

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FORUM

14 February 2008 at 6.30 pm

MEMBERS: Councillor Ruth Dombey (Chair), and Councillors Margaret Ali, Shafi Chowdhury, Edwina McCarthy, Joan Parker, Pam Davis, Andy Wilson and David Gair

ABSENT: Councillors Abigail Lock, Pamela Picknett, Misdaq Zaidi, Nasser Butt, Toby Price, Kevin Biggs, Kate Evans, Beau Fadahunsi, Alastair Howarth, Sally Hill and Tim Lyth.

Also present:
(*Absent)

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| *Kevin Biggs | Borough Fire Commander |
| *Kate Evans | Sutton Education Lead Adviser |
| *Beau Fadahunsi | Sutton Minority Ethnic forum |
| Chief Insp David Gair | Safer Sutton Partnership |
| *Alastair Howarth | HM Prison Highdown |
| *Tim Lyth | Carshalton College |
| Marion Martin | Carshalton College |
| *Fran Massiah | Sutton Housing Strategy Group |
| Richard Lennard | Sutton Faith and Belief Group |
| Sally Hill | HM Prison Downview |
| Petei Ferrozzulu | Sutton Seniors Forum |

In the absence of the Chair Councillor Ruth Dombey at the start of the meeting, Shafi Chowdhury, the Vice Chair took the Chair.

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTES

Councillor Abigail Lock and Nikki Williams sent their apologies. They were represented by Councillor Brendan Hudson and Sally Hills respectively. Councillor Ruth Dombey apologised for her late arrival.

38. MELODIE SHELBOURNE

Dennis Bartholomew referred to the recent death of Melodie Shelbourne, a member of this Forum. Ms Shelbourne had played a pivotal role in the community and her passing would be felt by a large number of people.

Resolved: That the Forum's condolences be expressed to Melodie Shelbourne's family and colleagues.

39. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2007 were approved as a correct record, and signed by the Vice Chair.

40. SUTTON'S LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

Dennis Bartholomew, the Council's Equalities Officer, circulated a leaflet called "Working Together through the Sutton Partnership". It was noted that the Partnership Board comprised all the major service providers in the borough in six themed partnerships. A new Local Area Agreement between all the providers was currently being drawn up though it was thought that the themed structure would not change.

There was money available from central government in 2009/10 towards the work of the Partnership. It was suggested that the Partnership could be influenced through the Community Engagement Network, (CEN) four representatives of which sat on the Partnership Board. However, it was noted that the funding for the CEN would cease after 1 April 2008. It was hoped that the CEN would eventually be combined with LINK, the health consultation body, though this would not happen

before September 2008 at the earliest. All the momentum that the CEN had built up would be lost. Ways of ensuring the continuation of CEN were currently being explored.

It was felt important that this Forum was linked to the Sutton Partnership Board and found a role for itself. That could be achieved by looking at the themes of the Local Area Agreement.

Resolved: (i) That the Chief Executive of Sutton Council be informed of this Forum's concern at the lack of funding for the Community Engagement Network from 1 April 2008.

(ii) That the officers explore ways in which the Sutton Partnership Board could report to this Forum.

(iii) That the various partnerships that make up the Sutton Partnership Board be advised of the existence of this Forum and asked to let this Forum consider matters of interest to them.

41. WORK PLAN 2008/09

Resolved: That Dennis Bartholomew, together with the Chair and other officers devise a work plan for the Forum based on the discussions that had taken place earlier on the meeting on the Local Area Agreement for consideration at the next meeting.

42. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

It was reported that the commemoration for Holocaust Memorial Day had been organised by representatives from all the faith groups in the borough. This year the event had been held at Wentworth Hall, Carshalton and had been extremely well attended. The Worshipful the Mayor and the Council's Chief Executive together with Muslim, Humanist and Catholic representatives had taken part.

The event had been organised by Shaun O'Leary, the Council's Executive Head for Learning Disabilities and it was hoped that it would become a mainstream event in the life of the borough.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

43. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE DISABLED

Edwina McCarthy, from the Physical and Sensory Disabilities Partnership Board gave a report on how the International Day of the Disabled had been celebrated in the borough on 3 December 2007. The event, which had cost £1,200 and had been funded by three charities, had been successful and lessons had been learnt for future years.

Edwina also mentioned that this would probably be her last meeting as funding for her post with the Sutton Centre for Independent Living and Learning would finish at the end of March 2008.

Concern was expressed over the lack of press coverage, not only for this event but also other events organised by the voluntary sector. It was hoped that the new Council Communications Team could try and engage with the local press to improve upon this situation. The Council magazine – Sutton Scene, could also be used. It was also noted that Andy Wilson was having a meeting with the editor of the Sutton Guardian and could raise it then.

Details of funding for future events was also discussed and a leaflet which mentioned a specific fund managed by O2 (the mobile telephone company) was circulated.

Resolved: (i) That the relevant partnership be asked to take on responsibility for organising International Day of Disabled People in the future and involved other partners as necessary;

(ii) That Andy Wilson raise with the editor of the Sutton Guardian the lack of coverage for events organised by the voluntary sector;

(iii) That details of the O2 fund be circulated to Forum members;

(iv) That the Forum record their thanks to Edwina McCarthy for her input into the Forum's work

44. SUTTON MINORITY ETHNIC FORUM

It was reported that a number of activities had been organised that would lead to the formation of the Sutton Minority Ethnic Forum. These activities had including the shadowing of Councillors in their roles which had proved successful. Terms of reference for the Forum were currently being written. A general meeting would take place on 21 February and the AGM in April would provide an opportunity to elect a new Executive.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

45. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT 2007/08 - HALF-YEAR TRACKER REPORT

Dennis Bartholomew, the Council's Equalities Officer circulated and explained the Council's tracker report. This was a quarterly report on 198 indicators that the Council used to monitor its performance. Where services were falling below the acceptable standard, the report highlighted them and enabled corrective action to be taken.

It was hoped that by bringing the report to this Forum, the provision of services could be influenced. It was also suggested that the use of themed meetings could make the Forum more influential in its role.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

46. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The following matters were brought forward as urgent business so that members of the Forum could receive the latest information as soon as possible.

a) Faith and Belief Forum

Resolved: To note that the next Faith and Belief Forum meeting would be held on 17 March 2008 at 7pm when Andy Wilson would be speaking.

b) Mosquito Alarms

Resolved: To note that Sutton Police did not support the use of Mosquito Alarms to move groups of young people on and that, as far as they were aware, no such alarms operated in the borough.

c) Police Stop and Search Powers

It was reported that, towards the end of February, Sutton Police would be piloting the use of a new form to be completed when they used their stop and search powers. It was emphasised that there was no change in their powers; the change was in the way that information was recorded.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

d) Time of Meeting

Resolved: That, at the next meeting, further consideration be given to the start time of these meetings.

The meeting ended at 9.06 pm

Chair:

Date: