

Time commenced : 6.30 pm  
Time finished : 8.40 pm

## **DISABLED PEOPLE'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE 17 MARCH 2005**

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

In attendance: Councillor E Berry

### **Representing groups**

Pat Taylor – Derbyshire Association for the Blind  
Maurice Kilminster – Derby City Osteoporosis Group  
Judy Bateman – DCIL  
Nancy Pountain – Derby Access Group  
Marta Hancock – Disability Direct  
Alison Hicking – Derby Deaf Forum  
Trevor Ford – DSHF  
Edith Storer – EMASH  
Pat Fletcher – DCIL  
Sarah Fletcher – Derby Access Group  
Mary Walters – British Sign Language interpreter

### **City Council Advisors**

John Brown – Head of Sport and Leisure, Education Service  
Fiona Colton – Early Years and Childcare Manager, Education service  
Chris Edwards – Assistant Director, Property Services  
Sharon Hancock – Project Co-ordinator, Derby Homes  
Rachel Levy – Constitutional Services Officer, Corporate Services  
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  
Mahroof Hussain – Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer, Corporate Services  
Maureen King – Senior Librarian, Development and Cultural Services

## **38/04 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Troup and Rehman, George Sanders – CAMTAD and Martin Austin – Disability Direct.

## **39/04 Late Items Introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items.

## 40/04      Declarations of Interest

Councillor Webb declared a personal interest in minute number 42/04 as he was a Board Member of Derby Homes.

## 41/04      Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 42/04      Methods of Identifying Disabled Customers - Consultation

Sharon Hancock – Derby Homes asked the group for help and advice in trying to identify vulnerable customers. Work was being planned on properties throughout Derby, this would involve approaching tenants at their homes and it was agreed that it would be helpful to know which of the tenants were vulnerable.

Nancy Pountain suggested that the tenants be contacted by phone to arrange an appointment and that when attending the properties, staff should have some form of accessible identification with them. It was also suggested that a friend could be present to give the tenant more confidence. It was noted that most visually impaired people and Deaf people had a social worker. Social Services would be able to help with distributing information. Ann Webster suggested sending a letter to all tenants asking them if they were disabled people and if they needed any reasonable adjustments either to the property or to other services provided by Derby Homes.. Pat Taylor expressed concerns regarding a letter being sent as many visually impaired tenants who live alone would not be able to access the letter. Ann commented that she didn't mean a letter in isolation, but part of a wider publicity drive, including radio coverage and also that the information be put onto a tape. Pat said she could help publicising this to visually impaired people in Derby. Alison Hicking suggested that Social workers be told about the letters before they are sent, as there are many Deaf people who could not read who will ask their social workers to help.

## 43/04      Fire Safety and Disabled People

Chris Edwards – Assistant Director, Property Services updated the committee on the progress being made with the fire safety procedures for disabled people. It was noted that disabled employees now had individual personal evacuation plans and managers had been provided with guidelines about producing these plans with disabled employees... Meetings with disabled members were held in meeting rooms on the ground floor, for easy access and evacuation if needed. Mick Watts suggested a practice run of evacuating room 96 at the next meeting now that the new emergency exit has been completed. A question was raised regarding the use of a deaf alerter system for deaf employees. Chris Edwards responded that it was currently being investigated.

**Agreed to note the report and resolved to have a practice evacuation of room 96 at the next meeting.**

## 44/04      Potential Role for Advisory Committees in Health Scrutiny

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services on the potential role of Advisory Committees in supporting the Social Care and Health Commissions health scrutiny functions. Mahroof Hussain – Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer, advised the Committee that the Health & Social Care Act 2001 gave local authorities with Social services additional power to scrutinise the National Health Services. This responsibility rested with the Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Commission. The new powers enabled the commission to review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services within the city. The Advisory Committees could assist the Commission with identifying appropriate groups for further consultation on topic reviews. The Advisory Committees could support the Health Scrutiny function by identifying health issues within their respective communities and presenting them to the Social Care Commission for its consideration.

A question was raised regarding the kind of strategy that would be used to consult with disabled people. Mahroof responded that it depended on the issue, it was not necessary to consult everyone on every topic. Mahroof explained that individuals who would like to be involved would only be co-opted on to the Committee for individual topics.

Ann Webster welcomed this report as the Disability Rights Commission had mentioned the importance of involving disabled people in scrutiny, in their draft Code of Practice on the new Disability Discrimination Act - Public Duty to Promote Disability Equality.

**Agreed to note the report.**

## 45/04      Library Services for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired People

Maureen King – Senior Librarian, Development and Cultural Services, informed the Committee that surveys had been conducted to assess how the libraries could become more accessible for Deaf and hearing-impaired people. It was noted that the survey had produced good suggestions such as, to improve the signage in the libraries, include a pictorial guide to the library in BSL, internet taster sessions tailored for Deaf users, BSL training for staff and portable induction loops that could be used anywhere in the building. Maureen explained that there would be another meeting in May to discuss more ideas, if any members have any suggestions they should contact Maureen before the meeting.

## 46/04      Early Years and Childcare Places Funding

Fiona Colton – Early Years and Childcare Services, informed the Committee of the plans to create new childcare places across the city. The service was planning on sending out information to parents about the services schools offer and the admission process. A list would be available detailing child minders that have extra skills such as British Sign Language. It was noted that the Government had stopped the provision of home care child minders but the Council were going to

continue to encourage child minders to offer services that were best suited to the child. There were also other enhanced services in the city that could provide additional support for children with hearing and visual impairments. A question was raised concerning the admission appeal process for schools that do not have places for disabled children, as many parents could not get their children to a special school due to the location. Fiona Colton replied that the Council controlled and set the admissions policy but did not control the admissions in to individual nurseries and schools. Admissions were controlled by the governing bodies of each school. Councillor Webb suggested that a recommendation be placed on behalf of the committee to make it possible for the Council to amend the admission criteria to have criteria for disabled children similar to the criteria for children looked after.

Judy Bateman commented that parents of special needs children tend to struggle to get child care out of school hours and this left families disadvantaged. Fiona Colton responded that this was why the strategy needed to be built on and the new places created now. Councillor Webb proposed that priority should be given to provide for out of school clubs for disabled children, particularly five to eight year olds.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To recommend Council Cabinet to consider that siblings of disabled children have priority over out of school / nursery places**
- 2. To recommend Council Cabinet to consider adding disabled children to the admissions to school criteria with a similar standing to children looked after.**

## **47/04 Council's Sports Facility and Physical activity Strategy**

The Committee received a presentation from Phil Bavefoot – strategic Leisure on the Council's Sports Facility and Physical Activity Strategy. It was noted that the strategy was currently in a consultative stage and that questionnaires had been sent out.

Phil asked the Committee if members would be interested in taking part in the Activity Alliance which met twice a year, as their views would be very much appreciated. Councillor Webb suggested that if members were interested in joining the alliance, they should contact Sarah Turner who would make the arrangements.

## **48/04 Consultation on the Draft Code of Practice for the New Public Duty for Disability Equality**

Ann Webster informed the group that she had received a copy of the draft code of practice and had been given a deadline of 22 April 2005 to make any responses to it. She had attended a meeting with the Disability Rights Commission and they were urging disabled people and local councils to respond to the consultation document. Ann asked if any members would be interested in meeting to discuss the document in detail to form the basis of the Council's response. Ann was also

inviting members of the Council's Disabled Employees Network. The following members expressed an interest. Marta Hancock, Nancy Pountain, Councillor Webb, Pat Taylor, Judy Bateman, Pat Fletcher, Sarah Fletcher and Mick Watts.

#### **49/04      Deaf Forum**

It was agreed to defer this item till the next meeting.

#### **50/04      Minutes of the DPAC Project Group – 25 January 2005**

It was agreed to defer this item till the next meeting.

#### **51/04      Recommendation to Council Cabinet – Derby Station**

Mick Watts informed the Committee that a draft letter had been written to send out to MPs regarding the concerns of disabled people about the station not having lift access to all platforms Mick presented the draft letter to the committee for comments. It was suggested that the lighting of the station be mentioned in the letter as visually impaired people have had accidents because of the lack of light. Mick responded that he would take that issue directly to the station management.

**Agreed to note the letter.**

#### **52/04      A – Boards Update**

Mick Watts updated the Committee on the progress that had been made on the A-board situation. It was noted that a detailed questionnaire has been given to Local Authorities across the country to find out the different approaches taken towards A-boards. It was discovered that many Authorities had a zero tolerance approach to this issue. The full audit throughout the City was completed on 23 February, there were 94 A-boards on the streets and the ownership had been identified. The owners have been invited to attend a meeting so that their views could be expressed, Mick Watts asked the Committee if members would also attend the meeting to give their opinions.

Ann Webster suggested that the street café licensing guidelines also needed re-visiting to make sure that it did not conflict with any approach that was taken on A boards.

#### **53/04      Work Programme**

It was agreed to defer this item till the next meeting.

**MINUTES END**