

**Notes from the Disability Forum Meeting held on
Wednesday 6th July, 2pm at Blackpool Centre for Independent Living**

In Attendance

Elaine Christian – Chairperson
Irene Bishop – Vice Chair
Maurice Christian
Brenda Giles
Eric Pearson
Joyce St Clair
Nicholas Wojewodka
Jen Ellis – Customer Involvement and Projects Officer, BCH
Karen Herschell – Disability Hate Crime Volunteer Co-ordinator

Apologies

John Bland
Pauline Richmond
Mavis Thomas
Deborah Blackwell
David Heanaghan
Peter Watton

1. Welcome and Introduction

Elaine Christian welcomed attendees to the meeting and explained to new members that she is the Chair of the Forum.

2. Disability Hate Crime Reporting

Karen Herschell attended to discuss her new position as Disability Hate Crime Volunteer Coordinator for Access Lancashire. K Herschell explained that she is managing the new project, which has received funding for the next three years due to the under-reporting of disability specific hate crimes. The Centre for Independent Living is now a third party reporting centre for disability hate crime incidents and K Herschell will be recruiting and training volunteers to provide assistance. The official launch is due to be held on 14th October and systems and procedures are currently being set up. K Herschell handed flyers to attendees with further information. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer should contact K Herschell on 07904 658331 or email disabilityhatecrime@live.co.uk.

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:

- John Bland passed on his thanks for the provision of the magnifier which he has found extremely beneficial.

4. Mystery Shopping Update

The mystery shopping scheme was discussed and an explanation provided for the benefit of new members. Further to the report discussed at the last meeting, which demonstrated the findings and highlighted key actions, the action plan is now being monitored by the Access and

Customer Care Focus Group. J Ellis explained that a review of the Estate Offices is currently being completed and the access issues highlighted in the mystery shopping exercise will be taken into consideration.

5. Tenant Liaison Forum Update

J Ellis stated that the annual general meeting for the TLF will be taking place on 10th August where it is expected that the group will formally disband. Its responsibilities will be transferred to the Get Involved Panel and the new scrutiny body; this is subject to approval from the Council. The new scrutiny body will monitor and scrutinise BCH's performance on a strategic level. J Ellis explained that an advert for Scrutiny Champions had been included within the Summer edition of Viewpoint; anyone interested needs to complete and return the application form by 11th July.

6. Disability Specific Survey

J Ellis handed out the draft survey developed specifically to gauge satisfaction levels of customers with a disability. It was stated that the survey had been altered according to suggestions from the last meeting and finalised. All attendees agreed that the survey was easy to read, understand and complete and included relevant questions. It was agreed that the survey should be sent to a sample of customers; further information is to be provided to this Forum once the results have been collated.

7. Any Other Business

- Blackpool Disability Partnership/Equality and Diversity

J Ellis stated that she would be attending future meetings as Yvonne Hammond, Equalities Officer, no longer works for BCH. Responsibility for Equality and Diversity is now with Customer Involvement due to Y Hammond's departure. The Disability Forum is also represented at the Partnership by Elaine and Maurice Christian. The promenade layout was briefly discussed as this is due to be discussed at the next BDP meeting; all agreed the layout was better but there may be potential problems for partially sighted people due to the lack of differentiation between the pavement and road – E and M Christian are to raise this at the next meeting.

J Ellis stated that the International Day of Disabled People is taking place on 3rd December – all agreed to think of suggestions to promote this and the Disability Forum.

J Ellis handed out the 'Computers Made Easy' flyer and explained that an Open Day was being held on 14th July between 11am and 2pm for people to learn about the course, meet the tutor and speak with past learners.

- Benefits Bus: The bus will park outside each Housing Office and will be available for drop in from 10.30am until 3pm as follows:
 - Tuesday 30th August at Grange Park, Chepstow Road
 - Wednesday 31st August at Mereside, Langdale Road
 - Thursday 1st September at Queens Park, Laycock Gate

There will be a representative from the Housing Benefit Team, Credit Union, Care and Repair, Advice Link and a representative from the Rents Team.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 5th October, 2pm at the Centre for Independent Living