

Minutes of the West Berkshire Council's Disability Equality Scheme's External Scrutiny Board Meeting 30th June 2011

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Board Members in attendance	Jan Rothwell (Chairman), Alan Fleming (Vice-Chairman), Keith Hester, Norma Weaver, Sue Hinks, John Carr, Kate Green, Mick Hutchins
Others	Councillor Pamela Bale, Councillor Joe Mooney, Councillor Julian Swift-Hook, Graham Hunt (Newbury Town Council), Jan Evans (Head of Adult & Community Services), Nigel Owen (Project Manager Community Services) and David Baker (WBC Policy Officer), Jo England (Client Financial Services Manager), Stephen Stace (Service Manager), Debbie Vaughan-Davies (Business Manager), Peter Hayes.
1. Introduction and apologies	The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, Apologies: There had been no apologies submitted.
3.- Minutes	The draft minutes of the meeting held on 30 th June 2011 was approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.
4. - Matters arising	<p>Update on Hildens Drive Tilehurst: Mark Cole presented his findings on a road traffic survey in Hildens Drive. The results of the survey was as follows: <u>Survey at South West end</u> Northbound (towards build out) - Volume of vehicles recorded in the survey period 10,855. 85th Percentile speed 25 mph. Average speed 20.6 mph. Southbound (away from build out) - Volume of vehicles recorded in survey period 14,152. 85th Percentile speed 29 mph. Average speed 24.3 mph. <u>Survey at Raised Table</u> Northbound - Volume of vehicles recorded in survey period 12,480. 85th percentile speed 26 mph. Average speed 22.8 mph. Southbound - Volume of vehicles recorded in survey period 15,765. 85th Percentile speed 27 mph. Average speed 22 mph. <u>Survey at North East end</u> Northbound (away from build out) - Volume of vehicles recorded in survey period 14,981. 85th Percentile speed 31</p>

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	<p>mph. Average speed 26.5 mph. Southbound (towards build out) - Volume of vehicles recorded in survey period 15,715. 85th Percentile speed 29 mph. Average speed 24.5 mph.</p> <p>The survey results confirmed that speeds were low throughout the section of Hildens Drive surveyed and that the current speed reduction measures were very effective. This backed up the contention that peoples' perceptions of speeds were very different from actual speeds and this was why it was worth obtaining up to date readings.</p> <p>Based on the results obtained from the speed surveys it was not proposed to take any further action other than the road markings refurbishment which had been completed.</p> <p>It was considered that it would be unwise to remove the raised table because this would result in increased speeds of traffic and therefore higher road safety risks for the vast majority of pedestrians who use that facility to cross the road at that location. Consequently it was proposed to retain the raised table.</p> <p>It was considered that the tactile paving provides the necessary warning to blind and partially sighted pedestrians that they have reached the edge of the road and it was therefore proposed that it should be retained.</p> <p>Councillor Joe Mooney asked could a 20 mph limit be considered over the 300 metre section of Hildens Drive. Mark Cole responded and confirmed it could be considered at the next speed limit Task Group planned in December 2011. Survey results confirmed that it was a suitable site and it would be a sensible area to consider for a 20 mph limit. Action Mark Cole</p>

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<p>5. – Welfare Benefit changes</p>	<p>Jo England gave a short presentation on the changes taking place on the Welfare Benefits system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DWP were moving the goal posts in terms of both the planned changes and timetable – guidance information had not yet been published; • The changes would not affect the Personal Budget process but it would have an effect on individual benefit entitlements; • A very significant change was the review of all people qualifying for incapacity benefit and the transition to employment support allowance; • Disability Living Allowance was going to be reviewed in 2013/14 and linked to a work capacity assessment; • DLA was to be replaced with PIP (Personal Independence Payment); • A Universal Credit was being set up that would combine a number of benefits together into a single scheme and operate under a single taper process; • Housing Benefit system may be moving back under central government control. There was no change expected in the system handling Council Tax benefit which was expected to remain under the control of Local Authorities. <p>The impact of all these changes was difficult to assess and very dependent on the government guidance to be published over the next 6 months.</p> <p>It was agreed to invite Jo England back to provide an update report on benefit changes at the January 26th meeting of the DES board when it was hoped a clearer picture would have emerged.</p> <p>Action Jo England.</p>
<p>6 – Service Model for WBC Resource Centres</p>	<p>Stephen Stace and Debbie Vaughan-Davies gave a joint presentation on the new service model being implemented across the four Resources Centres in West Berkshire.</p> <p>Initially Stephen outlined that reviews were taking place with all 465 service users. Some users had elected to take different services under Personal Budgets, others had opted to maintain their existing service. The new service model will be based on a mixed economy of services supplied by WBC, social and voluntary enterprises and private businesses. New services and service providers were being introduced to meet specific needs.</p> <p>The management of transport services for day services had been amalgamated into the Council's main transport services department.</p> <p>Debbie outlined the new services being operated through the four resource centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phoenix Centre – Monday – Friday – 9.00 – 5.00 • Greenfield House – Monday – Friday – 9.00 – 5.00 • Hungerford - Monday – Wednesday – Starting 4th July • Walnut Close - Thursday – Saturday – Starting 4th July <p>A pan disability service was planned for Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Dementia with specialist elements. Services were timed to each group's needs. PD specialist gym equipment, dedicated rooms or areas</p>

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	<p>were provided within each resource centre for both Council run and non-council services. Voluntary and private providers were being encouraged to make use of the resource centres during evening and weekend sessions. The objective was to make a range of services available 7 days/pw and provide longer hours opening hours each day. Board Members raised a number of concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some more severely disabled clients find the new pan-disability services difficult and stressful; • It was the most vulnerable that can't manage a Personal Budget and the risks associated with it; • Would council and non council staff providing services have access to adequate training; • There was a need for a 'good trader' scheme covering private service providers. <p>Stephen Stace responded to the concerns raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated member of staff was available to help individuals settle into new services, in many cases it was the same staff delivering services and that personal connection was recognised as important to clients; • Service users could choose to manage their own Personal Budgets or not; • WBC staff training would be maintained and WBC will help set minimum standards with other suppliers. Training grants and subsidised rates would be offered to voluntary staff and private businesses <p>It was suggested that a visit for board members to see the new services operating at the Phoenix Centre would be helpful. Action SS and MH to arrange visit.</p>
<p>7. - Update on Personal Budgets</p>	<p>Nigel Owen provided a progress report on Personal Budgets (PBs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 465 existing day centre users had all had assessment reviews completed and were currently negotiating the detail of their individual care packages; • Officers will be taking stock of that process over the next 2/3 months; • Then rolling out the Personal Budget process, in the autumn months, to cover all other users of Social Care Services; • Summary of the training available on Personal Budgets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A two hour introduction course on PBs which was appropriate for staff, care providers and interest groups; 2. Internal staff training on the PB process and assessments; 3. Support planning – identifying how PBs can be spent, risk managed and the completions of individual support plans; 4. Five internal staff were attending a financial brokerage course; • Officers will provide market development help and support to new businesses and community based groups planning to offer new care services or support existing local care groups looking to improve their sustainability. • The Council was going to tender to select a provider that will offer a financial brokerage service to individual

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	<p>care package users.</p> <p>Jan Evans commented that she was keen to capture individual user experiences of Personal Budgets as part of her evaluation process. Officers would be reviewing the PB process throughout July and August. A meeting was scheduled for 7th September to capture individual experiences and feedback from care users on the Personal Budgets. Action JE/MH</p>	
8 – AOB		
8.1 Transport Forum	MH	<p>Transport Forum Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community transport – specialist transport provision: Mick raised the concern that the use of specialist transport was already at full capacity particularly at peak times. It was expected that the direct payments system would generate additional individual journeys and add to peak levels of demand. • Taxi provision providing suitable facilities and support for disabled passengers was still patchy with availability sometimes being restricted to non peak hours, e.g. outside of school transport contracts; • Disability Audit of the railway station had been carried out and a report has been produced. It was agreed to circulate the report to board members for information. Action DB; • Real-time bus stop information and Cassel kerbs were being slowly rolled out as resources permitted.
8.2 Home Care	AF	<p>Home Care User Group Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Service User Group had been examining the standard of care offered by care providers. Main issues to emerge were: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. lack of communication between carers, clients were not kept informed; 2. poor consistency of service provision; 3. limited competency of some staff (standard of training); 4. poor flexibility of service provision (e.g. no services offered after 9.30pm). • Meeting arranged between AF/NO with 10 care providers invited to attend. • 5 care providers attended and did not recognise the issues listed above, only one provider was sympathetic to the issues raised. Meeting worked well to expose the reality of standard of care on offer • Alan requested that the Council should look to put more pressure on service providers to improve standards of care as contracts and SLAs were revised or re-negotiated. <p>Nigel Owen suggested that Tandra Foster should be invited to the January meeting of the DES Board to</p>

