

Time commenced : 6.30 pm  
Time finished : 8.15 pm

**DISABLED PEOPLE'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
1 APRIL 2004**

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

In Attendance: Councillor Carr

**Representing Groups**

Alison Hicking – Derby Deaf Forum  
Amarjit Raju – Disability Direct  
Martin Austin – Freedom Forum  
Edith Storer – EMASH  
Nancy Pountain – Derby Access Group  
Pat Fletcher – Derbyshire Coalition for Inclusive Living  
Trevor Ford – Derwent Housing Association  
George Sanders – CAMTAD  
Marta Hancock – Disability Direct  
Peter Walker – Support in to Work (on behalf of Anita Elwell)  
Roy Taylor – Derbyshire Association for the Blind

Mary Walters – Interpreter, Communications Unlimited

**City Council Advisors**

Sue Glithero – Director of Policy  
Kate Owen – Democratic Services Manager, Corporate Services  
Sarah Turner - Members Services Officer, Corporate Services  
Lesley Walker – Area Panel Manager, Policy Directorate  
Mick Watts – Access Officer, Development and Cultural Services  
Ann Webster – Equalities Advisor, Policy Directorate

The Advisory Committee paid a silent tribute in memory of Councillor Ron Allen.

**51/03 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dhamrait, Sarah Fletcher – Derby Access Group, Linda Lucas – Derbyshire Coalition for Inclusive Living and Pat Taylor – Derbyshire Association for the Blind.

**52/03 Late Items Introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items.

## 53/03 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 54/03 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

**The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 55/03 Updates From Last Meeting

### **Highway, Transportation and Development Focus Group – Minute no 42/03 refers**

Mick Watts advised that he had put Nancy Pountain in touch with the contractors who advised they were not responsible for the condition of the footpath on Green Lane. Nancy advised that this area was still in a shocking state and something needed to be done about it. Mick stated that he would liaise with Nancy to make sure a satisfactory outcome was reached.

### **Draft Revenue Budget 2004/5 to 2006/7 – Minute no 43/03**

Mick Watts advised that he was hoping to confirm additional funding for the DDA Reasonable Adjustment programme. He agreed to bring a report to the next meeting asking the Committee to comment on the proposed adjustments.

## 56/03 Minutes of the Disabled Peoples Advisory Committee – Highway, Transportation and Development Focus Group 16 February 2004

### **Derby Station Footbridge**

Mick Watts stated that Councillor Webb had written to Network Rail, Midland Mainline and local MP's about this issue. Councillor Webb advised he had received a response from Network rail saying that the matter was currently receiving their attention and the Chief Executive would be writing to him soon. Councillor Webb commented that he was disappointed that a press announcement had been made without first writing to the Committee with their response. The Council would have no statutory control over the footbridge and could not enforce that they have lift access to the platforms. Councillor Webb urged individual organisations to write to Network Rail to voice their concerns. Marta Hancock advised that she had raised this matter at the Passenger Consultative Committee.

### **Issuing of Blue Badges**

The issue had come up as to whether Blue Badge regulations allowed for two badges to be issued to one user. Mick advised that his interpretation of the regulations meant that only one badge could be issued to one person. He would clarify this point at the next meeting.

**Resolved to note the minutes.**

## 57/03 Proposed All Postal Elections June 2004

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services that advised of the likelihood of the 2004 local and European elections being all-postal, subject to parliamentary approval.

Kate Owen, Democratic Services Manager, advised that the Government had decided that all Council elections previously scheduled for May, would be put back to the same date as the European Parliamentary election scheduled for 10 June 2004, so both elections could be conducted at the same time.

One of the main ideas to make all-postal voting as inclusive as possible was to establish 'Supported Delivery Points'. A Supported Delivery Point was a venue where an elector requiring assistance could attend. It would be staffed by a trained officer and open for several days up to and including polling day. The Council were still awaiting guidance from Central Government on how many Points there should be in any area, there were also issues about the Council's capacity to staff multiple Points for an extended period in the run-up to an election.

Another suggestion made locally was that groups of disabled people who met regularly might wish to fix a meeting in the period between the issue of the ballot papers and the close of poll, and invite the returning Officer to provide a member of staff to give advice and assistance on voting at the meeting – subject to officer availability.

The Committee were asked to comment on any possible concerns or implications for disabled people in the likely event of an all-postal election.

