

**BRACKNELL FOREST ACCESS GROUP**  
**28 SEPTEMBER 2016**  
**7.30 - 9.20 PM**



**Present:**

Councillor Clifton Thompson (Chairman), Councillor Jim Finnie, Councillor Michael Brossard

**Also Present:**

David Ariss  
Sarah Gaitely, Konnections  
Mrs Isabel Mattick, Triple A  
Muriel Rawsthorne, Bracknell Forest Homes Tenants and Leasholders Panel  
Mark Sanders, Healthwatch  
Alison Sanders, Director of Corporate Services  
Abby Thomas, Head of Community Engagement & Equalities  
Emma Shaw, Community Team for People with Learning Disabilities

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Councillor Mrs Jan Angell  
Ray Edwards MBE  
Jane Figg  
Fiona Goodhand  
Mira Haynes

**56. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 20 April 2016 were approved as a correct record.

**57. Discussion around Disabled Parking Bay Misuse**

Marcos Busurto-Castillon and Kingsley Ijomah attended the meeting to inform the Group of their work to change public attitudes around the misuse of Disabled Parking Bays.

Marcos introduced Kingsley as a role model for disabled people and pillar for change. Kingsley introduced himself and told the Group that he was working as a Software Developer training people with disabilities. While living in Nigeria, Kingsley had contracted Polio aged 9 and had moved to the UK when he was 15 years old. He had discovered para-rowing and was hoping to compete in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.

Marcos commented that following reports from Blue Badge holders of lack of accessibility of disabled parking and lack of respect from the public, he was looking to work with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) and Bracknell Forest Councils to change public attitude and raise awareness. An event had been held in (RBWM) two years ago called 'Don't Be a Space Invader' which had provided a platform for press coverage of the issue. It was hoped that a similar event could be organised alongside both Councils, and Marcos informed the group that a steering group was being put together to hold an event in early 2017. Thames Valley Police and a number of other organisations were already in support of the event.

It was hope that alongside the new town centre being built and the Council's focus on community resilience, the issue of Disabled Parking bay misuse could be clarified and tackled.

The Council had been responsible for the regulation of parking bays for approximately 6 years, and had outsourced the regulation to an organisation called Patrol who issued fines of up to £40 for anyone witnessed parking incorrectly in a disabled bay. Marcos commented that, although set by law, he did not believe this fine was a sufficient penalty in comparison to other parking infringement fines such as parking on yellow hatching. It was commented that Patrol came under Steve Loudoun, Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection remit and Alison Sanders resolved to ask him to explain this issue. **(Action: Alison Sanders)**

The Group were reminded that in private car parks such as at supermarkets, the Council did not have a duty to patrol the spaces but that it was still important to report infringements to the store and to the police.

In the arising discussion, the following points were noted:

- It was commented that any abuse towards disabled people counted as a Hate Crime, and that the Police were particularly concerned about Hate Crime. An anti-Hate Crime campaign had been launched two years ago, and Abby Thomas resolved to feed this discussion into the campaign. **(Action: Abby Thomas)**
- It was suggested that a link between the Disabled Blue Badge page on the Council website could be linked to the Hate Crime page. **(Action: Abby Thomas)**
- Lisa McNally offered the support of Public Health and their active social media accounts to support prevention work.
- It was agreed that in a time of economisation, the Council could not employ more traffic wardens. The challenge was to change public perception.
- It was suggested that an article or promotion be included in Town & Country, the Council's Borough-wide newspaper. **(Action: Alison Sanders)**

#### 58. **Bracknell Forest Council Access Improvement Programme**

Darren Burgess reported on the Bracknell Forest Council Access Improvement Programme.

The Access Improvement Programme had been a gradual project to improve the Council owned buildings listed in the report. Charles Square and High Street Multi-Storey car parks were in the process of being assessed, however it had proven difficult to find a time to assess them amongst the changes being made for the town centre regeneration. The Group was assured that these assessments would be carried out at a later date.

Children's and Adult's Social Care buildings had benefitted recently from the review, including small changes such as new paint schemes, lighting and ramps being fitted to improve accessibility. The Oaks Children Centre and Age Concern Forest Park were both due to have works completed, and all Community Centres had been fitted with Hearing Loops.

Darren advised the Group that the programme would be concluded once the list had been completed. Any further accessibility improvement works would come under the ongoing Capital and Maintenance Programmes, and any complaints or suggestions for accessibility improvements would still be investigated.

The Group thanked Darren for his report and for attending the meeting.

In discussion, Group members raised concerns regarding the Multi-Storey Car Parks, commenting that there were accessibility issues when coming out of the car parks. Another concern was the barriers operating at both car parks which were inaccessible for people who could not reach the entry button. Alison commented that Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) was possible at both car parks, and she resolved to speak to Steve Loudoun about setting this up for anyone with Accessibility requirements. **(Action: Alison Sanders)**

#### 59. **Year of Self Care**

Dr Lisa McNally reported on the Bracknell Forest Year of Self Care.

Self Care promoted resilience, staying active, staying social and staying in control, by way of introducing Habitual and Holistic changes in people's lives. The Habitual element meant developing discipline daily practice, and the Holistic element aimed to solve problems by tackling their root cause. For example, Lisa commented that in assisting smokers to stop smoking, the Public Health team encouraged them to change their diet and to take up exercise to deal with their cravings.

Self Care Week had been ongoing for several years, but the Public Health team had found it difficult to fit all the messages into one week. The Year of Self Care 2016 had been the first of its kind, and it was hoped that this had given sufficient time to discuss one issue each month.

The Physical Activity month in 2016 was reported to have been a particular success, including 'Well Balanced' courses for people concerned about falling, promoting ParkRun as an inclusive, volunteer-led event, and the Sportivate course which encouraged inactive young people back into exercise.

Lisa highlighted the particular importance of Asset Development within the borough, to encourage good projects and strengths to grow and develop further. An example of this was Public Health's support of the Bracknell Cavaliers football team who had launched a team for people with disabilities.

Lisa asked the Group whether they thought a month in the Year of Self Care 2017 should be dedicated to those with disabilities, and after discussion it was agreed that these messages would be more effective and inclusive if included as a thread throughout all the months, rather than having a dedicated month.

Lisa commented on future plans to develop advertising and branding further to be used by businesses. It was also hoped that Sports Clubs could be encouraged to be more inclusive to those looking to begin a sport.

The Group congratulated Lisa and her team for their achievements and hard work, and thanked her for her update.

#### 60. **Equalities Scheme**

Abby Thomas reported on the Bracknell Forest Equalities Scheme.

The first single equalities scheme had been developed in 2012 in order to advance equality of opportunity, tackle discrimination and harassment, and had involved partners and officers in consultation. A scheme and action plan had been put

together as a result of this, with 13 objectives. The three year scheme had now come to an end, and a final monitoring report on the work was due to be finished and finalised by the end of October 2016. It was agreed that this report would be circulated to the Group by email. **(Action: Abby Thomas/Lizzie Rich)**

The next Equalities Scheme would soon be in development, and consultation was due to begin with Council officers, expanding to public consultation in Autumn 2016. Group members would be notified of consultation opportunities when they arose. **(Action: Abby Thomas)**

#### 61. **Transformation Programme**

Abby Thomas reported on the Bracknell Forest Transformation Programme.

At the end of 2015, Bracknell Forest Council had received the news that its Government grant would be reducing by 80%. This had resulted in the Council developing an Efficiency Plan, with all council services being reviewed over a three year period. Of the eight 2016/17 service reviews currently underway, three were outward looking and relevant to group members; Libraries, Leisure and Arts (a review of South Hill Park).

The Group was notified of the Library review which was due to begin public consultation in October 2016.

The Arts review was a review of the relationship between the Council and South Hill Park to develop the independence of the South Hill Park Trust.

A review of Citizen and Customer Contact was also underway, which aimed to promote a digitally enabled population in the Borough and to push Council services online.

The Group thanked Abby for her update.

#### 62. **Any Other Business**

**Mark Sanders, Healthwatch** raise concerns regarding highways and parking on Market Street. Healthwatch was based in a unit behind the Westview building on Market Street. Mark commented that Healthwatch had two allocated parking spaces, one of which was disabled parking but that both were inappropriately used by the residents of other units including Enterprise Rentals and takeaway delivery drivers. Mark reported that Healthwatch had begun photographing offending vehicles as evidence, and in a two week period had collected 49 photos.

There was also a significant litter issue in the area, which had caused accessibility issues for Healthwatch.

The Group also raised concerns regarding speeding on Market Street despite the installation of speed bumps, and concerns regarding the zebra crossing opposite Time Square.

Alison Sanders resolved to raise the issues regarding property, planning and enforcement with the relevant departments and improve the situation. **(Action: Alison Sanders)**

**63. Items for Future Meetings**

The Group was advised that the next meeting was scheduled for 23 November 2016 at Easthampstead Baptist Church.