



Bristol Women's Commission

MINUTES

Meeting	Date	Time	Location
Bristol Women's Commission	24.03.22	09.30	Zoom
Attendees			
Penny Gane (PG), Chair Bristol Women's Commission Cherene Whitfield (ChW), Equalities Team Claire Bloor (CB), and Co-Chair of the BWC Women's Safety Task Force Cllr Helen Holland (Cllr. HH), Cabinet Manager for Adult Social Care, Women and Women – Safe City, Labour Party Cllr Sarah Classick (Cllr. SC), Liberal Democrats Party Diane Bunyan (DB), Economy Task Group Lead Helen Mott (HM), Independent Consultant Joanne Kaye (JK), Trade Union Congress Julie Bird (JB), Health Watch Bristol Kalpna Woolf (KW), CEO BeOnBoard, Katy Taylor (KT), Director Bristol Women's Voice Laura Williams (LW), Comms BWC Laura Beynon (LB), Co-Chair Education Task Group Lorna Dallimore (LD), Avon and Somerset Police Monira Chowdhury (MC), Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, North Bristol NHS Trust and Co-Chair of the BWC Health Task Group Sandra Meadows (SM), CEO Voscur Sue Cohen (SC), Co-Chair Economy Task Group Victoria Matthews (VM), Business West Raquel Aguirre (RA), BCC City Office on behalf of Andrea Dell Anne James (AJ), BCC Refugees Commissioning Manager Tia Bakhshi (TB), Refugee resettlement scheme Sima Hemat (SH), Refugee resettlement scheme Lucy Fleming (LF), BCC Dem Services Rebecca Baldwin Cantello (RBC), BCC Cath Bowstead (CB), City of Bristol College, on behalf of Jo Ward			
Apologies		Minutes	
Andrea Dell (AD), BCC One City Anna Smith (AS) Cllr Kerry Bailes (Cllr. KB), Labour Party Cllr Ani Stafford-Townsend (Cllr. A S-T), Green Party Cllr Lesley Alexander (Cllr. LA), Conservative Party Sarah O'Leary (SO'L), Co-Chair Health Task Group Sue Durbin (SD), UWE Bristol Dr Zara Nanu (ZN), Chair, Women in Business Task Group		Rhea D'Silva (RD) ABS Business Support Officer (Minutes) Phoebe Burton (PB), ABS Senior Business Support Officer (Editor)	

Actions	Detail	Who	Status/Notes
01.	Questions in chat to be forwarded to KS.	Phoebe	Completed

02.	Penny to write to Cllr HH on one city.	Penny	In progress
03.	Phoebe to re-send all information on the Boards and link to web page.	Phoebe	Completed
04.	Diane to contact Sarah Carter	Diane	Not done,
05.	Phoebe to add Julie Bird, Karin Smyth and Candy to Health TG	Phoebe	Completed
06.	Education TG, joint forum to progress, Cherene to follow this up.	Cherene	In progress
07.	Cherene and Penny to arrange catch up to go through Action Plan	Cherene	Completed
08.	Cherene to speak with Rebecca about best HoS to attend meetings	Cherene	Penny to take on
09.	In March meeting ask what organisations are doing regarding, economy, violence, health, so we know what they are doing.	Penny	More work put into before doing – in progress
10.	Set up leads TG meeting 4:15pm on Thursdays	Phoebe	Completed

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
1.	Welcome, Introductions, Apologies The Chair welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Introductions were given and apologies were presented. The minutes were signed off on.	
2.	Afghan Resettlement Scheme - Anne James , Bristol City Council, Refugees Commissioning Manager, with Sima and Tiya • 2 tier system in government policy, government support settlement schemes, relocate most needy families, bring them to the U.K to be supported by local authorities including finding house in the private renting sector, which is a match to refugee family, working with UNHSR, funding for 5 years to support them. • Resettled 600 families in private sector accommodation, resettlement team look after 125 properties in Bristol • TB has been supporting Afghan families, was brought out of Kabul herself with the same scheme. • 593 people into PRS accommodation, 80% middle East, north Africa and 20% Afghanistan, pledge to support 15 ACRS and 15 UKRS families each year. • Operation warm welcome – fall of Afghan government in August 2021, 303 adults and children moved into temporary accommodation, 200 have been moved out of hotels into houses. • A lot of work around health, COVID vaccination, TB screenings, chest x-rays, hepatitis, vitamin D deficiency, screen 120 people in hotels. Health visitors, school nurses, maternity (High pregnancy level, trying to be pregnant), RAS health activity overseen by weekly CCG and Haven activity. • Befrienders for each resettled family for 1 year, neighbourhood hubs, walking volunteers, sewing groups, language support, DWP – skills training and employment support, refugee and asylum seeker, clothing donations, and support with registration for college. • Donations from Bristol – Wilkinson's, dental care products, cinema nights, theatre, camping trips, school uniform, local laundry service at a reduced rate and many others. • All the women in the hotel are on child benefits/universal credit and	

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	set up with a bank account however have no decent shoes/clothes, if men don't buy the clothing the women don't know how to access, some men do share the money, some are more aware of saving. • ACH supported women with sewing lessons, sewing from home to create a business from home, end of classes given sewing machine. Hard for some women to work outside of the home, many women have no history of work. • Employment class given new laptop. • Some that arrived married to British citizen, children and wife lived with in-laws in Afghanistan, finding it difficult to adjust to life with husband having never lived with them before. Families generally finding it difficult to live in a hotel – women sat in corridors, men in shared areas. • Some women are withdrawn, depressed with a lack of self-confidence. • In Afghanistan many women don't go outside without the men, men take decisions on whether women can attend the workshops, women do not know what an opportunity is. • Most go to English classes once a week, a lot of low levels of literacy, tendency to get bored in ESOL as not uncommon for women not to go to school in Afghanistan, families may not give permission to go to school. • Committed to finding a home for the Afghan families in Bristol who want to live in Bristol. • 22 resettled, 7 soon to be homed, another 7 families waiting x3 4 bedroom properties, x4 2 bed properties.	
3.	Q&A • Penny Gane Culture shock how have TB and SH found the transition into the culture – SH likes it here in Bristol, moved into a house 2 weeks ago and started a part time teaching job at Ashley housing community, assisting with a 7-week course, starting a teach assistant course. Afghan job fair next week, working alongside DWP bring bigger and smaller employers together – work experience, paid employment, and women in business task force. Wednesday 30th all day sessions all health service organised by North Bristol. How are they dealing with trauma? AJ – Lots of terrible things took place in Kabul airport to both the men and women. Some not sleeping at night and are withdrawn. Offering a mental health pathway, 3 women are receiving acute mental health support, 1 day a week group trauma therapy, 5 women are seeing a psychologist once a week. TB has seen lots of women suffering with anxiety, depression, lack of confidence to attend the courses, hoping in time this will be reduced with mental health support. • Kalpna Woolf Organisation 91 days to build a global city – 91 languages in Bristol, bringing the community together, build connections, all the same build common ground, power of food bring people together act of friendship, offer it out to any groups work with any of refugees, work with Ashley community housing. Ramadan supply food, heard about lack of food in hotels, simple food, not culturally appropriate. Offering to support	

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	communities and hotels particularly during Ramadan, can drop off food or find a place to cook their own food. Action 11: KW to contact TB regarding arranging kitchen space/food delivery to hotels for Ramadan. Cathy Bowstead Kitchens at College Green which can be used, catering kitchens resource to bring women together. Offered to do a fund raising in the college and possibly a clothes donation scheme, SH responded to say the women don't take the second-hand clothes but do accept new clothes. AJ added that a £5,000 donation was made and used to buy uniforms. Everyone in the hotel does receive full value of UC, no food, or bills as outgoings so they do have a source of income, if offered a cash donation SH will ensure that they use the cash on themselves by taking them to a women's clothes store, otherwise they will usually give the money to their husband. Action: TB to contact CB regarding College Green kitchens to cook during Ramadan and possibly raising money for coats and shoes. (out of BWC) Are the donations not taken up as they're not culturally appropriate? Donations made by the Asian communities however may be better to buy fabric so the women can make their own clothes and then buy new coats and shoes. Helen Holland Proud and humbled by the work, on going as a new wave is coming. Fantastic generosity, given such a warm welcome many families want to stay in Bristol. Can you get that kind of message out through the network, private rented homes, reassuring land lords that the property will be refurbished end of rental period and a good steady income during the rental contract. Dentistry problem for everyone, emergency treatment can be done through the dental hospital, difficult to get to NHS dentists, long waiting lists. Trying to get more social care reps on 30th care organisations.	
4.	Councillor Survey report and recommendations - Joanne Kaye/Penny Gane Updated report has been circulated, tried to look at recommendations, Cherene and Andrea to be here dicuss whats possible – robust code of conduct, holding events, stand for office, thinking about how you have front line / online facility, having own ways of contact online means you're more likely to be abused, family friendly (meeting times, flexible hours), paying for child care, national government legisaiton hybird meetings since changed, challenging internal culture, mentor, really hard to change political culture, hard for parties, think about how can I change? As report shows, significant barriers for women taking part in public life.	
5.	Democratic Services Response to report – Lucy Fleming Code of conduct with an established process, councillors to escalate formal complaints and the offer of informal advice and guidance, councillors want support when stressed and anxious doesn't have to be	

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	formal. • Women into public life's project in Bristol to encourage engagement with democratic services, stand for public office, BCC event to promote opportunities, pencilled in for October 2022. • Need to be online and contactable but not constantly exposed online. Casework management software to support officer. • Fund currently not well utilised, because councillors concerned around public expenses, talking to the WHIPS to make a change in the culture build confidence to claim expenses e.g., childcare. • Social media – training last week regarding security, new policy and safety security for members covers trolling, low level social media trolling can be grinding. • Mentoring – introduced a scheme May 2021 – opportunity to be paired with senior officer, 15 people took up the opportunity, relaunching the scheme now in case anyone missed it. • Training support – individual budget for everyone, if someone has specific area that they would like to work on e.g., public speaker or imposter syndrome they can contact BCC who will help identify a provider etc. • Penny Gane A culture change is needed, which is difficult to do. Breakfast meetings for example don't work for women who are carers or mothers. This needs to be changed. • Monira Chowdhury Report is valuable, appendix what's happening, what has fed back, commitment of the WHIPS to take forward. • From this meeting today take report to WHIPS, mention that it's still confidential, appendix included with what's happened since would be good. Action 12: JK? to add appendix to report on what has happened since before bringing to WHIPS.	
6.	Chair's Update • Penny was keynote speaker at Dept of Levelling Up IWD event for all govt depts. Was able to showcase all the different strands of our work. Attended by Govt Equalities Office • Summit May 6th – Avon and Somerset police tackling VAWG. A report is needed to commission before May 6th. • March 23rd 2nd sexual harassment meeting, BWC safety task group, UoB, BCC, CoBC, A&S Police, PG chaired. Forum of universities will take this on and report to BWC. Invites to next forum meeting received this morning.	
7.	Update on selection and membership of One City Boards 3 members of commission appointed to One City Boards. Direct invite to Transport Board. Katy Taylor to take on.	
8.	Action Plans 2022-3; Task Group leads Claire Bloor Womens safety task group – transport hard to get traction on, talked about domestic homicide reviews, focus this year working with council on the strategy. Katy attending the transport one city board, safety on transport.	

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	Monira Chowdhury Building on success from last year, evidence brought into govt strategy, women being believed for chronic pain, mental health and self-harm overlap with domestic violence and abuse. Lack of senior women in senior roles in the work force, not delivered in sex equality perspective. Sue Cohen Social care and children intrinsic into infrastructure, career and social opportunities. Skills and training CCG facing barriers at entry level WECA is difficult to navigate. Monthly economy task group, coming year good practice models, track how childcare is running. Diane Bunyan Successful in raising issues around the specific needs of women economic recovery in the plan. Group health and social care links – move up the agenda, challenges in the agenda and a need to provide care. Sandra Gordon Inclusive key purpose to bring companies together, hosted 5 events online this year – feedback, reported great passion for EDI. Organisations restructured - refocus and rebuild. Lots of businesses focus on surviving the crisis, longer term impact on pay has been seen. Provide intersectional dialogue, review on people policies in relation to parental leave, working parents tailored solutions, open to discuss flexible working. TSA – course available for secretaries to become lawyers. Intersectionality – charter to start progress reporting journey however not all organisations will have this info available Action 13: SM to review the charter with women in business task group. Laura Beynon Hard for schools, difficult year to get together. Made progress last year. Mentoring programme women in senior roles, successful conference in the summer. Made head way around PSHE resources, consent coercive control. Event to be held in Redmaids around equality and diversity, have invited other schools. LB and MC will be stepping down, currently looking for new chair(s) Action 14: Contact Laura Beynon if anyone knows any head teachers interested in taking up her role. Laura Williams Decided to come off social media. Supporting behind scenes for press releases and reports – Won't suddenly not have online presence. 500 followers on Instagram can come off platform, Twitter linked in engaging. Penny Gane SEV been difficult – social media has been bruising. Monria Chowdhury and Helen Mott – talk offline, Penny Gane will contact task group leads and notify BWC. Action 15: PG to notify commission of decision after consulting Task Group leads and interested individuals.	

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	AOB: Helen Mott Links in chat regarding safety charter on the 16th of March, lots of information there for everyone, stake holders will be there. Training available around sexual harassment. This evening (24.03) 'Shine a Light' parade against sexual violence towards women. Now new fund safety women at night sarah carter leaving	
9.	Close of Meeting.	

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Detail</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Status/Notes</u>
11.	KW to contact Tiya regarding arranging kitchen space/food delivery to hotels for Ramadan.		
12.	JK? to add appendix to report on what has happened since before bringing to WHIPS.		
13.	SG to review the charter with women in business task group.		
14.	Contact Laura Beynon if anyone knows any head teachers interested in taking up her role.	All	
15.	PG notify BWC of decision when Task group leads and others consulted.		
16.			

Meeting Chat:

09:33:30 From Rebecca Baldwin-Cantello to Everyone:

Good morning!

10:10:58 From Kalpna Woolf to Everyone:

It's the Almondsbury hotel which we are getting these reports from

10:12:20 From Monira Chowdhury (she/her) to Everyone:

go for vouchers or gift tokens

10:14:57 From Monira Chowdhury (she/her) to Everyone:

will a communal sewing machine be useful so not relaint just on classes

10:23:15 From Claire Bloor to Everyone:

sincere apologies but I will need to leave at 11am

10:25:34 From Victoria Matthews to Everyone:

Likewise apologies but I will also have to leave at 11am

10:29:11 From Rebecca Baldwin-Cantello to Everyone:

Just to say that Andrea has covid again, which is why she isn't here, but her colleague Raquel is here from the City Office.

10:29:48 From Phoebe Burton to Everyone:

Lucy is here as well to go through the response to the report

10:29:59 From Raquel Aguirre (City Office) to Everyone:

Thanks Rebecca, yes I can pass any messages to her

10:39:21 From Raquel Aguirre (City Office) to Everyone:

Apologies to all, Andrea didn't have a chance to give me any notes on the recommendations. I will let her know that you are waiting to hear from her on this when she returns to work next week.

10:43:17 From Helen Holland to Everyone:

The senior officer mentoring / buddying project is also potentially a real personal

and professional development opportunity for officers, seeing the world from a councillor's perspective.

10:46:05 From Monira Chowdhury (she/her) to Everyone:
also an ethos of confrontation

10:46:38 From Monira Chowdhury (she/her) to Everyone:
also issue for disabled women

10:49:12 From GUL SIMA to Everyone:
Apologies I need to leave at 11 I have class thanks

10:52:26 From Lucy Fleming to Everyone:
Nice to see you all - I am very happy to come back whenever that would be useful.

Thanks

10:52:40 From GUL SIMA to Phoebe Burton(Direct Message):
you welcome

10:55:23 From GUL SIMA to Everyone:
Nice to see you all - I will be glad to come back whenever that would be useful.

Thanks to all

10:59:59 From Helen Mott to Everyone:
The Prevention network of the End Violence Against Women Coalition met yesterday with the DoF who are updating their guidance around 'child on child sexual violence' and other things. It is missing an intersectional lens as well as a gendered lens, we talked about training

11:00:45 From GUL SIMA to Everyone:
Bye everyone and thanks all

11:01:55 From Kalpna Woolf to Everyone:
Apologies, I have to leave for another meeting.

11:03:00 From Victoria Matthews to Everyone:
Apologies but I also have to leave now, good to see you all.

11:06:41 From Monira Chowdhury (she/her) to Everyone:
opportunities in health agenda especially around Health Inequalities with new Integrated Care System (ICS) especially around intersectionality

11:10:33 From Monira Chowdhury (she/her) to Everyone:
another issue for health task group related to chronic pain & long term health conditions will impact/ outcomes around long covid which we already know higher proportion women affected

11:16:49 From Sandra Gordon to Everyone:
Hi details of our event on Tuesday, please share. Thank you

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/making-progress-on-gender-equality-tickets-275470328167>

11:20:20 From Helen Mott to Everyone:
Quick info updates from me

11:20:40 From Helen Mott to Everyone:
Women's Safety charter launched 16-3-22
<https://www.bristolnights.co.uk/womens-safety-charter>

My global report and resources on gender inequalities in Higher Education, for the British Council, launched 10-3-22: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/gender-equality-higher-education-maximising-impacts>

Training available on sexual harassment in the night time economy / Shine a Light Parade this evening

<https://www.bristolnights.co.uk/news/shine-a-light-parade>
<https://facebook.com/events/s/shine-a-light-parade/1574885582910659/>

Further tranche of Safety of Women at Night Fund from Home Office is open for applications but I don't find that women's sector are engaged in those discussions

11:23:07 From Monira Chowdhury (she/her) to Everyone:
agree Twitter & LinkedIn key