

**Ongo Partnership Ltd.
Equality Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group
Agenda**

Date: Thursday 18th March 2021
Time: 9:30am-11:30pm
Venue: Virtual Meeting, MS Teams

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 KC welcomed all to the meeting.
- 1.2 Present: Karen Cowan (Chair) (KC), Colin Boyce (CB), Lauren Robinson (LR), Leah Gillott (LG), Mazen Abd Alhak (MAA), Pauline Smith (PS), Wendy Wolf (WW), Matt Kelly (MK), Erica Sanderson (ES), Emma Kershaw (EK), Aaron Simpson King (ASK), Grace Fixter (GF), Jo Sugden (JS), Michael Taurone (MT), Olivia Minaudo (OM), Paige Whittingham (PW), Rabul Ibrahim (RI), Tim Mills (TM), Jane Crookes (JC), Tanya Brookes (TB), Helen Wright (HW), Claire Sparrow (CS), Jess White (JW)
- 1.3 Observer: Heena Mistry (National Centre for Diversity (NCfD) Assessor) (HM)
- 1.4 Apologies: Nayeema Choudhry (NC), Katie Herron (KH), Dawn Warwick (DW), Lisa Smith (LS) Julie Collins (JC)

2. Notes and actions from the previous meeting (Chair)

	Action	Who	Progress
1	Yearly plan of celebrations to be put in every month and report to group	LG	Agenda item for March meeting
2	To make a list of e-learning is available to tenants on learning pool and share with group	LR	Update from LR: It is all available to tenants once they sign up. I think we might need to look at what we want to make available to tenants. There is no specific tenant e learning on learning with Ongo so if we want to look at setting up a 'tenant programme' we can do, LR will need to liaise with WW on this and include the Equality & Diversity E Learning on this,

	Action	Who	Progress
			but probably needs reviewing for tenants
3	Review Ongo staff code of conduct to include something that alludes that we should all be allies	ES	Complete. Sent request to MM for this to be included in code of conduct review UPDATE: Discussed with MM and agreed that the Code of Conduct wouldn't be the right document for this, to pick up in the review of the EDI policy
4	Terms of reference to be received	ES	Completed
5	Feedback the issues with using Google Translate for some languages – Specifically Arabic to the NL EDI Forum	KC	To be picked up at the May North Lincs EDI Forum
6	Future agendas to include timings for each item & a break to be scheduled in the middle of meeting	EK	Completed
7	To speak with IT regarding rent statements being sent in Colin's Formatting	MK	Completed Sarah Hardman has been liaising with Colin on the rent statement issues he had had
8	Next Year's EDI meetings to be booked and sent out	EK	Completed

3. Leaders in Diversity update (ES)

- 3.1 ES gave update on the Leaders in Diversity accreditation journey to date and introduced HM. ES thanked for all completed surveys from colleagues and explained the next steps. HM will be completing targeted 1:1 meetings with colleagues and tenants over the next few days. She will then pull together all the feedback from these meetings along with the survey data and our comprehensive self-assessment against the standard and make a recommendation to the NCfD for us to achieve the accreditation – we hope! This should be mid-April. KC or ES will communicate the outcome to the group as soon as we hear.

4. EDI Calendar for 2021 (LG)

4.1 LG presented the events calendar the PR Team have created and explained how it will work going forward. It is spread across the business into sections around EDI, Health and Wellbeing, Ongo-specific etc. The group were asked to share any thoughts, ideas or suggestions directly with LG outside the meeting for how we can raise awareness around the different topics. This could be personal or what's going on in your work life. A video blog from members on their personal experiences in or out of work in respect of FREDIE.

4.2 All EDI group members encouraged to come forward and get involved, EK, ASK & JC (Lettings Team) all volunteered in the meeting to help, great piece of work by LG 😊

5. Board / LT update - EDI (KC)

5.1 The leadership team is fully supportive of unconscious bias training, and it is to be rolled out to the EDI Steering Group members and the Heads of Service. TM said what a great session it is. Two dates to be arranged and will be communicated with the group. **ACTION (ES) – communicate dates for training with the group to book onto.**

5.2 JS explained the new NHF Code of Governance and the changes to the length of time Board Members are able to remain on the board. It has changed from 9 years to 6 years. There is to be a new Succession Planning Policy which will go to June board for approval. There is consideration currently of introducing board trainee members through the HDN's Board Mentoring programme. This would create balance and a great mix of skills.

6. Race action plan update (KC)

6.1 KC explained that a lot of the action plan had been completed but still some outstanding items which were updated.

6.2 LR updated the group to explain that we have a lot more information in relation to colleagues and race / ethnicity so will be able to provide much more accurate results in terms of the race pay gap at Ongo.

6.3 In terms of engaging with young people, we have used different platforms to engage with young people which has been successful.

6.4 We have joined HDN and can now advertise our vacancies through that network to help get a broader diversity of applicants.

6.5 We have linked up with a local social enterprise, RedEverywhere and they have contacts with the Black and Asian Leadership Institute (BALI). Both this and HDN have been used to advertise our recent vacant leadership role. We have also revised our job adverts to state we are actively encouraging applications from underrepresented groups – e.g. ethnically diverse, disabled people, women etc. (as relevant at the time of vacancy).

6.6 Discussion around why underrepresented group in terms of ethnicity are not bidding on our properties. JC & MK have spoken around this topic however people only bid on what is available to them. **ACTION (JC) – provide data of numbers of applicants for different ethnic profiles.**

7. **Round- table session to discuss the 2021/22 action plan (ES)**

7.1 ES explained that the 2021 / 22 action plan would be informed by a number of different factors. Any outstanding actions from the Race Action Plan from 2020 / 2021 would be included, along with recommendations from the NCfD accreditation report. The strategic objectives and priorities identified by the Group Common Board will provide themes within the action plan. The discussion was then opened up to the group to discuss what other themes should be considered for the action plan. The following were proposed:

- **Education, training and awareness for colleagues and board members**
- **Education and training for tenants**
- **Recruitment of unrepresented groups**
- **Increase of unrepresented groups on tenant panels**
- **Covid-19 and promotion of the vaccine amongst ethnically diverse groups**
- **Covid-19 and coming out of the restrictions**
- **Hate crime and community cohesion**
- **Mental health and social isolation**
- **Reporting on the race pay gap**
- **Embedding FREDIE across the organisation**
- **Accessibility of ongo.co.uk**

7.2 In respect of hate crime and community cohesion, it was agreed that the group would like to know about the numbers and outcomes of ASB reports for these categories over the last year. **ACTION (ES) ask CC to present to the group at July's meeting**

8. **Break**

9. **Updates from other groups**

- 9.1 North Lincolnshire EDI Forum (NLEDIF) (KC) – KC attended this. KC chairs and ES is the secretary. The group is attended by a wide variety of agencies from across North Lincolnshire including North Lincolnshire Council, Public Health, the NHS, Humberside Fire & Rescue, the Police and Colleges. Guest speakers at the last meeting were RedEverywhere and the Smile Foundation.
- a) RedEverywhere is a company who run BAME community mentoring and coaching programme locally are working to empower young people from different backgrounds to make good, positive choices for their future. They aim to have 100 mentors from the diverse communities, the mentor journey is initially for 12 months. They also have links with the national Black and Asian Leadership Institute (BALI). It has been agreed that all Ongo leadership vacancies can be shared with BALI.
 - b) The Smile Foundation is a new befriending and signposting service for the local Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community. Its purpose is to support the reduction of social isolation through social prescribing. They are currently working on vaccine videos in different languages, these will be shared as soon as possible.
- 9.2 E&D Humber Practitioners Network (ES) - ES attended the Humber EDI network which has a new Chair, Richard Bartlett from Hull City Council.
- a) Katrin Platt from the probation service has funding available to support probation service users from ethnically diverse communities. She has linked in with Kerry and encourages others to get in touch. Contact ES for details.
 - b) The Police have held a Zoom employment support session. Jemma Akers linked in with this and the aim was to engage with young people in less represented profiles to consider work with the police.
- 9.3 HQN EDI Network (ES) – ES attended this. The last session was centred on LGBTQ+. Resident Involvement Officer at PA housing presented on how he has developed Resident Involvement with the LGBTQ+ community at PA Housing. ES has requested his contact details to share with WW for networking. The Houseproud accreditation was also discussed which is specific to LGBTQ+ and is free to do.
- 9.4 HDN North Group (ES) - ES attended this time but KC is the usual representative for Ongo. Focused on BLM which led to discussions around strategies for EDI. Ongo doesn't have or need a separate strategy for this as it is linked into the One Ongo strategy. Discussed that most member organisations have board champion for EDI, this has been discussed for Ongo post Andrew Pate but decision is that EDI is all board members responsibility and not just one person champion. HDN

members (Ongo is a member of HDN) have access to a member resource area that is currently being reviewed / revised, ES will provide details for access once live.

10. AOB

10.1 There have unfortunately been allegations of racism and homophobia put forward by an ex tenant volunteer against some members of Community Voice. As a result of these allegations, Ongo engaged TPAS to independently investigate the complaints made. TPAS carried out a desk top review and interviewed staff and tenants. They concluded that there were no significant issues, however, some refresher training would be beneficial for some individuals (please note that the unconscious bias training planned in will be perfect to address this). TPAS did find that one tenant volunteer had been in breach of the volunteers' code of conduct, but this individual has since resigned from all customer engagement activity and so no action was required.

10.2 It appears that the Browse Aloud function on the Ongo website doesn't cater for PDF documents, e.g. font can't be adjusted for those with sight difficulties, translations not available etc. The work to find a solution for this will be added to the action plan. **ACTION (KC&ES) to share this information with wider networking groups to raise awareness**

10.3 The EDI Steering Group has been shortlisted for the EDI Steering Group of the Year award and ES has been shortlisted for the EDI Lead of the Year at the NCfD's FREDIE Awards 2021. ES was nominated by Heena Mistry from the NCfD for all the great work she does. The EDI steering group is very happy and congratulated Erica on her nomination.

11. Reflection of today's meeting

11.1 All were happy with this meeting. A suggestion was made to have a presentation at every other meeting in the future rather than at each one.

12. Date & time of next meeting

12.1 1 July 2021 09:30am (MS Teams)

13. Actions

	Action	Who	By when?	Progress
1	Communicate dates for Unconscious Bias training with the group to book onto	ES	ASAP	COMPLETED Training sessions arranged for: 29/4/21 27/5/21

	Action	Who	By when?	Progress
2	Provide data of numbers of applicants for housing for different ethnic profiles	JC	30/4/21	COMPLETED Currently there are 7859 applicants registered for Home Choice Lincs. Of these applicants, 245 declare they are from a Black, Asian or other minority ethnic background. That equates to 3.11%
3	Produce draft action plan and share with EDI group	KC / ES	30/4/21	COMPLETED
4	Share with networks that Browse Aloud function on websites doesn't work on PDF documents	KC/ES	30/06/21	COMPLETED
5	Ask CC to present to the group at July's meeting	ES	ASAP	COMPLETED – PG presenting on behalf of CC