

**Towards a strategy for consulting
minority and equalities groups and individuals
in Orkney**

*A report
By
LC Littlejohn*

June 2008

Contents	Page
Introduction	3
The task	4
Summary	5-7
Literature search	8-10
Best practice elsewhere	11-13
Appraisal of national groups (and short regional section)	14-17
Good practice in Orkney	18-19
Liaison arrangements/contacts	20
Recommendations	21-23
Conclusion	24
Appendix on liaison arrangements and contacts	25-27

Introduction

This report seeks to inform the Orkney Community Planning Partnership (OCP) with regard to consulting with difficult to reach minority groups and individuals.

Consultation in this respect is not an easy task in such a small and rural area and will largely concentrate on those minorities for which there is a statutory duty to consult, especially with regard to ethnic minorities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups and individuals. However it should be borne in mind that the Single Equality Bill (SEB) will be considered by the Westminster parliament in 2008/2009 and that, "Almost all of this law is reserved to Westminster, which means that the Scottish parliament cannot amend it." (Equality Network website accessed 21/05/08).

However, the principles of equality remain as a given and it does not matter whether one is of an ethnic minority, disabled, transgender, old, of rural living or all of these together. Therefore the issue of changes brought about by such a parliamentary bill will not be considered here. Rather this report will look at the principles of how we can consult in a meaningful way with minority groups to do with race and LGBT, with some consideration given to consultation with other groups pertinent to Orkney.

The task

The task to be undertaken in this report was given as follows:

“Consulting with minorities: a strategy for consulting minority equalities groups and individuals in Orkney

A recurring problem when consulting in Orkney is the difficulty of meeting national standards for consulting with minorities, when Orkney has few interest groups representing their interests. This project will research best practice elsewhere, including in other remote and rural areas, where populations are sparse and minorities disseminated. It will also appraise the numerous national groups available for consultation on behalf of specific minorities and establish liaison arrangements with the most appropriate. The output of this piece of work will be a recommended strategy for consulting with minorities tailored to the specific circumstances prevailing in Orkney, which will form a vital part of the Orkney Community Planning Partnership’s joint community engagement strategy.”

The major parts of this work, therefore, were to:

- Research best practice elsewhere
- Appraise national groups representing specific minorities relevant to Orkney
- Establish liaison arrangements as appropriate
- Make recommendations on a strategy for consulting with minorities prevailing in Orkney

In addition, whilst working on this report, it became apparent that there were pertinent areas of good practice in Orkney itself, which may not be well known or sufficiently understood. Consequently this information has become a part of this report.

Summary

This report relates in large part to how the Orkney Community Planning Partnership (OCP) can reach minority ethnic groups and the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) community for purposes of consultation.

However, during research on this project other areas came to light, such as the difficulties and consultation needs experienced by parents of autistic children and young adults. The consultation of young people in general was also considered, but was found to be covered more than adequately in terms of Dialogue Youth participation.

Literature search

Having concluded a short search of the relevant government publications on Equalities and bearing in mind the changes inherent in a Single Equalities Bill in the future, it was deemed best to consider the consultation needs of specific groups, but always bearing in mind that the rights of equality are a given and can be general as well as specific.

Best practice

Looking for best practice in areas similar to Orkney, contact was made with the Highland Council and with the island councils of Shetland and the Western Isles. In addition the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) in Inverness was followed up. In all of the councils and in the WEA it was found that some good practice existed in each one, but mostly in the areas of reaching ethnic minority groups. It was Shetland Islands Council that had made real effort to reach out to the LGBT community. Orkney could do worse than follow their example.

Still looking for good practice in LGBT, two national organisations were contacted and proved invaluable - Equality Network and LGBT Youth Scotland. The former has splendid examples of how to begin the consultation process and the latter offers an opportunity to work on their Charter of Rights for LGBT young people. Both offer training towards raising awareness of the barriers faced by the LGBT community.

Appraisal of national groups

Several important national groups were appraised in relation to what they could offer the OCPP. These organisations were:

- Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland (BEMIS)
- Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO)
- Equality Network
- LGBT Youth Scotland
- Workers' Educational Association
- Dialogue Youth
- National Autistic Society in Scotland

Of these, good information and support were available from BEMIS and WEA in relation to ethnic minority groups. In relation to LGBT, Equality Network and LGBT Youth Scotland were excellent in their contact and in their desire to support the consultation rights of their respective communities in remote and rural areas such as Orkney.

In addition to the national groups some regional groups were also contacted. These were:

- Scottish Highlands & Islands and Moray Chinese Association (SHIMCA)
- Inverness Polish Association
- Highlands & Islands Equality Forum (HIEF)

Of these organisations SHIMCA produced a telephone number for an individual with whom contact might be made. However this turned out to be something of a red herring. Meanwhile Inverness Polish Association stated that it had no contact with Poles in Orkney. Rather, being a voluntary organisation, they waited for Poles to contact them and had no infrastructure whereby they could carry out any outreach work beyond Inverness. Contact was also made with the HIEF and, with regard to a request for information on tiny minority groups including LGBT, they produced a short list of organisations in Orkney. For the most part these organisations are already part of a comprehensive list held by Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO).

It was also possible to find out about best practice already existing in Orkney. Again it is centred on ethnic minorities, which seem to be well served in an educational sense by both The Learning Link (part of Orkney Islands Council's Community Learning and Development Department) and Orkney College.

On the one hand the LGBT community seems to be largely invisible, whilst on the other hand the parents of autistic children are trying to form themselves into a self-help group. Some autistic youngsters are already receiving one-to-one support through the auspices of Crossroads Orkney and the fledgling parent group are being aided by the ENABLE manager in Orkney. Both Crossroads Orkney and the group could be used as conduits for consultation with both the parents of and the young autistic adults themselves.

Contacts and liaison

All the main contacts outside and within Orkney were very willing to be named as contacts and are very happy to share their experience in working on equalities, especially in consulting with ethnic minority groups and where possible with the LGBT community. A full list is given in the appendix to this report.

Recommendations

A full list of recommendations appears on pages 21-23. These recommendations may well form the basis for a future strategy for consulting with specific minority groups and individuals in Orkney.

Literature Search

1. Scottish Government Publication: *Good Practice Guidance Consultation with Equalities Groups (2002)*

This is still a very relevant background for partnership working with equalities in mind. At consultation events held with disabled people, people from minority ethnic communities, women and LGBT groups, it was found that, “Many equalities groups report quite negative experiences of consultation.” Orkney would prefer consultation to be only a positive experience for all concerned.

This document identifies the two main categories of consultation as being written methods and face-to-face methods, but suggests that innovation is required in whatever category is chosen. A number of factors guide the choice of method including general good practice in consultation and bearing in mind the requirements of the specific group. “The most important issue is to consider carefully whether any groups will be unlikely or unable to respond using the combination of methods you use.” For example, people whose first language is not English may find a written method unsatisfactory to say the least. On the other hand someone who belongs to the LGBT community may find face-to-face an impossible method of communication. Indeed it may be difficult, if not impossible, to contact any individual or group who singly or together have not ‘come out’ as part of an LGBT community. Nevertheless, the attempt must be made for this and other minority groups.

The report goes on to suggest that the best way is to *ask* the groups who might be affected how best we can ensure that their voice is heard and included. However, arranging specific events or ordering specific pieces of work (by which to identify the views of hard to reach groups) are methods which are gaining in popularity.

2. Scottish Government Publication: *Working with Hard to Reach Young People – a Practical Guide (2007)*

Here is a very suitable definition of what is meant by ‘hard to reach’. This term “has its roots in social marketing and starts from the premise that no one is impossible to reach, it’s only a question of what is it we really have to do and how much will it cost...Hard to reach can also mean the ‘underserved’.”

This publication insists that young people, of whatever nature, are a vital part of the community. It goes on to consider black and minority ethnic young people and those who face discrimination and exclusion in everyday life. Because of the lack of visibility of LGBT the paper signposts the LGBT Youth Scotland for advice on good work practice in this area.

Rural isolation of itself is also considered a barrier to services and opportunities, with a particular quote from a youth worker in Ullapool viz. "Because of rural isolation we still have the highest number of young men committing suicide..."

3. Scottish Government Publication: *A Literature Review for the Scottish Government*

Chapter Five in this publication is on engaging hard to reach groups. Once again excluded groups are listed as those on low incomes, black and ethnic minority groups, the disabled, young people, homeless people and members of faith communities and members of rural communities. In the task of engaging with such groups it is emphasised that the inclusion or exclusion of groups should not be based on *the number of individuals involved*. It also suggests that building on long-term relationships between public and third sector (voluntary) organisations can make it easier to run participatory processes. It suggests that new ways of consultation should move away from the traditional meeting culture - which tends to suit people who already have a voice.

Dialogue Youth is cited as an existing structure which can help to interact with Patient Focus Public Involvement workshops.

4. The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Scotland

The Equality and Human Rights Commission "enforces the equality legislation on age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender status..." It brings together the three previous equality commissions as well as widening the field for equality and human rights.

The latest news on equality rights is given in this website. Especially noticeable is the new protection for disabled and LGBT victims of crime. On 21 May this year, Morag Alexander, the Scottish Commissioner for the Equality & Human Rights Commission

welcomed the introduction of the *Sentencing of Offences Aggravated by Prejudice (Scotland) Bill* which takes into account not only the harassment of people on grounds of race or religion, but also on account of homophobic or prejudiced motivations.

A telephone contact number is given in this website.

Best Practice Elsewhere including that found on Internet Sites

Highland Council

Contact was made with Rosemary Mackinnon, the present Equal Opportunities Officer, who identified the government papers and websites that she had found useful. As reported on the previous pages, it is necessary to look for a number of factors in trying to reach minority groups. There are areas of good practice here in the Highland Council. For example:

Highland Council schools employ Community Bi-lingual Assistants who offer support and assistance to children, parents and families in the wider community context. For more formal consultation purposes, there is a loose but working strategy for reaching migrant workers and the LGBT community. Known to the council are key contacts in these groups. When an issue requires consultation, the named person in the Council makes contact with the key person in the particular community group and it is taken on from there. There are what is described as 'vibrant' Polish and Chinese Associations and the council would know exactly who to approach in terms of a consultation issue.

WEA Inverness

The Workers Educational Association (WEA) in Inverness (which has good partnership arrangements with Highland Council) run very successful classes for ethnic minority women as a part of Adult Learning in the Community. This has proved extremely successful in terms of school visits, cross-cultural workshops and lunch time talks. Up to the present the groups are a mixture of Indian, Bangladeshi, Middle Eastern and Eastern European individuals. In their *End of Year Progress Report to the Voluntary Action Fund* in 2007, WEA made mention of setting up a course for Chinese women, but that these women wished to meet on their own to begin with. Perhaps different cultures need to be treated differently, at least at first.

Western Isles Council

Contact was made with the Equalities Officer, Lena Murray. Western Isles Council has a Diversity & Equalities Steering Group which has started good work. However, under "ESOL support for parents" a questionnaire has been issued to all the schools in the Western Isles to find out if there is a need for added support for parents - and

how these needs could be met. The questionnaire was given in nine different languages. As a result of the subsequent evaluations, Western Isles Council can now offer a particular language service for parents having set up an arrangement with a translation company in Glasgow. At the very least this is a method of first contact that could easily flower into a line of consultation.

Shetland Islands Council

There is not an Equalities Officer as such in Shetland Islands Council but nevertheless some very good work is being carried out with ethnic minority groups and with issues to do with LGBT.

The Adult Learning Manager has a number of ethnic minority groups taking part in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and in the past this group has been used as a conduit for consultation by community groups such as the Fire Service. In fact this became rather too much at one time in that the students and tutors felt that the English lessons were suffering in consequence. As a result a simple letter and pro-forma was sent out to all ESOL students asking if they would like to set up a discussion group that could be used for consultation rather than the class time itself. A number of people took this option up and this group is now beginning to be used to consult on services. It was felt that this was better than using the class time.

In addition a Welcome Point has been set up whereby people of ethnic minorities can drop in twice a week and be guided to or about services. This Welcome area is staffed by a volunteer and a tutor. It is a time and place to chat and to be signposted to services as appropriate.

However the needs of the LGBT community are also being considered in Shetland. The Youth Services Manager in Shetland Islands Council is in contact with LGBT Youth Scotland and has already arranged for and received training proposals for raising awareness issues and for challenging attitudes to the LGBT community. This training is scheduled to take place in Shetland in September 2008. It is their intention to move forward to best practice by working towards the LGBT charter.

Equality Network (based in Edinburgh)

This is a national body working to promote the equality and rights of the LGBT community in Scotland. In particular this organisation works with the Scottish Transgender Alliance 'to promote transgender rights.'

