

Sandwell Partnership Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Conference Report

October 2009

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1. Introduction

The Sandwell Partnership Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) conference held on 22nd October 2009 was organised jointly by the Sandwell Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. It's purpose was to raise awareness of issues faced by LGBT people and communities, and to start the process of identifying what the priorities for future work needs to be for the partner organisations.

The event was also to build on the work undertaken in Sandwell with young LGBT people over the previous years, which has been recognised as good practice. This work has led to the development of a support and development group called shOUT for young LGBT people in Sandwell.

The conference was held over half a day and the intention was to learn from good practice already being undertaken by partner organisations and have a keynote speaker from Stonewall to set the historical and national context. Workshops were also planned to identify what the top priorities should be around a number of areas.

The event was seen as a huge success by all the participants. The level of attendance was particularly pleasing with approximately 140 people in attendance, with the overwhelming majority staying for the whole event. There was more interest in the event than had been anticipated and a number of people had to be turned down, otherwise the maximum capacity venue would have been exceeded.

The feedback from those who attended was very positive, with the majority finding it very useful and informative and many seeing it as the first opportunity for LGBT people to be able to get together and contribute to what needs to be done for the future. One of the key messages was the need to build on this event, to move things forward and to hold other events.

This report contains the following:-

- The programme for the event (please note Cllr. P. Hinton was unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances and was replaced by John Garrett, Executive Director for Adult and Community Services)

- Biographies of most of the speakers
- Attendance list
- Notes from each workshop
- Feedback evaluation

For copies of the presentation slides used, please contact Kashmir Singh – 0121 569 3828 – kashmir_singh@sandwell.gov.uk

2. Overview of Conference Speakers

2.1 Opening Addresses

The Council's Sexual Orientation Champion, Alan Dean, opened the event up and highlighted that this conference was being used to build on the work and good practice already developed with young LGBT people and was a natural progression to start looking at issues for LGBT people. Some of the expected outcomes of the day which included; raising awareness of issues impacting on LGBT people; to consider and learn from good practice; to identifying what needs to be done as a partnership in Sandwell, to identify some of the priority areas and to bring people together.

The Executive Director of Adult and Community Services, John Garrett, replaced the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Improvement and Equality for Sandwell council, who was unable to attend because of unforeseen circumstances. John addressed the audience and welcomed everybody to the event and expressed his delight at the number of participants who had attended. He set out the context and importance of identifying and addressing the needs of diverse groups and people in Sandwell. He also highlighted the need to positively engage with different groups and the move towards the personalisation of service delivery.

The key note speaker was Derek Munn, Stonewall's Director of Public Affairs who outlined some of the key issues for the LGBT community. A series of presentations were then given from representatives from: the West Midlands Police, Healthy Gay Life, Sandwell MBC's Registrar Service and shOUT – an LGBT youth service. An overview of the content of these presentations is identified hereafter.

2.2 Stonewall –Derek Munn

Stonewall is a Nation-wide campaign organisation for lesbian, gay and bisexual equality. The Director of Public Affairs at Stonewall, Derek Munn, gave some context of Stonewall and identified key historical dates and legislation related to LGB. He described the effects of this history and although achievements have been made in improving the experiences of LGB people, there is still a lot that needs to be done to reduce discrimination e.g. reducing hate crime, addressing perception of public services and bullying. Consideration was given to the Diversity Champions Programme – an employer good practice programme which commits to

improving gay equality in the workplace. Homophobic bullying in schools was also raised as a key issue to be addressed.

2.3 West Midlands Police – PC Neil Jones

PC Neil Jones provided information on policing LGBT communities and their LGBT Staff Network. As part of the Rainbow Network, he is involved with improving policy and procedures, supporting staff and improving relations with the community in respect of LGBT issues. The Network supports LGBT officers within the Police and victims of homophobic crime to access support and advice through the Rainbow Network.

2.4 Healthy Gay Life – Nigel Burbidge

Healthy Gay Life provides a wide range of services to gay men, bisexual men and men who have sex with men. Some of their services are also available to lesbians, bisexual women and women who have sex with women too. They have services running across Birmingham and Sandwell. Nigel presented information on research done on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people's experiences and concerns in accessing health services. The key messages coming out were that although progress had been made, many LGB people were having negative experiences. Many doctors and other health professionals were showing a lack of understanding and had a degree of ignorance on the health issues for LGB people. There was evidence of a lack of trust in health professionals and services, as well as evidence of prejudice towards LGB people.

2.5 Sandwell MBC's Registrars – Paul Sheldon

The Registration Services Manager, Paul Sheldon, gave an overview of the history of Civil Partnerships with reference to the policy drivers for this. He provided figures on the number of Civil Partnership to have taken place in Sandwell and which were the most used venues. The customer feedback from these partnerships to the registrars has been very complimentary.

2.6 shOUT – Youth Workers and shOUT Members

Members of the shOUT group gave a presentation on experiences and issues faced as they move into adulthood. They discussed the experiences and support available for LGBT young people in Sandwell. Young people from Sandwell's Youth Parliament worked with the Scrutiny Panel to look at key issues. Key recommendations included: establishing a LGBT youth group,

establishing a telephone help line for LGBT young people and establishing an LGBT Youth Forum called shOUT. The group is open to any young person aged 11-25 years who is interested in developing work to support LGBT young people in Sandwell. The group agreed that one of the major projects should be around anti-homophobic bullying and have worked with Children Services to do work in some of the schools in Sandwell, including staff in schools. In November 2008 members of the group started to train school staff around dealing with homophobic bullying using a DVD workshop, which they produced themselves.

The shOUT group has also been involved in Sandwell's LGBT History month celebrations over the last 2 years. In February 2009 the theme was "Ancient LGBT History" and the young people hosted a costume event at the Public. The group have also been involved in attending other forums and events, including attending Stonewall's National Youth Conference for the last 2 years, involvement in a national campaign, have also had a stall at Birmingham Pride for the last 2 years, and a stall at a Wolverhampton Health and Wellbeing event this year, members of the group have also spoken at a West Midlands LGBT Consortium event, as well as Sandwell's LGBT History staff conference.

In between all of this work the group have also found the time to go on a residential to Manchester, and host many social events
Services and Support for LGBT Young people in Sandwell

The benefits to young LGBT people in Sandwell of all this work are:

- reducing the isolation felt by LGBT young people
- giving LGBT young people living in Sandwell a voice, and access to equality.
- helped to create an environment for young people in Sandwell where homophobic bullying wont be tolerated
- developed somewhere for LGBT young people to go to seek help and advice

3. Workshops Outcomes

It was commented on and reflected that although this was the first ever event of its type, there were very few senior staff from within the council and from across partnership organisations. It may have been that senior officers had identified members of their staff to represent them.

An acknowledgement has to be made of the excellent support from staff and organisations from across the partnership in supporting and helping with event; in particular with the running and facilitation of the workshops. This was a clear indication of just how important people felt the event was.

3.1 Workshop Areas and Purpose

There were a number of workshops held that were asked to consider the LGBT issues in each area. The workshops covered the following topics:

- Staff Groups
- Engagement with LGBT Communities
- Service Provision
- Health
- Older People
- Economy

The workshops were asked to focus on their area and broadly consider the following questions:

- What are the issues facing LGBT people and communities?
- What are the opportunities available to address those issues?
- What are the workshops top five priorities/areas that should be tackled first.

3.2 Priority Actions

Each of the six group highlighted a series of key actions, as detailed hereafter.

3.2.1 Staff Groups

- Event for LGBT people in Sandwell.
- Create a 'How to set up an LGBT group' toolkit.

- Creating a 'safe' environment is important. Develop a toolkit to create a 'safe' environment.
- Put the LGBT policy in display cabinets/on walls etc.. to demonstrate the organisation's support etc..
- Develop a training package for employers to raise awareness of LGBT issues.
- Develop a database, booklets/guides to signpost people to LGBT information.

