

Councillors Rose Williams (Chair),  
Eden, Grashoff, Hoskin and Khan

To all Members of the Access &  
Disabilities Working Group

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## NOTICE OF MEETING - ACCESS AND DISABILITIES WORKING GROUP - THURSDAY 3 DECEMBER 2015

A meeting of the Access and Disabilities Working Group will be held on **Thursday 3 December 2015 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading.**

The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

### AGENDA

	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	-
2. COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS	-
Councillors to declare any personal and prejudicial interests they may have in relation to the items on the agenda.	
3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2015	1-4
4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES	-

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5. **CYCLING IN BROAD STREET - CONSULTATION** -
6. **CHANGING PLACES FACILITIES IN READING** -  
Helen Bryant, Access Officer, Reading Borough Council
7. **CAR PARKING AT THE ORACLE** -  
Helen Bryant, Access Officer, Reading Borough Council
8. **DISABILITY PRIDE DAY** -  
Helen Bryant, Access Officer, Reading Borough Council
9. **ISSUES LIST** -
10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** -
  - **Special Shopping Event - Monday 7 December 2015**
11. **DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS** -  
The next meeting will be held on Thursday 10 March 2016 at 2pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU.

## ACCESS & DISABILITIES WORKING GROUP MINUTES - 17 SEPTEMBER 2015

### Present:

Councillors R Williams (Chair), Eden, Grashoff, Hoskin and Khan.

### Also in attendance:

Keith Hester	Berkshire County Blind Society
Harriet Faulkner	Readibus
Peter Absolon	Readibus
Alan Fleming	Enrych Berkshire
Jenny Turner	Service User
Liz Cheyney	Member of the Public
Diane Goodlock	MS Society Reading
Trish Wright	MS Therapy Centres/Readibus
Laxmi Kachwaha	Readibus
Lisa Bamsey	Readibus & Service User
Trish Thomas	RCWRU
David Wiltshire	Readibus User
Tony Pettitt	Reading Buses
Dom Gray	Talkback
Malcolm Lewis	Welfare Rights Unit
Helen Bryant	RBC - Access Officer
Simon Beasley	RBC - Network and Parking Services Manager
Nina Crispin	RBC - Consultation and Engagement Officer
Adam Bevington	RBC - Digital and Website Manager
Melanie O'Rourke	RBC - Interim Head of Adult Social Care
Sally Poole	RBC - Committee Services

### Apologies:

Bob Bristow	Reading Association for the Blind
Sian Hooley	Berkshire Phab
Carol & Michael Froud	

## 1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

## 2. POSITIVE IMAGES CAMPAIGN

Harriet Faulkner and Peter Absolom, from Readibus, explained that the idea for the Positive Images Campaign had originated from the disabled group at the Tackling Poverty Conference in 2013 and apologised for the delay in this project commencing. He stated that the rear doors of one or more Readibuses would display a positive image of a disabled person with an appropriate strapline such as 'Readibus enables me to... go college/ go to work/ meet my friends'.

Some example photographs were show to the meeting and all present agreed that this was an excellent way to portray positive images of disabled people. Peter Absolom asked if there was a preference between using stock photographs and using photographs of local people.

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He also explained that it was hoped that the campaign could be linked to other organisations through sponsorship, which would also extend the coverage via their websites.

### AGREED:

- (1) That the Positive Images campaign be endorsed;
- (2) That anyone interested in being photographed for the campaign contact Readibus.

### 3. BUDGET CONSULTATION - JULY 2015 - YOUR COUNCIL SERVICES. YOUR SAY

Melanie O'Rourke, Interim Head of Adult Social Care, Reading Borough Council gave a presentation on the Council's budget proposals as part of the public consultation. She explained that two thirds of the Council's money was spent on children and vulnerable adults which made savings to bridge the Council's budget gap of £40million very difficult. In addition, the population of Reading had increased by 9% since 2001 and was forecast to increase by 24% by 2050.

Melanie gave an overview of the Council's Corporate Plan which included the six main priorities for Reading as follows:

- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
- Providing the best life through education, early help and healthy living;
- Providing homes for those in most need;
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active;
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy;
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

She also outlined the budget savings proposals under each of these priorities which she felt could have the greatest impact for members of this Group. However, Melanie did stress that the Council had a commitment to narrowing the gaps in Reading and so would try to safeguard services for the vulnerable.

She suggested that people could submit individual responses to the consultation or respond collectively as local community organisations. The closing date was Friday 16 October 2015 and help to respond electronically could be given by Council Officers if required.

### AGREED:

- (1) That the position be noted;
- (2) That individuals or community organisations respond to the budget savings proposals.

#### 4. TARGET JUNCTION UPDATE

Further to Minute 5 of the previous meeting, Simon Beasley, Network and Parking Services Manager, attended the meeting to talk about the results of the 6-month trial switch off of traffic lights at Target Junction, at Broad Street and West Street.

Simon explained that the discussion and concerns raised around the junction at the previous meeting and at the visual audit and workshop on 15 July 2015 had been included in the consultation as well as the representations submitted by a number of community groups. He had also met with some groups, including The Guide Dogs for the Blind and the Berkshire Blind Society and their comments had been considered.

He also explained that the final decision had been made by the Traffic Management Sub-Committee on 16 September 2015 to keep the traffic lights off and to remove the infrastructure to help with sight lines, but to keep a pedestrian crossing on the Oxford Road side of the junction. This decision had incorporated comments from the consultation in that the junction was not going to be a shared space and so the kerbs, tactile paving and guard rails would be retained. There would also be a further review into waiting restrictions to ensure that sight lines were not obstructed by delivery vehicles for pedestrians or other vehicles.

Simon stressed that he did understand the emotional response to the consultation, particularly from members of this Group, but that the facts indicated a different outcome as at other junctions there had been less accidents with traffic lights removed. There were more traffic free gaps between buses and other vehicles for people to cross the road than there had been when lights controlled the crossing and also vehicles now travelled at a reduced speed. However, the junction would be kept under review.

**AGREED:** That the position be noted.

#### 5. READING BOROUGH COUNCIL WEBSITE

Adam Bevington, Digital and Website Manager, Reading Borough Council, attended the meeting and gave an update on the development of the Council's new website.

He stressed that the Council were aware that not everyone had access to a computer and that some people chose not to use them, but assured the Group that the channel shift to increase the number of people contacting the Council electronically and using self service options would not be exclusive and that there would always be people who could be contacted in person or by telephone for those without access to computers.

Adam explained that they had baselined the new website to ensure that it was accessible for everyone and had commissioned Disability Audit Consultants to carry out a disability audit, with tests completed by people with a range of disabilities.

They were now working on reducing the number of pages on the website and ensuring double compliance.

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**AGREED:** That Adam Bevington be thanked for his presentation.

### 6. SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD WEBSITE

The address for the local Safeguarding Adults Board was [www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk](http://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk).

Councillor Eden reported that the Board had an Interim Chair and that people should contact her if they had any particular issues.

### 7. DISABILITY PRIDE DAY

Helen Bryant reported that she had met with Clare Muir, RBC Policy and Voluntary Sector Manager and Debi Daniels, RBC Joint Acting Head of Communications and Promotions Manager, to discuss options for the proposed Disability Pride Day.

She explained that the recommendations had been to start with a small event in a venue such as Forbury Gardens or to align with another organised event such as The Story of Reading, which was taking place in May 2016.

It was proposed that a small working group could progress this further and possibly investigate sponsorship options. Diane Goodlock, Lisa Bamsey and David Wiltshire volunteered to help with this.

**AGREED:** That progress on the plans for Disability Pride Day be reported to the next meeting.

### 8. ISSUES LIST

A number of issues were reported and the problems with contractors blocking dropped kerbs and disabled parking bays would be followed up by Simon Beasley.

There were still issues with Access for All toilets in the town and it was felt that it would be useful to invite representatives from Reading Station, The Oracle and Broad Street Mall to future meetings.

It was also suggested that the issue of free parking in The Oracle car parks should be pursued as this had never been resolved.

**AGREED:** That the position be noted.

### 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Helen Bryant reported that the Special Shopping Event would be on Monday 7 December 2015 and that she would circulate further details once confirmed.

### 10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Access & Disabilities Working Group would next meet on Thursday 3 December 2015 at 2pm.

**ACCESS & DISABILITIES WORKING GROUP MINUTES - 17 SEPTEMBER 2015**

(The meeting opened at 2.00pm and closed at 4.00pm)