

## **DISABLED PEOPLES DIVERSITY FORUM 15 NOVEMBER 2007**

Present: Councillor Chera (Chair)  
Councillors Turner, Webb and Winter

### **Representing groups**

Jon Eccarius - DCIL  
Alison Hicking – Derby Deaf Forum  
Julie Hart – Speak Out and Learning Disability Partnership  
Andy Findlay – Derby Access Group  
Amarjit Raju – Disability Direct  
Steven Rigby – Disability Direct  
Nancy Pountain – Derby Access Group  
George Sanders – CamTAD  
Edith Storer – EMASH  
Sarah Fletcher - EMASH  
Noel Walsh – Derbyshire Association for the Blind  
Janet Warner – Derby Shopmobility

### **City Council Advisors**

Sheila Downey – Senior Assistant Director, Adult Social Services  
Ray Rippingale - Assistant Director, Culture  
Pam Thompson – Consultation Support Officer  
Chris Gregson - Constitutional Services Officer  
Mick Watts – Access Officer  
Ann Webster – Equality and Diversity Manager

### **Also Present**

Marta Hancock – Independent Spokesperson  
John Emery - BSL Interpreter

## **32/07 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Grimadell, Dhamrait and Carr, Andrew Auld – Head of Communications and Consultation, Roy Jones from CamTAD, Pat and Maurice Kilminster from Derby Osteoporosis, Trevor Ford from Derwent Sheltered Group, Rachell Bastiker from Derby Deaf Forum, Pat Fletcher from EMASH, Judi Bateman and Margaret Reeve from Derbyshire Autism Services Group. A card was circulated to send to Judi with the forum's best wishes following her operation.

## **33/07 Late Items Introduced by the Chair**

No late items were introduced by the Chair.

## 34/07      Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

## 35/07      Notes from Previous Meeting

The Notes of the meeting held on 13 September 2007 were reviewed by the Forum and approved with an alteration to the last sentence of note 23/07 to read 'He also advised that Derby Crematorium was the only site with a Loop System fitted with a Loop Tester device'. It was also agreed that the names of BSL interpreters would be added to the notes of future meetings.

## 36/07      Updates on matters arising from previous meeting

The Forum noted updates on actions from the previous meeting.

## 37/07      Work Programme

An updated Work programme schedule was distributed at the meeting and noted.

## 38/07      BBC Big Screen

The Forum was addressed by Ray Rippingale – Assistant Director, Culture. He explained that the BBC Big Screen was run as a partnership between the BBC, the University of Derby and Derby City Council. It had been installed for several reasons: to provide information such as programming from all BBC digital channels, as a what's on guide, to deliver cultural experiences, as a showcase for local filmmakers and for documentaries produced by local organisations, to enhance festivals and ceremonial occasions and to screen live sport.

Ray advised that it was not difficult to create material suitable for the Big Screen, and that training, guidance and access to equipment were available from the University or from Louise Angel of the BBC. He acknowledged that there was work still to do in developing local content, improving comfort for viewers, providing catering and finding the correct sound levels.

Ray was asked whether the films produced for the Big Screen were broadcast many times or just once. Ray replied that it was preferable that films were shown several times. Nancy Pountain - Derby Access Group - asked about extra seating, and Ray answered that he was working to achieve this even though it ran against part of the Public Realm Strategy that aimed to make public spaces open and uncluttered.

Alison Hicking – Derby Deaf Forum – asked if subtitles could be attached to programming, and Nancy Pountain passed on the suggestion of the Project Group that a subtitle typist be used. Ray advised that all BBC content was subtitled, but that it was difficult and costly to create subtitles if they were not attached. Ray added that any advice would be appreciated.

Ann informed the group that there would be an equality impact assessment of the big Screen soon and several members had already volunteered to help with this. All the equality issues would be highlighted and an action plan put in place to remove the barriers identified, such as sub-titles, seats and so on.

Councillor Turner asked if accessible toilets would be provided on the Market Square, and also if a signer could be inset on broadcasts. George Sanders - CamTAD - also advised that it would be simple to install a Loop System in the Square. Ray agreed to look into all these matters.

## 39/07 Direct Payments and Home Care Assessments

The Forum received a presentation by Sheila Downey, Senior Assistant Director – Adult Social Services giving an overview of services provided.

Sheila advised that there were four bands used in assessing the risk to loss of independence of service users. Care was provided to service users in all four bands until April 2006, when the local authority agreed to remove support to those in the Low band due to a lack of resources. Sheila advised that two-thirds of local authorities only provided care to service users in the Substantial and Critical bands, whereas Derby City Council also provided care to users in the Moderate band.

Even with the removal of support at the Low band, Sheila reported that there was a £3 million deficit out of a £70 million budget. This was despite the fact that Derby City Council was the second lowest spending Local Authority in its comparator group on Adult Social Care.

Sheila then reported on changes to Direct Payments. Rates had been decreased to £9.00 per hour for service users employing personal assistants directly, and increased to £10.52 per hour for those employing agency staff. The change was made to bring payments in line with market rates. Individual arrangements were brought into place, meaning that if a carer could not work at the new rate the rate would be kept the same for as long as the carer was employed.

To a question asking why the use of Direct Payments was identified as a cost and not a saving factor, Sheila answered that Direct Payments provided people with more hours and additional services and therefore costs increased.

Noel Walsh – Derbyshire Association for the Blind – asked why there were differing ideas within Social Services as to whether assistance was required

or not. Sheila replied that it was difficult to judge cases, and that a 'tick-box' method was not used to establish needs. If a case went to appeal, Sheila assured the Forum that it would be treated sensitively.

Marta Hancock – Independent Spokesperson – asked where information about individual arrangements was available as very few knew about it. Sheila replied that this was brought up at Council Cabinet, and that the letter to service users advised them to contact Social Services with any questions. Marta also asked if an Equality Impact Assessment had been made before the rates were changed. Sheila answered that this had not been done as it was not a change in policy.

Two Members stated that the new rates were insufficient to cover all costs, both for directly employed personal assistants and for agency workers. Sheila replied that all costs had been factored in.

The Forum agreed to invite Sheila Downey to a future meeting, as there was insufficient time to answer all the questions of Forum Members.

#### **40/07 Council House Lift**

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

#### **41/07 Public Realm developments / materials**

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

#### **42/07 Working for the Council – Employment Statistics**

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

#### **43/07 Equality Impact Assessment**

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

#### **44/07 International Day of Disabled People (IDDP)**

The Forum received an oral update from Ann Webster – Equality and Diversity Manager. Ann reported that the working group had met and come up with a few suggestions for an event, given the time restraints until 3 December 2007, The Forum was asked to select from: 'Just Do It 2' event to be held in the Eagle Market in January, Derby Homes hidden impairment and employment event or a campaign to stamp out inconsiderate parking by some blue badge users, such as across dropped kerbs. It was agreed that the theme should be around inconsiderate parking and abuse of Blue Badges.

Ann also advised that the top floor of the QUAD has been offered as a venue for free on 5 December 2008 for next year's European Day of Disabled People.

#### 45/07 Deaf Forum

No update was received at this meeting.

#### 46/07 Disabled People's Diversity Forum (DPDF) Project Group Minutes

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

#### 47/07 Open Discussion

No open discussion was held at this meeting.

#### 48/07 Date of next pre-meeting – 17 December 2007 at 6pm

The Forum agreed representatives to attend the next pre-meeting. The representatives were Noel Walsh – Derbyshire Association for the Blind and Edith Storer – EMASH.

NOTES END