

Time commenced : 6.30 pm
Time finished : 8.30 pm

DISABLED PEOPLE'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE 19 MAY 2005

Present: Councillor Webb (in the Chair)
Councillors Chera and Hird

Representing groups

Martin Austin – Freedom Forum/Disability Direct
Judi Bateman – DCIL
Trevor Ford – DSHF
Marta Hancock – Disability Direct
Alison Hicking – Derby Deaf Forum
Nancy Pountain – Derby Access Group
Amarjit Raju – Disability Direct
George Sanders – CAMTAD
Mary Walters – British Sign Language interpreter

City Council Advisors

Chris Hegarty – Senior Transportation Engineer – Development and Cultural Services
Siân Hoyle – Head of Service, Marketing and Communications – Education
Rita Silvester – Acting Assistant Director – Education
Pam Thompson – Consultation Support Officer – Policy Directorate
Sarah Turner – Constitutional Services Officer – Corporate Services
Mick Watts – Access Officer – Development and Cultural Services
Ann Webster – Equality Standard Project Manager – Policy Directorate
Richard Winter – Assistant Waste Management Officer – Development and Cultural Services

54/04 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rehman and Troup, Edith Storer – EMASH, Maurice Kilminster – Derby City Osteoporosis Group, Beverley Bowman – Shopmobility, Pat Taylor – Derbyshire Association for the Blind and Pat Fletcher – Derbyshire Coalition for Inclusive Living.

55/04 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

56/04 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

57/04 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2005 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

58/04 Restructuring Special Educational Needs Support Service and Pupil Referral Unit

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Education detailing the proposals agreed by Council Cabinet on 8 February 2005 for the restructure to the Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS) and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

Rita Silvester, Acting Assistant Director – Education, advised the Committee that a consultation had been carried out on the proposals to restructure the SENSS and the PRU. The role and the function of the service had altered considerably in recent years and major national strategies and funding requirements had impacted upon it. The recommendations aimed to ensure that effective support was available in the future for pupils with special educational needs and for their teachers and support staff, within the resources available and the roles and responsibilities of schools and the authority.

The role and function of the service had altered considerably in recent years whilst the existing management structure and organisation of the service had remained largely unchanged since 1998. The development and national strategies, policy changes, curriculum initiatives and budget delegation had had a significant impact on the interface of the service with schools and other agencies.

The department was just coming to the final stages of separation of the old service and relocating of the new service. The Council had invested significant funding to support these changes, approximately £300,000.

Rita stated that the restructuring was not about support already in specialist schools in the city but about parents that wanted to keep their children in main stream settings. It was hoped that the re-organisation would make this right and she thought that the Education Service were now in a much stronger position.

Resolve to note the Report

59/04 Recruitment of School Governors

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Education advising members that the Council were keen to increase the number of LEA school governors, particularly from the black and ethnic minority communities and disabled people in the city and would welcome DPAC members' views on ways they could do this.

Siân Hoyle – Head of Service, addressed the Committee and advised that within the city there were a total of 44 LEA governor vacancies out of a total of 274 LEA governor places. Some of these were at schools which were on the priority schools list. Schools in special measures could also have two additional LEA governors appointed. The Council wanted to encourage disabled people to become governors at any of the LEA schools in the city as their experiences could only

further raise awareness of disability issues and integration of disabled pupils into mainstream schools. Siân added that there were vacancies in special schools which disabled people might be interested in.

Amarjit Raju asked out of the total number of governors in the city, how many of these were disabled people. Siân responded that they had only started collating this information so could not give exact figures but she knew there were a number of disabled governors in the city.

Nancy Pountain commented that before recruiting disabled people as governors they needed to have accessible venues for meetings. Councillor Webb asked if there were any schools that were not accessible to disabled people. Mick Watts responded that a lot of money had been spent on school accessibility. Accessibility was improving and the most positive thing about this report was that it was hoped that if more disabled people became governors, the higher on the agenda accessibility issues would be. Mick suggested that groups put information in their news letters about this. Siân advised that she would be happy to send articles to DPAC member organisations.

The Committee were advised that there was no qualification to become a school or LEA governor, anyone who was interested would need to fill in an application and supply two references, and the three political groups would have to approve each application. There was no remuneration but individuals could claim expenses.

Alison Hicking asked if a Deaf person wanted to become a governor would there be an issue with interpreters. She thought the guidelines needed to be very clear stating who would book and pay for an interpreter. Siân responded that it would be the schools responsibility to book and pay for an interpreter.

Resolve to note the Report

60/04 Derby Joint Local Transport Plan 2006-2011

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Development and Cultural Services detailing the progress on the preparation of the Derby Joint Local Transport Plan for 2006-2011. Chris Hegarty – Senior Transportation Engineer, advised the Committee that the current Derby Joint Local Transport Plan, LTP, provided the transport strategy for Derby and the surrounding area up to March 2006. A new LTP was required to be submitted to government, in provisional form by 29 July 2005 and as a final plan by 31 March 2006. The new LTP was being prepared in line with government guidance.

The new LTP would contain a broad five year plan of measures that would help achieve a range of over arching agreed objectives. The transport improvements and other measures would be based on a transport strategy that was currently being determined through the Derby Area Transport Study, DATS, which was nearing completion.

Nancy Pountain commented that many people would like to see the arterial bus service reintroduced. At the last Area Panel 2 meeting; Arriva advised that they had £1.2 million for bus services if the Council made routes accessible. Chris

Hegarty responded that Arriva would be investing in more low floor buses once the uncertainty over when the new bus station would be open was resolved

Amarjit Raju commented that congestion charges in London were subsidised for disabled people. Would Derby be doing something similar? Chris responded that should congestion charging be introduced that it was very likely that some groups of people in Derby would get reduced or free access to the city

Alison Hicking advised that Deaf People would come into the centre of Derby to socialise but a lot of buses finished at 10.30-11.00 pm, so some Deaf People had to drive as there was always a queue for taxis. Hearing people could use mobile phones to ring for taxis, but not Deaf People. Chris responded that there were a growing number of night bus services that Trent was providing, although Arriva were not offering this service currently. Alison commented that Arriva were unlikely to offer this service as they owned a taxi firm in the city.

Ann Webster stated that taxi services should be complying with the DDA and making them accessible to Deaf People, by perhaps accepting text message bookings. Ann advised that she would speak with Dave Dowbenko in Taxi Licensing to see if anything could be done about this.

Chris advised the Committee that they were keen to encourage people to use Derby Community Transport. Nancy Pountain advised that people were aware of the service but quite often could not get the support from carers early enough in the morning to use the service at the times it currently runs.

Councillor Webb asked if they would be taking advice on street furniture, what type of furniture and where it was going to be placed. Chris responded that he would like to take advice on this as he knew this had not been done sufficiently in the past. Councillor Webb suggested using the Focus Group to look at plans for furniture.

Chris asked the Committee that if there were any further issues they should e-mail him individually with the details and comments.

Resolve to note the Report

61/04 Re-Thinking Rubbish Recycling Scheme and Forward Programme Options for 2005

The Committee received an oral report from Richard Winter – Assistant Waste Management Officer, on the Re-Thinking Rubbish Recycling Scheme and Forward Programme Options for 2005. He advised the committee that last year the city managed to re-cycle 22% of its waste which was phenomenal for a Council of our size. There was now two types of recycling, firstly; the 95 sites around the city and secondly the door-to-door service. A trial of the door to door service happened in 2003 with one bin round, it was decided to roll out the scheme and now nine rounds were included.

People had raised concerns with the blue box and having to lift it. Modifications have been implemented making the new boxes easier to lift. For rounds coming up later this year, small blue bins with wheels could be provided where needed.

Ann Webster advised of an issue with bins for visually impaired people as some people could not distinguish between black and brown bins. Derbyshire Dales District Council had a mark on one of the bins to identify it. Richard advised that the new bins would have two marks in the corner on the brown bin and three marks on the blue bin.

Richard advised that he had received a number of complaints regarding bins being left on the highway. Nancy Pountain confirmed that this was a problem. Richard advised that Nottingham City Council were going to fine people for leaving their bins on the street. Although he did not think this would work. The only thing that could be done was to take away the bin and leave black sacks or something similar. Sarah Fletcher commented that she thought it was difficult in some areas to leave a bin somewhere that would not be in anyone's way. Richard advised that people were supposed to leave their dustbins on the edge of their property.

Richard advised there was a big issue of where we were going to put rubbish once the landfill was full. Currently the Council pay 70p per bin which was £40.00 per year per dustbin and then another £40.00 per tonne to dispose of the waste which was about £8 or £9 million per year. At the moment recycling was more expensive but in the future it would be cheaper to recycle.

Richard brought examples of bags that were now available to put other forms of rubbish in - a red bag for newspapers and a pink bag for old clothes. Ann asked that the Council's minicom number be displayed on the bags.

Richard advised the committee that he or one of the team would visit any group with examples or provide information for news letters if they wished. Richard's contact details were Richard.Winter@Derby.Gov.uk or Streetcare@Derby.Gov.uk and the service line telephone number is 715000.

62/04 The Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Plan (draft)

Ann Webster advised the Committee that the draft Corporate Equality and Diversity Plan would be going to the Chief Officer Group on the 1 June 2005. It gave a three year plan on how the Council was going to implement the Equality Policy and include the Council's Race Equality Scheme. Ann asked for volunteers to form a small working group to help with the plan.

Nancy Pountain, Sarah Fletcher, Marta Hancock, Judi Bateman and Mick Watts volunteered for the Working Group and Ann advised that she would advise them of a date sometime in June for the meeting.

63/04 Response to Hospital Parking

Mick Watts advised the Committee that a response had been received from the PCTs to the Overview and Scrutiny Review on hospital car parking. Mick suggested discussing these comments at the next or a future focus group meeting and invite Brian Ible to discuss the issues with him. Councillor Webb advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission had made comments on the

recommendations and were sure that Mahroof Hussain – Overview and Scrutiny Co-Ordination Officer would like to listen to the Committee's comments.

64/04 Derby Deaf Forum

Alison Hicking advised the Committee that the Deaf Forum was currently working with the Police to improve access to Police Services and discuss problems Deaf People have with the Police. The Police were concerned that Deaf People were not reporting crimes to them, so the forum was working with the Police on this. They were trying to set up an SMS service so that Deaf People could contact the Police by sending text messages.

The Forum would also be involved with training beat officers on how to deal with issues when out in the community and faced with certain problems as they sometimes did not deal with these properly.

Alison advised that there was a Deaf Information Day coming up. 32 organisations were having stands and interpreters would be available all day. The Police and Fire and Rescue Service would be attending.

65/04 Derby Railway Station Footbridge

Mick advised that the Council had sent a letter to local MPs regarding the Derby Railway Station footbridge replacement. Responses have been received from Margaret Beckett MP, Bob Laxton MP and the Disability Rights Commission. Margaret Beckett had written to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and her response was also included.

Mick commented that the response from the Department from Work and Pensions was very disappointing. Although there were more encouraging comments from the Disability Rights Commission who felt it was important that a test case be taken to the courts to clarify the responsibilities of the different rail service providers. They were seeking legal advice at the on this issue.

Mick updated the Committee that Jonathan Guest – Director of Development and Cultural Services had received correspondence from the new managing director at Midland Mainline about the station footbridge. Jonathan was to meet with the new MD shortly where the issue would be discussed further.

66/04 Minutes of the DPAC Project Group – 25 January 2005 and 14 March 2005

Resolved to note the Minutes

67/04 Work Programme

Pam asked that members discussed the work programme with their organisations and advise any items to be included on the work programme at the next meeting.

MINUTES END