The community pages of this excellent site focus on consultation for community planning. The pages are full of ideas. One particularly good example given is to do with consulting with LGBT people if building a public swimming pool. (This may be particularly pertinent to Orkney). Even if transgender people might not be reachable in the normal way, the site suggests that a community advertisement might read, "We want your view on the new pool development. Would you like a children's pool? Would you like non-gender-specific, private changing spaces?"

This organisation has been working hard to reach the LGBT communities in rural and island areas. About six months ago a questionnaire was sent out to all the island groups in Scotland. On enquiry it was found that the questionnaires were sent to Community Centres and an advertisement was also placed in The Orcadian newspaper. The questionnaire was also available online. There were some returns from the Western Isles but no responses were received from Orkney or Shetland. However the Equality Network is determined to continue to try to make contact with LGBT communities in rural and isolated areas and is being funded by the Scottish Government to do this in a project called 'Beyond the Belt', as in beyond the Central Belt.

LGBT Youth Scotland

This is a national organisation that works in partnership with the Equality Network. It is an excellent website which cites all sorts of information for consultation with young LGBT people. In particular there are training sessions on *Engaging with LGBT Young People* and on *Awareness Raising*.

The organisation is working on a Charter of Rights. This comes with a toolkit that LGBT people feel organisations could use to make their services more inclusive. They have also supplied reports on *Involving Young People in Community Planning* and *Including Young People in Rural Areas*, among others. These reports are included as a package with this report.

Appraisal of National Groups representing specific minorities relevant to Orkney

Black and Ethnic Minorities Infrastructure in Scotland (BEMIS)

This organisation is supported by the Scottish Government and was established in 1997. It has "...a national role in promoting and ensuring diverse representation and the development of the black and ethnic minority voluntary sector throughout Scotland and pays particular attention to ...The support needs of black and ethnic minority communities in rural areas."

It has an excellent website and states that it wants to reach out to local groups, bearing in mind diverse representation and inclusion of all groups. So it does not confine itself only to ethnicity but is prepared to consider all the types of barriers that make consultation difficult for individuals.

During email discussion with the national organisation, they offered contact through the Local Rural Development Officer in Inverness, Shameena Yusaf. At the time of reporting telephone contact from both sides was attempted but proved problematic and when an email was sent, the Officer did not respond. This is not to say that this is not a useful name to have and Shameena Yusaf will be included in the list of contacts later in the report.

Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations Scotland (CEMVO) (website accessed 26/05/08)

This has a very professional looking website and was set up in April 2003, "...with the aim of building the capacity of the country's minority ethnic voluntary and community sector." Contact was made by email on two separate occasions but no return response has been established at time of report.

Workers' Educational Association (WEA)

A copy of the HMle report on the work of the WEA International Women's Group in Inverness was obtained. This shows the good practice evidenced in the Inverness area over the last seven years. Groups of Minority ethnic women share their cultures with the wider community and include presentations to schools, celebrating diversity days and what is called 'multicultural ceilidhs'.

The impact on the ethnic minority women would appear to be far reaching, the women becoming confident enough to become involved in a number of community events including a race equality workshop. The groups under the care of the WEA have led to some members using the group as a stepping stone to employment. Apparently the issue of loneliness and depression has meant the groups' attentions have been focused on peer support and friendship across the existing ethnic groupings.

Good ideas could be gained from the approach of the WEA in this context.

Equality Network (website accessed on several occasions)

As mentioned previously this is an excellent website that focuses on community planning and the challenges raised for consulting with LGBT people and communities within Scotland *viz* "At a community level we seek to engage and empower LGBT communities to promote our equality and rights through community engagement and developing the capacity and skill of LGBT groups and organisations."

It states that problems include the identification of LGBT people in the first place; the fact that there are many LGBT people who are not 'out' at all; and the difficulty of finding the most appropriate LGBT groups or individuals to involve in the process.

It is made clear that a specific effort is needed to engage with LGBT people and suggests that the easiest way to do this is through LGBT community groups and organizations. Having found the group it is then necessary to build a partnership well in advance of any consultation. The following quote from the website is typical of the Orkney situation. "If there are not any LGBT community groups, bars or clubs in your area, this is a problem for community planning in itself!"

The community part of this organisation's website (see previous page under Equality Network) is excellent in relation to community engagement with LGBT people. It gives salient advice on the sorts of LGBT awareness that needs to be taken into consideration if, for example, building a community pool. Very sensitively it claims that community planning cannot "out people who do not want to be outed, or who have not admitted their sexual orientation/true gender identity to themselves yet."

