

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FORUM

30 June 2011 at 7.00 pm

MEMBERS: Councillors Simon Wales (Chair) and Adrian Davey, and Pam Davis and Nicola Davies

ABSENT: Councillors Pamela Picknett, Jennifer Campbell-Klombs and Lester Holloway. Shafi Chowdhury and Joan Parker,

177. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received from Cllr Lester Holloway, Cllr Campbell-Klombs, Wasia Shahain and Peter Rollins.

A new member, Seren Rezak, from the Sutton Local Involvement Network was welcomed to the Forum.

178. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1 February 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

179. HATE INCIDENTS

Ian Kershaw, Head of Planning and Performance Safer Sutton Partnership Service, presented a report to the forum on the oversight that is in place for the tracking and responding to hate incidents in the borough.

Ian explained how the Safer Sutton Partnership Service (SSPS) took responsibility for hate incident monitoring in 2009 and now collects information from a wide range of sources. This includes using the intelligence gathered through interviews with residents in their own homes and, thanks to external funding to boost the survey sample, a more detailed survey to help understand the specific issues faced by Sutton's Muslim communities. Ian highlighted that while there have been successful actions taken against the perpetrators of hate crime; it is still an underreported issue.

Ian presented the following statistics on Hate Incidents in Sutton:

- The police received 137 racist and religious hatred reports in 2010/11
- There were 13 reports of homophobic offences, 3 of a violent nature
- The sanctioned detection rate (which can range from a caution to more serious action) is nearly 50% and this compares very well with other boroughs

Ian gave an overview of the 3rd Party Reporting System that is in place, commissioned through an organisation called Stop Hate UK. This provides a 24/7 telephone line for reporting hate incidents in the borough. Ian said that more work will be done to promote Stop Hate in the borough so that residents know how to report incidents quickly.

Following questions from the Forum members Ian explained how the Safer Neighbourhood Teams deliver information at a local level and agreed to look at increased online promotion, particularly using the Stop Hate Facebook Pages <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Stop-Hate-UK/153575053038>

Resolved: (i) To thank Ian Kershaw for his report

(ii) Ian Kershaw to circulate Stop Hate promotional materials to members of the Forum

180. PRESENTATION BY AMBITION

Adele Gregory and her family presented the award winning film “Romany Me” to the Forum. The film followed the life of a young Romany girl as she battles hatred. The film was made by amateur actors and the cast was made up from community members.

Following the film the Forum reflected on the impact of hatred on different groups in the community, noting that the messages in the film reflect issues felt by anyone who has experienced hatred because of their race, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

Resolved: To thank Adele and her family for attending to present the film.

181. UPDATE BY BLACK HISTORY MONTH GROUP

Veronica Williams and her colleagues from the BHM Steering Group gave an update of progress since the last meeting, which included:

- The recruitment of more members to the steering group
- Developing governance and operation guidelines to support the day to day activity of the group
- The organisation of an international day at Carshalton Baptist Church
- Winning a funding bid to take school groups to the Liverpool Slavery Museum and the Olympic Site
- Contact with local media organisations
- Working with inmates at Downview Prison
- The production of an annual report and development of a website
- Preparation of the 2011 programme

Resolved: (i) To thank the BHM group for their update

182. UPDATE FROM FORUM MEMBERS

Debbie O'Neill (Sutton Citizens Advice Bureaux) said that the CAB are campaigning locally on disability issues with regard to hate incidents and would be focusing on increasing reporting.

Resolved: To share forum members contact details so that activity can be followed up between meetings.

183. EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

Ben Unsworth, Head of Engagement and Equalities, introduced the Council's Equality Action Plan. The plan is the high-level corporate document that explains how the Council will meet its legal duties and priorities on Equality and Diversity.

Ben highlighted the five key areas of work for the Council as:

- Making sure that equality and diversity is a part of everyone's job
- Improving the way the council communicates equality information, so that residents can hold the council to account
- Improving the quality and relevance of equality impact assessments
- Building a workforce that is representative of our local communities
- Involving equality and diversity groups in decision making

Over the next few months the council will be developing its business plans for the following year's activity. These plans will include detailed objectives that will form the basis of the 2012/13 Equality Action Plan.

Resolved: To thank Ben for the report.

184. ANY URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

185. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Thursday 29 September, 7pm, meeting room 3,
Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, SM1 1EA

The meeting closed at 9:10pm.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified

Chair:

Date: