

Minutes of Disability Consultation Forum Meeting

Friday 20 January 2006 Castle Hill Centre, Bolton

Present:

Martin Dixon	Fairness Team Bolton Council (Chair)
Jayne Craig	Fairness Team Bolton Council (Co Chair)
Kirstin Jones	Jubilee Centre
Brenda Trigrance-Clark	Community Representative
Linda Evans	
Jenni Smith	Bolton at Home
Margaret McTaggart	Good Companions
Jill Cowan	Good Companions
Denise Taylor	Unison Disabled Members
Eileen Liptrot	National Osteoporsis Society
Elaine Sherrington	Councillor, Bolton Council
Martin McLoughlin	Bolton Community Transport
Sue Stockton	Backcare
Sheila Jackson	Parking Services Bolton Council
Ian Taylor	Parking Services Bolton Council
Jane Fulham	Adult Services Bolton Council
Susan Hall	Adult Services Bolton Council
Colin Jenkins	Highways, Bolton Council

Apologies

Marge Ashton	Direct Payments
Thaira Rasheed	Health and Care Together, Bolton CVS
Eileen Bennett	Jubilee Centre
Dorothy Martland	Diversity in Barrier Breaking Communications

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Jayne and Martin welcomed everyone to the meeting of Bolton Council's Disability Consultation Forum.

- 1.2 The Forum agreed that the minutes of the last meeting were a correct record.

2. Matters Arising From Previous Meeting

(i) Terms of Reference and Consultation Protocol

Jayne had asked Forum members to pass further comments to her by 31 October relating to the Terms of Reference and Consultation Protocol. No further comments were received and they have now been finalised.

(ii) Website Survey

Jayne circulated a copy of the results of the website survey undertaken by the Council's Corporate Information Unit, and asked for comments.

Jenni and Brenda both commented that they were aware of difficulties accessing the Council's website.

Brenda suggested that Jayne contact Kath Sutherland, Start Ability who would like to join the Disability Consultation Forum.

(iii) Highways Consultation

Colin Jenkins attended the meeting to up date the Forum on the project to make the highways in the Borough more accessible to disabled people.

Since the last Forum meeting Colin organised a Consultation event in the Tic Centre. This was attended by 160 people, 65 of which have agreed to work with Colin in the form of an Audit Group. The aim of the Audit Group is to assist in ensuring the highway is at the standard required by disabled people and produce a Code of Practice which can be used in the future by the Highway Department.

Colin is keen to get further information and encourage more people to join the Audit Group. He suggested arranging another consultation event at the beginning of March in the Tic Centre. Martin McLoughlin, Bolton Community Transport

offered to assist with the transport to the event.

Colin has taken a video of the route which is being assessed. This video is available to Forum members who wish to comment on the accessibility of the highway.

Agreed Actions:

Colin to send Jayne details of the next highway consultation to pass to members of the Forum

Members of Forum who wish to receive a copy of the video of the highway that is being audited to contact Jayne.

3. Car Parking

- 3.1 Sheila Jackson, Parking Services attended the meeting to discuss car parking issues in Bolton. She informed the group that Parking Services manage the Borough's car parks equivalent to over 4000 spaces.
- 3.2 Further information and contact details for Parking Services are circulated with these minutes.
- 3.3 Bolton has been awarded the Secure Parking award for many of its car parks, and most car parks except the smaller ones have CCTV security systems installed.
- 3.4 Sheila suggested that people contact Parking Services using the contact details circulated with these minutes if they have issues relating to parking in Bolton. This information is needed to ensure Parking Services address the correct and relevant issues.
- 3.5 Sheila circulated maps showing the car parks in the Borough which have been professionally audited for disability access. She asked for comments from disabled people on these car parks to ensure that what they have planned to do as a result of the audits it what disabled people want and need.
- 3.6 Martin McLoughlin, Bolton Community Transport commented that he could not get into the car parks with Community

Transport Vehicles because of the height of the barrier. As he transports disabled people he has to park on the street and quite often gets a ticket.

- 3.7 Sheila informed the Forum that anyone with a blue badge could park all day in any Council owned car park. A map of these car parks can be obtained from the Tourist Information Office, One Stop Shop or downloaded from the Council's website www.bolton.gov.uk
- 3.8 The Forum recommended that this map is updated to include information on the number of accessible parking bays in each car park.
- 3.9 Brenda commented that some accessible parking spaces had been turned into loading bays or now had double yellow lines. Ian Taylor, Parking Services, suggested that a solution to this may be using these bays for loading at particular times of the day, for example early in the morning, and accessible parking bays during the day.
- 3.10 The group did agree that parking in Bolton has improved over the last 2 – 3 years.

Agreed Action:

Sheila and Martin McLoughlin to meet to identify suitable areas in Bolton for Bolton Community Transport to park.

Disabled people or members of Forum to contact Parking Services direct if they have issues with parking in Bolton.

4. The Blue Badge Scheme

- 4.1 Jane Fulham, Adult Services and her team administer the Blue Badge Scheme for the Borough. She explained that as a result of the Traffic Management Act the Council will be given the power to police the Blue Badge scheme more stringently to alleviate abuse of badges. Jane welcomed comments from the Forum on how the system could be improved.

4.2 The following suggestions were made:

- Locate the photograph on the side of the badge that is displayed
- Indicate on the badge which way up the badge should be displayed.
- A code could be put on the badge so a Traffic Warden can identify who the badge belongs to.
- Because certain disabilities can result in good and bad days, this can affect the results of the medical assessment.

4.3 Jane agreed to confirm whether the Ring and Ride service was allowed to display a Blue Badge.

4.4 One of the Forum members indicated that the Ring and Ride service has a user group, suggesting that the Forum liaise with this group.

4.5 The Forum agreed that Cheadle Square is a good place for disabled people to park as it is close to the town centre and beside Shop Mobility.

Agreed Actions:

Jane Fulham to confirm if the Ring and Ride service can display a blue badge.

Jayne Craig to get further information on the Ring and Ride user group and pass to members of the Forum.

5. International Day of Disabled People Celebrations

5.1 Jayne informed the group that the event on 23 November had been a good success with over 160 people attending. All feedback had been very positive.

5.2 Martin explained to the Forum that there had been a problem at the last minute when the Fire Authority informed the Albert Halls that only a limited number of wheelchairs could attend

the event as a result of fire regulations and evacuation procedures. This resulted in some people not being able to attend. An alternative venue will have to be booked for the next event. Some people suggested the TIC Centre at Farnworth.

- 5.3 Jayne and Martin welcome any ideas or assistance with organising the next event.

6. Employment of Disabled People

- 6.1 Martin informed the group that the Council produces figures on the number of disabled staff it employs on an annual basis. The Council has set itself the target of having 7% of its workforce who consider themselves to be disabled. Currently 3.06% of staff are disabled.
- 6.2 The Council are keen to encourage more disabled people to work for the organisation.
- 6.3 The Forum agreed that employment of disabled people should be discussed at a later meeting.

Agreed Action:

Jayne to put employment of disabled people on a future agenda.

7. Date of Next Meeting

- 7.1 To be confirmed