

Time Commenced: 18:30

Time Finished: 20:30

DISABLED PEOPLE'S DIVERSITY FORUM 12 MAY 2011

Present: Councillor Turner

Representing Groups

Judi Bateman	Derbyshire Autism Services Group
Janet Warner	Derby Shopmobility
Edith Storer	East Midlands Arthritis Self Help
Roy Jones	CamTAD
Paul Richards	Arriva Buses
Noel Walsh	Derby Association for the Blind
Marjorie McDonald	Rethink
Liz Freeman	Disability Direct
Steve Rigby	Disability Direct
Sarah Fletcher	DCIL
Phil Binding	Mental Health Action Group/Changing Minds
Lynn Gilbey	TRAQ – Derby Homes
Nancy Pountain	DDN/Derby Access Group
Andy Findlay	Muscular Dystrophy Campaign

Representing Derby City Council

Malcolm Price	Policy Strategy Manager – Waste Management
Fran Renwick	Assistant Head of Library Services, Operations and Community
Andy Morgan	Landscape & Development Officer, Parks
Dawn Dagley	Parks Officer Community
Perveez Sadiq	Service Director – Putting People First
Ann Webster	Lead on Equality and Diversity
Pam Thompson	Engagement Officer – Diverse Communities
Gavin Thompson	Head of Policy, Research and Engagement
Christine Collingwood	Consultation and Engagement Manager
Jude King	Minute Taker

16/11 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Moira Findlay, Pat Fletcher, Ian Gosling, Marta Hancock, Alison Hicking and Richard Williams.

17/11 Introductions

In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair Judi Bateman welcomed everyone to the meeting and a round of introductions took place.

Pam Thompson attended the meeting in place of Richard Talaska, Engagement Officer – Adults and Health.

18/11 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

19/11 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

A flyer was circulated from Derbyshire Constabulary and Safer Derbyshire publicising two telephone numbers for people to report suspected threats from terrorism or other violent extremism. These are Derbyshire Constabulary 0345 123 3333 or the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321. This does not include hate crime or racism for which there are separate special reporting mechanisms although all can be directed in the first instance to the Constabulary number.

20/11 Minutes of meeting of 17 March 2011

These were agreed as an accurate record, subject to the correction that Sarah Fletcher and Lynne Gilbey had both forwarded their apologies.

21/11 Updates from Previous Meeting

14/11 Refuse Collection Date Review

The meeting welcomed Malcolm Price, Policy Strategy manager – Waste Management, to respond to concerns about the forthcoming collection date changes.

A new zone system is being introduced in an effort to increase efficiency and cost-savings and also bring some new properties into the recycling scheme. There will no longer be any bin collections on Monday which is why a new schedule is required.

The changes will be effective from Monday 6 June and there have been large notice boards and lamppost banners publicising this for some time. Information packs including new calendars are currently being delivered to all households in Derby explaining the changes which will result in altered collection days/times and recycling weeks in some areas. Comprehensive information is now also available on Derby City Council website www.derby.gov.uk with a look-up facility to enter an address to find out the collection day for individual streets. However it was acknowledged that not everyone has access to a computer.

The main method of communication will be through the post and Malcolm stressed the importance of checking mail over the next few weeks. There will also be details in the next edition of Your Derby. Some concerns were voiced about adequate information for those who are visually impaired. It was noted that an officer has been liaising with Sight Support Derbyshire to explore alternative communication channels.

An exemption service will still be available for those who need assistance although it was acknowledged this is an area of weakness. Malcolm urged everyone to report any problems so that these can be addressed and rectified. It was also recommended that attention be given to alerting bin men to potential problems for people with hearing difficulties and the Deaf Forum, CamTAD or DAB could possibly be approached to assist with this.

It is appreciated that with around 105,000 households there will inevitably be some teething problems. However, every effort is being made to ensure the service runs smoothly over the changeover period. Arrangements are already in place to increase the frequency of black bin collections in affected areas for the first couple of weeks until the normal alternating week pattern is established. Concerns were expressed about the possibility of needing to leave three bins out on the same day and the problems caused to wheelchair users by restricted pavement space. Malcolm noted that this was only likely to happen during the first two weeks but was requested to ask the bin men to make sure they are careful when replacing emptied bins to ensure any access restrictions are limited to the minimum. There is also a commitment to return within two working days to collect any bins and bags which have been missed if this is the fault of the Council.

Any individual problems with the new service should be raised directly with Streetpride on 0333 200 6981 or streetpride@derby.gov.uk. The new system should be embedded in place by the date of the next meeting when any general access issues can be discussed.

