

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 Monday 16th November 2009 at 2.30 in Meeting Rooms 1, 2 & 3, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

PRESENT:

Representing the Borough Council:

Councillors A Clery-Fox, M Langwade, J Legg and G Sandell

Representing People with Disabilities:

T Smith (Vice Chair in the Chair), A Bingham, W Blades, J Darling,
P French and S Smith

By invitation:

A Chu, S Moore

Apologies for absence were received from:

J Ellis, J Frary, T Gilder, G Henshaw, A Kenny, S Lowe.
Councillors D Harwood, J Murphy, S Smeaton.

	ACTION
<p>1. <u>APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR</u></p> <p>AGREED: That Councillor J Legg be appointed as Vice Chair for the meeting.</p>	
<p>2. <u>MINUTES</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by Trevor Smith (Vice Chair).</p>	
<p>3. <u>MATTERS ARISING AND NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA</u></p> <p><u>(i) Disability Equality Scheme (DES)</u></p> <p>Allison Bingham reminded the Committee that this item had been deferred from the previous meeting. The DES had now been considered by the Borough Council's Management Team and would be considered by the Community and Culture Panel, before being submitted to Cabinet in the New Year.</p>	

<p>She explained that a joint public consultation was being carried out with Norfolk County Council and that the DES was published as part of the Council's Equality Duty which places an obligation on public authorities to promote disability equality.</p> <p>Allison Bingham invited comments on the scheme.</p> <p>Councillor Langwade commented that it would be useful to include performance measures within the action plan.</p> <p>In response to a question, Allison Bingham explained that the Borough Council had made good progress on adhering to the Equality duty in comparison to some other Norfolk Authorities.</p> <p>Allison Bingham asked the Committee to send her any other comments on the DES by 18th December 2009, so that they could be incorporated prior to submission to the Community and Culture Panel in January 2010.</p>	All
<p>4. <u>UPDATE ON THE WALKS</u></p> <p>Sarah Moore, The Walks Manager provided the Committee with an update on future plans for The Walks.</p> <p>She reminded them that Sue Lowe had previously provided the Committee with information on the proposals for the installation of an outdoor green gym, petanque and parkour equipment.</p> <p>She explained that all equipment would be inclusive and available for all to use. Further work would be carried out to ensure that level access was available on the area and equipment would be chosen carefully to ensure it was accessible to all.</p> <p>Age Concern had assisted by carrying out research by surveying members of the public on what facilities they would like to see in The Walks and the results from this would be submitted with a bid proposal to Wren.</p> <p>Sarah Moore explained that the results of the bid would be known in March 2010.</p> <p>In response to a question, she explained that the equipment to be installed would be similar to that currently used in the green gym at</p>	

<p>Loke Road.</p> <p>Sarah Moore reminded the Committee that the area of The Walks proposed for development of sports facilities was set in a Grade II Registered Landscape, meaning she was limited on changes that could be made.</p> <p>In response to a question regarding security, she informed the Committee that these areas would be covered by CCTV and were also in close proximity to the management building.</p> <p>She also confirmed that the café in The Walks was usually open at weekends and school holidays.</p> <p>Susan Smith asked if any additional lighting could be installed in The Walks to cover the diagonal path running through the recreation field. Sarah Moore explained that other routes through The Walks were lit up, which could be used if someone did not feel comfortable walking across the field in the dark. She also explained that The Walks was covered by two Safer Neighbourhood Police Teams, meaning that there were regular Police patrols through the area.</p> <p>The Committee thanked Sarah Moore for her update and requested a further update following the results from the funding bid.</p>	
<p>5. <u>FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING UPDATE</u></p> <p>Sylvia Pomeroy informed the Committee that she had spoken to Jan Mitchell from Freebridge Community Housing, who had indicated that she would be prepared to come along to a future meeting of the Advisory Committee to provide an update on the disabled adaptations being carried out.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to contact Jan Mitchell to arrange this.</p> <p>On a separate note, Sylvia Pomeroy also explained that she thought it would be informative to invite representatives from the Lavender Hill Mob Theatre Company to a future meeting to receive an update on the work of the organisation. The Secretary agreed to investigate.</p>	<p>RP</p> <p>RP</p>
<p>6. <u>NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT BOARD UPDATE</u></p> <p>In the absence of Sue Lowe, Andy Chu agreed to provide an update on recent issues.</p>	

He reminded the Committee that at their previous meeting they heard that funding for Improving Neighbourhoods would run out in Spring 2010.

Andy Chu informed the Committee that a Service Review had been undertaken and considered by Cabinet and it had been agreed to continue funding the service for another three years. Budget was unknown at this stage and staffing levels would be reduced.

The Committee thanked Andy Chu for his update.

7. ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND – REACT SYSTEM

Allison Bingham reminded the Committee that it had been agreed for the REACT system to be installed in the pilgrimage trail in King's Lynn.

Following this, other areas had now expressed an interest in utilising this system, including tourism, conservation and possibly the Corn Exchange.

Allison Bingham had also been liaising with the Borough Council's Growth Point Team regarding using the technology at the bus station to provide real time bus scheduling information.

She informed the Committee that it was hoped the system would be up and running for the pilgrimage trail by next summer. Other areas would follow, subject to funding.

Allison Bingham had been engaging local groups to get their thoughts on the system and she had also scheduled visits to Royal National Institute for the Blind groups in West Norfolk.

She explained that the system could be programmed with six different languages, which were dependent on the key fob purchased.

Publicity for the system would take place through:

- The online Access Guide
- Pilgrimage trail leaflet
- Tourist Information Centres
- Inclusion in newsletters.

Allison Bingham agreed to keep the Committee informed of progress.	AB
<p>8. <u>OPPORTUNITY AWARDS 2009</u></p> <p>The Secretary reminded the Committee that this event had taken place on 15th October 2009. She sought feedback from the Committee on how they felt the event went and any suggestions on how the event could be improved in the future.</p> <p>Members of the Committee explained that they felt the event was a success, with some saying it was the best organised event so far. The Committee liked the informal atmosphere of the event.</p> <p>Additional feedback from the event could be emailed to rebecca.parker@west-norfolk.gov.uk.</p>	All
<p>9. <u>IMPROVING NEIGHBOURHOODS BOARD</u></p> <p>Andy Chu from the Improving Neighbourhoods Board team was present at the meeting and provided the Committee with an update on the work the team were doing for people with disabilities, specifically in the St Margaret's with St Nicholas Ward in King's Lynn.</p> <p>As part of the work, the Improving Neighbourhoods Team had organised a 'Give-it-a-go' event, which was to take place on 10th December 2009 from 1pm to 6pm at the King's Centre, Wellesley Street, King's Lynn. The main purpose of this event was to promote community cohesion and a wide range of service agencies would be in attendance.</p> <p>Events on the day included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table tennis with Mark Spinks • Carpet Bowls • Arts and Crafts • Nintendo Wii • Complimentary therapies • Croquet • Performances from the Lavender Hill Mob Theatre Company • Choir performance • Refreshments • Stalls • Gardening Club 	

<p>Andy Chu informed the Committee that West Norfolk Community Transport would run a minibus to and from the event, and further details would be available when publicity was sent out next week.</p> <p>Residents from the St Margaret's and St Nicholas ward had volunteered to assist with the distribution of leaflets to neighbouring wards</p> <p>The second project that the Improving Neighbourhoods Team was involved with, was to produce an information sheet which would be distributed along with the publicity for the 'Give-it-a-go' event. The information sheet would provide details of relevant service agencies and organisations which assisted in all matters relating to disability. He confirmed that the Borough Council's Advisory Committee and the Online Access Guide would have an advertisement in the information sheet.</p> <p>Anyone interested in attending the event should contact Andy Chu, Trainee Neighbourhood Support Worker, Improving Neighbourhoods on 07917 555663, or by emailing: andy.chu@west-norfolk.gov.uk.</p> <p>Finally, Andy Chu explained that the work his team was undertaking was not a duplication of the work of the Committee and hoped that both groups could work together in the future.</p> <p>The Secretary thanked Andy Chu for attending the meeting and asked that the Committee be kept informed of any other work the Improving Neighbourhoods Team were doing for people with disabilities.</p>	
<p>10. <u>FEEDBACK FROM VISIT TO RSPB TITCHWELL</u></p> <p>The Secretary invited feedback from those Committee Members who recently attended the visit to RSPB Titchwell to view proposals for future development.</p> <p>Pat French and Councillor Garry Sandell, who attended the visit feedback their comments to the Committee.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to submit their comments in writing to Allison Bingham who would use them to assist with preparing data for the online access guide.</p> <p>The Secretary explained that Paul Roney from RSPB Titchwell, had</p>	RP

<p>been invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss proposals for development of their site with Members of the Committee who were unable to attend the visit.</p>	
<p>11. <u>ESTABLISHMENT OF A VISITING WORKING GROUP</u></p> <p>Allison Bingham explained that discussions with the Chair had resulted in agreement that a Visiting Working Group be established to conduct visits to places that would be included in the online access guide.</p> <p>She explained that the role of the working group would be to visit specific places and produce a report on the facilities available, which would subsequently be used to inform the online access guide.</p> <p>She gave examples to the Committee of the type of attractions that had requested to go on the Online Access Guide. All of the attractions would need to be visited before their details could be published.</p> <p>Allison Bingham agreed to get Committee Members details from the Secretary, she could then call on Members who perhaps lived closest to the attraction in question to see if they were able to visit. The Members visiting the attraction would need to report back to Allison Bingham on the facilities available.</p> <p>Allison Bingham agreed to contact the members of the group as necessary.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>AB</p>
<p>12. <u>SECRETARY'S CORRESPONDENCE</u></p> <p><u>(i) Toilet block at Austin Street Car Park</u></p> <p>At the previous meeting members raised concern regarding the closure of the toilets at Austin Street.</p> <p>The Secretary confirmed that she had spoken to the Executive Director, Leisure and Public Space who stated that the toilets had been closed for approximately two years and would not reopen. They would be demolished when any new development took place on the site.</p> <p><u>(ii) Toilets at Swaffham Bus Station</u></p> <p>At the last meeting Genene Henshaw had informed the Committee</p>	

that she had been approached by someone 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.

As Swaffham was outside the Borough's area the Secretary had contacted Breckland District Council, who responded that they had been liaising with Swaffham Town Council, who were responsible for the toilets, on this issue. They had reported that in 2008 a decision was made to close the disabled toilets after hours, in the same way that they close the other toilets. This was because the key kept getting in the hands of those who were not disabled and it became apparent that it was being used for homeless people to sleep in through the night.

Breckland District Council stated that there was no statutory requirement for disabled toilets to be open for longer hours than the other public toilets and the current opening times were from 6am to 6pm.

(iii) St James' Pool

The Secretary reminded the Committee that at their last meeting several issues were raised regarding facilities at St James' Pool.

She confirmed that she had spoken to Lucy Mellish, Operational Manager at St James' Pool who indicated that she would be more than willing to attend a future of the Committee if necessary and also said that users should feel free to contact her directly with any issues so that they could be resolved quickly.

She had responded to the issues raised at the previous meeting as follows:

- The accessible shower was supposed to spray wider to ensure that if a user is in a wheelchair they would get the benefit of the water. St James Pool offered two types of shower in the accessible shower, with a handle to switch between the two heads. One was a fixed head and the other removable.
- The seat pad that Mr and Mrs Smith had been able to use occasionally to assist with changing was from a previous member of staff's wheelchair, which she used before the replacement hoist chair seat was purchased following an earlier request from Mrs Smith. If St James' Pool had

