

┌ Councillors Ruhemann (Chair), ┐
Benson, Eden, Khan, Stanford-Beale,
Vickers and White

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└ To All Members of the Access & ┘
Disabilities Working Group ┘

21 November 2013

Your contact is: Amy Bryan - Committee Services

**NOTICE OF MEETING - ACCESS AND DISABILITIES WORKING GROUP - THURSDAY
5 DECEMBER 2013**

A meeting of the Access and Disabilities Working Group will be held on **THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2013 at 2.00pm in the Kennet Room**, Civic Offices, Reading. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA

	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	-
2. UK DISABILITY HISTORY MONTH	-

Disabled people and organisations in Reading are invited to attend and share their experiences of being a disabled person in Reading.

CIVIC CENTRE EMERGENCY EVACUATION: Please familiarise yourself with the emergency evacuation procedures, which are displayed inside the Council's meeting rooms. If an alarm sounds, leave by the nearest fire exit quickly and calmly and assemble at the Hexagon sign, at the start of Queen's Walk. You will be advised when it is safe to re-enter the building.

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| 3. | COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS | - |
| | Councillors to declare any personal and prejudicial interests they may have in relation to the items on the agenda. | |
| 4. | MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2013 | 1-5 |
| 5. | MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES | - |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Civic Offices • Changes Places at the Oracle Shopping Centre • Reading Station - Readibus Stop • Home Care Consultation with Users | |
| 6. | WELFARE RIGHTS UPDATE | - |
| | Sam Harnett, Reading Community Welfare Rights Unit | |
| 7. | NEW READING BOROUGH COUNCIL WEBSITE | - |
| | Nick Butcher, Web Manager, Reading Borough Council | |
| 8. | SPECIAL SHOPPING EVENT FEEDBACK | - |
| 9. | ISSUES LIST - a look at the progress with the ongoing 'Issues List' (please see form printed at the back of the agenda papers) | 6 |
| 10. | ANY OTHER BUSINESS | - |
| 11. | DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING | - |
| | There will be a special meeting of the Access & Disabilities Working Group on Thursday 6 February 2014 at 2.00pm on the New Civic Offices at Plaza West. | |
| | Dates for the meetings in the 2013-14 Municipal Year are as follows: | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 20 March 2014 2pm | |

ACCESS & DISABILITIES WORKING GROUP MINUTES - 19 SEPTEMBER 2013

Present:

Councillors Ruhemann (Chair), Eden, Khan, Stanford-Beale, Vickers and White.

Also in attendance:

Keith Hester	Berkshire County Blind Society
Carol Marenghi	Chain Reaction & Stroke Association
Alan Fleming	Enrych Berkshire
Rebecca Norris	Healthwatch Reading
Derek Woad	Member of the Public
Liz Cheyney	Member of the Public
Carol Froud	Member of the Public
Diane Goodlock	MS Society
Keith Seville	Nesta Care Support
Dominic Howgego	Peter Brett Associates
Trish Wright	Readibus & MS Therapy Centre
Lisa Bamsey	Readibus & Service User
David Wiltshire	Readibus User
Dorothy Townsend	Reading Resident
Jenny Turner	Service User, Crossroads, Arthritis Matters & Readibus
Ruth Leuillette	RBC - Deputy Head of Highways and Transport
Janette Searle	RBC - Service Development and Partnerships Manager
Helen Bryant	RBC - Access Officer
Amy Bryan	RBC - Committee Services

Apologies:

Sian Hooley	Berkshire PHAB
Gary Deards	Level Playing Field
Bob Bristow	Reading Association for the Blind

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to it being noted that Keith Hester was a representative of Berkshire County Blind Society.

2. MATTERS ARISING

New Civic Offices Working Group

Further to Minute 2 of the last meeting, Helen Bryant, Access Officer, reported that she had attended a site visit of Plaza West with the Staff Working Group, and reported that there was a fire lift in the building and lots of natural light. Lisa Bamsey reported that she had attended a site visit in July 2013 to discuss the Readibus drop off points, of which there would be two. A question was raised regarding bus stops and if some buses would be redirected nearer to the new civic offices when it was opened. Councillor Ruhemann agreed to ask Reading Buses if they planned any route changes with regard to the new civic offices.

Changing Places at the Oracle Shopping Centre

Further to Minute 2 of the previous meeting, Councillor Ruhemann reported that the installation of the unit was underway in the shop mobility unit, and although the Group had previously expressed concern about this location access would be permitted outside of shop mobility opening hours by obtaining a key from the information point. In response to a question, Councillor Ruhemann agreed to investigate whether access to the shop mobility suite could be gained by radar key.

Reading Station - Disabled Toilets

Further to Minute 2 of the previous meeting, Ruth Leuillette reported that after talks and the intervention of First Great Western one of the platform toilets would be installed with a left hand transfer. Councillor Ruhemann noted that, sadly, the Access for All branch within the Department for Transport with whom he had also been in contact had not been willing to engage.