3.2.2 Engagement with LGBT Communities

- Acceptance – to learn, understand and tolerate each other. To accept difference. Unconditional positive regard. Training and raising people's awareness
- Empowerment/confidence – to approach any services - . Make service more accessible. Schools to provide training – more input with children
- Community venue – for people to get together – drop in centre
- Feel proud of who you are
- Sharing information so that everyone gets the message, promoting equality.
- Have gay pride in Sandwell – which will give Sandwell LGBT people confidence
- Peer mentoring who were seen as socially accepting groups like LGBT and Shout groups
- Monitoring e.g. at job interviews
- Somewhere to go
- Telephone/live helpline (counselling, support, signposting)

3.2.3 Service Provision

- Places where people know they are safe – scene?
- All environments approachable?
- Training needs – for staff/workforce
- Need not to set up services in 'silos'
- Men's perceived as 'no-go' – intolerance.
- Making all services friendly and welcoming
- Version of 'safe places' scheme LGBT
- Address distrust of agencies could be achieved by effective communication strategy
- Enable people to feel and be safe in their communities and addressing bullying/violence

- Enable Sandwell to be a great place to live for all
- Address discrimination through zero tolerance/empathy
- Need to know what LGBT community wants

3.2.4 Health

- Homophobic bullying needs to be addressed in schools
- Lesbians need to have health screening
- Need to include information in the LGBT and LGBT services within the mainstream services and mainstream literature so that people not out can access this.
- Train young people as mystery shoppers who report back on what they thought about the services.

3.2.5 Older People

- Staff - training and awareness – changing attitudes and developing support networks.
- Diversity champions
- Better social networks – making Sandwell feel more gay friendly (older LGBT a 'niche' for Sandwell? The Public? (discreet))

3.2.6 Economy

- Personal safety and a safe environment was important, particularly for West Bromwich
- Should work on having events that will encourage or attract LGBT people, including at the Public

4. Moving Forward

The conference brought together people from a wide range of agencies that operate within and outside of Sandwell for the first time.

There was goodwill from the partners represented and other agencies to work in partnership. There were some excellent example and good models of practice where organisations have addressed LGBT issues.

The key messages coming from participants were:

- They were glad that the event was taking place and raising the issues that impact on LGBT communities.
- Participants wanted the process to continue, so that the issues identifies could be progressed and dealt with in Sandwell
- There was a consensus that a working group comprised of key partnership organisations be set up to develop an action plan and deliver these actions.
- The approach should be a partnership one
- That this event would be a regular occurrence.

The suggestions made by the participants is seen as a sensible way forward and it is proposed that the following approach to take the agenda forward will be adopted:

- The LGBT Group to be strengthened in a partnership way.
- The LSP to support the establishment of an LGBT Network and provide financial support to develop the network.
- The council liaises with Stonewall to become a member of the diversity champions programme.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – LGBT Conference Programme

Sandwell LGBT Conference Thursday 22nd October 2009, at the Public, West Bromwich

Programme

- 1.30 pm Introduction to the day (Alan Dean, SMBC LGBT Champion)
- 1.35pm Welcome to conference (Cllr. P. Hinton, Cabinet Member for Improvement and Equality)
- 1.40pm Key note speech by Derek Munn from Stonewall
- 2.10pm Presentation from West Midlands Police on Policing LGBT communities and LGBT staff network (PC Neil Jones from the Rainbow Trust)
- 2.30pm Presentation from Healthy Gay Life by Nigel Burbidge
- 2.50pm Refreshment Break
- 3.05pm Workshop sessions
- 4.00pm Presentation from Sandwell MBC's Registrars Lindsey Rogers and Paul Sheldon
- 4.10pm Presentation by members of the shOUT group on experiences and issues faced as they move into adulthood
- 4.25pm Summing up and way forward (Alan Dean)
- 4.30pm Close

Appendix 2 – Biographies of Speakers

Alan Dean - Head of Health & Wellbeing - Council Champion for Sexual Orientation

Alan is a Social Worker by professional training and has worked in Sandwell in a range of management roles since 1985. Alan is currently the Head of Health and Wellbeing for the Council and the PCT. He is responsible for the strategies and services, which improve Partnership working to tackle health & wellbeing, inequalities and poverty in Sandwell.

Councilor P Hinton - Cabinet Member for Improvement & Equality

Pauline has been a councillor for 24 years in Sandwell representing the Langley area. Currently she is Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Improvement and Equality.

Derek Munn - Director of Public Affairs

Derek is Stonewall's Director of Public Affairs, a role embracing parliamentary and government relations, research, policy, the organisation's information service and work in the education field.

Before joining Stonewall, Derek was Special Adviser to the First Minister of Scotland. Derek advised the First Minister on a range of policy areas including health, the environment, Europe, culture and sport. Prior to this role in government he held influential positions in the Scottish Parliament and a political party.

Earlier in his career Derek ran the research and training programmes of the Scottish Council for single homeless and was President of the National Union of Students Scotland. He has extensive voluntary experience including chairing the board of a housing association.

PC Neil Jones

Neil is a Police Officer for the West Midlands Police and is a committee member of the Rainbow Network (West Midlands Police LGBT group). His role is as a full time trainer in Wednesbury. His role in Rainbow is as the Social Secretary organising events such as Birmingham Pride.

Also in his role he helps with internal training on LGBT issues for new recruits and also helps with Police recruitment. He is also a

first contact advisor helping members of staff within the organisation who are having problems or need advice.

Sitting on the committee for Rainbow Network, Neil helps with research and organisational decisions on policies and procedures, under reporting of homophobic crime and also helps with research into crime and crime prevention within the LGBT community.

Nigel Burbidge - Healthy Gay Life Manager

Nigel Burbidge has been involved in the HIV sector since 1987, then based in Leicester and subsequently worked for the Aled Richards Trust/Terrence Higgins Trust, in Bristol until 2000. He is currently the manager of Healthy Gay Life (HGL), a HIV prevention service for gay and bisexual men in Birmingham. The service is part of Heart of Birmingham Teaching PCT's Sexual Health Directorate. In the time Nigel has been in post he has developed a number of new services for HGL including a Sexual Health Clinic, opening up of the Counseling Service to lesbian and bisexual women and overseen the development of Oral HIV/Syphilis testing at Birmingham Pride. Nigel is also the Statutory Organisation Co-Chair of the Birmingham HIV Reference Forum. He also acted up as Head of Sexual Health Service for a period of time in 2007

Paul Sheldon - Registration Service Manager

Paul has worked within the Registration Service for over 30 years, in various roles, firstly at Birmingham and latterly at Sandwell, where he is part of a team of 16 staff. He has managed the service since 2004, overseeing the introduction of citizenship ceremonies, civil partnerships and more recently, the Nationality Checking Service

Lindsey Rogers - Government Services Manager

Lindsey works with 72 (challenging) Councillors within Sandwell MBC, providing along with a team of approx 20 staff, a range of support services including secretarial, information technology, training and development and constituency support including managing casework. Her role has recently expanded to take on greater divisional responsibilities including finance and equalities.

Before joining Sandwell, Lindsey worked in organisational development at Wolverhampton University, various local authorities and within the private sector for Nationwide Building Society, delivering to staff and Councillors, women's leadership

programmes, management development initiatives and coaching and mentoring programmes. A lively interest in politics led her to the current exciting position.

Sarah Clews - Senior Youth Officer for all LGBT work – shOUT Steering group and the Inside Out Provision

I am also the officer responsible for working with Looked After Youth People, I have been employed by Sandwell for twelve years.

Stuart Payne - Senior Youth Worker for shOUT Steering Group

I have been working in Sandwell on LGBT Work for the past two years.

Appendix 3 - LGBT Workshop Discussions

LGBT Engagement

1. What are the opportunities or barriers that exist to engagement with LGBT communities in Sandwell?

Barriers:

- Identify communities
- Communication with communities – ways on how to get in touch, get feedback.
- People reluctant to come forward as LGBT – an invisible community. Not aware of who we are dealing with – then maybe could tailor services
- People are scared/fear of approaching
- Lack of knowledge/training on what is there.
- No obvious LGBT community
- Lack of LGBT identified space (drop-ins/commercial vehicles)
- Separate and segmented culture/geography. Each have own culture – customs, perceptions, values, small town mentality, homophobic.
- Education
- Lack of infrastructure
- Lack of visibility
- Need to have somewhere for LGBT people to go (e.g. gay nightclub) as people go out of borough
- Increase in hate crime but could plan to deal with this

Opportunities:

- Have to be more proactive in understanding what services there are. How we work in partnership in a meaningful way
- Prioritising what we need to do? Is it on the agenda?

