance of the next meeting and to let Debbie know so that they can be forwarded to Marc and Kevin in advance.

Marc said that the Children and young People's Strategic Plan will be re-written in next year and this is therefore a good opportunity to ensure that equality issues are embedded.

Jenni thanked Marc and Kevin for their contribution to the meeting.

Action	Timescale	Who
James Lawrence agreed to carry out a broad analysis looking at key issues around ethnicity and new communities and to bring this back to the group.	Once information has been broken down.	James Lawrence
Marc's presentation was too large to email round to the group. It was therefore agreed that this would be	31 May 2009	Debbie Briggs

circulated to everyone who was not able to attend today's meeting by post.		
Everyone was asked to bring along their copy of the presentation to the next meeting, where Marc and Kevin would come back to the group to discuss this in more detail.	15 July 2009	ALL
Jenni asked the group to think about what they would like to ask Marc and Kevin at the next meeting and to let Debbie know so that any questions can be forwarded to Marc and Kevin in advance	30 June 2009	ALL
3. Sharing Good Practice – Disaggregation of Data in Hillfields – Phil Dunn		
Phil Dunn was going to share some good practice relating to disaggregating data to show the 'Hillfields perspective'. As time had run out for the meeting it was agreed that Phil would bring this to our next meeting. It was agreed that Phil would circulate the information to the group in advance so that people can come to the next meeting well informed and ready to ask questions.		
Action	Timescale	Who
Phil Dunn will come along to the next meeting to talk to the group about the good work that is happening in Hillfields. It was agreed that Phil would circulate the information in advance.	June 2009	Phil Dunn/Debbie Briggs
5. "Making Coventry a More Equal and Cohesive City" – Update		
There was no time to discuss this item so Debbie agreed to circulate a note to the group with the notes of this meeting and this will be discussed at the next meeting.		
Action	Timescale	Who
Debbie to circulate a note about taking forward the 'Making Coventry and More Equal and Cohesive City' project with the notes of this meeting. This will also be discussed at the next meeting.	June 2009	Debbie Briggs
8. Any Other Business		
Future Meetings		
Sue Bent is unable to make the date of the next meeting. It was therefore agreed that this would be rearranged.		
Update – The next meeting will now take place on Wednesday 15th July 2009 at St Peter's Community Centre.		