

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Notes of a Meeting of the Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities held on Thursday 17th September 2009 at 6.00pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

PRESENT:

Representing the Borough Council:

Councillors D Harwood, J Legg, A Lovett, J Murphy, G Sandell, S Smeaton.

Representing People with Disabilities:

R Carroll, P French, G Henshaw, S Lowe, S Pomeroy, S Smith, T Smith, K Warner

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor A Clery-Fox & M Langwade (Councillor Lovett Substituting),
W Blades, R Cotton, J Darling, T Gilder, E West-Burnham

	ACTION
<p>1. <u>MINUTES</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 11th May 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>2. <u>MATTERS ARISING AND NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA</u></p> <p><u>(i) Royal National Institute for the Blind – REACT System</u></p> <p>The Chair reminded the Committee that they had previously received information on the above system which was to be used for the Pilgrimage trail in King's Lynn.</p> <p>He explained that the Committee had been offered the opportunity to visit the Royal National Institute for the Blind Headquarters in Peterborough to view their facilities.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to arrange a future visit for the Committee and would also provide an update on the installation of the REACT system at the next meeting.</p>	RP

<p><u>(ii) Visit to Sandringham House and Gardens</u></p> <p>The Chair explained that he was awaiting the final report on the Committee's visit to Sandringham House and Gardens from Allison Bingham, and once completed would hand deliver it to the House.</p> <p>He also informed the Committee that he would display the photos taken at the visit at the next meeting.</p> <p>He expressed his concern regarding negative press following the visit and explained that the Chief Executive had contacted them on this issue.</p> <p>It was suggested that a follow up press release be issued following publication of the final report to express how satisfied the Committee were with the facilities available.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>DH</p> <p>DH</p> <p>AB</p>
<p>3. <u>DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME</u></p> <p>This item had been deferred.</p>	
<p>4. <u>NEIGHBOURHOODS MANAGEMENT BOARD UPDATE</u></p> <p>Sue Lowe informed the Committee that Neighbourhood Management funding would run out in Spring 2010. Consultation was ongoing within the Community on what projects, previously funded by the Neighbourhood Management Board, should continue. Once projects were identified the Board would seek to obtain further funding.</p> <p>She explained that at the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Management Board work to prioritise current projects and identify which ones should continue would take place. Representatives of the Board were actively seeking funding opportunities to assist with continuation of Community projects.</p> <p>Genevieve Henshaw was Vice Chair of the Fairstead Neighbourhood Committee, which was a sub-committee of the Board. There were several other sub-Committees that reported directly to the Board and each one was responsible for managing their own budget.</p>	

<p>Sue Lowe felt it would be disappointing if community projects did not continue as many projects were now starting to engage the local community.</p> <p>The Chair suggested encouraging the Sub-Committees to self-fund by arranging fundraising events to support the continuation of community projects.</p>	
<p>5. <u>OPPORTUNITY AWARDS 2009</u></p> <p>The Secretary reminded the Committee that the Opportunity Awards Ceremony would take place on 15th October 2009 at 7.00pm in the Sandringham Suite at Lynnsport.</p> <p>Invitations for the event had been sent out to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominees and Nominators • Members of the Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities. • Cabinet Members • Management Team • Other interested organisations. <p>She informed the group that over twenty nominations had been received and judging took place in August. Awards would be made under the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Achievement in Sport – Group Achievement • Disabled Achievement in Sport – Individual Achievement • Carers Award • Young Carers Award • Award for Volunteering and Helping Others – Individual Award • Award for Volunteering and Helping Others – Group Award • Service Providers • Charity Work • Mayors Award 	
<p>6. <u>SECRETARY'S CORRESPONDENCE</u></p> <p><u>(i) Correspondence received regarding pavements in Hunstanton</u></p>	

The Chair explained that he had received an email from a Hunstanton resident regarding problems with dropped kerbs on Park Road, Hunstanton.