The Committee made the following comments. The Committee were concerned about the service provided by the Royal Mail, particularly ensuring that everyone received their own post and no one else's, and they were concerned about putting the ballot papers back through the post ensuring the Council received them. Kate Owen advised that the Royal Mail were being very cooperative and saw this as a way of re-establishing their credibility. If people had concerns, they could bring their ballot paper to the Council House directly.

Alison Hicking was concerned that the two-week period between receiving the ballot papers and the election was very short. Many Deaf people would want to speak to their Social Worker to get assistance. This would also be an issue for people with basic skills. Kate shared Alison's concerns and the Council would do it's best to see different groups. The Government had set the timetable so this could not be changed.

The Committee suggested having a 'Supported Delivery Point' in each ward. Alison Hicking asked if the Council would provide a sign language interpreter at certain Delivery points and advertise this service. Kate advised that this would be looked into. The Committee suggested that the Council could also have an officer at Disability Direct, DAB or other groups.

Councillor Webb stated that the all-postal elections were a pilot for future elections and all difficulties would be reported back to Central Government for their consideration for future elections.

The Committee considered the likelihood of an all-postal election would mean that some people would be worse off, particularly minority ethnic communities, and people who could not read. Kate advised that the literature accompanying the ballot papers could include contact details in the three community languages that the Council used and could be made available in other formats as required. A telephone and text phone number to ring for assistance would also be provided.

**Resolved to ask the Director of Corporate Services to consider the comments of the Committee.**

## **58/03 Area and Neighbourhood Unit**

The Committee received a presentation from Lesley Walker, Area and Neighbourhood Manager about the roles and responsibilities of the Area and Neighbourhood Unit.

The Committee commented that this was an excellent presentation and they particularly liked seeing the hard copy of the presentation on yellow paper, which was more suitable for partially, sighted people. It was agreed that all future presentations would be printed on yellow paper.

Amarjit Raju asked if the Neighbourhood Coordination team could advise local businesses on the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act, as businesses were not listening to Disability Direct. Lesley advised that Area Coordinators were trying to encourage local businesses to join the Neighbourhood Management Framework. She would speak with the Coordinators about this issue.

Amarjit Raju advised that the Unit were undertaking Disability Awareness Training.

Nancy Pountain advised that her Group used the new Sure Start building in Osmaston/Allenton for meetings but had been advised that they do not have an induction loop or access to one. Members thought this unacceptable in a new building.

Ann Webster suggested that Edith's group apply for an equality grant to buy a portable induction loop, to save them the effort collecting Derby CVS's loop. Ann agreed to send a grant pack to Edith.

Lesley Walker advised that although this building did not fall within her area of responsibility she would talk to Lesley Whitney about it.

Lesley asked if Members could forward any feedback or suggestions on the Area Panels or the Area and Neighbourhood Bases to her.

## **59/03 Independent Living Fund – ILF – Sacrifice of Benefit**

Amarjit Raju presented a report on the Independent Living fund. Members agreed that this issue needed more consideration and discussion within groups and that this would be an item on the next agenda.

## 60/03 Derby Community Legal Services Partnership

**Resolved to approve the nomination of Amarjit Raju as the Committee's representative on the Derby Community Legal Services Partnership Steering Group.**

## 61/03 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following item, on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

## 62/03 Repositioning of Policy Directorate Services

A report of the Director of Policy was considered which stated that Council Cabinet, at its meeting on 16 March 2004 had approved a report on mainstreaming equality services within the Council and focusing work on the community cohesion agenda within Derby City Partnership. The report had been referred to this committee, among others, for consideration and comment. Sue Glithero, Director of Policy and Councillor Carr, Council Cabinet Member for Personnel, Equalities and Direct Services addressed the Committee.

The Committee made the following comments:

Amarjit Raju commented on behalf of Disability Direct that the Equalities Unit had done an excellent job over the last couple of years and he hoped it would continue with the new organisation.

The Committee were concerned that they would find it difficult to know who to contact for specific issues. Sue Glithero advised that this would be looked at, so there could be one initial point of contact.

Trevor Ford stated that this repositioning of Equalities looked good on paper and looked like it would be more efficiently managed. It was a big improvement.

The Committee asked if Ann Webster would still be involved with the Committee. Sue Glithero advised that whichever job Ann chose, she was sure that something could be done to make sure Ann continued her links with the Committee.

**Resolved to report the comments of the Committee to Council Cabinet.**

MINUTES END