Reading Station - Readibus & Drop-off

Further to Minute 2 of the previous meeting, Ruth Leuillette reported that a meeting with Peter Absolom of Readibus had been arranged to visit Reading Station. Ruth also reported that there would be access for taller vehicles to a drop-off area on the north side of the station when works had been completed.

Reading Station - Signage and Tactile Paving

Further to Minute 8 of the previous meeting, Ruth Leuillette reported that Network Rail, First Great Western and Guide Dogs had been on a walk-through of Reading Station with regard to signage and tactile paving.

Royal Berkshire Hospital Car Park

Councillor Ruhemann asked the Group to report any issues regarding the car park at the Royal Berkshire Hospital to him by email.

AGREED: That the position be noted.

3. HOME CARE USERS RESEARCH PROJECT

Janette Searle, Service Development and Partnerships Manager, Reading Borough Council, and Rebecca Morris, Healthwatch Reading, reported on the Home Care Users Research Project. The project had involved Reading Borough Council and Healthwatch Reading (previously Reading Link) interviewing 57 people who had used home care services. The purpose of the interviews had been to gain a better understanding of what people wanted and expected from home care services, how home care services could best protect people's dignity, and what support home care users might need to overcome social isolation.

Rebecca reported that themes had emerged around six key areas where things could be improved. These were:

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- timeliness of visits
- having enough time for needs to be met
- consistency of care workers
- care workers' approach to tasks
- support from the care agency officer
- training for care workers.

The Group discussed their concerns and issues that they had experienced themselves with home care. It was suggested that a group of home care users would be a one way for such issues to be raised and shared with care agencies, and Councillor Eden said she would discuss the suggestion with officers.

AGREED:

- (1) That the Home Care Users Research Project report be noted;
- (2) That Rebecca Morris be thanked for attending the meeting.

4. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD MINUTES

The Group noted the Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting held on 21 June 2013.

AGREED: That the position be noted.

5. PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE BRIDGE OVER THE THAMES

Ruth Leuillette, Reading Borough Council, and Dominic Howgago, Peter Brett Associates, attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the proposed pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Thames.

Dominic explained that the proposed new cycle and pedestrian bridge would be located to the east of Fry's Island, between the existing Caversham and Reading Bridges. On the northern side of the river it would link to the existing footpath running through Christchurch Meadows. To the south it would link to an improved riverside foot and cycle path, via Norman Place, and on to the new crossing on Vastern Road in front of Reading Railway Station. The new bridge was being funded through Reading Borough Council's £20.7m Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) bid, which aimed to create additional bus, walking and cycle trips access the town.

In answer to a question Ruth explained that the bridge was being recommended as a shared use bridge and cyclists would not be required to dismount before using the bridge. Ruth also confirmed that the incline up to the bridge would be one in 15, which Helen Bryant confirmed had met the requirements of British Standards, and there would be 2m long landings.

AGREED: That Ruth and Dominic be thanked for the presentation.

6. ISSUES IN SOCIAL CARE

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This Item was considered under Agenda Item 5 Home Care Users Research Project (see Minute 3 above).

7. WELFARE RIGHTS UPDATE

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

8. PUBLIC HEALTH

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

Feedback from Nexus Ariadne Audible/Tactile Map Demonstration

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

Press Release - Consultation on Housing Allocations Scheme

The Council's press release on the Housing Allocations Scheme consultation had been attached to the agenda.

Press Release - Major Work Planned for Reading's Woodlands

The Council's press release on the major work that was planned for Reading's woodlands had been attached to the agenda.

10. ISSUES LIST

The following issues were reported at the meeting:

- The back of Marks & Spencer in Friar Street was not currently accessible by wheelchair users. The current refurbishment of Town Hall Square had fenced off access to the dropped curbs which meant that the shop entrance could not be accessed.
- There was an issue with the crossing on Sidmouth Street (London Road end).
- The pavement was uneven on Broad Street (west).
- The pavement was uneven on Henley Road.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

Ruth Leuillette, Deputy Head of Highways & Transport, reported to the Group on the upgrade that would be made to the junction of St. Mary's Butts/Gun street/Bridge Street. Ruth said that the technical controls would be upgraded and puffin facilities would be installed on each arm of the junction as well as a new diagonal crossing. Some of the footpaths would also be widened and it was expected that the work would be completed during 2014.

AGREED: That the position be noted.

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12. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Access & Disabilities Working Group would meet on the following dates in 2013/14:

Thursday 5 December 2013 at 2pm
Thursday 20 March 2014 at 2pm

(The meeting opened at 2.00pm and closed at 4.18pm)

PLEASE USE THIS FORM TO RECORD ANY ACCESS OR
DISABILITIES ISSUES THAT YOU WISH THE COUNCIL
TO INVESTIGATE

FILL IN AND HAND IN AT THE ACCESS AND
DISABILITIES WORKING GROUP MEETING

Name:

Contact Details (if you wish the Council to let you know the
progress with your enquiry - a telephone number or email address
would be useful):

Issues: