EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FORUM

1 March 2012 at 7.00 pm

MEMBERS: Councillor Simon Wales (Chair),and Andy Wilson, Yeats, O'Neill, Davies, Travers, Morris, Locke-Thomson, Bartlett, Rollins, Joan Parker, Kate Evans, Adrian Davey, Lester Holloway and Watson

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTES

- Julie Duffy
- Pam Pickett
- Pam Davies
- Andy Stally

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th of December 2012 were approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

Cllr Wales informed the Forum that the item on Sutton Housing Centre had been deferred to the May meeting of the Forum.

3. RESIDENTS SURVEY

Cllr Wales welcomed Julie Young, from the Policy and Customer Services Division, to the Forum who provided a presentation on the Residents Survey.

JY took the Forum through a comprehensive presentation covering:

- The economic context
- Perceptions of the local area and priorities for improvement
- Views of the Council
- Contact with the Council
- Community engagement and volunteering
- Crime and anti-social behaviours
- Health and exercise
- Looking ahead

The Forum welcomed the presentation and the demographic information drawn out of the survey. There were a number of questions on the detail of the presentation covering: the impact of the recession for BME groups and the view that this was more limited in Sutton, contact with the Council, Internet access, and motivations for volunteering.

JY committed to providing the Forum with further information on:

- Parking and the additional exploration of parking issues with the online Residents Panel (approx, 400 people).
- Contact with the Council, which the Forum wished to be broken down further
- How to become a member of the online Residents Panel.
  (**Action: Julie Young**).

4. SUTTON HOUSING CENTRE

Deferred to the May meeting of the Forum.

5. BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Cllr Wales invited William Essel and Sylvia Lambe to update the Forum on the plans for the 2012 Black History Month in October.

WE noted the positive events in 2011, with an increase in attendance and shared the annual report with the Forum.

SL described the plans for BHM for 2012, which included how to gain further participation from schools. The Group were keen to continue to make links with other events and had welcomed the opportunity to get involved with the Holocaust Memorial Day. The Group were keen to ensure a cross fertilisation of issues.

SL confirmed the BHMG had secured funding from the Imagine Festival and would be having a steel band in the High Street to promote the Group and the BHM.

The theme for 2012 was yet to be determined, but SL and WE agreed to keep the Forum updated with progress.

It was agreed that Victoria Lawson would distribute the BHM plan for 2011 to the Forum with the minutes (**Action: BHM Group to provide electronic copy for distribution.**

The Chair thanked William Essel and Sylvia Lambe for attending the item.

6. EQUALITIES IN SCHOOLS

Cllr Wales invited Kate Evans to provide a short presentation on equalities in schools, following a request from the previous Forum in December.

The presentation highlighted:

- The equality duties placed on schools;
- Racial incidents within schools;
- Attitudes and behaviours within schools;
- Areas for further development;
- Schools approaches to other equality issues.

The Forum discussed the areas for development which were:

- To add ethnicity boxes to surveys to allow improved analysis of feedback;
- Consistently well-planned admission of new arrivals;
- Lesson observations to have an equality focus;
- To monitor participation rates in option subjects, alternative provision and wider school life;
- Reporting annually on the impact of equality policies.

There was a discussion on academies and KE informed the Forum that they continue to report incidents to her and that it would be important to understand the types of incidents. KE told the Forum it was primarily name calling, but further information can be provided to the Forum if required.

The Chair thanked Kate Evans for attending the item.

7. TRAVELLERS FORUM

Cllr Wales welcomed Cllr Butt and Kate Evans to the Forum to provide an update on the Travellers Forum within Sutton.
The presentation covered:

- A short history;
- Key achievements, which included:
    - A raised profile across the council, with a full range of services recognising their responsibilities towards the Traveller community
    - Visits to the site from lead councillors and senior officers;
    - Dedicated meetings with the Leader of the Council, and presentations from children;
    - A footpath joining the private and LA site;
    - A name and postcode for the LA site: 'The Pastures';
    - Wheelie bins and recycling collection for all plots;
    - Re-modelled bin-store to make a community room;
    - Re-furbished utility blocks and fencing;
    - Bus stop;
    - Dedicated time from a management company;
    - Dedicated police liaison officer;
- Plans for the future;
- Ongoing concerns, which were highlighted as:
    - Health inequalities;
    - Fuel poverty – particularly lack of mains gas;
    - Lack of access to public transport;
    - Lack of safe play space;
    - The number of pupils out of school;
    - Lack of co-ordination for managing encampments of highly mobile Travellers;
    - Awareness raising for lead members and officers of the council.