The meeting thanked Malcolm Price for his input.

30/10 Premises in the City Centre and Cathedral Quarter Access

The letter which Ann Webster and Councillor Hird have drafted has not yet been sent. Disability Direct offered to do some work but this has not been taken up. Ann also questioned John Forkin, Managing Director of Marketing Derby, at the recent Derby City Council Employee Briefings. The Council gave a commitment to do all it can to encourage businesses in the Cathedral Quarter to do all they can to provide access for disabled people.

The mini access audit proposed some very cheap remedies but businesses have not taken these up despite the fact that reasonable adjustment often costs very little. As noted at the last meeting, the installation of signage and appropriate staff training in Bennetts/Zest show the considerable difference which can be made for little financial outlay.

Discussed possible alternative ways of getting the message across including a feature in the Cathedral Quarter magazine detailing progress (or lack of) so far. Gavin Thompson suggested it might be a good idea to do a short film visually pointing out some of the problem areas whilst at the same time highlighting where adaptations have been made to facilitate access. This could then be presented to the Cathedral Quarter Management Committee.

The meeting thought this was a good idea in which they could hopefully participate.

Ann and Gavin will have further discussions outside this meeting with a view to seeking volunteers. The last access audit was about 15 months ago so need to revisit and see what improvements have actually been made. Noted this applies not just to the Cathedral Quarter and it is incumbent on all members of this Forum to report problems wherever they are in the city where access is restricted for wheelchair users and those with mobility difficulties, hearing and sight impairment.

34/10 Muscular Disease

Andy Findlay reported that he attended a Parliamentary reception at the House of Commons the previous day with invited MPs, clinicians and commissioning groups lobbying for facilities and care to be provided under the new NHS reforms. This was a very successful event and also happened to coincide with the 'Hardest Hit' march with thousands of disabled people, their carers and supporters campaigning against Government cuts to benefits and services.

22/11 Work Programme 2010/2011

Pam Thompson reported the programme was on schedule up to and including Item 21. She also noted that there are several outstanding items which may need to be brought to the next meeting in addition to those already scheduled.

With regard to the Voluntary Sector Grant Aid Strategy 2011-2015, it was noted that the open round for grant aid applications from across Derby's voluntary and community sector runs from 16 May to 24 June. To assist groups to complete an application form, Derby City Council is working with Community Action Derby to run half day grant application workshops on 18 May and Pam has already circulated details. The need to adhere to the Derby Plan is in the criteria and further information on this and how to apply is available through the Voluntary and Community Sector pages on the Council website or by contacting Ian Chennery, Voluntary and Community Sector Partnerships Manager, on 01332 642753 ian.chennery@derby.gov.uk.

Consensus that update on Derby Direct telephone service should stay on agenda. Lynn Gilbey cited Derby Homes as a good example of a system which works well and which the Council could learn from. Janet Warner reported she had taken part in an Equalities Impact Assessment at Derby Direct that very morning and had mentioned the Forum's concerns. Derby Direct is now the first point of contact for calls which would previously have gone through the Access Officer and it is important that the service is both accessible and user-friendly.

Noted that Item 28 was to have been progressed by Councillor Hird who has, unfortunately, not been re-elected. This will need to be reviewed when it becomes clear as to which member will chair the Forum.

23/11 Question and Answer Session

In view of the lengthy agenda the Chair proposed deferring this till the end of the meeting if time permits.

24/11 Chaddesden Library

Copies of the Site Access Audit were circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. The Forum welcomed Fran Renwick (Assistant Head of Library Services, Operations and Community), Paul Richards (Arriva Buses), Andrew Morgan (Landscape & Development Officer, Parks) and Dawn Dagley (Parks Officer Community).

Noel Walsh and Janet Warner who participated in the access audit reiterated the access problems for visually impaired users, wheelchair users and people with mobility impairments. Specific barriers to access which could reduce some disabled people attending the library at the site in the park include uneven surfaces, potholes and speed bumps and it was recommended this be referred to Parks as it also affects access to the park as a whole.

Another key issue is around the siting of bus stops. On Chaddesden Lane there is some distance from the existing bus stops in both directions and very narrow pavements or none at all. On Maine Drive the bus stops are closer to the park entrance and the pavements are wider and in better condition, but there is a very steep slope from the bus stop to the park. Buses on this route only serve the local area of Chaddesden. Recommended these problems be referred to Transport and Highways with representations to bus operators.

