

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITIES BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

MEMBERS: Councillors Clare De Silva, Achilleas Georgiou, Margaret Greer and Ayfer Orhan

Community Representatives:

Tim Fellows – Enfield LGBT Network
Bevin Betton – Enfield Racial Equality Council

Officers: Doug Wilson, Head of Strategy, Service Development & Resources, People, Harriet Potemkin, Head of Policy & Strategy, Lucy Nasby, Strategy & Policy Manager, Duduzile Sher Arami, Acting Director of Public Health, Mark Tickner, Senior Public Health Strategist, Debbie-Ann Ofosuware, Public Health Practitioner, Tinu Olowe, Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development, Glyn Drew, Head of Employee Experience, Stacey Gilmour, Governance Officer

Also Attending: Jo Ikhelef, Chief Executive Officer, Enfield Voluntary Action

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

As the Chair, Councillor Ergin Erbil, was unable to attend the meeting, Councillor Margaret Greer (Vice-Chair) chaired the meeting. Councillor Greer welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Erbil, Councillor Akpinar, Ben Ingber (Age UK Enfield), Ginnie Landon (Enfield Women's Centre) and Nnenna Anyanwu (Citizen's Advice Enfield).

Kerree Ahern, Programme Manager, North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had hoped to attend the meeting but was unfortunately now unable to so her apologies were also noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest registered in respect of any items on the agenda.

3. AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING ON 15TH JULY 2021

The Board agreed the minutes of the last meeting held on the 15th July 2021.

4. ENFIELD VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

Doug Wilson (Head of Strategy, Service Development & Resources, People) provided an update on Enfield Voluntary & Community Sectors' Response to the Pandemic.

A new Voluntary & Community Sector offer was commissioned in 2017 and background information was provided regarding the activity and work undertaken over the past 3 to 4 years with Voluntary Sector Partners. This focused on various aspects including:

- Accessible Information/Advice and practical support
- Supporting informal (unpaid) carers
- Independent living
- Advocacy to ensure the voice of local people is heard
- Supporting appropriate discharge from hospital
- Supporting vulnerable people to manage housing and other practical tasks associated with daily living
- And new this year, a service supporting people to better self-manage long term conditions.

The update given highlighted the following:

Lead Voluntary & Community Sector Providers

These include:

- Enfield Connections
- Enfield Carers Centre
- Age UK Enfield
- Enfield Disability Action
- Alpha Care – (supporting people leaving hospital who are able but may live alone)
- Riverside – (assisting with practical tasks to help maintain tenancy)
- Enfield Voluntary Action – (support for a whole range of different things, especially during the pandemic. For example, shopping, collection and delivery of prescriptions etc.)

Impact of the Pandemic & Response

There had been an increased demand in many areas including:

- Basic emergency needs, food, hot food, shopping, prescriptions and people needing social contact
- Surge in on-line activity and requests for support with technology
- Increasing numbers of people self-reporting increased levels of anxiety and depression
- Increased requests for counselling support and debt management advice

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

- Significant surge in carers requesting support, particularly around living with loved ones with dementia
- Increased attendance at in-person sessions since restrictions eased but more from older people than younger ill/disabled people
- All areas reporting significant increases in on-line, telephone contacts in the initial few months of lockdown which have decreased over time.

What has the Pandemic Changed

- Technology was highlighted as an area where more support was needed
- The way in which more people choose to interact so in-person versus virtual contact
- The impact of social isolation/loneliness exacerbated for many
- Older people adapted well to the pandemic – this was a testament to our Voluntary Services
- Increased pressure on informal carers
- But a more flexible response from our Voluntary Community Sector really welcomed as a critical lifeline for many vulnerable people in the community.
- Highlighted the importance of maintaining better physical and mental health, for example to avoid falls/hospital admission- Falls project through safe and connected and new long-term conditions VCS contract
- Request for befriending- telephone calls- a virtual chat over a cup of tea- these types of requests increased.
- Although many people have been keen to get out into the open world with the easing of restrictions, many have also been keen to maintain the virtual contact.
- It has been evident during the last 18 months how we have all been able to come together to serve the community and again this is testament to all the different services and partners.

Living with Covid and Learning from it

- The importance of good hygiene and infection control in all aspects of life – continuing to get this message out there
- Understanding what the new normal will look like, e.g. hybrid services like virtual day-care
- A greater appetite for trying new things, innovating and collaborating
- A better real world understanding of what personalisation really is, the importance of seeing people as individuals rather than illnesses or disabilities
- An increased focus on prevention and early intervention, what that means and how to evidence the impact.

The following questions and comments were received.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

1. Councillor Orhan said that although the update was of value for her the issue was that the same things have been said for the past fifty years. We should be aware that people who are isolated live that 24/7 throughout their whole life and not just during a pandemic, and it should not have taken a pandemic to highlight these issues, which have affected many Enfield residents for years. She therefore questioned what new things have been learnt from the pandemic that were not known before, what new policies are being considered and what specific areas has the pandemic highlighted that are now essential to address for moving forward?

Doug Wilson responded that he wasn't suggesting that anything new was established during the pandemic with regards to peoples' situations. However, certain situations did become more highlighted but the response that services, partners and the wider community had provided was heartening to see. He went on to say that a key lesson learnt was that there are a huge number of people living in our community with a vast number of problems and issues, and this has highlighted the need to introduce new types of technology into peoples' lives. Ideas are now being discussed to ascertain how this can be implemented as it is vital to get better at supporting people to help them manage their conditions better, and it was acknowledged that early intervention rather than responding to a crisis is the way forward.

2. Councillor De Silva asked how the Local Authority (LA) is supporting the Voluntary Sector (VS) in terms of funding, capacity and resources?

Doug advised that the LA currently fund the VS to the sum of £2.5 million per year.

The Chair thanked Doug for his fascinating and interesting update and noted that many issues had arisen as a result of the pandemic which the Local Authority could learn from for years to come.

5. PROVIDE ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES AND NETWORKS TO REDUCE SOCIAL ISOLATION

Dudzile Sher-Arami (Acting Director of Public Health) introduced the item, Social Prescription- London Borough of Enfield Public Health and provided an overview of latest developments around social prescription within the Council.

Social Prescribing is a way to help GPs and other frontline healthcare professionals to refer people to 'services' in their community instead of offering largely medicalised solutions. Often the first point of referral is a link worker who can talk to each person about the things that matter to them. Together they can produce a social as opposed to a medical prescription that will help to improve their health and well-being and address peoples' needs in a holistic way.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

The Board were advised that there is currently a lot of work taking place in Enfield around Social Prescribing and Enfield Council has a facilitative role in bringing partners together to look at how we develop Social Prescribing across the borough. Funding has recently been received from the Equalities levy through the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) with a focus on young people at risk of becoming involved in serious youth violence.

Jo Ikhelef (CEO Enfield Voluntary Action) provided a further update, highlighting the following:

- (i) Social prescribing enables connections to non-medical activities and supports individuals to take greater control of their own health.
- (ii) It recognises that people's health is determined by social, economic and environmental factors.
- (iii) There are many partners involved including Enfield Voluntary Action (EVA), Enfield Public Health, Voluntary and Community Groups (Including Equalities Groups), North Central London NHS, plus various others.
- (iv) Citizens Advice Enfield is one of the biggest activities that EVA connects with and at the centre of all the work are the Health Champions and Link Workers.
- (v) EVA's approach is to put the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) at the heart of the system.
- (vi) Objectives include a community centred approach, co-production, peer support using lived experience and people in the lead.
- (vii) Methods of delivery include Health Champions, Simply Connect, volunteering, capacity building and grants programmes.
- (viii) Capacity building is a huge part of the work undertaken.
- (ix) Further information was provided on the EVA Health Champions. These are representatives of the VCS groups less engaged by the mainstream system where social exclusion and inequality has affected their health and wellbeing.
- (x) One in five GP appointments focus on wider social needs rather than acute medical issues.
- (xi) EVA funds two Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) advisers and the Link Workers connect many people to CAB.
- (xii) Simply Connect Enfield offers a searchable online directory of over 220 activities provided by community groups in Enfield for all age groups.
- (xiii) These activities include arts and crafts, outdoors, wellbeing, social groups, theatre, employment training, counselling and many more. This directory is updated weekly with new activities and information.
- (xiv) EVA employs 4 Link Workers for Unity Primary Care Network (PCN) and Evergreen PCN. They receive referrals from GPs for individuals presenting non-medical issues and then research and connect to relevant groups, activities and services to improve their health and wellbeing.
- (xv) A Health and Wellbeing Coach is employed by EVA for Unity PCN. Their role includes setting personal goals that will improve residents' physical and mental wellbeing and they also take referrals from residents who are at high risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes and

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

support them in managing their own health by changing unhealthy behaviour.

