

Time commenced : 6.30 pm
Time finished : 8.30 pm

DISABLED PEOPLE'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE 22 SEPTEMBER 2005

Present: Councillor Chera (in the Chair)
Councillor Troup

Representing groups

Amarjit Raju – Disability Direct
Martin Austin – Disability Direct/Freedom Forum
Sally Morter – Disability Direct
Judi Bateman – DCIL
Andy Findlay – Derby Access Group
Pat Fletcher - DCIL
Marta Hancock – Disability Direct
Beverley Bowman - Shopmobility
Nancy Pountain – Derby Access Group
George Sanders – CAMTAD
Bev Stanley – British Sign Language interpreter
Edith Storer – EMASH

City Council Advisors

Andrew Auld – Head of Communications and Consultation – Policy Directorate
Stephen Sadler – Direct Payments Officer, Social Services
Pam Thompson – Consultation Support Officer – Policy Directorate
Sarah Turner – Constitutional Services Officer – Corporate Services
Mick Watts – Access Officer – Development and Cultural Services

16/05 Appointment of Chair

Resolved to appoint Councillor Chera Chair for this meeting.

17/05 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hird, Rawson, and Turner, Pat Taylor – Derbyshire Association for the Blind, Alison Hicking – Derby Deaf Forum, Trevor Ford - DSHF, and Ann Webster – Policy Directorate.

18/05 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

19/05 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20/05 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2005 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

21/05 Home Care Charges

The Committee were advised that the Council, at its meeting on 14 September had agreed to abolish charges for Home Care.

Councillor Chera advised that all home care charges would be removed. Other charges would remain, for example residential and nursing, would remain means tested as they were dictated by a national framework of determining service users contributions to residential care.

Nancy Pountain asked that members be given a copy of the details.

Resolved to note the update.

22/05 Direct Payments

The Committee received a presentation from Amarjit Raju – Disability Direct, about Direct Payments and the service offered by Disability Direct. Amarjit explained the concept of Direct Payments and how the system works.

A Member of the Committee reported concerns that there was a lot of negativity from Home Care Assistants regarding Direct Payments. The member advised that her Home Care Assistant had accused her of 'doing her out of three hours work'. This attitude was upsetting. The member also advised that fears and misconceptions about the impact of Direct Payments on traditional provided services could negatively influence people's choice over Direct Payments.

Steve Sadler responded that one of the barriers to increased take up nationally had been identified as the attitudes of local authority staff and that myths about the impact of Direct Payments needed to be addressed. In addressing this issue Derby had been successful in encouraging more people to take the Direct Payment option as staff had come to perceive the benefits. There continued to be an ongoing programme of raising awareness. In response to another question Derby recognised that awareness amongst health authority workers may not have had sufficient opportunities to learn about Direct Payments. Steve affirmed that Social Services were committed to Direct Payments.

Andy Findlay commented that Direct Payments was very good. However his only concern was that people assumed disabled people only wanted to paint or draw, this wasn't always the case.

Judy Bateman commented that parents of disabled children were being presented with conflicting and confusing information about services and Direct Payments. She reported that families were being presented with the message that services would reduce if people took up Direct Payments thus placing pressure on families to accept provided services.

Steve responded that the take up of Direct Payments to families with disabled children was increasing. In this case there seemed to be two issues:

1. Assessment of need

- a. To be eligible to receive a Direct Payment a person must be eligible for services following an assessment. If a person is informed that they are not eligible for services and are unhappy with this they should initially represent their views to the team manager.
- b. If people are unhappy with the response they should use the social services complaints procedure.

2. Choice of Direct payment

- a. If the authority has determined that someone is eligible for services, which they would normally provide then the level of these services must be offered as a Direct Payment as a first choice.
- b. If people are being denied the choice of Direct Payments they should represent their views as described above.
- c. There are occasions where the local authority can decide not to give a Direct Payment. Reasons for this should be explained to families of disabled children.