The general conclusion is that the proposed location on Chaddesden Park is wrong because of the surrounding area being inaccessible to disabled people. The Forum's view is that the new library should be sited nearer to the road and bus stops, and closer to the shops, preferably on Nottingham Road. A Changing Places toilet is being fitted in the new library and so it is important that users can get to use it. Disabled people would have been able to combine going to the library and the shops avoiding the need to transfer wheelchairs in and out of cars again if they wanted to visit the library. Not only are there acute access issues but also concerns that the proposed site would be open to vandalism. It is hoped that councillors will change their mind when they realise the full extent of the problems for disabled people.

Ann Webster reported that the Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods, Paul Robinson, had advised her that disabled people need to highlight the barriers facing them if the library is built on the Maine Drive site. He offered to present these to the new cabinet member for Leisure and Culture and come to the next Forum meeting to feedback on their response.

Paul Richards agreed it may be possible to look at rerouting or diverting Arriva bus services as an option. The Chaddesden Lane route is operated by a different company so they would need to be approached separately.

On behalf of the Library Service, Fran Renwick noted that the cabinet member decision on the location was made after a huge consultation exercise on a couple of proposed sites. Although the results were inconclusive, there seemed to be a strong feeling that it should be in the park and the audit followed this decision. The planning application is up for consideration on 26 May so a definitive decision is still awaited. There may well be a new cabinet member following the recent local election who might suggest revisiting the application in light of objections raised.

She also noted there is a risk to the budget for the library if it is not spent within the specified time frame. From the beginning of the design and planning process there is a 30 month lead-in. Completion is currently on track for March 2013 so any change of site will delay the process considerably. Also the present building will be condemned due to ongoing maintenance problems so there could be a lengthy gap when there are no library facilities at all. It has taken four years searching for a suitable site and she appreciates it is not easy to please everyone. However, it will be better for future generations if it is sited in the best place.

Andrew Morgan concurred that Parks had consulted on the location before reaching a decision. They could look at reasonable and cost-effective measures to address some of the access issues, although it may be difficult to install cables for any lighting.

In conclusion, Ann Webster sees this as a valuable exercise in the benefit of early involvement. The Forum agreed that the access audit should have been done at a much earlier stage in the process before it got to this point, as any site options need to be accessible for disabled people under the Equality Act.

25/11 Personalisation Agenda

The meeting welcomed Perveez Sadiq, Service Director – Putting People First, to present an update and reply to questions from Forum members.

A Summary report 'Supporting Carers in 2011/12 and Carers Personal Budgets' which outlines Social Services' approach was circulated at the meeting – see Appendix (i).

The report is self-explanatory but Perveez added that there is a section on support for carers in the Voluntary Sector Grant Aid Strategy for which the open round for grant aid applications begins on 16 May. He also noted the work with local employers will be an attempt to increase their understanding of the role and needs of carers.

The carers self-assessment process will continue and has resulted in a significant increase in new referrals, averaging 60 per month. It is also hoped to continue the Carers Breaks Demonstrator site project which has been targeting carers from minority ethnic communities. The Council will work with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to identify better and more appropriate support and ensure there are funds available to provide it.

Roy Jones referred to past personal experience when there was little or no support for carers and was very pleased by such developments. Andy Findlay enquired whether money can be used to buy in extra care for the cared-for person to allow the carer to take a respite break. Perveez explained that whilst the personal budget is to be used as the carer sees fit to support them in their role, unfortunately it is not currently permissible in law for it to be spent directly on the cared-for person. However, a new bill is being drafted to consolidate and modernise present

legislation. In the meantime, Social Services can arrange for respite care and backfill the costs to enable the carer to take a break.

The aim now is to let people know that more help is available which carers are eligible to get for free. It was acknowledged that there is a 'confidence' issue for carers in trusting someone else to take over whilst they have a break. Perveez noted that Social Services will liaise with carers in the provision of appropriate alternative temporary support without risk to the cared-for person.

This report is exclusively about adult carers but a similar policy is being developed by the Children and Young People's Directorate for young carers.

Perveez was thanked by the meeting for what is seen as a huge move forward in recognising the stresses of carers and affording greater consideration to their needs as part of the whole care package.

26/11 Hearing Assisted Systems

Roy Jones from CamTAD agreed to provide an update on the current service at today's meeting. Firstly he thanked Ann Webster for her support and eagerness in helping to arrange meetings with the relevant sections of the Council.

He was able to report both positives and negatives, a good example being the infra-red induction loop sign at the Assembly Rooms. This has images of a headset and neckloop with information on how to request ancillary equipment.

The main problem is lack of continuity since the Access Officer left the Council and knowing exactly where the audit is up to. Even if there has been initial testing, there should be regular checks that equipment is functioning properly. He reported that this is on Derby LIVE technicians check list but need to recognise that different productions may have different needs so should be checked as a matter of course before the start of a new run.