- Having a relationship and empowering communities in taking a lead.
- More difficult in Sandwell as not a city like Birmingham. No central point in Sandwell – increasing difficulty.
- Promote LGBT in teams and then communities
- Look to signpost people – but no organisation in Sandwell that people feel they can advise people to
- Need to give training – but money arisen. So services not changed.
- Websites should have more information available on what there is in Sandwell. All services in Sandwell could be listed, this to be signposted.
- Look at in voluntary service, developing champions in LGBT.
- Not a comfortable situation for people to feel open about discussing issues.
- Have one named person about who to contact
- If budgets are limited, have one elective representative to cascade information to everyone
- Lots of derelict buildings – should utilise them
- Utilising the public!
- Monitoring should be done

2. What forums exist in Sandwell and what is currently good practice that people are aware of?

- SHOUT – youth provisions
- No forum to publicise rape support services
- Magazines of community LGBT IS Birmingham and Wolverhampton but not in Sandwell.
- No good practice for deaf LGBT people
- There does not appear to be much in Sandwell. Stigma and negativity record as the worst in this areas. Questioned why this is? Maybe money should be put in to do research.
- A lot of things in Sandwell are hidden – old fashioned views
- Nothing changed in over 50 years
- Solutions – each makes an effort. Working in partnership. How do we capture information? And do we share it with

other people?

- Collate statistics with others
- Need to understand monitoring information, how do we make use of information that is collected?
- Person's sexual orientation is captured on some forms but not on others
- Need to set up an LGBT network. People work together and create a group
- Need to find what are LGBT priorities i.e. healthcare, homophobic bullying, schools etc.
- Forum held in September. Follow up will be done in November/December.
- One forum in process
- One meeting has taken place so far, facebook group.
- Could this be promoted through Council routes? To make use of networks?
- Utilise community development workers, which many organisations have
- Work in partnership with neighbouring boroughs/cities. Also 3rd Sector
- Best practice from non LGBT forums – knowing your communities – local knowledge
- Forums identify passionate people, need them for starting point

3. What do we need to do in Sandwell so that we can engage with LGBT communities?

- Acceptance – to learn, understand and tolerate each other. To accept difference. Unconditional positive regard. Training and raising people's awareness
- Empowerment/confidence – to approach any services - . Make service more accessible. Schools to provide training – more input with children
- Community venue – for people to get together – drop in centre
- Feel proud of who you are
- Sharing information so that everyone gets the message, promoting equality.
- Have gay pride in Sandwell – which will give Sandwell LGBT people confidence
- Peer mentoring who were seen as socially accepting groups like LGBT and Shout groups

- Monitoring e.g. at job interviews
 - i. People feeling comfortable in what you can ask on monitoring forms
 - ii. Stockport as example
 - iii. Sensitive subject/ people think it may affect service provision
 - iv. Anonymous survey of council employers?

- Somewhere to go
 - i. Social event at public, coffee morning
 - ii. Led jointly by LGBT and non LGBT people
 - iii. Related to alcohol?
 - iv. Use facebook or text
 - v. Buildings must be cheap due to economic climate
 - vi. Utilise empty shop scheme
 - vii. Sense of ownership/cultural identify.
 - viii. People need to feel safe
 - ix. Have more LGBT people at the top
 - x. Financial investment in LGBT communities

- Telephone/live helpline
 - i. Counselling, support, signposting

2. How do we identify or get people to come forward who are LGBT?

- Need to go beyond looking at sexuality. Needs an holistic way of working i.e. professionals-jobs etc.
- Social networking
- Utilise straight/mainstream publications

- Gay pages on Council website – link into other websites, all members of the LSP
- Find motivated LGBT people to help/lead to push forward agenda
- Needs financial input
- Ownership should lie with everyone
- Ensure non LGBT people aren't/don't feel excluded.

LGBT Staff Groups

1. Identify current best practice and which organisations have LGBT staff groups.

The group identified Birmingham City Council and Manchester council as having well developed LGBT staff groups.

