

# Disability Liaison Group

**Wednesday, 9 January 2008**

Present:

Chorley Borough Councillors:

Councillor David Dickinson (Chair) and Councillors Catherine Hoyle, Rosie Russell, Iris Smith and Ralph Snape

Chorley Borough and Lancashire County Council Officers:

Gary Hall (Director of Finance), Paul Whittingham (Development Control Manager), Jo Oliver (Waste and Contaminated Land Team Leader), Alan Capstick (Engineering Services, LCC), Julie Riding (Assessment Manager), Sarah Dobson (Performance Advisor - Corporate and Customer), Cath Burns (Economic Development Manager), Danny Manicolo (Liberata), Neil Houlihan (Liberata) and Ruth Hawes (Democratic Services Officer)

Disability Forum Representatives:

Eileen Bee (Disability Forum Co-Ordinator), Judy Daniels (Disability Forum), Alison Hansford (Disability Forum), Maureen Kay (Deaf and Disability Forum) and Ronnie Kay (Deaf Forum)

Sign Language Interpreter:

Carol Kyle (BSL Interpreter) and Catherine Moxon (BSL Interpreter)

Also in attendance:

PCSO Ray Chadwick

## **08.DLG.01 WELCOME BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair wished all the members of the Group a Happy New Year. The Group congratulated Councillor Ralph Snape on receiving an MBE. People present introduced themselves and their role at the meeting.

The Group were advised that Harold Rimmer sadly passed away and commended the enormous contribution Harold made over many years. Eileen Bee reported the Disability Forum would institute a 'Harold Rimmer Memorial Award' to be presented annually to the local shop/business/service that has done the most to improve its services for disabled people. The Group gave this heartfelt support.

## **08.DLG.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Nora Ball, Nancy Banks, Adrian Beardmore, Ivy Carroll, Christine Crankshaw, Albert and Rita Jeffery, David Lyon, Peter Mounsey, Terry Reynolds, Maurice Waterhouse.

## **08.DLG.03 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS (COUNCILLORS ONLY)**

No Councillors declared an interest in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

## **08.DLG.04 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Disability Liaison Group held on 10 October 2007 were confirmed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of apologies for absence from Alison Hansford.

The Group considered a schedule listing issues that have been considered at past meetings of the Liaison Group and summarising the action that has either been taken or is proposed by Officers.

#### Parking

5, a: Cars parking on Coronation rec. A car is being parked inside the rec when the gates are closed. A request will be made to the Parking Manager to patrol the area.

5, b: Disabled Bay outside the One Stop Shop. Alan Capstick advised there is support for an increase from half an hour, but there is a Traffic Regulation Order process to go through which could take 12-18 months.

It was noted that in Chorley blue badges could be used only for 3 hours, in other areas the use was unlimited. Gary Hall undertook to investigate this.

### **08.DLG.05 OPTIONS FOR THE WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTRACT**

The Chair introduced Jo Oliver from the Neighbourhoods Directorate to discuss options for the waste and recycling contract.

Jo outlined the alternate weekly collection and kerbside collection service currently provided by the Council and noted the excellent recycling rates in Chorley. Assisted and point of storage collections were available for people on request.

The waste and recycling contract was currently out to tender. The preferred option included a wheeled bin and pod within the bin to enable collection of paper and bottles from one container and this should reduce clutter and litter on collection days. The wheeled bin and pod were demonstrated and received a positive response.

Feedback was received in the following areas:

Assisted collection scheme on occasion receptacles were picked up but not returned.

Recycling collections broken glass was dangerous for guide dogs and children in particular.

Receptacles left across the kerbs were a trip hazard for partially sighted people.

Any issues could be reported to the contact centre (01257) 515151.

A suggestion was made that calendars for waste collection dates in large print be widely available.

The Chair thanked Jo for her attendance. Developments in this area would be reported to future meetings of the Group.

### **08.DLG.06 DEVELOPMENT OF THE COVERED MARKETS**

The Chair introduced Cath Burns from the Business Directorate and Danny Manicolo and Neil Houlihan from Liberata.

The officers explained they were looking at the development of the covered market, to make it safer and more appealing. The current plans were outlined to the Group and included the installation of a clear plastic roof over the central walkway, new ceiling and low energy lighting. Aspects such as signage and flooring would be chosen with consideration to the needs of people with disabilities. The outside of the market would also be redecorated.

The aim would be to make the market a centre piece and there would be further consultation later in the year.

The Group raised several issues, including the need to mark out the walkways to ensure people could pass between stalls and that it would be ideal to increase the gap between stalls in a particular area where there were often queues.

It was AGREED that the officers meet with Alison, Judy and any other volunteers to identify issue with walkways in the Covered Market and the Flat Iron.

It was noted that the flooring used would be non-slip and cleanable. Officers would attend a future meeting to consult on issues such as signage.

The Chair thanked the officers for their attendance.

#### **08.DLG.07 CHANGES TO HOUSING BENEFITS**

The Chair introduced Julie Riding from the Business Transformation Directorate.

Julie explained that from April there would be changes to the Housing Benefit system and the Council would like to talk to those organisations that would be involved with customers affected by the change.

The main change was that housing benefit would be paid to the claimant rather than to the landlord. Only be a small percentage of people would be affected by the change as the majority of housing benefit recipients rent through social housing which is not affected by the change.

It was noted that there was a discretionary housing fund and if a shortfall occurred information would be provided about the fund, for example, a member of the family was disabled.

A leaflet would be sent out to Members of the Group and Councillors with further information.

The Chair thanked Julie for her attendance.

#### **08.DLG.08 UPDATE ON ASTLEY PARK, COUNCIL WEBSITE AND PLANNING ISSUES SUB-GROUP**

The Chair introduced Paul Whittingham from the Business Directorate who discussed options for the group about consultation on planning issues as currently this was limited. Paul could be contacted on [paul.whittingham@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:paul.whittingham@chorley.gov.uk) or (01257) 515349.

Eileen advised that the Forum would be keen to have an input on major applications but would not be able to comment on all applications. The Forum would be particularly interested in applications relating to public spaces.

It was AGREED to set up a small focus group to look at the criteria for planning applications, who to consult, how plans are presented and the Council's web site generally. It was noted that plans were currently published to the web site in pdf format. It was AGREED that other formats would be investigated that worked better with screen readers.

Consultation letters could not yet be published on the web site as the letters inviting consultation required amendments to highlight their publication the web site. It was suggested that a disabled champion could be appointed within parish council's.

It was noted Members would be contacted for volunteers to join a focus group on Astley Park.

A suggestion was made that cards could be produced for people with disabilities to use to ask for assistance, for example, in shops. This would be investigated.

Chair