- (xvi) The Link Workers specialisms are employability & women, mental health& housing, physical activity & sports, care homes & LGBTQ+ and Diabetes.
- (xvii) Information was provided on how EVA's Social Prescribing Project is funded, which includes National Lottery Funding, NHS England, Tudor Trust, Cornerstone Fund and various others.
- (xviii) EVA offers Enfield PCNs far more than a staff management role. Link Workers have access to VCS knowledge and statutory/health partners to build and shape the system.
- (xix) The whole system benefits from the resources and funding EVA levered for other programmes.
- (xx) Link Workers can identify gaps in provision, which development staff can respond to with funding applications, training and inclusion in networks responding to need.
- (xxi) If there appears to be any gaps appearing in the project ECVA will look at sourcing additional funding

Debbie-Ann Ofosuware (Public Health Practitioner) updated the Board on the Youth Alive- Social Prescribing Project, highlighting the following:

- (i) Youth Alive is a Social Prescribing Project for young people aged 10-19 in the Borough of Enfield. The project launch date is the 7th October 2021.
- (ii) The objectives are to increase physical activity in young people, positively impact the individual and community and engage with partners locally and nationally.
- (iii) EVA has appointed a new Development and Funding Advice Manager who is project managing Youth Alive (YA) from EVA's side.
- (iv) A Health Champions and Health and Wellbeing Youth Worker is also in post.
- (v) The targets set for the project are:
 - Aim to receive 135 referrals;
 - Aim to promote within schools and PCNs;
 - Aim to engage and scale up the approach across the borough
- (vi) Funding has been secured on the DOVE project funded by NCL inequalities fund. This will enable an addition of a new post of serious youth violence social prescriber

The following comments and questions were received:

1. Councillor De Silva asked for some more information around capacity building and what this involved.

Jo explained that in terms of capacity building funding is a big barrier as well as time delays as getting onto the directory takes time due to data protection, safeguarding checks etc. Funding must then be available to get the projects up and running.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

2. Councillor Greer asked what plans are in place for when the current funding streams run out.

Jo advised that the Bigger Lottery Fund and Tudor Trust Fund come to an end next year, so discussions and forward thinking are now taking place regarding future funding options.

3. Councillor Greer also asked what the workload of the Link Workers was.

Jo advised that currently the Link Workers see between 200 and 250 hundred patients per year

The Chair thanked everyone for their interesting updates. It was agreed that Kerree Ahern, Programme Manager of the Enfield Training Hub of the North Central London Commissioning Group be invited to a future meeting to provide an update on Social Prescribing activities and future plans for Enfield.

Action: Harriet Potemkin/Lucy Nasby

6. IMPROVE THE WELLBEING AND CELEBRATE THE CONTRIBUTION OF OUR LESBIAN, GAY, BI AND TRANS COMMUNITIES

Tim Fellows (CEO Enfield LGBT Network) provided an update on how the LGBT Network came about, highlighting the following:

- (i) Enfield Council called the first meeting in June 2003 and the Network became a charity in September 2005.
- (ii) The two main functions for the Network are social support and representation.
- (iii) The Network now receives some funding from the Local Authority with other sources coming from elsewhere.
- (iv) Social support is provided to the following groups:
 - HIV+ Men's group
 - Women's Group
 - Youth Group
 - Tuesday Group (held in local pubs)
 - Counselling Service
 - Trans Information and Support
 - Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse reporting and support.
- (v) The Network represents LGBT+ people on many groups and boards, namely 23 Enfield Boards and 4 Pan London Boards.
- (vi) These boards cover areas such as Policing, Community Safety, Health, Sexual Health, Faith, Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Equalities.
- (vii) The Network facilitates training sessions on LGBT awareness, Trans awareness and HIV awareness.
- (viii) The Network provides most of its services from the Lancaster Centre and it also manages the centre for the use of many other VCS organisations in the borough.

Following Tim's update the following comments/questions were raised:

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

1. Councillor Orhan thanked Tim for his interesting update and asked if any of this invaluable work was covered within schools.

Tim explained that the organisation is mostly for over 18s with counselling support being offered to this age group. However, support is available for parents wishing to support their children, therefore guidance and advice can be provided on the best way to do this. The main youth work is carried out by The Proud Trust and Enfield Children and Young Persons' Service (ECYPS). The Proud Trust meet regularly in two different youth centres across the borough and these sessions are very well attended.

In conclusion Tim advised the Board that young people from within the LGBT Community have a much higher suicide rate hence why LGBT mental health needs to be a priority.

The Chair thanked Tim for his update and said how encouraging it was to hear of the wonderful work undertaken by the Enfield LGBT Network.

Tinu Olowe (Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development) and Glyn Drew (Head of Employee Experience) provided a further update on the work to create an LGBT inclusive workplace by delivering training to encourage an active LGBT staff network and running an 'LGBT allies' programme, which means non-LGBT staff can identify themselves as supportive individuals. This supports the culture of change that the Local Authority are trying to embed across the organisation.

Enfield Council joined Stonewall Diversity Champions in 2020 and have already benefited from their expertise in developing our HR policies and re-establishing our LGBTQ+ Staff Network.

The LGBTQ+ staff network has grown and developed over the past year with support from the Employee Experience Team and Stonewall. These staff-led network groups act as staff representatives for the council and help to make sure decisions are properly informed by diverse and representative points of view. The groups are run by their members and meet on a regular basis to inform policies, processes and training, and help all of us celebrate our diversity with events throughout the year.

Enfield Council is currently working towards the Stonewall UK Workplace Equality Index, however due to COVID 19, Stonewall have changed the normal annual submission and benchmarking index and have replaced it with a comprehensive series of Workplace Equality Index Support for 2021. This has enabled us to use this period to prepare our first submission for Stonewall accreditation during 2022.

Glyn Drew provided further information highlighting the following:

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

- (i) Equality is a golden thread through all the Council's learning and development starting with the corporate induction for all new recruits right through to the Leadership Development Curriculum.
- (ii) In addition to the Equality Awareness learning programmes and workshops a number of modules have been implemented specifically centred around LGBTQ+ topics. Awareness campaigns are also undertaken through Staff Matters and Culture Matters- Enfield Council's two staff magazines.
- (iii) The Council has recently launched a refreshed mentoring programme which includes a Network Mentoring stream for staff from different backgrounds to form one-to-one mutual mentoring relationships in order to gain a better understanding of cultural differences or challenges, such as LGBTQ+, disabilities, ethnicities etc.
- (iv) HR policies and processes have been reviewed in collaboration with Stonewall to identify potential for unconscious bias and make good practice improvements. HR continues to advertise job roles on LGBTQ+ job boards.
- (v) Initiatives delivered by the network include:
 - Incorporating the new LGBTQ+ flag into the Network logo and flying the flag outside the Civic Centre
 - Active Intranet and Yammer pages
 - A refresh of the LGBTQ+ magazine- Prism
 - LGBTQ+ webinars open to all staff
- (vi) A well-attended workshop was delivered by Stonewall as part of the relaunch of the LGBTQ+ staff network and to create an 'Allies' programme. An LGBTQ+ Ally badge has been introduced and used across the council.
- (vii) Promotion of pronouns to be voluntarily used within staff email signatures with a micro internet site set up explaining what pronouns are and why they are used.

Further to the updates provided, Councillor Orhan raised the following questions/comments:

- How does the work taking place in Enfield link into the Government's LGBT Action Plan?
- With regards to HR policies and procedures is there a caption that encapsulates Health and Wellbeing and is there also a policy around Mental Health and self-referral for staff?
- Really excited to hear about the Qualities Index. Can this come to the Board as soon as it is ready?

Officers responded as follows:

- (i) Work has just started with Stonewall to look at policies and procedures, and feedback will be provided to the Board in due course.
- (ii) Stonewall Equalities Index will be available in February 2022 and again this will be shared with the Equalities Board.
- (iii) Acutely aware of the importance of staff support with regards to Mental Health and Wellbeing, especially in relation to Occupational Health

EQUALITIES BOARD - 7.9.2021

provision etc. Officers are looking to strengthen this area with a strategy around Mental Health and Wellbeing.

- (iv) Training in equalities is always ongoing with staff and management teams. Bevin Betton (Enfield Race Equality Team) felt that Contractors and Sub-Contractors should also be trained with the relevant information written into contracts.
- (v) Harriet Potemkin (Head of Strategy & Policy) advised that a new Sustainable & Ethical Procurement Policy was in the process of being developed.

The Chair thanked Officers for a great presentation and commented how proud she was of the work taking place in Enfield.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NOTED:

- (i) Enfield Council's website would be updated shortly with a list of planned events taking place to celebrate Black History Month during October 2021.
- (ii) The Equalities Board Work Programme will be included as a standard item on future agendas to review and amend if necessary.
Action: Harriet Potemkin /Lucy Nasby /Stacey Gilmour
- (iii) Members requested that a Forward Plan be published for the Board's agenda. Once agreed by the Chair this would be circulated to Members.
Action: Harriet Potemkin/Lucy Nasby/Stacey Gilmour
- (iv) It was also requested that the Draft Local Plan be included on the agenda for the December meeting.
Action: Harriet Potemkin/Lucy Nasby/Stacey Gilmour

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted and agreed the dates of the next Equality Board meetings as follows:

Wednesday 1st December 2021

Tuesday 8th February 2022