

**Notes from the Disability Forum Meeting held on
Wednesday 5th October, 2pm at Blackpool Centre for Independent Living**

In Attendance

Elaine Christian – Chairperson
Maurice Christian
Brenda Giles
Joyce St Clair
Pauline Richmond
Mavis Thomas
Nicholas Wojewodka
Jen Taylor – Customer Involvement and Projects Officer, BCH
Catriona Bright – Public Protection Officer, Trading Standards

Apologies

Irene Bishop
Eric Pearson
John Bland
Deborah Blackwell
Peter Watton

1. Welcome and Introduction

Elaine Christian welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. Trading Standards Presentation

Catriona Bright, Public Protection Officer from Trading Standards attended to provide an overview of the service. She explained that the department covered the areas of advice and education and enforcement. A discussion took place into the different topics relating to Trading Standards such as consumer rights, no cold calling and current scams. Information booklets were handed out to provide further detailed information.

3. Minutes of the last meeting/Matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were read through and agreed as a true record. The following point was updated:

- J Taylor is to check if any events have been organised for the International Day of Disabled People on 3rd December and feed back to members.

4. Tenant Liaison Forum Update

The TLF was officially disbanded in September following Council approval for the new involvement and scrutiny arrangements. Recruitment for the Assembly is currently taking place and the Service Improvement Panels (SIP) are being formalised. It is expected that SIP meetings will be scheduled to take place mid-November.

Tenants and Residents Associations can sign up to the Community Partners Scheme which enables support from the Customer Involvement and Projects Team. Representatives can attend the Community Partners Group to share information and discuss relevant topics. J Taylor is to send the information on the Community Partners Scheme to Brenda Giles.

5. Disability Specific Survey

The Disability Access Survey has been designed to gauge satisfaction levels and help to ensure BCH services are fully accessible. The survey is currently with the Reading Panel for final approval. There are approximately 1930 customers who have identified themselves as having some form of disability and, once finalised, the survey will be sent to all customers to ensure the highest response rate and accurate feedback. The results will be discussed at a future meeting.

6. Disability Partnership Update

The Disability information and Support Service is being re-launched as Disability First on 14th October and will link with the launch of the Disability Hate Crime Reporting Project. Disability First can provide advice on benefits, help with completing forms, information on aids and equipment, specific leisure activities and other information. The contact telephone number for this service is 472202 and is based at the Blackpool Centre for Independent Living.

7. Blue Badge Scheme

The reforms of the blue badge scheme was discussed which will be introduced to ensure fair allocation of badges, deliver efficiency savings, improve customer services, improve effective prevention of abuse and enforcement. It is anticipated that the changes will come into effect over the next year.

8. Any Other Business

None

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11th January 2012, 2pm at Blackpool Centre for Independent Living