He proposed the following:

- A team of loop testers
- Regular audit of number of loop locations and tests that are in good working order
- Continuity of use checks – pre-show check recommended for every new production
- More importance given to the needs of hearing impaired – given that tickets are quite costly, there should be an expectation in this day and age that all members of the audience should be able to hear.

By way of progress, there is a meeting with the Head Technician on 24 May to form a strategy with a view to this becoming a mainstream activity of facilities management. There will also be discussions around awareness training in how to operate the equipment, which CamTAD can offer, and development of a testing schedule with checklist.

Roy acknowledged there is no 'golden' answer but feels that the Council should have

a duty of care to make their entertainments facilities accessible to all and should be resourced accordingly. He is happy to advise but is unable to physically participate as much in actual testing. He feels there needs to be a fuller appreciation of the difficulties and change of attitude amongst Council colleagues and noted that Christine Durrant, Director of Planning and Transportation, is taking the concerns on board very seriously. This, together with Ann Webster being extremely pro-active, is keeping it on the agenda and Roy wishes it to keep appearing on worksheets until the matter is resolved.

As an aside, Roy noted there was no loop facility at today's venue and that, ideally, this should be an integral part of any room hire. He advised that room loops would be much more effective for Council meeting rooms as they provide greater flexibility.

Roy was thanked for his update and continued efforts on behalf of the Forum.

27/11 Diversity Forum Review

Before giving an update on the review, Gavin Thompson noted ongoing issues such as Chaddesden Library and Induction Loops are good examples of where earlier involvement by the Forums could have prevented later problems. Often issues are not able to be discussed quickly enough under the current Forum meeting structure and this is a major area the review is hoping to address.

Going on present the recommendations from the Review Working Group, he noted that the proposed model introduced at the last meeting had been met with some alarm and concerns but clarified that this was only a starting point for discussion.

The main aim is to engage with the Diversity Forums and listen to what they want. To this end, representatives from all three met with officers on 18 April to go back to the drawing board and explore the issues. He circulated a copy of revised plans pulled together as an outcome of that meeting. It was acknowledged there are strengths and weaknesses in all three Forums which is why different proposals for each are being considered.

This Forum seems to work best and be most productive with the opinion 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. The general feeling was against joint meetings but happy to have one Joint Annual Meeting which includes the 50+ Forum. Also, that this Forum needs more regular meetings than the others but proposed moving from 6 to 4 per year (not including the Joint Annual Meeting) with Project Group meetings staying as they are.

The Gender and Sexuality Diversity Forum (GSDF) has a different take on what best suits them. In addition to a Joint Annual Meeting they propose an annual all-day event to bring organisations and individuals together to raise, discuss and explore issues by themes which is similar to the conference idea in the initial proposals. In addition they would like to hold a review meeting to prioritise what issues go to the Task and Finish Groups and receive feedback. Feel there is capacity to support two Task and Finish groups but may be more according to how resource-dependent they are.

The Minority Communities Diversity Forum (MCDF) also supports having a Joint Annual Meeting with possibly 4 Forum meetings throughout the year as well as Task and Finish groups based on the model of this Forum's Project Group.

A meeting timetable has been drafted proposing the Joint Forum Meeting be held in November. DPDF meetings would be in September, December, March and June and MCDF in September and March although these may be increased. The GSDF all-day event would probably take place in September. Underpinning these would be the DPDF Project Group and Task and Finish Groups with regularity of meetings yet to be agreed.

The Supporting Officer for DPDF will be Richard Talaska and for GSDF and MCDF Pam Thompson. They will have a much broader remit and workload under the new structure.

Comments from the last meeting have been fed into the discussions and the DPDF wished it to be minuted that they feel their Forum will not work as effectively without the Access Officer post and urged the Council to seriously consider reinstating this.

Gavin noted that there was no time left at today's meeting for fuller discussion and asked everyone to submit any comments and suggestions as soon as possible through Pam Thompson or Richard Talaska. These will be fed back to the next review meeting where it is hoped to add more substance and detail to the proposals before bringing them to the next meeting at the end of June.

28/11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 30 June at a venue to be decided. Apologies in advance from Councillor Robin Turner.

The pre-meeting will take place on 2 June at 1.00 pm in Meeting Room E, Saxon House – representatives to attend

Judi Bateman

Roy Jones

Janet Warner and/or Nancy Pountain

NOTES END

Paul Richards from Arriva buses noted he would be happy to stay and answer any individual questions about bus services.