The Chair had passed on the correspondence to Norfolk County Council Highways who had carried out a site visit to the areas of concern and had agreed to add the repairs onto their schedule of works.

(ii) West Norfolk Online Access Guide

The Committee was informed that the West Norfolk Online Access Guide had been entered into the 2009 Local Government IT Excellence Award under the Customer Access and Service Transformation category. The Secretary agreed to keep the Committee informed on progress.

RP

(iii) Correspondence received from the Department of Work and Pensions

The Secretary reminded the Committee that previously they had written to the Department of Work and Pensions regarding the Early Day Motion 340 which called on the Government to resolve the issue of extending the higher rate component of Disability Living Allowance to blind people. The Government had now underlined its existing commitment to this important change by accepting John Robertson MP's amendment to the Welfare Reform Bill. The amendment, once introduced, would allow prescribed categories of severely sight impaired people to access the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance. The Bill was currently making its passage through the House of Lords.

(iv) Dropped kerbs to rear of Boots, King's Lynn

The Secretary reminded the Committee that at the meeting on 11th May 2009 members had raised issues regarding the state of the dropped kerb at the drop off point to the rear of Boots, King's Lynn. The Secretary had passed these comments onto Norfolk County Council's Highways Department who agreed to investigate next time they were in the area to see if anything could be done to improve the facility.

<p><u>(v) The Big Lottery Fund</u></p> <p>The Secretary had been passed correspondence regarding The Big Lottery Fund event which would take place on 24th September 2009 in Norwich.</p> <p>The event would include a presentation and workshop and an opportunity for organisations to discuss projects which could potentially be funded by The Big Lottery Fund.</p> <p>The Big Lottery Fund wanted to spend money in Norfolk for its 'Awards for All Programme' and was awarding grants ranging from £300 to £10,000 for projects which met their criteria.</p> <p>Further information and a booking form for the event was available from the Secretary or by visiting The Big Lottery Fund website.</p>	
<p>7. <u>DISABILITY ISSUES CORRESPONDENCE</u></p> <p><u>(i) Tactile paving at North Lynn</u></p> <p>Trevor Smith enquired if tactile paving should be sloped rather than a kerb drop, as he was aware of an area of tactile paving at North Lynn Industrial Estate, opposite the Dentist Surgery, where there was a drop in the kerb.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to investigate and report back to the Committee.</p>	RP
<p>8. <u>FUTURE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES</u></p> <p><u>(i) Visit to RSPB Titchwell</u></p> <p>The Secretary informed the Committee that RSPB Titchwell had been in contact as they required a local group of disabled people to go around the reserve and make recommendations on the newly installed hide and designs for further development.</p> <p>The visit had been scheduled for 23rd September at 1pm and members of the Committee who would like to attend were to contact the Secretary as soon as possible.</p>	ALL

<p>9. <u>ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR</u></p> <p>AGREED: That Trevor Smith be elected as Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities for the period 2009/2011.</p>	
<p>10. <u>FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING UPDATE</u></p> <p>Sylvia Pomeroy informed the Committee that disabled adaptations carried out by Freebridge Community Housing were running ahead of schedule. Sufficient budget was available to see through the remaining adaptations for the current financial year.</p> <p>The Chair commented that the Borough Council's disabled facilities grants also had sufficient budget for the current financial year and that the waiting list had been dramatically reduced following the introduction of changes in the way the grants were delivered. It was anticipated that the waiting list for grants would continue to decrease in the next twelve months.</p> <p>Sylvia Pomeroy informed the Committee that the Tenants of West Norfolk (TOWN) showcase would take place in the Corn Exchange on 21st September 2009. This would be followed by the TOWN Annual General Meeting, where it was hoped that more tenants would become shareholders.</p> <p>In response to a question from Pat French, Sylvia Pomeroy confirmed that Freebridge Community Housing was responsible for maintaining the alleyways between their properties, however if the property had been sold it would be the responsibility of the owner. She agreed to investigate if Spring Sedge, Marsh Lane was owned by Freebridge Community Housing and report back to Pat French.</p>	SP
<p>11. <u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <p><u>(i) RADAR Keys</u></p> <p>Genevieve Henshaw informed the Committee that she had been approached by a customer who was unable to access the disabled toilet at Swaffham bus station with a RADAR key because an additional bolt had been installed to lock the toilet</p>	

after opening hours.