Pat Fletcher commented that at the Job Centre advertisements for carers were always listed under nursing. The majority of people wanting to apply for carers job would not know to look under nursing. Steve responded that work needed to be done with the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure job Centre Plus understood these issues. He suggested that people speak to managers at Job Centre Plus to raise these concerns.

23/05 Deaf Forum

Resolved to defer consideration of this item to the next meeting.

24/05 Paths Consultation Questionnaire

Mick Watts distributed copies of the Paths Consultation questionnaire to Members asking them to complete and return to the Council in the pre-paid envelope. He also asked members to take extra copies for their groups and anyone else who would be interested in expressing their views. Additional copies could be received from Ray Brown whose contact details were on the questionnaire.

Nancy Pountain advised that the paths on Green Lane, Alvaston were in poor condition, especially for disabled people. Mick Watts responded that he would take this forward and respond to Nancy directly.

Mick reported that Ray Brown had encouraged members to join the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum – DADLAF. Nancy Pountain and Judy Bateman had volunteered and were now members.

25/05 Citywide Meeting Room Register

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Development and Cultural Services regarding the development of a Citywide register of accessible meeting rooms in partnership with the Voluntary Sector.

Mick Watts reported that at a recent meeting of the Project Group the issue of the lack of information about meeting room availability throughout the city was

discussed. It was agreed to seek the support of members of this Committee for developing a Citywide register of meeting venues.

Mick asked members to look at the proposed form for completion by each venue which would gather information on accessibility and suitability, particularly for disabled people. Mick advised that the Project Group would be looking at this issue in more detail at their next meeting and asked members to feed in any comments on the form at the Project Group meeting.

Amarjit Raju advised that he would very much welcome this register and that Disability Direct would be happy to look after the database.

26/05 Derby Station

Mick Watts reported that he was aware that discussions were taking place between the Council and Midland Mainline regarding major works to Derby Station. Mick would ensure that the issue of footbridge accessibility would continue to be raised as part of any station development plans. Any DRC developments on the issue would be reported to members.

27/05 A-Boards

Mick Watts reported that Council Cabinet had received a presentation on the options for the control of A-boards. Cabinet had resolved to defer any further consideration of the issue until next year. The issue then being considered as part of a wider strategy of city centre management issues, including the control of vehicles parked on the footway, which could be controlled through decriminalisation parking powers. Mick reported that he had discussed the proposed approach ~~this~~ with Pat Taylor from Derbyshire Association for the Blind and she was unhappy with the proposed approach and would be speaking directly with the Cabinet Member to express her views. Councillor Chera added that he would also contact the Cabinet Member.

28/05 International Day of Disabled People

Mick Watts advised the Committee that at the last meeting members had agreed that the theme for this year's event was Transport. A representative from Arriva would be attending the next Project Group meeting and he would try and get them on board for the event. Mick asked for volunteers to help organise the event. Mick advised that he would bring a full report to the next meeting.

Judy Bateman advised that DCIL members had expressed an interest in celebrating the event and wanted to join in with the Council's events. She advised that Mick should speak with Siobhan Williamson to discuss how DCIL could help.

29/05 Minutes of the DPAC Project Group – 18 July 2005

Off-peak Cycling in Pedestrianised Areas

Mick Watts reported that Derbyshire Association for the Blind and Derby Access Group had submitted objections to this proposal and so had the Project Group. Mick advised that he would give a further update at the next Project Group meeting.

Andrew Auld, commented that as a cyclist he thought that the signage for cyclists in the City was not clear.

Revive Healthy Living Project

Mick Watts reported that following lengthy discussions, two lifts would now be installed.

Resolved to note the Minutes

30/05 Work Programme

The Committee asked that the following items from the Forward Plan be included in the Work Programme:

DDA Implementation Criteria for Disabled People looking For Accommodation
Accommodation Strategy
Derby Homes Service Access Review

MINUTES END