Other organisations who are considering developing LGBT staff groups:

- Mental Health Foundation trust – LBGT issues are currently on the mental health agenda. Consideration is being given to the LGBT training.
- Sandwell Homes – involved with LGBT campaigns.
- Outreach worker (Carl Needham) provides support to organisations on LGBT groups.
- PCT looking at LGBT issues.
- Terrance Higgins – provide LGBT training, particularly around assertiveness training.

Best Practice

It would be useful to collect data of LGBT people, but appreciate there are sensitivity issues around doing this.

May be worth considering linking in with the police as they are ahead in terms of LGBT in organisations.

2. What are the issues/barriers to setting up LGBT staff groups?

- People may not feel comfortable.
- There may not be enough visible support from an organisation. Organisations need to promote their support of LGBT.
- Need to create a safe environment where people feel safe/comfortable to be part of a group/out of work.

- Barriers may be reduced if people were educated better. Organisation has to take responsibility, it's not just about LGBT people driving LGBT issues forward.
- Line managers need to be trained/clued up on LGBT issues.
- If LGBT groups are set up, then they need to be clear on the purpose/remit.

• What support/information is in existence to help organisations establish LGBT staff groups?

- LGBT Wolverhampton – Terrance Higgins. This document makes reference to the other places that have well developed LGBT networks.
- It would be useful to have a database of people that can help out/provide information.
- Awareness is important.
- Need to ask staff if they want an LGBT group:
 - What do they want/need?
 - Needs top level management support.

4. What can be done to support and strengthen existing LGBT staff groups? Is there a need for a Sandwell wide forum/group?

- A borough wide forum would be useful but we need to identify purpose.
- Each organisation is unique and each equality strand is unique.
- May be useful to have an organisation staff group and borough wide one too. If staff are not comfortable going to their organisational LGBT group they can have anonymity at the borough forum.
- Small groups can be fed into larger groups.
- There should be a top level government framework.
- SMBC needs to look at how it can influence other areas.

5. Is there a need for all partner organisations to have staff groups?

- The answer to this question depends upon the constitution of the group. We need to establish whether staff want a group, some people may not want one. There are also resource implications. One person suggested it might be

worth setting up a Facebook Forum, where we could list LGBT friendly businesses, places to go for LGBT community etc.

- I may be worth developing an action working group – a Sandwell wide group that has LGBT representatives, housing reps, police and PCT reps – people that can make an impact. Sandwell Partnership needs to get people involved.
- We also need to make sure that the laws to protect LGBT communities are fully implemented e.g. discrimination prevention.
- An LGBT wider group could challenge organisations that do not take LGBT issues on board.

6. List your three priority actions/issues

- Event for LGBT people in Sandwell. This would be a good platform to advertise/people to offer support and to gauge opinions. This would also provide the opportunity to launch the organisation's Partnership LGBT group.
- Create a 'How to set up an LGBT group' toolkit.
- Creating a 'safe' environment is important. Develop a toolkit to create a 'safe' environment. Put the LGBY policy in display cabinets/on walls etc.. to demonstrate the organisation's support etc.
- Develop a training package for employers to raise awareness of LGBT issues.
- Develop a database, booklets/guides to signpost people to LGBT information.

LGBT Service Provision

1. How do we identify what services are of concern to LGBT communities?

- Engaging LGBT Community in Strategic Housing Forum
- No specific LGBT Housing Strategy
- Need to talk to local people – consultation
- Creating conditions for consultations to happen
- Perceptions of people/places

- Using commissioning power to influence/raise awareness
- Cross Partner Forum
- No 'scene' but need networks

Ideas – resources – funding for LGBT involvement – engage via Sandwell website.

- A place to be safe to socialise
- Able to be who you are wherever you are.
- Strategic Housing Forum – ensure LGBT representation
- Fair allocations policy for housing. Takes account of LGBT issues
- Avoid ghettoisation
- Need to take account of the 'character' of the area
- Who can LGBT people talk to about problems? – where is the voluntary sector?
- Need to do something to encourage the LGBT community in Sandwell to engage in consultation
- Use commissioning/grant support framework to encourage community e.g. Agewell, advocacy etc.
- Equality monitoring should include sexuality and civil partnerships – explanation of why we are collecting data.
- Sign up to Stonewell Diversity Champions – sets example, leads to encourage local business.

2. What intelligence or information do we have that points us to what services we should focus on?

- Need to review what we record and develop in light of LGBT issues.

3. What are the current service areas of concern and what are likely to be the top 5 areas?

- Places where people know they are safe – scene?
- All environments approachable?
- Training needs – for staff/workforce
- Need not to set up services in 'silos'

- Men's perceived as 'no-go' – intolerance.
- Making all services friendly and welcoming
- Version of 'safe places' scheme LGBT
- Address distrust of agencies could be achieved by effective communication strategy
- Enable people to feel and be safe in their communities and addressing bullying/violence
- Enable Sandwell to be a great place to live for all
- Address discrimination through zero tolerance/empathy
- Need to know what LGBT community wants

LGBT Older People

1. Identify what are the issues for LGBT older people that impact on their quality of life?

- Difference between older and younger.
- Alone, isolated in a 'straight' service – at home or in residential care. Loneliness. This is made worse by disability e.g. hearing loss, mobility problems.
- Fear of crime and ASB
- Someone to talk to about concerns
- Training and awareness of staff – diversity
- Support network
- Places to go that are gay friendly but not young orientated
- Sandwell has nowhere
- Greater social networks – could the Council support this?
- Health and disability can affect your choices even more e.g. getting out to Birmingham
- Public attitudes – making Sandwell feel more gay friendly
- 'The shadow of Birmingham'

- Generational experiences are different for older people
- Respect and dignity from staff

2. Which services in Sandwell do we need to look at that currently do not address the needs of LGBT older people?

- Look at good practice elsewhere via today's networks of support.
- Raise awareness amongst staff in health and social care – a key diversity issues (use social care guidance just produced and NHS guidance)
- Support staff who are LGBT – use police model to reach people and develop services.
- Build trust
- Personalised care needs to be informed and sensitive to LGBT
- NHS and social care policy on next of kin etc. (PALS)
- Complaints – feeling able to speak out

3. Which of the issues identified should be out top 3 priorities?

- Staff - training and awareness – changing attitudes and developing support networks.
- Diversity champions
- Better social networks – making Sandwell feel more gay friendly (older LGBT a 'niche' for Sandwell? The Public? (discreet)

LGBT Health

1. What are the health service issues for LGBT communities in Sandwell?

- Homophobic bullying addressed in schools. Prevention. Need more education to prevent bullying. Maybe consider school drop-ins, counselling, more awareness for professionals (teachers, learning mentors, school nurses).
- Education is required for parents and support services for young people
- Ability to talk in confidence
- Support mechanism for LGBT.
- Lesbians have health screening (LGBT health profession website).
- No LGBT counselling service, only mainstream.
- Need an opposition? for LGBT within the mainstream which is advertised with the mainstream literature.
- Isolation - User groups – getting representation on groups / services user participation
- Layers of discrimination / Multiple discrimination – poor sexual health and poor mental health
- Access - Clear communication, clear publicity, appropriate marketing, connexions, G.P's, Childline
- Access - Clear information - Who is service for? What do they do? Need to promote in the community
- Peer led talks - Facebook and internet; text messaging
- Breaking down gender roles - Children's education and Staff education

2. Which of these are priorities? Please identify the top 3.

- Service providers on board with the LGBT issues. To be welcoming and supportive. Confidentiality.
- Appropriate training for counsellors across the 7 equality strands (Mental Health).
- A focus on homophobic bullying prevention will provide good mental health outcomes for the LGBT communities in Sandwell.

Top 3 identified by other group:

- Bullying
- Access to services – particularly early access for prevention
- Mental and emotional health - isolation, self harm and substance misuse

3. What do we need to make sure that LGBT people can communicate their concerns/issues around health services?

- Young people back as mystery shoppers who report back on what they thought about the services.
- Effective consultation with the LGBT community.
- Build upon the young people that we have currently – use as a springboard to engage the community.
- Utilisation of the internet
- More accessible and confidential services – budget/resource implications?

