

**Action Notes of the Equalities and Communities Theme Group held on  
Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**Present:**

Sue Bent, Barbara Hay, Surindar Nagra, Sabir Zazai, Jenni Venn, Amy Robinson, Balbir Sohal, Alison Quigley Jody Gordon, June Jeffrey and Charles Fotso

**In Attendance:**

Jo Floyd and Mandie Watson (for item on Serious Violent Crime)

**Apologies:**

Debbie Briggs, June Morley, Teresa Staniewicz, Cllr Kevin Foster, Janita Wesson, Richard Tomlins, Alison Porter, John Payne, Cllr Foster

**1. Welcome, Introductions and Notes of last meeting**

Sue Bent opened the meeting and round the table introductions took place.

The notes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

**2. Embedding Equalities and Cohesion into the LAA**

Jo Floyd and Mandie Watson attended to present this item. Jo Floyd provided the context for the presentation. Jo Floyd said that the Community Safety Partnership produce a Strategic Assessment each year. This was the third Strategic Assessment and a new delivery document was being prepared for distribution in the New Year.

Jo Floyd spoke about the iQuanta system for collating crime data in different areas and explained that Coventry was the 12<sup>th</sup> for less serious crime and 6<sup>th</sup> for most violent crime. Furthermore alcohol related crime was significantly worse in Coventry than other areas and binge drinking was also significantly worse than other areas. The concern was that these figures were very rigid with very little variance over years compared to other areas.

Jenni asked if anyone had done any cross referencing with young people as Coventry has a large population of young people, including students. Jo explained that offenders of domestic violence fell into the 33 – 40 years age group and that we needed to dig deeper into the factors contributing to this and age would be one of the factors considered.

Jo Floyd explained the different categories of crime which included less serious violent crime included broken bones; most serious crime included people being hospitalised and badly injured and most violent crime which is on the increase in Coventry included malicious wounding.

Jo Floyd talked about the seasonal rises in crime including April to September and December in addition to weekend and night time crime associated with the night time economy and socialising. There was now some evidence to suggest that violence in the home is increasing possibly due to economic climate and more people drinking/socialising at home. Jo Floyd also talked about the variation in the different Police OCUs, where 'preloading' at home took place before moving to city centre venues.

Jo reminded members that crime is not just a Police issue or Community Safety Partnership issues, as lots of service providers' access dwellings and can identify signs of violence and should report it.

Jo Floyd said that there were about three areas in the City from where offenders travel to offend and the key focus was on 15 – 29 year old white men, many of whom are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). Youth Offending Service data showed that

emerging trends of bullying and violent crime was increasing for 10 – 17 year olds and that it is possibly learnt behaviour (underlying cause as it is history in family way of life) but also linked to peer pressure (act hard = stay safe). It was acknowledged that learnt behaviour can be influenced and resources put in place at an earlier stage working with very young children and their parents/families could prevent this behaviour later on in life (break cycle).

Jenni Venn asked if there had been any work done in looking at family types, who people are living with; how many people living together and whether it was a single parent family etc. Jo Floyd said that further data around this was required to draw any suspected correlation and further discussion was also required on whether drugs and alcohol further magnifying learnt behaviour.

Jo also provided information on carrying and use of weapons in the city and explained that there were various categories for recording weapon related crime and these included seen, threatened, used, and believed to be there. In Coventry the data shows that where weapons are seen they are then used. This is supported by the 'Communities that Care' survey findings which indicates a growing number of young people carrying knives in our City.

With respect to gang culture, there is a national trend of gang culture and 'going out for a fight'. The gangs have become very sophisticated in how they operate and will seek to network in areas where there is less focus on them by agencies (thought government tackling guns and gangs approach) which makes Coventry vulnerable to this sort of networking recognises that more needs to be done on prevention through schools etc on gangs and violence.

Jo talked about a diagram that she had prepared linking violence to other policy areas. Jo believed that if this was mapped then you would probably see the same people who were of concern to different agencies. Mandie added that discussions were often focussed at a strategic level but connectivity needs to be made at an operational level to identify characteristics such as Looked After Children, deprivation, experience of violence etc and to see if people can be prevented from taking part in criminal activity. From this type of information the City would then need to take a decision on where our resources were being focussed.

Mandie Watson also said that we needed to get better at communication about services that were available as some preventative work could be done through other agencies.

Sue asked Mandie that when this piece of information on potential characteristics was available then the theme group would like to see it. Sue Bent asked Mandie Watson to send more details on the characteristic to Debbie for circulation when it was available.

