

**Action Notes of the Equalities and Communities Theme Group held on
Wednesday 9th September 2009**

Present:

Sue Bent, Barbara Hay, Teresa Staniewicz, Paul Wells, June Morley, Steph Keeble, Edwin Lukong, Grace Forrester, Dave Reilly, Bill Hall, Abdul Hassan, Charles Fotso, Surindar Nagra and Debbie Briggs

In Attendance:

Richard Howe ((for item on Serious Violent Crime)
Adrienne Fitzgerald and Harjinder Kundra (for Employment Placement Initiative item)
David Owen (for Survey of New Communities item)
Tom Clift and David Moorcroft (for 2012 Olympics item)

Apologies:

Jenni Venn, Cllr Kevin Foster, Jim Titley, Charley Gibbons, Lora Morris, Leonie Walls, Balbir Sohal, Alison Quigley, Janita Wesson, Alison Porter, Richard Tomlins, Rajo Saira, Jody Gordon, Joy Warren, June Jeffrey, John Payne and Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership

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, with the exception of an amendment to page 4 identified by Barbara Hay, which Debbie agreed to action.

Phil Dunn was not able to make the meeting, and it was therefore agreed to move straight on to the next agenda item, looking at embedding equalities and cohesion into the LAA.

2. Embedding Equalities and Cohesion into the LAA

Sue said that our work programme is to look at the LAA themes to ensure that equalities and cohesion are embedded into the work programmes of each theme. We are trying to act as a resource to the other theme groups and monitor this on behalf of the Coventry Partnership. Today we are reporting back progress on some of the issues that have come out of these discussions.

Debbie Briggs shared the performance management document with the group that is being used to record the LAA discussions that we have been having. Any actions that have been agreed as part of these discussions are being recorded and progress updates added. Debbie explained that this will be used as evidence for the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

Employment Placement Initiative (Volunteering Scheme)

Sue welcomed Adrienne Fitzgerald and Harjinder to the group to talk about this item. Two Employment Placement Schemes have been developed to respond to the current economic situation. The first is a national scheme which has been established by the Government and this is called the Future Jobs Fund. This is worth £2.3m in Coventry and there is an expectation that this will fund 380 placements. The second scheme is a local scheme that has been initiated by the Local Public Service Board. This is called the Employment Placement Scheme and it is anticipated that this will provide 100 placements. Both schemes will run together and the key challenge is around identifying placements. A placement is defined as a 6 month period of paid employment for graduates, NEETs or managers who can come out of the 6 month period with the skills that will enable them to move forward and find employment. The costs of the placement will be paid by the project and the aim is to offer a route back into employment or a bridge from education to employment. Adrienne circulated information about both schemes to the group.

The Future Jobs Fund will offer 380 6 month placements which will have a direct benefit to the local community. The Employment Placement Initiative will target young people aged between 18 – 24 who are long term unemployed (9 months or more) and on Job Seeker's Allowance. Hot spot areas will be targeted including Foleshill, Binley/Willenhall, St Michaels, Holbrooks, Henley, Radford, Lower Stoke, Upper Stoke and Longford. The programme will run from October 2009 – December 2011. Funding for each placement will be provided up to £6,500 including 25% towards support and set up costs and 75% wage. Placements will be for a minimum of 25 hours a week work experience and 5 hours training per week. Referrals will be made through Job Centre Plus, and a mentor would need to be available to support the placement.

The Employment Placement Scheme is a local scheme which will be run by Coventry City Council. This will include a total of 100 placements including 50 unemployed graduates, 25 placements for unemployed managers and professionals and 25 placements for the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) population. Again, this will run from October 2009 – March 2011. Placements will be for 6 months and will focus on developing skills and training, building a CV and gaining a reference. Placement opportunities can be from the Public, Private or Third sector and generic job descriptions can be provided.

Adrienne said that she is looking for people working in local communities to spread the word about these 2 schemes. Steph Keeble asked what happens after the 6 month placement period. Adrienne said that the placement provider would either offer an ongoing contract or help to ensure that the person was ready and able to take the next step towards permanent employment. Steph said that she felt that this may be difficult ethically if an organisation was not able to offer anything ongoing after the initial 6 months. Adrienne said that the emphasis is about upskilling the individual so that they are in a better position to move on due to the work experience they have gained.

