Notes of the Staff Race Equality Forum

Held on Thursday 7th February 2008

12.30 – 2.00pm

Wentworth Senior Common Room

Summary of key points:

The Forum itself:

Aims were provisionally agreed by the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC) but will be revisited in Autumn 2008 for members to revise.

- meetings to be chaired by members on a rotating basis, with support from the Equal Opportunities Office – volunteers for one or more sessions please contact the Equal Opportunities Office Co-ordinator. (Carol-Ann Hooper, Chair of Equality & Diversity Committee chaired this meeting)
- a member of the EO Office to take notes on issues to be fed in to the Equality and Diversity committee, member(s) of the Forum to be invited to attend the EDC as appropriate
- Meetings to aim to be inclusive and promote participation by all. Members to keep under review what may facilitate or inhibit this, e.g. need to avoid or explain acronyms. Any concerns or questions please feed back to the EO Office
- BME staff to consider whether and how they would like to include BME-only “space” within the Forum.

Progress so far on Race Equality at York

- Yvie Holder, Director of the Equal Opportunities Office, reviewed work undertaken towards race equality in a presentation “Progress on Race Equality at the University of York: a perspective from the EO Office” (to be made available on EO website in due course). Overall much progress has been made but change is slow and there are still serious issues to address.
- Other examples of good practice include Health Sciences Single Equality Strategy Group.
Next steps

Ways of increasing cultural awareness and competence throughout the university, facilitating communication across different groups, and including more BME staff in the Forum were suggested, including:

- use of the University’s facilities for community events (Keith Lilley, Director of Directorate of Facilities Management to be consulted)
- More extensive cultural awareness training for staff
- Giving paid time off for support staff in DFM to attend Forum meetings
- Using the Forum and/or other spaces for personal story-telling, e.g. in an informal setting over lunch. Anyone who would like to share personal experiences to contact the EO Office
- Expanding the EO Office’s ‘We all make it unique’ campaign to create a web-based resource with stories behind the faces

Next meeting

To be held on Tuesday 13th May from 12.30 – 2.00pm in H/G21. It will include a participatory session run by Philip Warwick (York Management School) and Heather Richardson (York Award Manager) on “Cultural Issues and Good Practice within the University”

Any suggestions for speakers for future meetings or activities - please send to the EO office.

Carol-Ann Hooper/Linda Whiting
March 2008.