The Forum thanked Kate for her comprehensive presentation. There was a short discussion on the issues raised in particular the health inequalities and the challenges with the transport into Sutton.

KE noted that there was ongoing work to address the myths of the Travellers Community, not helped by recent TV and press coverage. SREC were working with the Travellers Forum to promote Travellers History Month and the importance of the Forum attending other events to promote this community.

The Chair thanked Cllr Butt and Kate Evans for attending the item.

8. EVENTS 2012

Events in 2012

Victoria Lawson highlighted three areas for the Forum:

- Request to support the Happy Soul Festival;
- Feedback from the Holocaust Memorial Day;
- Upcoming events in May and June.

VL noted an email request from those organising the Happy Soul Festival and whether the Council would be willing to meet and discuss how to get involved. The festival celebrates BME film and art, whilst creatively exploring wellbeing and addressing the stigma of mental health. The Forum agreed that it would be important to support the event. **Action: VL, IK, SREC and Cllr Davey to meet with the organisation to discuss further.**

VL provided feedback on the HMD and thanked the Forum members for their support and contributions to making the event successful. There had been positive feedback on the event but recognition that there were improvements that could be made for 2013 including a change in venue and greater involvement of schools.

VL highlighted to the Forum a range of events coming up in May and June that the Forum could support these included:

- International Day against Homophobia (17th May);
- Learning Disability Week (18-24 June);
- Carers Week (18-24 June);
- Travellers History Month (June).

The Forum agreed to support these events and to explore what was being planned across our networks. VL to arrange meetings with individuals as follows:

- International Day against Homophobia (VL, IK, SAY and SJ-P);
- Learning Disability Week (VL and IK);
- Carers Week (VL, SAY, and IK);
- Travellers History Month (SREC).

TA updated the Forum on the plans for Travellers History Month, which included:

- Established a steering group;
- Development of a programme of events, which includes: launch event, exhibitions, storytelling sessions, traveller art, dance, craft workshops and a closing event;
- The role of the month was to raise awareness whilst also building links between the travellers and wider community.

Cllr Davey suggested sharing the events information at Local Committees once developed and via Notice Boards throughout the Borough (**Action: Victoria Lawson**).

9. EQUALITY ACT 2010 COMPLIANCE

Equality 2010 compliance

VL provided a short update on the Council's compliance with the Equality Act 2010, which included the publication of Equality Data on the main Council Internet site and the publication of equality objectives. VL directed the Forum to the

Internet site and asked for their views and comments (**Action: Forum to provide comments to Victoria Lawson**).

10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Any Other Business

South London Interfaith Walks
VL handed out details on the Interfaith Walks being set up across London for July and the request for Sutton to be involved.

Mencap – Stand By Me
IK handed out information on the 3 year campaign against disability hate crime, called "Stand By Me". The purpose of the campaign is to challenge the police, criminal justice system and the courts to end hate crime against people with a learning disability.

Hate Incidents Update
IK circulated a report detailing the current position with regard to hate incidents within the Borough.

Police Update
IK provided a short update for the minutes from Andy Stalley. The update for the Forum was:

Sutton Police has rolled out Total Victim Care (TVC) and Quality Call Back (QCB) in February. TVC gives better information to victims of crime in a better way and will improve the quality of service we give to the public. QCB is a system of phone interviews with those victims of crime, which will over time will produce meaningful data on the performance of officers when they report and investigate crime.

More significantly we have launched our ASB policy. This involves completion of a risk assessment at the majority of ASB calls. So far the results are excellent, more useful information coming on vulnerable victims than previously, meaning we are taking more action, more quickly and involving partners more, We are highlighting vulnerability and repeat victims which we has not known of before.

The next step is to develop the use of the Risk Assessment form internally for other incidents that are not strictly ASB and to give it to partners for them to assess the vulnerability of people coming to their notice in the same way as we do.

We have just completed the major mapping exercise of the Borough aiming to cover all diversity groups are include. The aim is to build that into or engagement strategy. The next step is to verify data with the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and present it as a meaningful tool. This looks to be a very productive project.

Insp.Stalley is reviewing the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) structure and role, along with internal diversity group structure and role. Insp Stalley has met a few partners and will be presenting a way forward next week for approval. The aim is to make the IAG representative and to give it a meaningful role, by engaging them more often and in a more structured way.

Overall, Insp Stalley reports he is loving my job, because of the role, but because of the encouragement and participation of all partners, LBS Staff and the officers. Everyone wants to be involved, wants to help and that makes my job easy and fun. There is lots of scope for the near future and he hopes to be able to present some positive results to the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm

Chair: .....

Date: .....