Barbara Hay asked whether people with learning disabilities have been considered in the scheme, how it will embrace other disadvantaged groups, and how we will ensure that people are not being discriminated against. Adrienne said that individual organisations will be doing the recruitment process once the initial referrals have been made. Equality monitoring of those people undergoing work placements will be undertaken and particular disadvantaged groups including disabled people and people from ethnic minorities are being targeted.

Bill Hall expressed concern that there are lots of NEET young people who do not bother with Job Centre Plus and may therefore miss out on these opportunities. Adrienne said that the programme officially starts in October 2009 and she is looking at other ways to promote this, for example, through the Coventry Telegraph. Adrienne also clarified that access to the Employment Placement Scheme is not dependent on a person receiving benefits.

Steph Keeble asked if people on placements will be classed as unemployed. Adrienne said that they would not be classed as unemployed whilst they are on a placement. They would be offered a Welfare Rights appointment to ensure that they would not be worse off financially as a result of this.

June Morley asked about people from new communities who may be excluded from the scheme as they would not be classed as unemployed for the 9 month period. Adrienne said that from day 1 – 6 months unemployed they would be able to access Enterprising Coventry (Formerly Local Enterprise Growth Initiative), and this can be accessed via the Job Centre. Enterprising Coventry is also about to be relaunched.

Grace Forrester said that the Coventry Telegraph will not get to many disadvantaged communities in Coventry. It is important to think about how we can get information to these

people through community groups, religious groups, community radio, etc. We need to reach those people who do not have access to information. Adrienne said that this is why she is here today and also visiting lots of other groups. It is important for everyone to spread the word and pass information on to those groups we all have contact with.

Sue Bent asked if there is a leaflet we can pass out to our contacts with details of the work placement schemes. Adrienne said that a leaflet will be produced shortly and it was agreed that the group will be informed when this is available.

Adrienne thanked the group for the opportunity to come along and talk about this, and also encouraged people to get back to her with any questions.

Sue Bent thanked Adrienne and Harjinder for coming along to talk about this.

Sue said that this comes from the conversation we had with the ELSE theme group about embedding equalities and cohesion into their theme, regarding the provision of volunteering and work placement opportunities. When we met with the ELSE theme group we also asked for a more detailed breakdown of NI 152 – working age people on out of work benefits and we will also be looking at this later on during today's meeting.

Action	Timescale	Who
If anyone would like any more information, or has an idea about a possible placement opportunity, please contact Adrienne Fitzgerald on 024 7683 4808 or email adrienne.fitzgerald@coventry.gov.uk	Ongoing	ALL
It was agreed that Debbie would circulate the 2 papers that were circulated at the meeting regarding the Future Jobs Fund and Employment Placement Initiative along with the notes of the meeting.	September 2009	Debbie Briggs
Adrienne asked everyone who is working with communities to spread the word about these schemes and encourage people who are seeking employment to look at these opportunities.	Ongoing	ALL
A leaflet is being produced to promote the 2 work placement schemes. It was agreed that Adrienne would let the group know when this is available, via Debbie, so that this can be passed on to our contacts.	October 2009	Adrienne Fitzgerald/ Debbie Briggs/ ALL

Breakdown of NI 15 – Serious Violent Crime

Sue welcomed Richard Howe who had come to talk to the group about this indicator. This follows on from the discussion the group has had with Sara Roach about embedding equalities and cohesion into the Community Safety Theme, when the group requested that a more detailed breakdown was provided for this indicator.

Richard said that there had been 460 offences of serious violent crime in Coventry, including Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and alcohol related offences. Of the 460 victims, 362 were male, compared to all violent crime in Coventry where there is a 50-50 split between males and females. We know that there is a massive under-reporting of domestic violence. The figures also show us that ethnic background does not really have an impact on likelihood of being a victim of serious violent crime, with the figures largely reflecting Coventry's population. 82% of victims are from a white background; 10% Asian, 6% Black and 1.6% other. This shows us that there is a small over-representation of victims from the Black community as Coventry's overall population is 4.1% Black.

