

## **Northampton Borough Council**

### **Northampton Disabled People's Forum**

**Friday, 12 July 2019**

Attendance ; Martin de Rosario, Cllr Phil Larratt, Martin Page, Laura Church, David Bevan, Rufia Ashraf, Sarah Whitehead, Maz Stretton, Doug Peacock, Kevin Reynolds, Kizzy Minter, Ingrid Ruffnig

#### **1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies – Debbie MacColl, Larry Barber, Barbara Barber, Beverley Mennell.

#### **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

#### **3. INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

MS – Debbie, Jennifer and Maz, community music event in December. Will be contacting a group from the cube. Will be a way to get different disability organisations to come together for a fun event. Will be a quiet room. Was an event with school children at Dallington Park, over 100 school children and over 60 people with disabilities? Looking at mini Olympics next year, with both disabled and able bodied people to break down the barriers. We need more correspondence from organisations to make this event as great as we can and other details like if medical care is needed. If the groups like the idea they need to have the input so it is suitable.

MDR – might be worth contacting housing, local councillors etc.

MS – We did try to do it this year but found it too difficult to arrange with organisations as they cannot give up their time they are often too busy.

MDR – It would be good to get out to all the radio and things like that.

#### **7. LAURA CHURCH AND DAVID BEVAN - NBC AND NCC WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY**

Looking to make the website more accessible. It is now becoming a law to make websites accessible for people with disabilities.

Written some reports which have gone to management and now at the point where we are reaching out to different disability groups. Have contacted groups concerning autism, blindness and dementia already etc.

Not too good with the website at the minute so want to improve it all. We are always working on things, currently at 65-70 percent accessible.

Some things I can't do like change the colour of hyperlinks etc but I have recommended that these change to those who can.

We are looking to do some tests in the one stop shop for some honest feedback for those people who we are trying to improve the website for.

September 2020 is the deadline for this to be done.

Training some web authors soon to help those people who are responsible for their sections make them suitable for all users.

Looking to make the website accessible for all, so it is a lot of work with many different changes needing to be made.

Can send all necessary changes to Laura Church.

SW – Can you add a dyslexia organisation to those groups you will be contacting?

LC – Yes of course.

DP – Anything about accessibility and assessments on physical access to buildings, could they be added to the website?

LC – Yes that's a good idea, to have a list of places and how accessible they are.

DP – Yes, even one angel square is not very accessible and it would be good for other to see that.

DP – could you also promote Different Strokes group.

DP – Also run group for people with communication difficulties.

MP – Have you contacted the Autism Strategy group, I sit on the board, and we have a lady called amber who helped design our site.

DB - I know Amber, she did a placement with us and she is incredibly talented and what she has done with the website is fantastic.

DB – Laura has already given the background of the accessibility directive. When the gov gives us advice, they'll be both automated and and user tests. The user tests is where you get the true value and great recommendations. We've been testing with a visually impaired user, he ran through his experiences with a lot of people in the room watching him, this helped us understand more but we do understand that this is only one persons experience.

I can leave my e-mail address.

Also part of a project called digital Northampton. Been speaking to Barclays about running an accessibility workshop for people to show how they can make their website more accessibility. They want to hold this in December to help tie in with International Day for People with Disabilities.

## **COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

### **5. ITEMS FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS**

DP – Useful to find out what extra benefits people can get apart from the government benefits. I understand that water companies can give discounts to elderly or low usage.

Also power companies do something called the 'warm home initiative'

Local authorities do a discounted council tax with people with severe mental illnesses.

I think they have stopped single person benefits.

KM and PL – they have not.

DP – You're right I was thinking of empty properties.

DP – Suggestion to get people to talk about these extra benefits.

DP – Maybe KM could talk about this.

RA – Is there anything we can do to encourage people to cycle more? Would be nice to here from the county to see what they can do.

PL – Cycle hire at Pitsford is made disabled friendly.

RA – I have had to spend almost £1000 for a bike for my son.

DB – Neil Holland is the cycling officer.

DP – How man people get fines for parking on cycle lanes?

SW – Not sure but that's definitely something I can look into.

DP – A lot of the cycle paths are not in a good condition or wide enough.

MS – Yes if you want to encourage there are a lot of things that need to be looked at. Some paths are in bad condition or you have to cross the road half way.

IR – I agree most drivers do not seem to care about cyclists on the and they do not indicate or give the cyclist enough room.

**ACTION – MM to invite county council and a cycling organisation/charity.**

RA – it is about sharing the road, but if there are no cycle lanes you are pushing that option away and cycling is a great way to keep fit.

MP – Yes, there are also cyclists who do not follow the rules and run red lights and nearly knock people over crossing the road.

MDR closed the meeting.

## **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified