

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

In Attendance

Elaine Christian – Chairperson
Irene Bishop – Vice Chair
Maurice Christian
John Bland
Pauline Richmond
Jim Bryson
Mavis Thomas
Jen Ellis – Customer Involvement and Projects Officer, BCH
Yvonne Hammond – Equalities and Communication Officer, BCH

Apologies

Mark Turner
Brenda Giles
Eric Pearson
Joyce St Clair

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. Blackpool Disability Partnership (BDP)

It was noted that Alan Reid, Chair of the BDP, had given his apologies for the meeting. Maurice Christian provided an explanation of the group for the benefit of attendees; meetings are held on a bi-monthly basis and provide the opportunity for disabled people and groups to discuss relevant issues and work in partnership. Guest speakers are invited to attend meetings and events are organised on a regular basis. Due to last years successful event, another Awareness Day is being planned to take place in September – date and venue to be confirmed.

The next meeting is due to take place on 17th May; attendees requested their details be passed to Karen Herschell for an invitation to this meeting, Y Hammond agreed to do this.

3. Annual General Meeting

JE thanked everyone for their continued involvement over the past year and gave a special thanks to Elaine and Irene for taking on the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. JE stated that she had received three nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. All Forum members present voted (with the exception of the nominees) and the results were collated by JE:

Elaine Christian is to remain as Chair for the forthcoming year
Irene Bishop is to remain as Vice-Chair for the forthcoming year

4. 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:

- Census 2011 – attendees stated that they found this beneficial and were reminded to complete and return their forms as soon as possible if they had not already done so.

5. Mystery Shopping Update

JE thanked all who took part in the mystery shopping exercise and handed out the report produced on the findings. The report was discussed and it was highlighted that the majority of findings were positive, although some areas for improvement were also identified. An Action Plan identifying the areas for improvement is to be developed and brought to the Disability Forum.

A general discussion took place into the services provided by BCH and attendees felt that services were disability friendly. Jim Bryson explained that work had been completed at Dunsop Court following a fire risk assessment and assistance from disabled customers to enable easier access in the communal areas.

6. Tenant Liaison Forum Update

Attendees stated that they had received the BCH Customer Charter which details the local offers along with the spring edition of Viewpoint.

At the last TLF meeting, the projects which received funding from the Tenants Project Fund (TPF) were discussed and approximately £19,500 had been awarded to 3 different projects. The deadline for funding applications was the 31st March and the TPF will meet to discuss all applications in the forthcoming weeks.

The new scrutiny structure outline which has been approved by the TLF and the Board has now been passed to the Council for final approval.

7. Disability Awareness DVD

As per a request made at a previous meeting, the Disability Awareness DVD was shown to attendees. After the film, it was highlighted that BCH Trades Staff are still parking over dropped kerbs – this is to be passed to the Property Services Team.

It was stated that the Awareness film has been shown to all BCH staff and has also been to partnering contractors. However, it was noted that new staff may not have seen the DVD – it had been previously agreed that the DVD should be part of the induction process for new staff; JE is to check this.

8. Disability Specific Survey

Further to the previous meeting, it was stated that this specific survey had been drafted. The draft survey was handed out to attendees and discussed; all attendees agreed that the questions were specific, relevant and easy to read and understand. Following a discussion at a separate Improvement Panel meeting, it was suggested that disability specific questions be included relating to relevant services areas; this was agreed by

attendees. A full draft of the survey is to be produced and sent to Forum members for comments before the survey is finalised and sent to a sample of disabled customers.

9. Any Other Business

- Meeting Venues – JE stated that an approved list of meeting venues still needs to be developed. After discussion it was agreed that Coastal House should be on the list of approved venues along with the Centre for Independent Living. Other venues are still to be checked.
- Mavis Thomas and John Bland requested magnifiers – these are to be posted out.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 6th July, 2pm at Blackpool Centre for Independent Living, Whitegate Drive