Sue Bent thanked Jo Floyd and Mandie Watson and asked for the presentation to be circulated to the group.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Who</b>
Debbie Briggs to circulate the presentation slides to the group with the minutes.		Debbie Briggs
Mandie Watson was asked to send more details on the characteristics when she has it to Debbie for circulation.		Mandie Watson/Debbie Briggs

### **3. Coventry Partnership's Community Cohesion Strategy**

Surindar Nagra reported that the Coventry Partnership Board approved the Community Cohesion Strategy on 12 November 2009. Surindar Nagra explained that the Strategy was linked to the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement and set out how the Equalities & Community Cohesion theme group delivers the outcome of

making 'A more equal Coventry with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods'.

The strategy provides the vision and strategic direction for building a cohesive Coventry and included an action plan reflecting the themes of the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and has been produced through input from all theme groups and the Business Group. The activities in the action plan will be monitored and progress reported through existing plans and strategies and through existing reporting mechanisms. A basket of indicators has also been developed and will be reported on annually to the Local Public Service Board.

The consultation on the strategy took place over six months and included consultation and engagement with theme groups, Business Group, community consultation, consultation meeting with CEMAP and an online consultation through the Coventry Partnership website.

Surindar Nagra concluded that the Community Cohesion Strategy would be launched at the Coventry Partnership conference on 3 December 2009 and that she would circulate the link to the website once it was launched.

Sue Bent said that when theme groups were asked to report on progress to the Equalities & Community Cohesion theme group that we should also be asking them to report progress on the Community Cohesion action plan as well and in this way we would be getting cohesion embedded from the beginning.

Action	Timescale	Who
To circulate the link to the Community Cohesion strategy	December 2009	Surindar Nagra

#### 4. Coventry Partnership's Community Cohesion Awards

Sue Bent explained that the Coventry Community Cohesion Awards were going to be launched at the Coventry Partnership conference on 3 December 2009.

Barbara Hay and Jody Gordon said that she had not received an invitation to the conference. Sue Bent said that everyone had been asked to book online for the conference and Sue Bent asked Surindar Nagra to check with the Coventry Partnership to see if both Barbara Hay and Jody Gordon could attend.

Sue Bent said that the Awards was a good way of showcasing community cohesion and will help us to embed community cohesion in Coventry. Barbara Hay asked how the conference fitted into the Community Cohesion Awards and Sue Bent explained that the conference was the Coventry Partnership's annual conference, which was an opportunity to bring people from the Coventry Partnership together and the theme of the conference this year was community cohesion.

Sue Bent further added that the Cohesion Guidance which predated the Community Coventry's Cohesion Strategy was backed with examples of good practice and that it was agreed that this would need to be refreshed regularly for the guidance to remain useful and live. The Community Cohesion Awards was one way of refreshing the guidance. At the same time CEMAP had also wanted to promote Community Cohesion Awards so the Awards are a joint initiative between Coventry Partnership and CEMAP.

Barbara Hay asked how these Awards linked to the Awards that iCoCo were running. Surindar Nagra explained that the Coventry Partnership Awards were local and the iCoCo Awards were national and iCoCo had money attached to it.

Balbir Sohal said that the Education & Learning Services had developed a community cohesion toolkit for schools and Balbir was keen to reference the toolkit at the conference.

Sue said that she could mention it in her bit and asked Balbir to send her a copy of the toolkit.

Sue Bent concluded by explaining that there were five categories for the Awards. The closing date was 30 April and the Lord Mayor would host the Awards ceremony sometime in July 2010. A panel of judges had been set up and June Jeffrey was asked to represent the Equalities & Community Cohesion theme group and June had accepted. The details of the Awards would be on the Coventry Partnership website after the conference on 3 December and Surindar Nagra agreed to circulate the link once it was up and running. .

Action	Timescale	Who
Surindar to see if Barbara and Jody can attend the conference	ASAP	Surindar Nagra
Balbir to send a copy of the community cohesion toolkit to Sue Bent/	ASAP	Balbir Sohal
Surindar to circulate the link to the Community Cohesion awards	4 December 2009	Surindar Nagra

### 5. Migration Impact Project

Sabir Zazai attended for this item and thanked the group for inviting him to speak. Sabir Zazai introduced himself as the Migration Impact Manager and explained that he was on a secondment to Voluntary Action Coventry from the Coventry Refugee Centre. Sabir Zazai provided background to the project and explained that the Government launched the Migration Impact Fund in April 2009 to look at migrant workers and the impact on the economy. In addition, the Government also recognised that migrants can bring short term funding pressures and has used the charges raised through levy from fees charged to migrants for example international students, visas etc to fund the programme.