Richard said that we do know that these figures are affected by other social variables including deprivation and social expectations and we know that incidents of serious violent crime are higher in the city centre and within priority neighbourhoods, and we know that most perpetrators of serious violent crime also come from the more deprived areas of the city. A target has been set to narrow the gap between serious violent crime rates in priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city to reflect this as a priority for Coventry. Richard circulated a map reflecting this and it was agreed that this would be circulated along with the notes of this meeting.

Steph Keeble asked about Domestic Violence and hate related crime and whether this information is disaggregated. Steph said that DVA within same sex relationships is hugely under reported and that this is not being tackled. We need to know what proportion of the 462 serious violent crimes were classified as a hate crime, and Richard said that this can be done and reported back to the group.

Dave Reilly said that there is a specific group that looks at how we tackle violent crime and Dave agreed to feed back these issues to that group. Dave said that we know that Coventry has a problem with domestic violence that other cities in the region do not have and we also know that there are far greater levels of reporting in some communities than others. Dave said that he would feed back in relation to this at the next meeting.

Sue Bent said that it is clear that there is a huge amount of analysis of statistics that informs the work of the Community Safety Partnership, and that it would be good to see the link between the analysis of data, the work that is being undertaken as a result of this, and how the equalities agenda is informing that work.

The group would like to hear about what work is being done within areas or communities where we know that there is evident under reporting of hate crime and DVA to break down barriers and increase confidence in reporting.

It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the next meeting.

Sue thanked Richard for attending the meeting.

Action	Timescale	Who
It was agreed that the map outlining the location of perpetrators of serious violent crime in the city would be circulated along with the notes of this meeting.	September 2009	Debbie Briggs
It was agreed that Richard Howe would provide a breakdown showing the proportion of serious violent crimes that are classified as hate crime.	Next meeting – 18 th November 2009	Richard Howe
It was agreed that Dave Reilly would feed back to the group that looks at tackling violent crime in the city, and report back at the next meeting.	Next meeting – 18 th November 2009`	Dave Reilly

3. 2012 Olympics

Sue welcomed Tom Clift and David Moorcroft who had come along to talk to the group about what is happening in Coventry to prepare for the 2012 Olympics.

Tom thanked the group for the opportunity to come along and share this work with them. Tom is part of the Coventry and Warwickshire 2012 Partnership and talked to the group about opportunities to get involved with what is happening. Tom took the group through a Powerpoint presentation, and it was agreed that this would be circulated along with the notes of this meeting. Tom said that it is now less than 3 years until the 2012 Olympic Games and

Paralympic Games which are the world's 2 biggest sporting events. Tom's role is to gain benefits for Coventry and Warwickshire from the 2012 Olympics and there are a number of opportunities for us all to engage and be a part of it.

Tom took the group through the slides and David Moorcroft then talked to the group about the 6 projects that are being undertaken. Coventry and Warwickshire will be involved in these projects, for example, there is a project that celebrates former Olympians and Paralympians and there are 100+ people with strong connections to Coventry and Warwickshire. There is also a project focusing on Carnivals and Festivals with an aim of all Carnivals and Festivals held between now and 2012 taking on an Olympic theme. This has already started in Coventry with the Godiva Festival this year. David explained that this can be extended to fairs and school fetes and the Coventry and Warwickshire 2012 Partnership wants to raise the level of ambition in the region.

There is also a project with the theme of peace and reconciliation and there is an opportunity for Coventry within this as it is the 50th anniversary of the consecration of Coventry Cathedral in 2012. Peace and Reconciliation should be at the heart of what the Olympics is all about.

The Olympics and Paralympics are one of the most inclusive events in the world. There is something in it for everyone and the opportunity to connect cities and countries. The Olympics are relevant to the whole of the UK and not just London.

Grace Forrester said that it is important to get older people involved and we know about the benefits of keeping older people fit and active. David said that there is a project called 'Fit as a Fiddle' which will be around engaging with older people and encouraging them to be more active.

Tom said that Aston Villa Football Club has withdrawn from being a host location for the Olympics, and this has presented an opportunity for Coventry to put the Ricoh Arena forward as a host venue. This would be a tremendous honour and we should know the result of this by Christmas.

Edwin Lukong asked about the Africa Inspires Project. David said that it would be really useful to meet with members of different African communities within Coventry to contribute to this. If anyone has contacts who would be interested in getting involved in this, please let Debbie know so that they can be passed on to Tom and David.

Sue asked everyone to think about the events they are planning between now and 2012 and if they are supportive of any of the 6 themes and can add value, please let Debbie know so that this information can be passed on.

It was also agreed that the group would discuss this at the next meeting on 18th November 2009 and think about any opportunities to link into the projects that are being planned.

Sue thanked Tom and David for attending the meeting.

Action	Timescale	Who
It was agreed that Debbie would circulate a copy of Tom's presentation along with the notes of the meeting.	September 2009	Debbie Briggs
If anyone has any contacts with members of different African communities in Coventry who would be interested in getting involved in the Africa Inspires project, please let Debbie know so that their names can be passed on to Tom and David.	October 2009	ALL

<p>If anyone is organising any events between now and 2012 that are supportive of the 6 themes, please let Debbie know so that this information can be passed on.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>It was agreed that the group would discuss this further at the next meeting and let Tom and David know if there are any opportunities for members of the group to become involved.</p>	<p>18th November 2009</p>	<p>ALL</p>

4. Embedding Equalities and Cohesion into the LAA Part 2

Breakdown on NI 152 – Working Age People on Out of Work Benefits

Sue welcomed Tom Evans and Myles Mackie to the group from the Council's Corporate Research, Information and Consultation Team. This agenda item follows on from the discussion the group had with Steve Stewart and Rebecca Young about embedding equalities and cohesion into the Economy, Learning, Skills and Employment Theme, and the group had asked for more information about NI 152 – Working Age People on Out of Work Benefits.

Tom Evans took the group through a Powerpoint presentation looking at the breakdown of this indicator. It was agreed that the presentation would be circulated along with the notes of this meeting.

Tom explained that the data he was using is taken from the Department for Work and Pensions and breaks down the number of benefit claimants by ethnicity, age, gender and disability. The benefits covered include Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), Incapacity benefits, Lone Parents Benefits and other means tested income related benefits. 16% of the working age population now claims one of these benefits, which equates to approximately 1 in 6 people. We know that JSA claimants have increased by two thirds in the last year due to the recession, and the number of JSA claimants now stands at about 11,200. This has now started to level out and there are signs that this may begin to drop off again in the near future as local business confidence has started to increase, resulting in businesses in the city starting to recruit again.

A year ago, there was a higher rate of female JSA claimants. This trend has now reversed and we can see that most claimants of JSA are now male. 3,000 more men are now claiming out of work benefits. In terms of age, the highest numbers of claimants are in the 35 – 44 age group. This is a key measure as the rate of claimants does increase with age. 1 in 4 people age 55 and over are currently claiming benefits. In 2008/09 there has been an increase in claimants from across all age groups.

Ethnicity can only be broken down for JSA claimants and we can see that 68% of JSA claimants are from a white background, compared to 70% of the working age population in Coventry being from a white background, which is reasonably representative. We can also see that people from an Asian background have an average level of unemployment, and people from an Indian background have a lower than average level of unemployment. The number of JSA claimants from a Black background is higher than average. In 2009/09 there has been an increase in the number of JSA claimants across all ethnic groups in Coventry.

Grace Forrester said that it is important for us to target Black and Black African groups for the Work Placement Schemes we heard about earlier in the meeting.

Approximately one quarter of the people claiming out of work benefits are disabled and claiming Disability Living Allowance. This equates to approximately 1 in 4. The census shows us that approximately 1 in 6 of Coventry's population has a limiting long term illness

and therefore we can see that worklessness is more prevalent amongst Coventry's disabled population.

Bill Hall said that he had received information earlier from Myles about unemployment in St Michaels and Foleshill which has increased to 48.7% over the last 12 months. Myles said that the number of JSA claimants has increased less in priority neighbourhoods and more in areas like Earlsdon and Wainbody reflecting that more middle class jobs have been affected. It may also be the case that women amongst some minority groups tend not to claim benefits and would therefore not be included in these figures.

