

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

**HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY, 22
OCTOBER 2014 AT 5.00 PM**

PRESENT: F M Gordon (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)
J C Bayliss	S M Jones	V M Evans
A C S Colburn	T H Rees	Y V Jardine
D W Cole	L V Walton	

Officers:

E Owen	-	Access to Services Manager
J Whitmore	-	Partnership, Performance and Commissioning Manager
J Hooper	-	Directorate Lawyer
H Clancy	-	Principal Community Regeneration Projects Officer
J Parkhouse	-	Democratic Services Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

A Khalil - Swansea Bay Asylum Seeker Support Group and (EYST)

31 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor G J Tanner.

32 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

33 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Equalities Committee held on 24 September 2014 be agreed as a correct record.

34 **PRESENTATION - ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES, IMMIGRATION AND COMMUNITY COHESION.**

H Clancy and A Khalil provided a detailed and informative presentation which centred around the main issues affecting asylum seekers and refugees in Swansea and the links with the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan.

Details provided in the presentation included:

- City of Sanctuary.
- City of Sanctuary Baseline Study 2012 - Key Local Challenges.
- Additional recently identified issues.
- Community Cohesion Programme.
- Background to Community Cohesion.
- 7 Community Cohesion Delivery Plan outcomes.
- Outcome 1: Hate Crime.
- Outcome 2: Modern Slavery.
- Outcome 3: Gypsies and Travellers.
- Outcome 4: Immigration.
- Outcome 5: Communities First.
- Outcome 6: Mainstreaming.
- Outcome 7: Tension Monitoring.
- City and County of Swansea - Governance Arrangements.
- City and County of Swansea - Further Support.

Details of the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan 2014-16 were also provided. The Committee asked a number of questions in relation to the presentation which were responded to accordingly. A workshop discussion took place and matters discussed included the following:

- The Council is adopting the new Victim Support Hate Crime Project reporting process which will replace the Council's Hate and Harassment process.
- High hate crime incidents in relation to race/disability amongst refugees and asylum seekers. There is a very low reporting level of such crimes due to the fear of being deported, language barriers, physical fear and fear of authority i.e. Police by asylum seekers/refugees due to corruption and lack of trust in authority in their own countries.
- Cases of human trafficking and slavery in the area. It was reported that there were 60 occurrences across the South Wales Police area within the last 6 months.
- People can suffer human trafficking for a number of reasons e.g. sex trade, farm work and domestic servants.
- The need to produce some myth busting information as only 7% of the population of Swansea are not born in the UK.
- People are afraid to discuss such matters due to current legislation which was recognised as being there to support and protect people who may be at risk of discriminatory harassment etc.
- The need to break down barriers and bring people/communities together.

- How the City and County of Swansea proposes to support the delivery of the outcomes going forward.
- Bringing people together with community events e.g. Vetch Project or food festivals.
- The need to get the message across in schools.
- The need to promote Swansea as a City of Sanctuary.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the contents of the presentation/workshop discussions be noted;
- (2) the Chair circulates the information detailed from the discussions to the Committee.

35 **MEMBER CHAMPIONS REPORTS.**

There were none.

36 **WORK PLAN TIMETABLE.**

The Chair presented the revised Work Plan Timetable for 2014/15.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

37 **NEXT MEETING - 5 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2014.**

NOTED that the next meeting of the Equalities Committee be scheduled for 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday 19 November 2014.

The meeting ended at 6.20 pm

CHAIR