

Minutes of the West Berkshire Council's Disability Equality Scheme's External Scrutiny Board Meeting 24th June 2010

Item	Notes
Board Members in attendance	Bob King (Chairman), Alan Fleming (Vice-Chairman), Sabrina McNair, Keith Hester, Kate Green, Norma Weaver, Colin Parker, Mick Hutchins.
Others	Councillor Pamela Bale, Sharon Jones (Development Worker, West Berkshire User Led Organisation), Jan Evans (Head of Social Adult Care), Stephen Stace (Team Manager - Promoting Independence), Elaine Walker (WBC Principal Policy Officer, Equality and Diversity), David Lowe (Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager).
1. Introduction and Apologies	The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, Apologies were received from Graham Hunt (Newbury Town Council), John Carr, John Dolton and Councillor Julian Swift Hook.
2 - Minutes	The draft minutes of the meeting held on 18 th March 2010 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment: Page 3, final paragraph to read: Bus Timetables and Accessible Bus Stops: Changes to bus timetables in Reading mean that the last bus to a particular accessible bus stop in Tilehurst is leaving Reading at 19:40. Although later buses may be available, these stop at alternative bus stops located half a mile or more away. Actions were updated as follows: 1. EW to pass on to Graham Hunt that the Board would welcome him to future meetings. Complete. 2. EW to report back to the Board as appropriate regarding presenting to council officers at future Senior

Item	Notes
	<p>Management Seminars.</p> <p>Action 1: Ongoing. EW to continue to report back to the Board.</p> <p>3. Councillor Swift-Hook to clarify action 144 with Matthew Scalpello.</p> <p>The following update was received:</p> <p>With regard to the availability (or not) of services we have constructed the site around Cabinet Office guidelines namely the <u>Integrated Public Sector Vocabulary (IPSV)</u> and <u>Local Government Navigation List (LGNL)</u>. The site's A-Z is specifically constructed around the <u>IPSV terms suitable for a Local Authority A-Z page where applicable</u> (we don't have any <i>beaches</i> or <i>sea defences</i> for instance).</p> <p>So we do provide access to information about 100% of all IPSV top tier services.</p> <p>Complete.</p> <p>4. EW to look into including the Board in a future member development session</p> <p>Action 2: Ongoing. EW to report back to the Board as appropriate.</p> <p>5. Jan Evans to respond the following questions:</p> <p>- What checks are there to ensure that people do not return to a critical level after initial care assessments?</p> <p>Response: Many individuals continue with a domiciliary care package following enablement, often a reduced amount. In these situations, the Council is acknowledging the individual continues to have 'critical' needs though less dependent than when the enablement started.</p> <p>For those whose care package ceases it is confirming the individual is now independent and thus does not have needs that need to be met with care services. They are all left with contact details should their circumstances change.</p> <p>- Respond to challenge that current care packages do not meet legislation (time constraints esp. in evenings)</p> <p>Response: This is now a matter being taken up formally through the Councils Complaints Procedure so I suggest it would be better to await a formal response rather than pre-empt the findings</p> <p>Complete</p>

Item	Notes
	<p>6. EW to enquire about future meetings of the Transport Forum.</p> <p>Jenny Graham (was Noble) has proposed a date for the next meeting of 21st July 2010.</p> <p>Complete.</p> <p>7. Cllr Betts to request further consideration of pavements in Tilehurst area</p> <p>8. Cllr Betts to consider review of balance between road and pavement repair.</p> <p>Road and pavement repair forms part of the work programme set each year and which is published and can be accessed via the following link: http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4696. Work is undertaken on a priority basis.</p> <p>NW noted that during some road works being carried out on St John's Road, the location of the temporary traffic lights prevented access to the dipped kerb, making it difficult for people in wheelchairs to find a suitable crossing point.</p> <p>Action 3: PB to pass this back to Highways for consideration of this can be resolved.</p> <p>9. Cllr Betts to investigate whether the raised traffic calming measure on Hildens Drive, Tilehurst could be converted to a pedestrian crossing.</p> <p>The Head of Highways has visited this location and noted that people do use the raised area as a crossing point. He is investigating whether this should be made a formal crossing.</p> <p>Action 4: EW to report back on progress.</p> <p>10. Cllr Betts to investigate the possibility of installing a pedestrian barrier along the A339 between Sainsbury's and Burger King.</p> <p>The footway is 2.5 metres wide so there is no statutory reason to install a barrier. However the Head of Highways has offered to walk the route with JC to understand the issues fully.</p> <p>Action 5: EW to contact JC to inform him of this offer.</p>

Item	Notes
	<p>11. Cllr Betts to investigate how the Highways service area have used the Department for Transport Inclusive Mobility Document.</p> <p>This document is used in project work.</p> <p>Complete.</p> <p>12. Cllr Betts to investigate the times that concessionary bus passes can be used.</p> <p>West Berkshire offer concessionary bus passes for use from 9am (compared to the statutory requirement of 9:30am). Passes are available in relation to disability and age, and it is not possible to set different start times to relate to the different reasons for having a pass. However travel tokens are an alternative which can be used at any time.</p> <p>The Board asked whether there was any evidence that allowing an earlier start time for bus passes caused capacity issues, or whether the reason for not bringing the time forward was financial. It was noted that in Reading passes can be used at any time.</p> <p>Action 6: PB to clarify the reason for not allowing the earlier use of concessionary passes.</p> <p>13. EW to enquire about the change to the application form for concessionary bus passes regarding driving licence refusal.</p> <p>There are two references to driving licences. One is a statutory requirement and was added last year. The other is an either/or provision to capture people who did not fit the CMT criteria.</p> <p>Complete.</p> <p>14. EW to forward the remaining sections of the single equality scheme when available</p> <p>The scheme was circulated to the DES Board, ME Forum and more generally to the public on 18th June 2010.</p> <p>Complete.</p>
3 – Home Care	Stephen Stace (Team Manager - Promoting Independence) attended the meeting to discuss the Home Care User

Item	Notes
<p>User Group</p>	<p>Forum. SS began by updating the Board on the current position of the Forum.</p> <p>The forum has been established for about a year and the fourth meeting was held last week. All service users were posted information about the forum however Royal Mail delays meant that some people did not get the information before the last meeting as intended. Other methods of communication are also being used including Consultation Finder, a page on our internet site and an article will be included in a future 'A Great Place to Live' publication.</p> <p>Action 7: SS to send information to Sabrina McNair for inclusion in the DES Board newsletter, and to Parish Councils for inclusion in local publications.</p> <p>It was suggested that instead of using Royal Mail, that carers were used to deliver the information to users. This had been considered but had been rejected in favour of Royal Mail as it had been considered that this would be the most reliable and timely method of delivery.</p> <p>SS added that a stand would be in place at the LINKs meeting on Friday.</p> <p>Action 8: SS to send minutes of last meeting to Alan Fleming for circulation.</p> <p>The Board asked if it had been considered that forum meetings be held in locations around the district. SS replied that the forum had decided to hold all meetings in Newbury at their first meeting. However alternative locations can be considered.</p> <p>Action 9: SS to consider alternative locations for future forum meetings.</p> <p>BK asked what benefits had been gained from the forum.</p> <p>SS replied that users are able to provide direct feedback on issues which highlights areas that the council needs to work on. It is also possible to compare experiences from those who obtain their services from different sources.</p> <p>There are currently 654 people in receipt of domiciliary care. This information is currently being mapped with a view to future analysis.</p> <p>SS confirmed that missed or late calls are being logged and the agency concerned is asked to account for this.</p> <p>MH suggested that these figures could be used as a performance measure.</p>

Item	Notes
	<p>BK asked what plans there are to look at the requirement for home care in the future given our ageing population.</p> <p>SS replied that we promote independence through a re-ablement programme, however ongoing care is provided as required.</p> <p>MH highlighted the use of two carers when this is not necessarily required. There is a danger that the user can be disempowered if the two carers are not sensitive to how they are acting together and toward the user.</p>
<p>4 – Community Care Discussion</p>	<p>Jan Evans (Head of Adult Social Care) attended the meeting to discuss community care issues through a question and answer session.</p> <p>AF asked when the curfew would be removed from users of domiciliary care agencies.</p> <p>JE – A retendering of the block contracts with domiciliary care agencies will be undertaken next year, at which point this can be reviewed. However there are currently two options for users:</p> <p>1 – Care Assistants have work rotas which end at 10pm after which there are 2 night wardens who are able to accommodate later requests as well as emergency needs.</p> <p>2 – Users can choose to use personal budgets which would allow them to purchase their own care and hours of care to meet their specific requirements.</p> <p>AF replied that the night wardens invariably respond that they cannot accommodate requests for later than normal visits. He suggested that the Council was in breach of the Disability Discrimination Act, Human Rights Act and European Convention on Human Rights for Disabled People by denying access to care after 10pm as this severely limits leisure and social activity in the evenings.</p> <p>JE – Breaches have not been made as there is provision for care at any time of the day or night through the use of night wardens or personal budgets. If night wardens are not fulfilling their brief then this must be resolved.</p> <p>Action 10: JE to investigate the availability of night wardens to respond to planned as well as emergency care.</p> <p>BK noted that nationally, the Citizens Advice Bureau have been advised of people taking up personal budgets and being required to comply with all existing employment laws. In some areas agencies are being set up to handle this</p>

Item	Notes
	<p>area for people. How is this being addressed in West Berkshire?</p> <p>JE – The issue of employment of personal assistants is certainly a challenging one. Currently there are four choices about how personal budgets can be managed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 – Individuals can manage their own budget. 2 – Individuals can ask family or friends to manage their budget. 3 – A brokerage service can be used to manage their budget 4 – The care manager can help set up the plan of services. <p>Some people choose to buy back into Council provided services, but the choice is open to go elsewhere.</p> <p>Support for setting up a support plan by another agency is being piloted by Kingsley. West Berkshire is choosing to proceed cautiously with an understanding of the issues that are arising from pilots to avoid such concerns as raised by BK.</p> <p>Where individuals choose to employ a personal assistant, the Council would work through the processes and risks with the individual using knowledge of the legislation. Kingsley has considerable expertise in this area.</p> <p>MH noted that there is no real choice in care provider as they all finish at 10pm.</p> <p>JE – All providers agreed to be available for longer hours during the contract tendering process, however it is accepted that this was not stated firmly enough in contracts. This will be taken forward on renewal of contracts.</p> <p>KH asked if he is entitled to any care and how he arranges this as his circumstances change.</p> <p>JE – Being registered blind does not automatically entitle anyone to care. However anyone over 65 can request and receive an assessment to understand their care needs.</p> <p>MH raised an issue around individuals who are entitled to equipment in their homes, for example hoists, stair lifts, etc. During the warranty period, servicing and repair costs are covered, however as the warranty expires, individuals are required to pay for this. There is currently no mechanism to deal with this through direct payments. This is also relevant for health and safety testing of equipment.</p>

Item	Notes	
	<p>KG asked if there was a procedure for replacing essential equipment when it breaks down under these circumstances.</p> <p>JE agreed that consideration should be given to contingency planning. Currently electrical equipment is provided and maintained through Electrical Store. The contract for this is due for retendering this year.</p> <p>JE thanked the Board for their questions.</p>	
5 – Equality Scheme and Action Plan	<p>EW informed the Board that the single equality scheme had now been circulated to the Board for consultation. A short questionnaire was attached to assist with feedback and feedback is invited from anyone on the district. The consultation period remains open until 27th August 2010 and all feedback is welcomed.</p> <p>Initial feedback was provided:</p> <p>AF – Too many references to pages on the internet</p> <p>BK – Pleased to see items included that have arisen from the Board.</p> <p>BK – Too many monitoring actions.</p> <p>Action 11: All to feedback any comments they have regarding the scheme.</p>	
6 – AOB	<p>Transport Forum update: Although there have been no meetings of the forum, activity has still taken place with bus and train companies and a report will shortly be posted on the WBDA website. KG and MH attended a meeting with the Disability and Inclusion Manager of First Great Western to view and highlight issues at a number of stations in the area. A number of actions were taken away.</p> <p>Monthly training is taking place for taxi drivers, which is being very well received.</p>	
	<p>Home Care User Forum update: Please see item 3.</p>	
	<p>Access Panel update: The panel is meeting on a regular basis, with many various applications being commented on, which are spread across the West Berkshire area. At present there are 8 members.</p>	
KG	Noted a number of acronyms used in a report which were not explained. The author will be contacted.	

Item	Notes	
	AF	Noted that the new disabled parking spaces outside the Market Street offices are very good.
	KH	<p>Asked where the real time bus signs are.</p> <p>KH replied there are two at Thatcham Broadway, one at the community hospital and one at Beenham Hill. They don't connect with the REACT system.</p>
	MH	User Led Organisation. A grant from the Department of Health along with matched funding from West Berkshire Council has allowed the employment of Sharon Jones - Development Worker for the West Berkshire User Led Organisation. Initially the organisation is looking to set up and advice and support centre particularly for people who are not currently able to obtain care services but would benefit from some services.
	MH	Notified the Board that a consultant will be undertaking a survey on the shared spaces in Newbury and has asked for his contribution for this along with some other individuals.
	EW	<p>The EIA on the Wharf car parks was circulated with the minutes for this meeting. The Board are asked to consider if there are any further points to be raised with Martyn Baker regarding this EIA.</p> <p>MH noted that he had not read the EIA as he did not agree with the consultation methods used.</p> <p>No further comments were received.</p>
	EW	<p>The Board requested a set of performance measures to sit alongside the equality scheme action plan. EW requested that the Board make suggestions as to what measures they feel would be useful.</p> <p>Action 12: All to consider and feed back to EW by July 30th.</p>
	BK	Notified the Board that he has resigned from the Citizens Advice Bureau although he will remain in post until a replacement is found and reasonably settled. The post of Chair of the DES Board will transfer to the new Chief Executive of the Citizen's Advice Bureau however Bob will remain Chair until the new appointee is firmly in post and able to take the role on.
7 – Membership Application Form	One application form has been received. This will be circulated to the Board for review.	

Item	Notes
Submissions.	Action 13: EW to circulate application form to the Board.
8 – Agree focus for next meeting	<p>The Board suggested a topic for the next meeting of updates for the Parkway development. However a decision on what to discuss was delayed until further suggestions had been sought from the Board.</p> <p>Action 14: EW to request ideas for the next agenda from all Board members.</p> <p>Dates for future meetings have been agreed as:</p> <p>Thursday September 30th 2010 – 10:30am</p> <p>Thursday January 27th 2011 – 10:30am (ending with lunch with Nick Carter)</p> <p>All meetings will be held in Committee Room 2 at the Council Offices in Market Street</p>