Sue said that one of the reasons the group had asked for this breakdown was that we were not sure about how much data was available and the extent to which it could be broken down. Myles said that this data is now available in this disaggregated format. Myles also said that the mid year estimates had also just come out on 27th August, and this shows that there is a 3,100 increase in Coventry's population and that a third of all births were from BME groups, with the fastest growing group being the African community. It is likely that the ethnic balance in the city has changed fairly significantly, although we will not know the full extent of this for a few more weeks as more data is received.

Sue thanked Tom and Myles for attending.

Action	Timescale	Who
Debbie to circulate a copy of Tom's presentation along with the notes of this meeting.	September 2009	Debbie Briggs

5. Survey of New Communities

Sue explained that this was a piece of research that had been commissioned by the Law Centre and funded by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. Teresa Staniewicz then gave a brief overview of the report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Teresa explained that herself and David Owen had been involved in producing this piece of work and had been tasked with finding out how hard to reach and new communities were accessing advice services in the city, and to supply an evidence base in relation to this. The research found that Advice Services in Coventry were facilitating the needs of existing communities but that new communities have a different set of needs which were not being met. People from new communities were presenting in a circular way and it is difficult for them to access the often quite specific information they need. The needs of newer communities are at a lower lever, for example, needing information where to go to access services and how to fill forms in.

This information has been used to submit a bid to the Migration Impact Fund and this has been successful in securing funding which will help to equip people with basic knowledge and bring them up to the same level as other communities.

If anyone has any questions in relation to this, please let Debbie know and she will pass them on to Teresa.

Paul Wells said that he is doing some work with Warwick University and there is a dedicated Police Officer working with International Students who have raised similar issues and need assistance with simple tasks, for example, information about how to obtain a driving license. Simple lesson plans have been developed to respond to this need. Paul is also on the working group for the Migration Impact Fund.

Teresa said that pamphlets are available that signpost people to basic information, for example, how to access a GP.

Sue thanked Teresa Staniewicz and David Owen for this piece of work.

Action	Timescale	Who
If anyone has any questions in relation to this research please let Debbie know and she will pass them on to Teresa.	Ongoing	ALL
8. Any Other Business		
Coventry Partnership Annual Conference		
<p>The Coventry Partnership Annual Conference is taking place on 3rd December 2009 and the theme of the day will be around Cohesion. The Community Cohesion Guidance that the group has developed will be launched on the day, alongside the Community Cohesion Strategy.</p>		
Coventry Partnership Community Cohesion Strategy		
<p>Surindar Nagra reported that a draft of the Coventry Partnership Community Cohesion Strategy, produced by a sub-group of this group, is now out for consultation. Surindar has emailed the draft strategy round to the group for comment and it can also be found here: http://www.coventrypartnership.com/equalitiesandcommunitiesdocuments</p> <p>Comments are welcomed up to 13th October 2009. As part of the consultation on the Community Cohesion strategy, the Equalities & Community Cohesion Group has arranged a community meeting which will take place on 29th September 2009.</p>		
National Care Service		
<p>The Government has produced a Green Paper 'Shaping the Future of Care Together' which is currently being consulted on. Grace Forrester has produced a summary of the document which was circulated and will also be sent out with the notes of this meeting. A White Paper is expected in 2010 and will be implemented in 2012.</p> <p>Within the paper are six elements that the Government thinks every adult should expect in the new National Care Service and the Government is consulting to find out if there are any gaps, and how the service should be funded in the future.</p> <p>This will affect everybody and Grace Forrester would like to encourage everyone to respond to the consultation by 13th November 2009, either as individuals or as groups.</p>		
Dates of Future Meetings		
<p>Debbie circulated a list of future meeting dates for the next year. Please note that the next meeting, which is taking place on 18th November 2009, will be held in Committee Room 2 in the Council House and not at St Peter's.</p>		
Action	Timescale	Who
A summary of the Government's Green Paper 'Shaping the Future of Care Together' to be circulated with the notes of this meeting.	September 2009	Debbie Briggs
Members of the Group are encouraged to respond to the Government's consultation either as individuals or as groups.	13 th November 2009	ALL
Everyone was asked to make a note of the future meeting dates (copy attached to these notes)	ASAP	ALL

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 18th November 2009 in Committee Room 2, Council House, Earl Street