The Secretary agreed to raise the issue with Breckland District Council. RP

(ii) Toilet block at Austin Street Car Park

Sylvia Pomeroy queried if the toilet block at Austin Street Car Park would ever reopen.

Councillor Lovett explained that the Borough Council had refurbished the toilet block, but as it kept getting vandalised, the Borough Council took the decision not to invest any further money in it.

Sylvia Pomeroy asked if it would be possible to just re-open the disabled toilet so that it could only be opened with a RADAR key.

The Secretary agreed to raise the issue with the Head of Leisure and Open Space. RP

(iii) Facilities in the Walks

Sue Lowe informed the Committee that she had been in contact with the Walks Manager, Sarah Moore regarding the installation of inclusive recreational facilities in the walks.

Funding was currently being sought for the installation of an outdoor gym, pentanque and parkour equipment.

Age Concern had surveyed members of the public on what facilities they would like to see in the Walks and the results of the survey had been passed onto The Walks Manager to submit as evidence with bids for funding.

Sue Lowe explained that the proposed facilities would be available for all members of the public and would be in view of The Walks Manager's Office and the Café so that it could be monitored when unsupervised activities were taking place.

She informed the Committee that she would contact Roger Partridge, The Sports Development Manager, to ascertain if any funding was available for a coach to carry out supervised

sessions.

Trevor Smith, who had previously contacted The Walks Manager regarding the provision of accessible sports facilities in The Walks, offered assistance with this project. Sue Lowe agreed to inform The Walks Manager that he was willing to assist.

SL

The Secretary agreed to contact the The Walks Manager to invite her to a future meeting to provide the Committee with an update on the above.

RP

(iv) Online Access Guide

In response to a question, The Chair explained that the Online Access Guide would be updated on an ad hoc basis.

Businesses in the guide and members of the public were able to contact Allison Bingham with comments and updates on facilities available. Allison Bingham would then conduct a site visit to ensure that the amendments required were accurate and then update the site as necessary.

Ruth Carroll informed the Committee that she was aware of an attraction within the access guide that had recently re-laid gravel over path ways making it difficult for people in wheelchairs to navigate.

The Secretary agreed to liaise with Allison Bingham regarding the above mentioned attraction.

RP/AB

(v) St James Swimming Pool

Trevor and Susan Smith reminded the Committee that they had previously raised issues regarding the accessible changing/shower cubicle at St James Pool.

They explained that they had recently been able to use a wheelchair cushion that had been provided in the cubicle which made it easier to change in the cubicle after showering.

Recently, however, the wheelchair cushion was unavailable, resulting in the initial problem returning.

<p>Trevor and Susan Smith commented that the problem had recently been made worse, as the shower head was blocked up meaning that the water shot out at all different angles instead of flowing straight down.</p> <p>Sylvia Pomeroy agreed that the accessible changing/shower cubicle was too small and was aware of problems with water not draining away quickly enough meaning that clothes got wet when trying to get dressed after a shower.</p> <p>Pat French informed the Committee that the changing room floors were often slippery when she had finished her swimming sessions on a Saturday evening as this is when the floors were cleaned by staff. She understood that the floors needed to be cleaned but wondered if this could be carried out at a different time.</p> <p>Susan Smith explained that she had recently used the accessible changing cubicle at Lynnsport and felt that this was a good example of what should be installed at St James Pool.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to contact the Head of Leisure and Public Space on these issues.</p>	RP
<p>12. <u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities would take place on Monday 16th November 2009 at 3.30pm in Meeting Rooms 1, 2 & 3, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.</p>	

The meeting closed at 7.25pm