

Disability Advisory Group

Thursday 1 February 2018, 2 pm

Bawnacre Centre, Irvinestown

Present: Councillor Victor Warrington (Chair), Councillor Errol Thompson, Andrew Wilson, Eileen Drumm, Gerry Knight and Dermot Devlin.

Apologies: Councillor Debbie Coyle, Councillor Patricia Rogers and Gerry Maguire.

In Attendance: Margaret McMahon (Head of Policy & Strategic Services), Finbar Maguire (Policy Officer – Equality) and Matthew Nevin (Access & Inclusion Coordinator).

1. Welcome

Councillor Warrington welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were accepted.

3. Review of Minutes of Tuesday 28 November 2017

Members of the Group reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 28 November 2018.

Proposed: Councillor Thompson

Seconded: Gerry Knight

4. Matters Arising

Shopmobility Signage

Eileen informed the Group that she had no further update on the signage in Erneside.

RNIB Contact Details

Margaret explained that Gerry Knight had passed on the details of the RNIB Employment Service and that a meeting with Officers had taken place.

Gerry passed on feedback from RNIB that they had been delighted with the Council's response.

Launch of Groups

Matthew informed Members that a letter explaining the aim of the Group had been drafted and would be sent to local organisations within the District over the next few weeks.

Finbar explained that the photograph taken before the meeting would be used to promote the Groups in the local press. Finbar added that an article on the Group would also be included in the Community Newsletter in March.

Provision of Microphones at Meetings

Margaret reassured members that the issue had been raised with the relevant Officers and the Senior Management Team.

5. Meeting with Local Organisations

Matthew explained that a letter offering the chance to meet members would be sent to local organisations within the District in the next few weeks.

Action: Matthew to update members on the Groups' responses at the next meeting.

6. Outcome of International Day for Persons with Disabilities

Finbar presented the members with a report on the International Day for Persons with Disabilities.

Councillor Warrington informed the Group that he had attended both Events and that attendees seemed to be pleased with the activities. Eileen and Gerry agreed.

Councillor Thompson issued his apologies for not attending the Events.

Eileen raised an issue with the doors in the Fermanagh Lakeland Forum. Margaret updated members that Liz Wilson (Head of Leisure, Recreation & Sport) had reported that the doors will be updated to push-pad ones in the 18/19 period, with all doors eventually being updated to automatic 'pinned-back' fire doors in the future.

Councillor Warrington asked for an update on the program of work at The Ardhowen. Margaret informed members that Robert Gibson (Director of Community, Health &

Leisure) had confirmed that plans were in place to redevelop the Auditorium, which would also focus on the accessible seating.

Eileen queried whether the Group would be involved in the consultation process during the redevelopment. Margaret reassured members that the Group's feedback would be taken onboard to ensure the future-proofing of all re-developments, including The Ardhowen.

7. Autism Update

Finbar provided the Group with an update on the Council becoming Autism-Friendly. Finbar informed members that two training sessions had been arranged in February for the Townhall and Grange. Finbar added that the venues would then qualify for Autism NI's 'Autism Impact Award'.

Action: Finbar to update members on the Award's progress at the next meeting

8. Challenge Fund – Arts for All

Matthew informed members that the Arts Council NI had provided FODC with funding for a large Arts Project. Matthew added that a section had been created for people with disabilities, including producing a silent film, prop-making workshops, dance and circus skills.

9. Funding Programme

Matthew provided the Group with information on a small funding stream that is open to groups that have had contact with the Access & Inclusion Project.

Margaret suggested that the Group could come up with a proposal on potential training sessions that would benefit members. Gerry suggested making the members aware of all the different disabilities and how people get through life. Eileen agreed.

10. Any Other Business

Access Advisory Groups

Gerry queried whether the Access Advisory Groups could start setting up meetings. Margaret responded that it would be ideal to have the two groups meet before the next Disability Advisory Group. Councillor Thompson agreed.

Action: Matthew to arrange Access Advisory Group Meetings.

Strule Arts Centre

Gerry asked Officers for an update on the work on the Strule Arts Centre Doors. Matthew explained that the work had started on Monday 29th January and would be finished within eight weeks. Dermot asked if the work included fixing the cobble footpath. Matthew informed members that the work would not include the cobbled footpath but he would ask the Operations Manager for an update.

Action: Matthew to provide an update on the cobbled footpath at the next meeting.

Omagh Leisure Complex

Eileen expressed her thanks to staff at Omagh Leisure Complex, who were polite and helpful at a recent meeting she attended.

Dermot raised an issue with the hoist at Omagh Leisure Complex and asked for an update on when the new Pool Pod would be installed. Margaret explained that Pods would be installed in both Omagh and Enniskillen and would ask the Head of Leisure for details on when they would be installed.

Action: Margaret to update members on the Pool Pods at the next meeting.

Recent Newspaper Article

Eileen informed the Group that a member of the public raised some concerns about accessibility of The Ardhowen and Fermanagh Lakeland Forum in the local newspapers last week.

Margaret assured members that the Council had issued an apology and explanation. Margaret added that new equipment and future refurbishments will help to improve venues. All Members welcomed this commitment.

Translink Survey

Dermot raised a concern regarding Translink's survey on the provision of new buses. Dermot added that there was only one question about accessibility in the survey - 'Should buses be accessible?'. Gerry added that no thought had been given to people with visual impairments reading posters or negotiating steps.

Eileen commented that she would pass this information onto the local Visual Impaired Group in Fermanagh.

Action: Eileen to make 'V.I.P.' Group aware of survey.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will take place on Thursday 29 March 2018 at 2 pm.