Annex A

Draft Terms of Reference
Human Rights and Equalities Board (HREB)

The City of York Council (CYC) and the civil society-led York Human Rights City (YHRC) Steering Group established the Human Rights and Equalities Board in 2018. The Terms of Reference were reviewed and updated in x 2023 following the suspension of the Board in 2021 to reset the relationship between the City of York Council and YHRC Steering Group.

Purpose

To play a strategic leadership role in creating a 'human rights culture' in the city of York.

To advise CYC on steps required to ensure that Human Rights and Equalities are further embedded within CYC and to increase knowledge and awareness of human rights and equalities amongst elected members and officers across CYC.

To provide a focal point for interactions between CYC, civil society organisations and other key agencies in the city about Human Rights and Equalities issues.

The remit of HREB is to:

- Provide strategic direction for the Council's Human Rights and Equalities work.

- Consider issues raised in the York Human Rights City Indicator Report.

- Consider recommendations made through the Indicator Report and Community Voices projects.

- Review a sample of CYC's Human Rights and Equalities Analysis Tools to identify learning, areas for improvement and to recommend training as required.

- Receive the quarterly CYC Equalities report and make such recommendations as it considers helpful.

- Consider swiftly such current issues/systemic concerns as are deemed necessary by the Board, and to advise CYC accordingly.

- Develop task and finish groups to work on specific issues as identified and to advise the Board accordingly.

- Be cognisant of work being undertaken across the city that could contribute to the work of the Board.

- Consider any 'Declaration of Incompatibility' which is submitted from the YHRCN Steering Group, prepare commentary and guidance on its contents, and provide that commentary and guidance to the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Corporate Services, Climate Change, and Scrutiny Management Committee, either of whom may choose to refer the issue for consideration by scrutiny. In the event that both the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee do not, within a period two months, refer the declaration of incompatibility, and the associated commentary and guidance, for consideration by scrutiny, the Board may choose to refer the matter to all Group Leaders of the Council.

Membership

The Board will have a core membership drawn from:

- The York Human Rights City Network Steering Group
- York CVS
- North Yorkshire Police
- Higher York (to represent the student population)
- The Centre for Applied Human Rights (University of York)
- Business (e.g., York BID, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses)
- Health (to be drawn from Primary Care, Mental Health services and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust [TEWV])
- One City of York councillor from each of the political groups represented on the Council.

From time-to-time experts by lived experience, or profession, may be invited to meetings for specific items.

Efforts will also be made to ensure appropriate diversity of board members (including race and ethnicity to reflect the CYC Anti-Racism Action Plan).

Chair

The Board will be co-chaired by:

- the appropriate CYC Executive Member.
- an independent person who will be elected from the Board on an annual basis.

The co-Chairs will share equal rights and responsibilities for chairing the Board taking account of, and declaring, any Conflicts of Interest as they arise. Either of these co-Chairs can call a meeting of the Board.

Conflict of Interest

Each member is personally responsible for deciding whether they should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for them to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained if the CYC co-Chair (Executive Member) declares a conflict of interest, the Independent co-Chair will be expected to step in as Chair for that item/meeting, and vice versa.

Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly. At least one annual meeting will be held in public.

Meetings will be administered and supported by CYC, as a CYC board. Senior CYC Officers will also be available in an advisory capacity.

Agenda and minutes of the board to be published on the CYC website as a CYC board.

Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis.