

Ongo Partnership Ltd.
Equality Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group
Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday 16th December 2021

Time: 9:30am-12:00pm

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), Pauline Smith (PS), Wendy Wolfe (WW), Matt Kelly (MK), Erica Sanderson (ES), Emma Kershaw (EK) Paige Whittingham (PW), Rabul Ibrahim (RI), Jessica White (JW) Laura Dodsworth (LD) Richard Morfitt (RM), Jane Crookes (JC), Kerry Copson (KCo)

1.3 Apologies: Julie Collins (JC), Jo Sugden (JS), Tim Mills (TM), Christine Fowler (CF), Michaela Paxton (MP), Nayeema Choudhry (NC), Helen Wright (HW), Aaron Simpson-King (ASK), Dawn Warwick (DW), Tim Mills (TM) Eddie Stringer (ES), Michaela Paxton (MP)

1.4 Guest speaker Liesel Dickinson from North Lincolnshire Council (NLC), Sally Senior, Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion, observing from DN Colleges Group.

2. Disability & Employment (Liesel Dickinson, NLC)

2.1 Liesel Dickinson, EDI lead at North Lincolnshire Council presented to us on the barriers experienced by disabled people in employment. Liesel herself is a disabled person and so as well as professional experience, she has lived experience too.

2.2 Liesel provided facts and figures around the number of people of working age that are disabled and that the pandemic has exacerbated this, specifically with Long Covid creating even more disabled people.

2.3 Liesel explained that through lockdown, there had been a lot of positives come out of it for disabled people in the workplace, with all kinds of accommodations being made, remote access to employment, education and entertainment, health and other appointments and much more. These accommodations made things more accessible for many disabled people and now, disabled people fear and are experiencing some of them disappearing as a world rushes back to normal.

2.4 Liesel explained that on a personal level, her work-life balance has been immeasurably improved by the availability for home working, with her energy no

longer needing to be focussed on anticipating barriers both attitudinal and physical – for example in the winter weather and having access to a blue badge parking bay, if the lift will be working and if a desk will be available. These are the small things that some non-disabled people can take for granted.

2.5 Liesel’s presentation has been attached to these minutes.

3. Notes and actions from the previous meeting (Chair KC)

3.1 All agreed minutes were accurate and true reflection of meeting

3.2 Actions from last meeting

	Action	Who	Progress
1	KC- NHF have a profiling diversity tool now, KC to liaise with Annie Akande if this is a worthwhile.	KC	COMPLETE Response from Annie - having spoken to Erica and Mo on this, we did not feel that the tool was of use to us just yet. Mo has said she is not in a position to provide the required data and at present they are not sharing the analytics with us. So our thoughts on this was that we want to collate the data but just not at present
2	WW to discuss with Dawn Hill around incorporating information of fairness around protected characteristics in current surveys	WW	COMPLETE Details have been included in the STAR response plan that Dawn is working on
3	JW to feed back to EDI around work on International Men’s Day from the Health and Wellbeing Group	JW	COMPLETE Helen Pearce circulated some information on Yammer for the wider business, link below. https://web.yammer.com/main/threads/eyJfdHlwZSI6IlRocmVhZCIsImkljoiMTQ3OTc4Mzg3NDI4MTQ3MiJ9

	Action	Who	Progress
4	EK to circulate events calendar to EDI group	EK	COMPLETE
5	EK to update action plan on Pentana	EK	COMPLETE
6	KC & ES to do a group discussion around inclusive leadership at leadership level	KC/ES	COMPLETE Response being that this is something they would like to consider at a later stage
7	LR to check around annual leave allowances if all colleagues will go to 30 days leave and how will it be given and to whom.	LR	COMPLETE This will be confirmed as part of the pay and benefit review outcome which is due to be communicated around March/April 2022 once all agreed
8	EK to look into booking suitable venue and re send team link for December's meeting.	EK	COMPLETE

4. Recruitment update

4.1 Lauren Robinson gave the recruitment update which shows the following key points

- We continue to receive applications, interview and appoint individuals of varying ages from the age of 18 to 58
- There has been a positive increase in our job adverts and vacancies reaching individuals who consider themselves to have a disability who are applying for roles at Ongo. There is also a positive increase in shortlisting, interviewing and

appointing these individuals. The HR team and disability confident steering group will continue to work on this to ensure our recruitment processes and procedures are as easy and transparent as they can be to make the process as smooth and easy as possible for everyone

- One individual confirmed they had gender reassignment which is a really positive representation within the audit. The one person who confirmed gender reassignment as part of the recruitment process was also appointed
- Arrangements made to include internal applications and appointments so the next report will include data of both external and internal vacancies
- Next report to include comparison to the new census and tenant EDI monitoring audit, these reports are done every six months and Lauren will present us with this in our June EDI Group 2022

