

Time commenced : 6.30 pm
Time finished : 8.35 pm

DISABLED PEOPLE'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE 23 SEPTEMBER 2004

Present: Councillor Webb (in the Chair)
Councillors Hird, Rehman Troup, Turner

In attendance: Councillor Redfern

Representing Groups

Pat Taylor – Derbyshire Association for the Blind
Michael Bishop – Derbyshire Association for the Blind
Judi Bateman – Derby Access Group
Nancy Pountain – Derby Access Group
Edith Storer – East Midlands Arthritis Self Help Group
Pat Fletcher – Derbyshire Coalition for inclusive living
Trevor Ford – Derwent Housing
Martin Austin – Freedom Forum and Disability Direct
Alison Hicking – Derby Deaf Forum
Marta Hancock – Disability Direct

John Emery – BSL Sign Language Interpreter, Communications
Unlimited

City Council Advisors

Stuart Corbett – Highway Manager, Development and Cultural Services
Mahroof Hussain – Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer,
Corporate Services
Sharon Jackson – Corporate Customer Services Manger, Finance
Michael Kay – Group Leader – Health and Safety, Corporate Services
Simon Longley – Assistant Director, Education
Yvonne Pearson – Project Manager Carers and Disabled People's
Employment, Social Services
Pam Thompson – Consultation Support Officer, Policy Directorate
Sarah Turner – Members Services Officer, Corporate Services
Ann Webster – Equalities Standard Project Manager, Policy Directorate

01/04 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chera, Maurice Kilminster – Derby City Osteoporosis Group, George Sanders – CAMTAD, Amarjit Raju, Disability Direct and Linda Lucas – Derbyshire Coalition for Inclusive Living

02/04 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

03/04 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

04/04 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment:

Minute Number 73/03 – Towards Work Disability Partnership

To delete the second sentence of the second paragraph. ‘Yvonne had been appointed Diversity Manager’.

05/04 Minutes of the Disabled People’s Advisory Committee – Highway Transportation and Development Focus Group Held on 21 June, 12 July and 9 August 2004

Resolved to note the minutes.

06/04 Proposals for Reception Area Standardisation

The Committee received an oral report from Sharon Jackson, Corporate Customer Services Manager, on the proposals for the reception area’s standardisation. Sharon advised the Committee that the proposals would include all receptions in the City Centre:

- The Council House
- Derby Advice
- Roman House
- Saxon House
- Middleton House
- Bio House
- Tourist Information Centre

A project team had been put together and members of the Committee were asked to forward any ideas on ways to improve the reception areas to Sharon or Ann Webster. Recommendations would be passed to the project board on 22 October 2004. It was envisaged that these improvements would be implemented by 31 March 2005.

Pat Taylor asked if a member of the Derbyshire Association for the Blind (DAB) could be included in the project team. Sharon welcomed a nomination from DAB.

07/04 Consultation on Hospital Car Parking Charges

The Committee received a presentation from Mahroof Hussain, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer on the Social Care and Health Commission's review of Hospital Car Parking charges. The Committee were asked their views on:

- The principle of car parking charges for
 - Patients
 - Visitors
- Effect of charges on patients and visitors to the hospital, if any
- Level of charges - were they too high, about right or too low
- Location of car parks and number of spaces
- Any changes that the Committee would like to see to the car parking at the hospital.

A member of the Committee commented that disabled people's parking bays in both hospitals were rarely accessible and were not wide enough. At the City Hospital, the disabled people's parking spaces were at opposite ends of the car park from the pay machine, and the drop curbs at both hospitals were not level or at the right height.

A Member of the Committee commented that the disabled parking bays were always full when they visited the hospital and asked if any one policed the use of the disabled parking spaces, as most cars did not seem to have blue badges.

Another issue raised was the lack of tactile pavements around the City Hospital and the DRI.

Issues were raised regarding the different ways in collecting car parking charges as some of the smaller clinics had pay and display car parks. Another member asked if disabled people could be exempt from car parking charges at the hospitals in Derby.

Ann Webster raised the issue of some disabled drivers being unable to reach the machine, while sitting at the wheel, at the exit barrier to insert their ticket to leave the car park.

The Committee were advised that there was a time frame of 15 minutes between paying for your car parking and leaving the car park. Members of the Committee were concerned that not all disabled people would be able to exit the car park in that time frame.

Mahroof advised the Committee that there was a concessionary ticket that could be purchased at a cost of £7 for seven days and £20 for 30 days 28 days. Members were not aware of this option.

Members were not happy with the travel claim facility at the hospital and disabled people were only able to claim for bus fares and not taxis which was discriminatory as not all disabled people found busses accessible. The Committee commented that there was only a bus once an hour, which cut people's options down for what transport to use.

Marta advised that Disability Direct had discussed the issue of volunteers paying for car parking and wanted volunteers to get free parking. The Committee strongly agreed with this comment.

Resolved

- 1. to forward the Committee's comments to the hospitals for their consideration and to include the comments in the Social Care and Health Commission's Review of Hospital Car Parking Charges.**
- 2. to recommend that volunteers working at the hospital get free parking.**

08/04 Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act and Equality Standard for Local Government in the Education Service

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Education on the progress being made in the Education Service on implementing the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (DDA) and the Equalities Standard for Local Government. Simon Longley – Assistant Director Education, advised that the Education Service was the largest department in the City Council, covering a complex range of services and linking to many partners within and outside the Council. The service included:

- 104 schools with delegated management, exercising responsibility for all personnel, curriculum, financial and premises matters within guidelines from the Council's wide range of school support services
- Adult learning services
- youth services
- early years and childcare service
- sport and leisure services

To assist schools in complying with the DDA, the education service had provided a model policy format for all schools. This had given them a structure to consider the three areas covered by the DDA.

- buildings
- curriculum
- information provision

The Education Service's administrative staff were mostly based at Middleton House. These offices were extremely difficult to adapt fully for disabled people because of their layout, especially differences in floor level. There were a number of facilities for disabled people including a ramp up to the main entrance, automatic doors at the main entrance and an induction loop in reception area.

The Education Service was responsible for five adult learning centres, some adult learning activities took place at schools across the city. A suitability survey of all adult properties was carried out in the spring 2003. This looked at how well the

properties met the needs of their service users. One of the criteria used in the suitability surveys was accessibility for disabled users.

The Education Service was also responsible for nine youth centres. A number of the Youth Centres had received Special Educational Needs and Disability Act funding from GOEM. These included Lancaster Sports Centre and Southgate Youth Centre.

A Member of the Committee advised that she tried to enrol on a course at Littleover Community School and due to steps to the classroom asked if they could re-site the class with no satisfactory response. Simon Longley responded that this was a perfect illustration of schools in the west of the city not being accessible. It was hoped that all secondary schools would be refurbished through 'Building Schools for the Future' funding over the next 10/15 years. A member of the Committee asked if evening classes could be provided in accessible schools only.

A Member of the Committee was concerned that Deaf parents of hearing children were being discriminated against, as schools would not pay for interpreter services, forcing many families to use friends to interpret for them. Another issue raised was schools procedures for advising parents on schools re-opening after bad weather or work that had had to take place during term time. Generally schools used Radio Derby to broadcast to parents when schools would be re-opening. Deaf parents were unable to use this and one incidence saw a parent going to school everyday to check if it was open.

Simon Longley advised that governing bodies should make reasonable adjustments for disabled children or their families. The Council could only challenge the school and could not instruct the governing bodies on how to spend their budgets. Simon commented that the press was used frequently to communicate with parents but Deaf parents could contact the education service directly for information.

Ann Webster suggested that as the schools knew who the Deaf parents were they could text them with information.

A member of the Committee asked if disabled children would be able to take education equipment home as currently in most schools there was not enough equipment to go round all children, which discriminated against individual disabled children. Simon Longley responded that they were seeking to provide inclusive education and was surprised that a child who needed to use a laptop at home could not have one. He asked that individual cases be brought to his attention and he would take these up with the individual schools. Ann Webster suggested that the statement of educational needs for these children should be expanded to include "equipment to be used for homework".

Resolved to note the report.

09/04 Consultation of the Draft Licensing Policy

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services on the Council's proposed draft Licensing Policy. Michael Kay, Group Leader – Health and Safety, advised the Committee that the way in which certain licenses were

dealt with was changing. The Licensing Act 2003 introduced a new way in dealing with Alcohol, Public Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment Licenses. Local Authorities would be responsible for implementing the Act which meant that from February 2005 the Council would consider these licenses under one new system.

As part of this new process the Council had to produce a Licensing Policy. This set out how it would achieve its responsibilities under the act. Before implementing this policy, the Council was required to carry out a consultation exercise. This would take place throughout October 2004 and involved a mix of meetings, displays, mail shots and exhibitions. Following the consultation exercise, the comments that had been received would be collated and considered by the Council's Licensing Officers and Members of the Council's Licensing and Appeals Committee.

Ann Webster stated that there was a campaign called 'Free to Pee' which was aimed at pubs, clubs and shops in cities. on the eve of the introduction of the final strands of the Disability Discrimination Act, Volunteers from the Committee would go to pubs and clubs in Derby and put signs on toilet doors that were inaccessible to disabled people. Ann asked if accessibility issues would be investigated as part of the new Licensing Legislation. Michael advised that DDA and health and safety issues would be looked at separately from the Licensing conditions.

Councillor Redfern asked that this issue be taken to the Licensing and Appeals Committee for clarification. Ann Webster stated that from 1 October 2004 premises would be breaking the law if they were not accessible to disabled people.

Councillor Webb asked that once the policy had been through the consultation process that it be brought back to the Committee and a presentation be made on the terms and conditions of the licensing policy.

Resolved to note the report and request a further report detailing the results of the consultation and details of the Licensing Policy.

10/04 Control of A-Boards on the Highway

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Development and Cultural Services on the options for the control of A-boards on the highway. At the last meeting Pat Taylor from DAB raised the issue of A-boards. She expressed concerns about the location and number of boards in the City Centre. There were five possible options for the Control of A-boards on the highway:

- Investigate and respond to individual complaints and observed A-board obstruction
- Arrange removal where particular dangers were created. This was the current position.
- Adopt a licensing scheme under part V11A of the Highways Act 1980 - Previously considered but due to highway staff resource issues and legal difficulties in taking enforcement action, not progressed
- Adopt guidelines, which control the design and location of A-boards - Approach previously agreed by this committee.
- Adopt a zero tolerance policy

Members of the Committee agreed in general that A-boards were a nuisance and made it difficult for some disabled people to get round the town centre. It was also

pointed out that parents with push chairs and prams found it difficult to manoeuvre around A-boards. Stuart Corbett - Highway Manager, advised that until a complaint was received, A-boards were not inspected. Items were picked up on a daily worksheet and then investigated whether they were an obstruction and it was up to the highway inspector to decide.

Councillor Redfern advised the Committee that Leeds City Council already had a zero tolerance policy on A-boards in the City.

Councillor Turner stated that for a long time he had been appalled that people were allowed to put A-Boards on the public highway. He suggested that the boundary of the public highway and where private property begins was more clearly defined to stop any confusion. Councillor Hird suggested that the Council looked into the legal aspect of how Leeds adapted a zero tolerance policy on A-boards. The Council needed to know what work Leeds had done and this needed to be investigated.

Resolved to recommend to Council Cabinet that the Council adopt a zero tolerance policy on A-boards in the City Centre.

11/04 Equality Impact Assessment Form and Guidelines

Resolved to bring the form back to the committee once officers had commented on it too.

12/04 Delivering Equality for Disabled People – Consulting on Extending the Disability Discrimination Act

Resolved to ask the Disabled Peoples Advisory Committee – Highways, Transportation and Development focus group to consider this item at their meeting on 4 October 2004.

13/04 Work Programme

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

14/04 International Day of Disabled People

Resolved to ask the Disabled Peoples Advisory Committee – Highways, Transportation and Development focus group to consider this item at their meeting on 4 October 2004.

MINUTES END