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		present on the commissioning process for care service providers. Action NO/TF.
8.3 Access Panel	JC	<p>Access Panel Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John raised a concern picking up on an article in the Newbury Weekly News reporting that WBC had ended up with an underspend on its 2010/11 budget. He expressed disappointment that WBC had refused to fund the reprint of the Access Guide on cost grounds; • John asked Councillor Pam Bale to ensure that two bids for future funding were submitted: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A bid to produce a new access guide in the next financial year. 2. Footpath 18 in Thatcham, a capital bid request for an access ramp in the 2012/13 capital budget plan. Action PB; • At the July board meeting in 2009, Lyn Stevens reported on a Mental Health survey and as a follow up it was requested that an agenda item be tabled on the January board meeting to provide a progress report. Action JE/NO. John requested that Verity Murrice be invited to attend that meeting as the main representative of the 'Eight bells project' in order to take part in discussion of that item. Action DB.
8.4 Near misses	MC	Mark Cole confirmed that there was no national system for reporting near misses. Mark suggested that a way forward was for a person who wanted to report a near miss to do this through the Customer Contact Services team. John Carr asked if there was a need for better publicity on near misses. It was thought that the Customer Contact Services team reporting arrangements were well known to the public.
8.5 Social Care Provision in West Berkshire	MH	Mick Hutchins circulated a statement calling upon WBC to implement a 12 point plan to ensure local disabled people were not put at disadvantage by the programme of changes made to Social Care provision following the UK Coalition Governments 2010 spending review. It was agreed that WBC would prepare a written response to the plan and a meeting would be arranged between Jan Evans, Nigel Owen and Mick Hutchins to develop a joint summary to take before the September DES board meeting. Action JE/NO/MH. It was agreed that the item would be placed on the agenda at the September meeting of the Board for further discussion. Action DB.
8.6 Equally Healthy Event	NO	Nigel passed on details of an event planned by NHS Berkshire and Reading Voluntary Action who were running a free healthcare conference on Thursday 14 th July, 10.00-14.00 at Reading Town Hall – board members were invited to attend and were encouraged to pass the details forward through their wider networks.
8.7 Southern	All	Speculation on Southern Cross care homes going into administration still remained high. Jan Evans

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Cross		confirmed that there 2 homes in West Berkshire that were run by Southern Cross. In addition we buy 22 beds in Riverview in Reading. Contingency plans were being developed to ensure that these homes would not be closed should Southern Cross be forced into administration.
8.8 Close of meeting	All	Jan Rothwell closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. The agendas for the next 2 meetings were already filling up fast and with all the changes taking place it was proposed to extend the DES Board meetings by 30 minutes with a finish time at 13.00. David Baker was asked to survey opinion amongst board members for those in favour of a longer meeting. DB to action. Meeting Close at 12.35
9. – Digital TV Switchover Help Scheme	The presentation on the Digital TV Switchover Help scheme by Peter Hayes was deferred to the next meeting. Peter Hayes briefly outlined the list of information materials available. It was agreed to that details should be emailed to board members. Action DB. The timetable of events leading up to the conversion in February 2012 and details of the Help Scheme would be presented at the September meeting of the DES board. Action Peter Hayes.	
10 Meeting dates for 2011/12	<p>Dates agreed for future meetings: Thursday 26th January 2012 in Committee Room 2 Market St, 10.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. Next meeting: Thursday 29th September 2011 in Committee Room 2 Market St, 10.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.</p> <p>Agenda Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital TV Switchover Help Scheme • Changes in Social Care – follow up to plan tabled by Mick Hutchins • Housing Policy 	