

Start: 6.30pm
End: 8.35pm

**DISABLED PEOPLES DIVERSITY FORUM
6 NOVEMBER 2008**

Present: Judi Bateman - Derbyshire Autism Services (Chair)
Councillors Chera, Grimadell, Turner and Webb

In Attendance: Councillor Skelton

Representing groups

Toni Shepherd – Derbyshire Autism Services Group
Andy Findlay – Derby Access Group
Roy Jones – CAMTAD
Nancy Pountain – Derby Access Group
Noel Walsh – Derbyshire Association for the Blind
Janet Warner – Derby Shopmobility

City Council Advisors

Ann Webster – Equality and Diversity Manager
Christine Collingwood – Consultation Support Manager
Mick Watts – Access Officer
Maggie Fennell – Chair DCC Disabled Employee Network
David Marshall – Derby Cityscape Ltd
Bev Stanley – Sign Language Interpreter

29/08 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Fletcher, Pat Fletcher and George Sanders.

30/08 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items

31/08 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

32/08 Notes from Previous Meeting

The Notes of the meeting held on 4 September 2008 were reviewed by the Forum and approved with no amendments.

33/08 Updates on matters arising from the previous meeting

It was reported that contact had been made with Roy Godfrey regarding deaf awareness training for bus drivers, but as yet no progress had been made. It was agreed that Alison Hicking, Ann Webster, Mick Watts, Noel Walsh and Roy Jones would all work together to facilitate the training. It was agreed that it would be important for CAMTAD to be involved as the needs of those with acquired deafness may vary and needed to be addressed.

It was reported that the taxi scheme taking passengers into the city centre was now up and running, and participating taxis could be identified by an orange sticker in the windscreen. The Committee queried whether the taxi licensing and appeals committee had given approval to the low fare schemes. It was reported that the committee would only set maximum fares and that drivers could charge less if they wanted to.

22/08 Transport: Rickshaws and Tuk-Tuks

It was reported that an Equality Impact Assessment was being undertaken on the use of rickshaws in the city centre. A rickshaw would be available outside the Assembly Rooms on the 15 November for forum members to examine. It was reported that the council were currently consulting public bodies on a possible 18 month experimental traffic regulation order, which if approved would allow rickshaw use in bus lanes and pedestrianised areas. It had been agreed that forum members could participate in this consultation process and the appropriate comment forms had been circulated.

33/08 Work Programme 2008/09

An updated Work Programme was distributed to the Forum and noted.

It was agreed that the Forum would use the meeting in March to re-visit the work programme and consider what items should be brought forward for May and June. It was noted that the work on refurbishing Council buildings would begin soon and so it would be important to establish a working group at the next meeting who could report back to the Forum.

Agreed:

- 1. To note the work programme**
- 2. To establish a working group to consult on the refurbishment of Council Buildings**

34/08 Fairer Charging - Update

The Forum held a question and answer session on fairer charging with Councillor Skelton, Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health; Sheila Downey, Senior Assistant Director Adult Social Services and Perveez Sadiq Acting Assistant Director for Commissioning and Performance.

The Forum asked why there had been a short notification period for assessments (in some cases only 2 or 3 days) which had made it difficult for people to arrange for help during the assessment – like key workers.

It was agreed that there were a few short notice appointments, but currently the notification period was 2-3 weeks. The appointment letter did give the option to rearrange appointments via the telephone number provided in the letter. 69 appointments had been rearranged in the first week, so it was felt that the system was working. However, it was agreed that the option to rearrange should be made clearer in the letters.

The Forum asked questions about assessments and whether the actual costs were calculated rather than using fixed rate costs. It was reported that a set amount had been adopted but individual assessments could be done if requested. The team were undertaking random sampling of those who had already had assessments to ensure that they had been offered the opportunity to have an individual assessment, and any that had been missed were being given the opportunity to have one. It was noted that there needed to be consistency in the approach but also flexibility in the system to cater for the individual needs of people.

The Forum asked about the potential for people to stop accessing services as they were not prepared to pay. It was reported that a small drop out was expected, and out of the 270 assessment currently completed only 5 had indicated that they would consider stopping the service. The service as a whole was experiencing growth at 9.8% p.a. and it was anticipated that more jobs would be created in the future.

The Forum raised queries about the accessibility of services, for example whether the forms used were the best way to assess people's caring needs, and whether the telephone line was best located within Derby Direct.

It was reported that the assessment forms had been developed by the Department for Work and Pensions and were an improvement. However, it was noted that it was important to make people aware of services available in the city that could provide support for the assessments. It was noted that the telephone service was being provided by Derby Direct as a joint effort with Social Care and the Revenues and Benefits team. It was understood that the service was better than it had been, although the Forum still raised concerns regarding the speed in which people could get through to someone.

Agreed:

- 1. To note the update**
- 2. To consider reviewing the Derby Direct telephone service as a future work plan item**

35/08 Disabled Employees Network

The Forum received the annual report and work plan for the disabled employees network. It was reported that there were three networks, but there were concerns that staff were not being permitted to be released from their duties for network meetings. This issue was being explored to see what the barriers to participation were.

It was reported that the three employee networks shared their minutes with each other, and that there was also a joint agenda which allowed them to work on projects together. The network issues were raised with the Assistant Directors and Chief Officers when appropriate.

Resolved to note the update

36/08 Public Realm

The Forum received a presentation from Dave Marshall, Derby Cityscape, on the current plans for public realm developments in Derby. It was reported that the planned developments were aimed to meeting the needs of the diverse groups in Derby. The Forum were keen to ensure that their views were kept on the agenda for these developments, as it was felt that previous consultations had ended with the messages being lost when it came to implementation of developments. The Forum felt it would be important to have a standard working group for cityscape developments, facilitated by Mick Watts. It would be vital for the group to meet with the designers to ensure that the issues were not lost.

Resolved:

1. **To note the updates**
2. **To establish a standard working group to provide advice on Derby Cityscape developments.**

37/08 International day of Disabled People: Disability Hate Crime

It was reported that the International Day of Disabled People would take place on 5 December 2008 in the Westfield Centre from 10am-3pm. Participants would include Fire and Rescue, the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service for hate crime.

Agreed to note the update

38/08 Deaf Forum

This item was deferred to a later meeting.

39/08 Open Discussion

This item was deferred to a later meeting.

40/08 Date of next meeting

The Forum agreed that Nancy Pountain, Janet Warner and Noel Walsh would attend the next pre-meeting, on 3 December 2008. The next Forum meeting would take place on 8 January 2009.

To be signed by the Chair of the next Ensuing Meeting