<p>been aware that she still required the seat pad then they would have provided it for her use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regards to issues relating to the drainage of water, the only people that St James' Pool were aware of in the sessions who used the disabled changing room were Mr and Mrs Smith. As this was designed as a wet room in a swimming pool, St James Pool feel unsure of what could be done to prevent this. • Regarding the cleaning of the floors, St James' Pool had agreed to look at cleaning the floors in sections to avoid slippery surfaces. <p>Allison Bingham confirmed that she was liaising directly with Lucy Mellish regarding the accessible shower and agreed to keep the Committee updated on progress.</p> <p><u>(iv) Correspondence received from Able Community Care</u></p> <p>The Secretary informed the Committee that she had received correspondence from Angela Gifford from Able Community Care, who were based in Norwich, outlining the services they provided.</p> <p>The Secretary asked the Committee if they had any objections to inviting representatives from Able Community Care to the next meeting of the Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities so that she could provide them with information on the work of the organisation.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>RP</p>
<p>13. <u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <p><u>(i) Accessible toilet at Sainsburys, King's Lynn</u></p> <p>Sylvia Pomeroy explained that she was disappointed with the state of the disabled toilets outside Sainsburys.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to draw this to the attention of the Executive Director, Leisure and Public Space.</p> <p><u>(ii) Accessible toilet at Gaywood Library</u></p> <p>Sylvia Pomeroy commented that the accessible toilet at Gaywood Library was often cluttered making it difficult to access.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to pass on these concerns to Norfolk County</p>	<p>RP</p> <p>RP</p>

<p>Council.</p> <p><u>(iii) Sandringham House and Gardens</u></p> <p>Allison Bingham informed the Committee that their report, following their visit, had now been delivered to Sandringham House, who were pleased with the report and would look at it thoroughly and implement changes where appropriate.</p> <p><u>(iv) Online Access Guide</u></p> <p>Allison Bingham asked the Committee to give consideration to taking responsibility for the Online Access Guide. She also asked that consideration be given to the prospect of charging businesses for being included on the guide.</p> <p>This item would be included on the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion.</p> <p><u>(v) Majestic Theatre, King's Lynn</u></p> <p>Kathy Warner informed the Committee that only one of the screens at the Majestic Cinema was accessible.</p> <p>She explained that she was aware of someone in a wheelchair who was turned away from the cinema as they could not access the theatre on which the film they wanted to watch was being played in.</p> <p>The Secretary agreed to investigate.</p> <p><u>(vi) Funding issues</u></p> <p>The Committee was informed that recent media coverage detailed that Mark Spinks, sports coach, would have to cease his work with disabled people due to lack of funding.</p> <p>Councillor Clery-Fox indicated that this situation may have changed since the media coverage. The Secretary agreed to clarify the situation.</p> <p><u>(v) Jill Darling</u></p> <p>Jill Darling introduced herself to those present. Jill suffered from Lupus. She explained that there was not a group to represent Lupus</p>	<p>All</p> <p>RP</p> <p>RP</p> <p>RP</p>
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<p>sufferers in King's Lynn and the Norwich wide group may disband due to lack of interest.</p> <p>She wanted to raise awareness of this condition and the Secretary explained that she could raise any issues through the Advisory Committee Meetings. She also explained that the meeting was a public meeting so any other representatives could attend if necessary.</p> <p><u>(vi) Leisure Card</u></p> <p>Trevor Smith informed the Committee that he had recently been aware that a Carer went free at St James' Pool if they had a leisure card and were accompanying someone who needed care.</p> <p><u>(v) King's Lynn Equipment Centre – Open Day</u></p> <p>The Committee were informed that King's Lynn Equipment Centre would be holding an open day on 20th November 2009 from 11am to 3pm at the centre at 3 North Lynn Business Village, Bergen Way, King's Lynn.</p> <p>For further information please contact 01603 629553 or email: office@nnab.co.uk.</p>	
<p>14. <u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The Vice Chair wished the Committee a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.</p> <p>The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities would take place on Wednesday 13th January 2010 at 2.30pm in Meeting Rooms 1, 2 & 3, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.</p>	

The meeting closed at 4.05pm