However it does suggest that advertising should clearly state an organisation's commitment to equal access with regard to LGBT. This may lead to a realisation by this hard to reach group that the community is trying to involve them in a friendly way. It seems to be a matter of making it clear to LGBT people in the community that there is an honest intent to consult them on their needs.

LGBT Youth Scotland (website accessed 21/05/08)

LGBT Youth Scotland is a national youth organisation working towards the inclusion of LGBT young people in the life of Scotland. It has a good website with advice, news, events, and training. Training sessions can be related to raising awareness of the challenges young LGBT people face in Scotland and include a Training and Toolkit resource for colleges and universities in Scotland on 'Taking LGBT Equality Further and Higher.' LGBT Youth Scotland will offer training proposals as required and will travel to deliver training.

Further telephone and email discussion with LGBT Youth Scotland established that their Charter Development Officer is working on a Charter of Rights for LGBT people and is keen to spread the word to organisations such as planning partnerships.

Dialogue Youth (website accessed 10/06/08)

"Dialogue Youth was created in 2002 as a partnership between Young Scot, the National Youth Information Agency for Scotland and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA)."

This is a vibrant website with lots of up-to-date information throughout the country generally and there is a direct link to the Orkney area of Dialogue Youth.

National Autistic Society in Scotland (website accessed 27/05/08)

This website has a huge amount of information for autistic people and the parents of children with autism. What comes out most here is the relative isolation of autistic people and the difficulty that might be experienced in consulting with them. The society is convinced that more than half of all autistic people have experienced huge problems to do with living in a 'normal' world. Parents feel disenfranchised and sometimes quite lost. The website urges members to send an 'I exist' postcard to the

Directors of Social Work Services in Scotland asking them to ensure that adults with autism have their needs recognised, understood and met.

Appraisal of relevant regional groups

In addition to the national organisations, contact was made with more regional groups, such as the Scottish Highlands & Islands and Moray Chinese Association (SHIMCA), the Inverness Polish Association and the Highlands & Islands Equality Forum (HIEF).

The first is reported as being a thriving and vibrant group whose members consist of people "... from all over the Highlands and Islands and Moray." On contact the Chairperson agreed to check possible contacts in the Chinese community in Orkney. After a search she named one individual but qualified this by saying that there were other families whose command of English might not be sufficient for consultation purposes. However it turned out that this named individual, who seemed happy to be contacted, actually lived in the Western Isles.

The Inverness Polish Association is a group purely for the Inverness area and has no contact with Poles in Orkney.

The HIEF was contacted. Two questions were asked: whether they were aware of any tiny minorities in Orkney and if they had any ideas as to how to reach the LGBT community. The reply did not vouchsafe any information about the second question but did include a list of groups they were aware of in Orkney. This list is part of a much more comprehensive one held by Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) However, there was one tiny health minority included which might be of interest to the OCPP. This was given as the Parkinson's Disease Society in Sanday. No contact name was given as HIEF is 'bound by data protection not to share contact details.'

An email address was found for the Caithness Lesbian and Gay Group. However contact could not be established and it is felt that this is now defunct. Indeed the Equality Network 'had had no recent contact with this group.'

Good practice existing in Orkney

In Orkney itself there are many people who are helping to reach minority groups, although it is clear that, whilst ethnic peoples and other hard to reach individuals are visible, the LGBT community is largely invisible.

Ethnic Minorities

The Learning Link in Kirkwall has well established contact with some of the Eastern European and Chinese communities. A mixed group of Polish, Czech and Russian people meet for English lessons in Stromness. Mostly working in the fish industry the group share similar work patterns and shifts. On the other hand a group of Chinese meet in Kirkwall. Again they have particular, but not similar, work patterns and shifts.

The manager of The Learning Link would be willing to take questions to the groups whereby the consultation requests can be put as part of the learning issues. For some of the ethnic groups she felt that straightforward consultation would not necessarily be understood because of the language difficulties. (However, see under Shetland Islands in the Best Practice section on page 11)

Although at the time of this report, there were no Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi students taking part in the English language lessons some families are known to the manager of the Centre and contacts could be set up through her.

Orkney College has a range of race minority groups undertaking ESOL qualifications, including about a dozen Eastern Europeans and some Asian and Eurasian students. Again the tutors are willing to be contacts for consultation work and suggest that such work needs to be put across in a fairly simple way. (Again see Shetland Islands Council on page 11)

Young People

Dialogue Youth Orkney has already been a lively conduit for consultation on many issues. However, as elsewhere, LGBT issues are as hidden, if not more so, within the young population. Nevertheless, this organisation is very willing to add a link to their existing website which would allow a young person to connect directly with the LGBT Youth Scotland site.

Parents of children with autism

Whilst looking into the existence of this disenfranchised community group, it was reported that one parent of an autistic child felt that visible disabilities are well catered for, but it is the more invisible disabilities that are hard to reach in terms of community consultation. In respect of this, notice was taken for this report on how we could consult with the parents of autistic children and young people.

Crossroads Orkney works with autistic children and young people, usually in a one-to-one supportive role. *Crossroads* holds a database of parental addresses that could be useful to reach parents of autistic children and young adults with requests to allow information on consultation to be passed on to them.

At present a group of parents who feel disenfranchised and left out are forming a group to support each other. Should this come to fruition through the help of the third Sector in Orkney, then this group would seem a prime vehicle for consulting on the difficulties faced by autistic children and young adults.

Liaison arrangements/contacts

Liaison arrangements and contacts are given in some detail as an appendix to this report. Contact persons and organisations outside Orkney are given first, followed by persons and organisations specific to Orkney. It has been affirmed that all are willing to help as appropriate with regard to best practice, experience sharing, training issues and discussion.

Recommendations (tailored to Orkney) for consulting with minority groups and individuals

The recommendations cited below are a result of a considerable amount of information gathering and discussion with various informed individuals. Government papers have been consulted and other information gained from various equalities-related sources in the Highlands and Islands. In addition contact has been made with national organisations representing the minority groups most likely to be found in Orkney. Dialogue too has been established with contact people in ethnic minority associations in Inverness; and meetings held with various people in Orkney who have worked with and have a knowledge of ethnic minority groups in the islands. From all of this it is clear that good contact can be made and consultation methods set up for ethnic minority groups.

More problematic, of course, is the question of reaching and consulting with anyone in the LGBT community in Orkney. Having said that, it is clear that civil partnerships are becoming more openly spoken of and reported in the local papers. It would be possible to put a sensitive request publicly to ask such individuals to come forward for consultation purposes. However it is the Equality Network that has really good advice on how some community engagement can be fostered with the rest of the LGBT community, in particular transgender needs.

Some cognisance has been taken of another specific group pertinent to Orkney and their issues are included here.

The following recommendations are made which may be the basis for a future strategy for consulting with specific minority groups and individuals in Orkney:

1. consider carefully and set out a range of methods of consultation with regard to whether language is a barrier, or the impossibility for some - for example in the LGBT group - to be able to be consulted at all in a public manner
2. if possible, set up arrangements for contacting a key person in each of the main minority groups of ethnicity, LGBT and autism. Once that contact has been established as a conduit, use it for all consultation purposes

3. bearing in mind the above, make arrangements for contact with the Eastern European, Chinese and Asian groups in Orkney through the auspices of The Learning Link and Orkney College. However cognisance should be taken of the fact that Shetland Council tutors found that too much consultation ate into the actual lesson time for English speaking and they ended up by establishing a discussion group especially for consultation purposes.

These local arrangements could be augmented by helpful contact with some of the nearest associations in Inverness

4. Consider arranging specific events such as a *Meet Other Cultures' Day* or similar, which would also encompass other faiths and all ages.
5. Use the main contact people in other areas (see Best Practice section) such as the Highland Council and WEA Inverness for shared discussions on strategic planning in Single Equalities
6. specifically in relation to LGBT, make arrangements to seek advice on consultation matters from the Equality Network's Community Engagement Worker. Marketing ideas and materials could be usefully gained from this organisation which is working to help the LGBT community in rural areas far from the central belt of Scotland
7. With regard to number six above, when consulting on the construction of public buildings, contact should be made with the Equality Network. They have good ideas for reaching the LGBT minority. For example, a carefully worded request for consultation, which may relate to transgender issues, would make it clear that Orkney's Community Planning Partnership is considering, and is considerate of, anyone belonging to the LGBT community
8. consider asking a representative of LGBT Youth Scotland along with a representative from ethnic minority groups and the embryonic Autism group to talk and take part in a Single Equalities Workshop

9. consider sending a representative to take part in the course about LGBT issues and barriers - to be led by LGBT Youth Scotland and held in Shetland this autumn

10. seek to establish contacts for young people with Autism through the information given in the Appendix to this report and maintain contact with Dialogue Youth Orkney with regard to its establishing links with LGBT Youth Scotland.

Conclusion

This report has particularly sought to establish the position with regard to ethnic and LGBT minority groups in Orkney, with which there is a statutory duty to consult. In addition, it was found necessary to consider the situation of parents with autistic children, which is a minority group particularly pertinent here.

Some very good practice was found in other rural areas and has been put forward in this report. In addition contact has been made with two national groups representing LGBT. Their information has been excellent and provides opportunities to reach out to a largely invisible part of our community.

Cognisance has also been taken of good work already being carried out in Orkney and of the possibilities of establishing new pathways for consultation with certain minority groups and individuals.

Good contact points have been set up, which, if maintained and followed through, should provide Orkney's Community Planning Partnership with the wherewithal to develop shared endeavours with regard to the inclusion of groups and individuals for whom consultation may sometimes be difficult in the extreme.

Appendix

Liaison arrangements/Contacts

Outside Orkney

The Highland Council

Rosemary Mackinnon, Equal Opportunities officer

Tel. 01463 702094

Email: rosemary.mackinnon@highland.gov.uk

Rosemary is very happy to be contacted with regards to good practice in equalities.

WEA Inverness

Hilary Lawson, Area Tutor Organiser

Tel. 01463 710577

Email: Inverness@weascotland.org.uk

Hilary is very happy to be contacted and would welcome anyone to visit and see what is happening with their ethnic minority groups

Western Isles Council

Lena Murray, Equalities Officer,

Tel.01851 703773

Part of a Diversity and Equalities Steering Group and willing to share good practice

Shetland Islands Council

Nancy Heubeck, Adult Learning Manager

Tel. 01595 743881

Email: nancy.heubeck@shetland.gov.uk

Happy to be contacted on consultation with ethnic minority groups regarding her experience and work so far

AND

Avril Nicol, Youth Services manager, Shetland Islands Council

Tel. 01595 743830

Email: avril.nicol@shetland.gov.uk

Happy to discuss her contact and work so far with LGBT Youth Scotland and the training being organised for Shetland

Equality Network (LGBT)

Scott Cuthbertson, Community Engagement Worker

Tel. 07020 933 952

Email: scott@equality-network.org

Very happy to be contacted on any issue to do with community consultation with the LGBT community in Orkney

LGBT Youth Scotland

Tel. 0141 5488121

Email: Pamela.clocherty@lgbtyouth.org.uk

Very happy to share their reports on LGBT and to help organisations work towards a Charter of Rights of LGBT people. Very willing to put on training sessions.

Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland (BEMIS)

Shameena Yusaf, Local Rural Development Officer

Tel: 01463 258846

Email: shameena.yusaf@bemis.org.uk

Could be a useful contact.

Scottish Highlands & Islands and Moray Chinese Association (SHIMCA)

Monica Lee-Macpherson, Chairperson

Tel. 07715948968

Email: m.leemacpherson@tesco.net

This might be a useful contact in the future.

Within Orkney**Orkney Islands Council**

Patricia Hartley, ABE Coordinator

The Learning Link

Tel. 01856 879200

Happy to discuss ways of engaging with ethnic minority students

Orkney College

Mandy Smith, Senior Lecturer Core Skills

Tel. 01856 569273

Email:mandy.smith@uhi.ac.uk

Happy to discuss ways of engaging with ethnic minority students undertaking ESOL courses

Orkney Islands Council

Arthur Jones

Dialogue Youth Coordinator

Tel. 01856 873535

Very willing to discuss website linking to LGBT Youth Scotland

Crossroads Orkney

Mairhi Trickett, Manager

Tel. 01856 870500

Willing to help through use of a database of parents' names. Could contact parents of known autistic youngsters and ask their permission for the agencies to contact them with a view to consultation.

Enable Scotland

Sheelagh Barnes, Service Manager Orkney & Highlands,

C/O The Strynd, Kirkwall

Tel. 01856 870080

Sheelagh is very willing to be the contact person for the embryonic Autism group should there be a requirement to consult with them.

ENDS