Asking the question and identifying:

- Safe environment
- What are our issues
- Discover / identify
- Voice and choice
- Patient groups
- User involvement
- Training - Champions 'training the trainer'
- Encouraging feedback from service users in different ways eg Surveys, Websites, Texting suggesting improvements
- Prioritising funding - Review of mainstream services, Specialist services
- Ensuring organisations work together

- Offer better confidentiality - prevent services from 'labelling', no stereo types
- Freedom to make enquiry without being labelled

Holistic service –

- Challenge and enhance professional competencies and ensure LGBT issues / awareness is included
- LGBT should be included within wider cultural competence
- Equality bill gives us a great opportunity
- Inclusion around same-sex issues challenging mainstream services

Pink Pound/Economic Impact of LGBT people in Sandwell

1. What are the opportunities for Sandwell to encourage LGBT people to spend their leisure and social time in Sandwell?

- Need to recognise that individual safety and a safe environment is important for LGBT people
- Recognise there are possible opportunities but these might be limited.

2. How can we encourage LGBT people to establish business in Sandwell?

- This is not necessarily a LGBT issue; business people are business people and will take opportunities where they present themselves.
- Specific business that target LGBT people will operate where there is a client base or where people are likely to go.
- Creating a welcoming and a safe atmosphere

3. What should Sandwell's role be in relation to Birmingham's and Wolverhampton's gay scene?

- Accept that LGBT people from Sandwell will travel to these areas., as there is an established scene, for social and leisure pursuits.
- Accept that at the moment Sandwell cannot compete with Birmingham given its facilities and established infrastructure for LGBT people.
- Sandwell should work on having events that will or might attract LGBT people. A particular opportunity is using the Public for such events.
- Safety is an issue generally in West Bromwich

4. Which of the issues identified should be our top 3 priorities?

- Personal safety and a safe environment was important, particularly for West Bromwich
- Should work on having events that will encourage or attract LGBT people, including at the Public

Appendix 4 - Feedback Evaluation

A total of 44 completed forms were returned at the end of the session

Did you find the venue convenient, comfortable and helpful?

Excellent Good Average Poor

What did you feel about today?

Excellent Good Average Poor

There were some comments about the Pink Tank being too noisy for workshops

What parts of the session have you found most useful? (More than one box was ticked on most forms)

- Presentations by speakers 65
- Workshops 31
- Discussions 7
- Stalls / Information 8
- Talking to other people 1
- People's journey 1
- Statistical side 1

Is there anything we could do differently?

- Wider involvement of all staff and other agencies 3
- Future events involving all partners 3
- Longer event 2
- Need more space and better venue 2

Individual comments included:

More opportunity to ask speakers questions, hold less formal event, include personal experiences, community cohesion very important, colour hand outs for LGBT health issues presentation, give more notice, less power points, know about workshops in advance / programme, give packs out on arrival, more breaks, present info in more up beat manner, better organised seating.

Is there other information you would find helpful?

- Signposting and information on groups and services 4
- What is being done or what action has been taken to make changes? 5
- Lack of venues and provisions for LGBT people 2

Other individual comments were:

Suggestions of what organisations could do to help with issues, proper focus on Transsexual / Transgender, information to be read out (has visual impairment), data on Sandwell perspective, clinical perspective, email addresses on a database to send information to.

Are there any subjects you'd like us to focus on in future forums?

- Training and awareness raising of LGBT issues 4

Other individual comments were:

Trans issues, taking the work of today forward, reducing work place bullying, safety in the community, the older LGBT community, sexual health issues and solutions, past / present / future locally adults LGBT experiences , social groups and activities for LGBT adults

Are there any other comments you'd like to make?

Other individual comments were:

Make it a regular event, the Public was an excellent venue and well set out with tables rather than chairs in a row, would like to have taken part in other workshops, most useful, a monthly gay social event at the Public would be fantastic, I think this is a positive start, another successful event, well done, public a better venue than Coneygre, thank you for this opportunity, useful to have copy of all the workshop feedback and key actions, conference and aims very positive, would like to assist although I am not gay, very good afternoon, organise a gay pride in Sandwell and Invite service areas / organisations to promote their stands and volunteer to help with the event, How will this event be built upon? Historic background to LGBT not just recent times but since 1000yrs and in different culture, food needed improving and venue cold, excellent day.