The Migration Impact Fund was accessed through the Coventry Partnership. Coventry has been allocated £200,000 till March 2010. 70% of the funding has been used to commission services through other delivery organisations for example Friends Project and CEMAP, New Communities Forum and the Fire Service.

The key outcomes of the project included migrants will be better educated on Fire Safety issues around the home and surrounding environment; migrants will integrate more quickly through understanding their rights and responsibilities; local people will be more ready to enter work having volunteered and achieved NVQ qualifications and service providers will be better informed, and more able to support Migrants to access appropriate services, enabling improvement in response times to meet local community needs more effectively. To deliver on the outcomes there are seven different projects which Sabir Zazai outlined including Community Based Champions.

There was some discussion on the Community Based Champions project and Sabir Zazai asked the group to refer any new migrant who would benefit from the project to him.

Sabir Zazai also circulated information on the project including dates for the November workshops which he encouraged everyone to publicise and attend.

Barbara Hay said that it would be a good thing for the hospitals to get involved and asked if there was a possibility of getting involved in the workshops. Sabir welcomed the input into workshops delivered for the Community Based Champions.

Sabir also mentioned that he was going to produce a database of languages so that if agencies were finding it difficult to get in touch with interpreters then he would be able to find someone. Barbara Hay was cautious about the use of interpreters and recognising the skills required for delivering interpreting service and she was also mindful of not undermining the interpreters by expecting them to do it on the cheap. Sabir Zazai understood the importance of recognising the skills that interpreters required and said that if some of the Community

Based Champions registered with the Refugee Centre that they would employ them as interpreters but if they have the language skills and they were not registered with anyone then they would be trained. Balbir Sohal asked if Sabir Zazai had been in touch with MGSS. Sabir Zazai confirmed that he had and that he had also made contact with the supplementary schools for Community Based Champions.

Alison Quigley offered to do a slot on hate crime with the Community Based Champions.

Sabir Zazai stressed that if anyone knew any migrant persons who may want to be trained as a Community Base Champion to him know. June Jeffrey offered to put some information on the CEN website. Jenni Venn suggested that there should be something on the Coventry Partnership website and it should also include information for those people who are not migrants and want to volunteer and they should be directed to Voluntary Action Coventry's Volunteers project.

Jenni Venn also mentioned that there the Coventry partnership were doing some work to priorities ESOL provision in the city.

Action	Timescale	Who
June Jeffrey to include information on the CEN website	December	June Jeffrey
Surindar to talk to Dawn Ford and get the information on the Partnership website including details of the VAC project	December	Surindar Nagra
To circulate Sabir Zazai's presentation	December 2009	Debbie Briggs

#### **8. Continuation of the discussion about 2012 Olympics and the opportunities to get involved**

Sue Bent referred to the presentation which Dave Moorcroft and Tom Clift gave at the last meeting which included the six themes for the sub region. It was agreed that Debbie Briggs would find out what the strapline was that Tom was using in his presentation to see how the work of the theme group fitted into this. Sue Bent asked if anyone was interested in a small group to take this forward, Barbara Hay and June Jeffrey agreed to be involved and Jody Gordon offered to be the link for the group.

Balbir Sohal suggested that there schools may already be involved and it may be useful to find out if different other Directorates were doing for 2012 Olympiad. Sue Bent said that it would be good if there are things already happening that we could influence in terms of community cohesion. Mandie Watson said that there were things already happening in CLYP. Sue said that CV ONE would already have it on their agenda. June Jeffrey offered to get some information into their 2012 newsletter. Sue Bent also mentioned that Dave Moorcroft had ambassadors and they could be used to launch events etc. Sue Bent also mentioned that Coventry had adopted an African country to host at the 2012 Olympic and Sue thought that it was Malawi.

Balbir Sohal asked for a sheet with the 6 themes on it and how community cohesion will be embedded into the activities linked to the Olympic 2012. It was agreed that Debbie Briggs to produce a sheet with the 6 themes and Jody Gordon to set up a small group to look at what is happening in the city which could be tweaked to be incorporated into the 2012 Olympics and to have a community cohesion element to it, including making links with culture and leisure

Action	Timescale	Who
Sue Bent to arrange for the 2012 Olympic presentation to be circulated	ASAP	Surindar Nagra Debbie Briggs
Debbie Briggs to contact Tom Cliffe and ask for the	November 2009	

strapline and to produce a sheet with the 6 themes.  Jody Gordon to set up a small group to look at what is happening in the city.	January 2009	June Jeffrey
<b>8. Any Other Business</b>		
There were no items of any other business		

**The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010 in Diamond Room 2, Council House, Earl Street**