

Meeting of NEREO Equalities Network (Virtual)

Tuesday 12 October 2021

Attendees

Durham County Council:	Claire Holt (Chair) Mary Gallagher,
Darlington Council	Eleanor Walker
NHS ICS	David Atkinson
Hartlepool Council	Catherine Grimwood
Sunderland Council	Kirsty McNally
Middlesbrough Council	Saadia Azam
North Tyneside Council	Anne Foreman, Jessica Madden
Gateshead Council	Rachel Mason, Debbie Worrall
Stockton Council	Louise Deer
Northumberland	Patrick Price

Guest: Anne Lythgoe Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Apologies:

Carrie Sherwen	Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service
Nicola Finnegan	Middlesbrough Council
Stephen McCurry	NEREO
Louise Crosbie	Newcastle City Council
Susan Williams	Together for Children

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Attendee introductions.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Tuesday 13 July 2021

Minutes agreed.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Stephen to circulate standardised spreadsheet to the network- **outstanding action**
- North Tyneside shared standardised questions with Stephen
- Cleveland FRS produced overarching EDI statement to appear on front page of portal
- Establish a working group to look at development of webpage, EDI and joint commitment from Chief Executive- **outstanding action to complete**
- Chairs of staff network- to discuss with group possibility of recording vlogs for website- **outstanding action to complete**

Action: Claire to set up meeting with Stephen to follow up outstanding actions. To be an agenda item at the next meeting.

4. Presentation - Anne Lythgoe, Greater Manchester Combined Authority

The combined authority is made up of the 10 local authorities in the Manchester area, covering population of 2.8 million people. They established an independent inequalities commission, to examine the impacts on inequality, equality, poverty, and intersectionality. Each Council Leader is a portfolio lead for a specific area, e.g., Tameside Council lead on equality. In conjunction, a partnership board was established, consisting of Leaders of Council, Chair of Housing Authority, and other relevant equality groups in the area. A piece of research was commissioned to examine structural inequalities, and the commission act as 'independent critical friend'. This culminated in 'The next level: Good lives for all in Greater Manchester'. [The Next Level: Good Lives for All in Greater Manchester \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](#). This also links with the Greater Manchester strategy, published November 2021.

Discussion took place in relation to improved intelligence data, not just statistics but also personal lived experience and insights are important.

Engagement with voluntary sectors across large geographical areas, important to establish and build relationship with VCS. Also, important to examine the 'inequalities' the root causes faced by groups in society.

Anne recommended the following document:

[Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review - The Health Foundation](#)

Action: Copy of presentation to be circulated with notes.

5. National Disability Strategy - Jessica Madden, North Tyneside

Jess previously circulated notes on the National Disability strategy to the group. Discussion took place around focus priorities from the strategy, review of Hate Crime, Autism strategy, workforce standards, changing places funding.

Action: Include as agenda item next meeting, to discuss further actions authorities taking.

6. Equality Training - Jessica Madden, North Tyneside

North Tyneside currently embedding equality training and producing revamp of protected characteristic modules. Discussed the possibility of perhaps working on joint initiative to run joint events, to share training, or even device inhouse sessions which could then be delivered across all authorities. To look at where we all have gaps- for the training modules to be local and lived experiences for employees and local communities, would be more powerful and relevant.

Northumberland- currently rolling out 'lived experience learning' for senior managers. Also recommended, Sarah Jones, Transgender speaker. [Talks and Conference Speaking | Sarah Jones](#)

The Chairs of the Staff networks also involved in delivering these sessions. They are engaging with author 'Power of Staff networks' to also deliver sessions. [Staff Networks | The Power of Staff Networks](#)

Consideration needs to be given to any potential legal sign off training provided.

Darlington Council- producing hub of online training resources, something similar currently produced at Durham County Council. BBC3 'what not to say' recommended as a useful resource, something North Tyneside will be replicating

Action: All: to provide list of E&D training currently delivered, who provides this, are there resources we could share and produce together. Discuss at next meeting, perhaps set up a working group to look at this project. Agenda item at next meeting.

7. ICS Update

Update on North East and North Cumbria, Integrated Care System (ICS)

Dave Atkinson provided an ICS update on staff networks. They are looking to expand and include members from local authorities and VCS. Their work is similar to local council networks and aligned to regional EDI work, examines issues such as recruitment and selection. Networks are open to sharing resources and access to events.

Request made for Dave to provide an update on what the ICS is and they work they do – anything Dave could share can be put onto the teams site or Dave could maybe explain more about ICS at the next meeting.

8. GDPR

9. AOB

Update on Regional Staff Network Chairs Meeting (11 October 2021)

The second regional meeting of staff network chairs took place on 11 October. Louise Crosby from Newcastle City Council chaired the meeting. Discussion topics included:

- Rolling programme of chairing the meeting required
- Training for network chairs including managing hybrid meetings
- Updates provided by each representative chair:
 - Activities and events e.g. disability events especially around the international day of people with disabilities, lgbt events and awareness raising,
 - All chairs noted the value of having an opportunity to connect and network with other chairs and welcomed this
 - Opportunities to share resources and/or access to events and activities

Request made to share (on teams or via email) any project plans or management reports used to request support from management teams to implement, sustain and fund staff networks.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 18 January 2022 (1.30-3.00) - virtual