5. EDI Action plan update (Karen)

- 5.1 Karen went through the items on the EDI action plan that were identified as the bigger issues.
- 5.2 EDI1.4 The review of the rewards and recognition options available to colleagues. Consultant employed to look at this, their recommendations were approved at Group Common Board on the 1st December 2021. The next stage is to consult with Trade Unions. This can be moved to 100%.
- 5.3 EDI1.9 Utilise Best Companies Survey findings to gain insight into the fairness of the organisation in respect of the protected characteristics, this has been completed and the results are with HR now. This can be moved to 100%.
- 5.4 EDI4.2 Implement the HDN board trainee programme to ensure board succession planning takes into account underrepresented groups. This is all in place adverts for board trainees will run during December 2021 (Key news, social media and head hunting) with plans to interview in January 2022 for this two year programme.
- 5.5 EDI4.3 pro actively encourage colleagues from across the business to update their EDI profile information on the HR Portal. We have continued to promote this and are going to start asking staff when applying for internal jobs to complete their diversity profile too so this will help. Move this to 100%
- 5.6 EDI4.8 Submit EDI reports to Board. The next one is due for June 2022 so this financial year is completed to 100%.
- 5.7 EDI6.12 Implement initiative to ensure a diverse tenant voice that is representative of our tenant population. This can be moved forward to 100% as we are now routinely getting views from younger people and our new Qualtrix digital survey system is receiving feedback from greater numbers of our tenants.

- 5.8 EDI6.4 Item in Key News each edition around one/two of the themes of FREDIE. This can be moved to 66% as each edition is to have at least one article on one of the diversity themes from FREDIE.

Ten minute break

6. Star survey (Karen)

- 6.1 The STAR survey is a periodic survey for customer satisfaction. In terms of fairness, the results are broken down into the tenants' diversity profile characteristics to see if there are any disparities or differences between minority groups and currently there is nothing we need to do differently which is great.

7. EDI calendar 2022 (Leah)

- 7.1 Leah Gillott shared the proposed 2022 EDI calendar that was included in the EDI group pack, we had a lot of volunteers kindly adding themselves to different events which Leah will share and to be included in the minutes.

- 7.2 Sally Senior & Liesel Dickinson both offered to co-ordinate, share ideas and resources with us and to make each event the best it can be.

8. HDN Board Trainee Programme (Karen)

- 8.1 We have been looking at the HDN board trainee programme which is a two year programme that will see new recruits shadow our board members in readiness for a Board role in the future. It's a really innovative piece of work and is going out to advert with the aim to recruit in April 2022.

9. Updates from other groups

9.1 North Lincolnshire EDI Forum (NLEDIF) (Erica) 2/11/21

- 9.1.1 A member gave an update to the group on The People Focused Group, who they have contracted in to provide mental health peer support services across the Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber locality. More information will be provided on this at February's NLEDIF by one of the leads for the project.
- 9.1.2 A new member from the Humber Outreach Project at North Lincolnshire Council provided an update on a project they have led on, raising the aspirations of young people and their families in BAME communities. They have had brilliant outcomes from the funded project with 16 people moving on to formal training and / or work.
- 9.1.3 The annual impact assessment of the NLEDIF was completed and the findings presented to the group. It was agreed that the impact assessment evidenced the aims of the Terms of Reference of the group were being achieved.

9.2 NHF Chief Executives and Chair's EDI Forum (Erica) 12/11/21

- 9.2.1 Erica attended this session, which was to discuss the outcomes of the report on the NHF's EDI Data Tool. Registered Providers were invited to input their EDI data

for tenants and employees and the tool is able to identify areas of underrepresentation. The main themes pulled from the report as areas for focus were lack of representation of disabled people in Housing Association workforces, a lack of representation of ethnic diversity in leadership positions, lack of representation of women in leadership positions and / or on boards and representation of LGBT+ in Housing Association workforces. More information will follow when the NHF publishes further detail and analysis. The survey will be completed again towards the end of 2023.

10. AOB (All)

10.1 Erica confirmed Ongo have had the green light to go forward with the White Ribbon Accreditation. This is a three year accreditation to encourage organisations and their employees to support ending male violence against women. Paul Grimley will be leading on this.

11. Reflection of today's meeting (all)

11.1 Everyone agreed today's meeting went well with special praise to Liesel for her presentation.

11.2 Colin stated that due to all the good work the EDI group has achieved over time, today's meeting has made him feel that he is more of an onlooker, and not so much a participant. This is because most things discussed today have been of a staff / organisation nature. This point was understood and Colin and other tenant members of the group were encouraged to put forward agenda items they would like to be included in the future that would be of more interest to them. Karen assured Colin that he is a valued and appreciated part of this EDI group and we encourage and appreciate his non-bias opinions.

11.3 Thanks to all guest speakers and if at any point they want to come to future meetings they are more than welcome as we have an open door policy in our EDI group

11.4 Richard Morfitt volunteered to ask someone from the, "One for the Lads" initiative to attend the group next year which all agreed would be great. Lauren Robinson also has a connection she will speak to there also. **ACTION**

11.5 Kerry Copson suggested the "Endeavour" project attend the EDI group to explain their project and get the word out. **ACTION**

11.6 Merry Christmas wished to all and meeting closed.

12. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 27th April 2022 9:30am-12:00pm via Microsoft Teams.

13. Actions

	Action	Who	By when?	Progress
13.1	Update Pentana actions as per section 5 of these minutes	EK	ASAP	Complete
13.2	Make contact with 'One for the Lads' to come and speak to us about the group at April's meeting (27/04/2022)	RM / LR	ASAP	
13.3	Ask someone from the Endeavour Project to attend and speak to us about the work going on at our June 2022 meeting (30/06/2022)	KC (Kerry Copson)	End April 2022	