

Time commenced : 6.30 pm
Time finished : 8.20 pm

WOMEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 22 November 2005

Present: **Representing Derby City Council**
Councillor MacDonald (Chair)
Councillor Bolton
Councillor Jackson

Council Advisors

Andrew Auld, Head of Communications
Ellen Bird, Constitutional Services Officer
Pam Thompson, Consultation Support Officer

Officers

Richard Talaska, Older People's Consultation Officer

Community Representatives

Lyn Anglin	The Friendship Group
Kulvinder Bola	Raunak Group
Susan Boon	Osmaston Community Panel
Nasreen Iqbal	Individual
Arshia Iqbal	Individual
Naranjan Lalria	Individual
Angela Neill	Individual
Janice Platt	Individual
Irene Shiels	War Widows' Association
Chandra Sayal	Individual

27/05 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Shirley Howard, Sylvia Hyde and Councillors Hird, Latham and Winter.

28/05 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

None.

29/05 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

30/05

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2005 were agreed as a correct record subject to minute number 17/05 being amended to read 'Derbyshire Probation Board'.

31/05 Membership of the Committee

The Committee received an application from Lyn Anglin to join the Committee. Lyn Anglin introduced herself to the Group.

Resolved to appoint Lyn Anglin as a Member of the Committee.

32/05 A Vision for Ageing in Derby

The Committee received a report on Derby City Council's 'Vision for Ageing' which had recently been approved by Council Cabinet. Richard Talaska informed the Committee that the vision had been developed from extensive consultation with older people and key stakeholders. The aim of the consultation was to establish how to plan effectively for an ageing population in all of the Council's Policies. The Consultation with older people had revealed the desire for the promotion of independence and a 'can do' approach to tackling the needs of Derby's residents who were over 50.

The Committee expressed agreement with the findings of the Consultation and supported the positive approach that had stemmed from the consultation.

Nasreen Iqbal highlighted the high numbers of women who were in the 'older people' category and asked whether this had been taken into consideration during the development of the plan. She also highlighted that there were minority ethnic groups in the over 50's age group and asked that consideration be given as to how these people were to be catered for and drawn into the community as part of the plan.

Richard Talaska reported that these issues had been taken into consideration during the development of the 'Vision for Ageing'.

Irene Sheils reported that she had attended the open access group which had formed part of the consultation process. She felt that a large amount of useful information had been gleaned at the sessions and was concerned that the information would be utilised effectively. Richard Talaska informed the Committee that the information was used as the basis for formulating the vision and had influenced the priorities within the 'Vision for Ageing'.

It was noted that no additional funds were available for the implementation of the plan.

Resolved to note the report and to endorse the outcomes of the Consultation process.

33/05 'Getting Derby Active'

The Committee received a report on the 'Getting Derby Active' Strategy. It was agreed that discussion of the report would be deferred to a future meeting.

Nasreen Iqbal stated that she was already a Member of the Strategy Planning Group of 'Getting Derby Active'. She reported on her involvement in the Group and the levels of commitment required.

Resolved to

- 1. defer discussion of the report on 'Getting Derby Active' to a future meeting and:**
- 2. to ask the Committee Members to contact Pam Thompson if they were interested in joining the Strategy Planning Group of 'Getting Derby Active'.**

34/05 Home Office Consultation: Forced Marriages

The Committee received a Home Office Consultation Document on Forced Marriages and discussed their opinions on this issue using the questions in the Consultation to structure their discussion.

The Committee felt that the disadvantages to creating a specific offence of forcing someone to marry were that:

- it may not necessarily be one person who is responsible for forcing two people to marry, the wider family may be involved in exerting pressure on the couple and it may be difficult to establish who should be prosecuted.
- A marriage may start as a consensual arranged marriage but the couple may use the forced marriage legislation as a reason for the failure of their marriage leaving parents and others involved in arranging the marriage to be falsely accused.

The Committee felt that the advantages of creating a specific offence of forcing someone to marry were that:

- couples may be encouraged to speak out against forced marriages and seek help
- Families may be less likely to force a couple to marry if they knew their actions were punishable by a prison sentence. The Committee felt that a fine would not have a significant influence on the wider families behaviour as usually forced marriages brought significant financial benefit to the family.

The Committee felt that on balance the Government should introduce a criminal offence for forced marriage as they believed it was right to punish people for destroying the couples lives. They believed that the punishment should be a prison sentence and that the whole family should be investigated for their involvement in the forced marriage.

The Committee felt that their needed to be very careful investigation of each case to ensure that the couple had been forced to marry and were not using the legislation to disguise the fact that their marriage had simply failed.

The Committee believed that any new legislation needed to be accompanied by increased education and greater access to information about where to go to get help before the marriage took place as well as after any such marriage.

Careful consideration needed to be given to when an arranged marriage became a forced marriage.

Resolved to ask Pam Thompson to forward the Committee's views to be part of the consultation process.

35/05 International Women's Day 2006

Pam Thompson reported that the Planning Group for Derby's International Women's Day had met and had decided that Derby's event would be held on Saturday 4 March 2006 at the Council House. The theme would be 'Celebrating Success through generations'. The Planning Group had agreed that the event would include information stalls for women, a fashion show which recognised cultural diversity and an awards ceremony celebrating success through generations. The awards would be spread over 4/5 themes and the public would be asked to nominate women living or working in Derby. The awards would be sponsored by private companies.

Resolved to note the Report

36/05 Forward Plan

Copies of the Forward Plan were tabled.

Resolved to incorporate the following report into the Workplan at an appropriate time:

48/05 Corporate Strategy: Consideration of Consultation Strategy.

25/05 Work Programme

The Committee considered the latest Work Programme.

It was noted that the budget would be considered in January.

The Committee agreed to ask the Chair to determine appropriate reports for the next meeting in order to allow sufficient time for consideration of the budget.

Resolved to note the Work Programme.

| 26/05 Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: Definition Update

The Committee were provided with information on the new definition for Harassment in the Workplace.

Resolved to note the update material.

27/05 Date of the Next Meeting

| It was noted that the next Women's Advisory Meeting would be on Tuesday 24th January 2006 at 6.30pm.

Chair of the next ensuing meeting
at which these minutes were signed