

Time commenced : 6.35pm
Time finished : 8.35pm

GENDER DIVERSITY FORUM 5 FEBRUARY 2008

Present: **Representing Derby City Council**
Councillor Higginbottom (Chair)
Councillor Redfern

Community Representatives

Bernadette Pinnock – Friendship Group
Susan Boon – Women in Neighbouring Communities
Gill Taylor – Soroptimists International
Arshia Iqbal – Normanton Women's Engagement Project
Nasreen Iqbal – Normanton Women's Engagement Project
Toni Montinaro – Derbyshire Friend
Emma Boyes – Derbyshire Friend
Cherry Henry – Hadhari Nari
Famida Bhatti – Refuge

Council and Other Officers

Pam Thompson – Consultation Support Officer
Cal Chikwendu – Derby City PCT
Rachel Dickenson – AD, Locality Services
Kevin Murphy – Education Welfare Services

In Attendance

Dionne Reid – Women's Work
Andrew Outram – LGBT Young People
Rebecca Ward – Derbyshire Friend

38/07 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Berry, Bolton, Winter and Willoughby, Shirley Howard-Johnson and Karen Maclean.

39/07 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

40/07 Introductions

The Forum members introduced themselves and welcomed new members.

41/07 Election of the Vice-Chair

The Forum voted for a Vice Chair of the meeting. No ballots had been received prior to the meeting.

Agreed to elect Dawn Makawana as Vice Chair of the Forum.

42/07 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November were noted and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

43/07 Update on Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

Following the meeting held on 20 November 2008 the Forum received an update from Kevin Murphy, Acting Head of Welfare Service regarding processes for legal action in cases of children not attending school.

It was reported that every child in Derby had the right to attend school, and every school had an education welfare officer who were there to support the schools in maintaining attendance. It was reported that there were 74 prosecutions for non-attendance in Derby last year, out of 36,000 parents although parents had not been jailed. This was only used in extreme cases where the parents could be held directly accountable for non-attendance and had a long period of disengagement. It was reported that if matters got to the point of prosecution, then legal proceedings could be taken against whoever had parental responsibility. This meant that even if the parents were separated but were living in the same city, then they could both reasonably be held responsible for the child's educational attendance.

It was reported that the education welfare team had a high level of involvement with cases of non-attendance and could provide support to schools, families and other organisations. The Forum welcomed this information, and noted that there were still organisations within the city which could benefit from more support from the education welfare team. A concern was raised about transport to school for children living in refuges and it was noted that there are no funds currently identified for this. Kevin Murphy will contact Cherry Henry of Hadhari Nari about the support that is available. Rachel Dickinson advised the Forum that the Derby Safeguarding Children Board planned in 2008/09 to review services for children affected by domestic violence. Kevin Murphy reported that the Education Welfare Team would be happy to provide support to anyone who contacted them.

Noted.

44/07 Work Programme 2007/08

The Forum discussed the forthcoming items on the work programme. It was agreed to bring items 14, 15 and 16 to the April Forum meeting. It was agreed to move the Community Safety Partnership item up the agenda to group agenda items more logically. It was noted that 3 items per meeting was usually not feasible and so it was agreed that the Play strategy could be moved to a later meeting. The Forum also agreed that they would like to see identifiable actions arising from the different presentations, which Forum members could take away to their own organisations.

Agreed to note the update and for Forum members to consider what actions they could take away from the different presentations.

45/07 Women's Health

Following the presentation on Men's Health, the Forum received a presentation on Women's Health from Cal Chikwendu, Senior Public Health Manager Derby

PCT. It was reported that while there had been significant improvements in men's health, women's health had not seen much progress as while men's mortality rate from cancer was decreasing, the women's rate was increasing. This was especially noticeable with lung cancer, which it was felt was correlated to many women taking up smoking in the 1960s. It was reported that there was a good uptake of cancer screening in Derby, with c.80% of women using the services. However, there were still some groups who were not utilising the services, and while the numbers were not huge the PCT recognised that this was a problem that needed addressing.

It was reported that the PCT held consultation events through the public health forum and that details would be sent to any interested Forum members. The Forum also agreed that members with experience of Equality Impact Assessments would be happy to assist if the PCT wanted help with this.

Noted.

46/07 Hadhari Nari Women's Domestic Violence Service Provision

The Forum received a presentation from Cherry Henry on the work of the Hadhari Nari, an organisation providing specialist refuge support to women and children experiencing violence in the home. It was reported that a specialist refuge support was important as it offered women a safe environment to be able to live within their own culture, as trying to adapt their culture to live in a mixed refuge could potentially be very distressing. It was reported that the refuge was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and this required high levels of resources. The refuge was therefore dependant on donations to help them provide basic essentials. It was reported that there were sometimes difficulties with communication with other agencies that referred women to the refuge, but these could be overcome with greater partnership working and communication between agencies.

Noted.

47/07 Open Discussion

The Forum discussed the plans for the forthcoming International Women's Day. It was reported that the event would be held in the Darwin Suite of the Derby Assembly Rooms. The theme would be 'What's Your Next Move' which would offer options to visitors regarding opportunities for work, hobbies and new interests that they could get involved in. The key focus would be to produce a directory of women's service providers so that visitors on the day would be able to take away a full list of key contacts and agencies. The event would not just be for women, but the focus of the events would be on women.

The forum suggested that this might be an opportunity to raise some teenage pregnancy issues, as it was acknowledged that for some girls it was an aspiration to have children at an early age. It was agreed that if a suitable speaker on the issue could be identified then thought could be given to including this in the programme for the day.

Noted.

48/07 Next Forum Pre-Meeting

The next pre-meeting would be held on Monday 3 March at 4:15pm. Any Forum members interested in attending the pre-meeting were asked to contact Pam Thompson.

Agreed.

MINUTES END