

Joint Access Advisory Group

Tuesday 22 January 2019, 2:00 pm

Bawnacre Centre, Irvinestown

Present:

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| Councillor Victor Warrington (Chair) | Councillor Errol Thompson |
| Gerry Knight | Pauline O'Hagan |
| Bob Lingwood | Karen O'Neill-Young |
| Jayne Hughes | Joanne McDonald |
| Orla McIlhatton | Seline McDonnell |
| Caroline Bogue | Jean Kennedy |
| Sarah McQuaid | Geraldine Keys |
| <p>In attendance: Margaret McMahon, Finbar Maguire, Matthew Nevin, Patricia McGough and Ryan Tracey.</p> | |

| No | Item | Action By: |
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| 1. | <p>Welcome and Introductions Councillor Warrington welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Warrington informed members that Andrew Wilson had been involved in an accident. All members agreed to send Andrew their best wishes for a speedy recovery.</p> <p>Apologies received: Councillor Garbhan McPhillips, Andrew Wilson, Gerry Maguire, Eileen Drumm, Darren McConnell, Hetty van Brandenburg, David McCollum, Naomi Fujitani and Karen Wheeler (Fresh Focus).</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Agree Action Notes of last meeting First meeting of the Joint Access Advisory Group, so no minutes to refer to.</p> | |
| 3. | <p>Car Parking Update Councillor Warrington welcomed Patricia McGough, Off-Street Car Parking Officer, to the meeting. Patricia outlined the Council's responsibility for off-street car parking and added that the Council working to make them more accessible for people with disabilities. Patricia informed the Group that if they had any issues they could contact her directly.</p> <p>Gerry K. queried whether additional signage could be added behind Blue-Badge spaces. Patricia agreed this was a good idea in theory, but that there were a number of areas that needed to be considered, including health and safety. However, Patricia agreed to explore different options to help identify improvements, including appropriate positioning of spaces.</p> <p>Gerry added that people misuse blue-badges which causes issues for other users. Jayne informed members that a photo of the registered user is on the opposite side of the badge. Councillor Warrington welcomed the new dedicated Blue-Badge Wardens in Omagh and encouraged traffic wardens to be more proactive in asking to see if the Blue-Badge relates to someone in the vehicle.</p> <p>Patricia welcomed all the feedback and informed members that the Council have signed up to the British Parking Association. Patricia added that a meeting between the Association, District Councils and Department for Communities would take place next week, and that Blue-Badge parking was on the Agenda.</p> | |

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| | <p>Action: Patricia to provide an update on Blue-Badge Parking before next meeting.</p> <p>Jayne informed the Group that she had been working with Patricia and Andrew Knox from the Department for Communities to try and improve on-street parking for rear-loading adapted vehicles. Members welcomed these efforts.</p> | <p>Patricia McGough</p> |
| | <p>Insert Update: Improving spaces for rear loading vehicles:</p> <p>Further to the meeting, a number of locations in Enniskillen were identified as potential bays to facilitate rear loading vehicles. (I have not had any similar requests for Omagh.) Two car parks identified where Head Street, Enniskillen (beside the Library) and Market Street, Enniskillen (adjacent to the Buttermarket). Work has been carried out in Head Street Car Park to improve the footpaths and as part of this, improvements have been made to the space in proximity to the Salvation Army Building. This has resulted in relocation of a pole that was hindering rear loading vehicles from opening and installation of drop kerbs at the footpaths at this point too.</p> <p>I have met with Andrew Knox Dfl in relation to the footpaths around Market Street Car Park. I have requested that plans have been drawn up to improve the disabled spaces and the footpaths in this car park. A further update will be brought to another meeting. Any works of this nature will be subject to available budget.</p> <p>Improved Signage for disabled bays:</p> <p>The Council has agreed to erect additional signage in each disabled parking bay. It is hoped that this work will commence shortly. This will mean that the sign will indicate that the space is for blue badge holders only and a reminder that normal parking charges apply.</p> <p>Improvement to footpath access in Market Street, Enniskillen:</p> <p>In light with comments in 1 above, the footpath configuration will be considered as part of any refurbishment works that will be carried out in this car park.</p> | |

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| | <p>Responsibilities of Traffic Attendants</p> <p>I have spoken with Seán McConnell DfI in relation to the responsibilities of the Traffic Attendants and his comments are attached:</p> <p>Article 32 of the Traffic Management Order (NI) 2005 amends Section 14 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (NI) Act 1978 and gives a TA the right to ask to inspect the badge, and for the motorist to fail to do this is an offence.</p> <p>In the Car Parks there is a contravention (code 86) which is “Parked in a person with a disability's parking space without clearly displaying a valid person with a disability badge”. This contravention is one of the offences that the Traffic Attendants look for when they are carrying out their Car Park visits.</p> <p>Also, if a driver is present when a code 86 (“Parked in a person with a disability's parking space without clearly displaying a valid person with a disability badge) is being issued in a P & D car park and they are asked for a copy of their Blue Badge and they fail to produce it they are in contravention of the Order.</p> <p>Blue Badge misuse</p> <p>It is a criminal offence for anyone to misuse a Blue Badge. Blue Badges must never be copied or tampered with. The fraudulent use of a Blue Badge could lead to prosecution and a fine of up to £1,000.</p> <p>When using a parking concession you must display the badge on the dashboard or fascia panel where it can be clearly read through the front windscreen. If there is no dashboard or fascia panel, you must display it where it can be clearly read from outside the vehicle.</p> <p>The front of the badge should face upwards showing the hologram. The side showing the photograph should not be visible through the windscreen.</p> | |

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| | <p>You must make sure the details on the front of the badge are legible. If they become illegible through fading or wear and tear, you must return the badge to the Blue Badge Unit so it can issue a new one. Displaying an illegible badge or incorrectly displaying the badge may result in a Penalty Charge Notice.</p> <p>Returning a Blue Badge You must return the badge to the Blue Badge Unit if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the badge has expired • your medical condition or mobility improves and you are no longer eligible • a replacement badge has been issued for one that is lost or stolen and the original is found or recovered - then return the original badge • the badge becomes damaged or faded and is illegible • the badge is no longer required, for example, if you are confined to your home • the badge holder is deceased <p>Disabled Motoring UK</p> <p>At the BPA (British Parking Association) NI Meeting in January we met with a representative from the above Charity. Disabled Motoring UK is the charity which supports disabled drivers, passengers and Blue Badge holders. Their website is: https://www.disabledmotoring.org/</p> | |
| 4 | <p>Consultation: Fermanagh & Omagh District Council Improvement Plan</p> <p>Ryan Tracey, Performance Improvement Officer, introduced himself and gave an overview of the Draft Council Improvement Plan 19/20. Ryan outlined the five objectives and asked members to complete the hardcopy or online survey if possible.</p> <p>Bob queried whether the Council produced an Annual Report to see if they met the objectives. Ryan informed members that the Council must complete regular reporting and that a copies would be made available to all members.</p> | |

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| 5. | <p>Conference & Activity Mornings Feedback</p> <p>Finbar provided an update from the International Day for Persons with Disabilities Events. Finbar added that the Conference had received great feedback from the 55 attendees and guest speakers. He provided further detail on the 2 Fun Days that provided adults with disabilities a chance to take part in inclusive arts and leisure activities, including the new Accessibility Bikes. Members welcomed the report.</p> <p>Karen queried whether the groups supporting people with visual impairments could use the bikes. Finbar encouraged groups to speak with staff at the Leisure Centres to organise activities with the new equipment.</p> | |
| 6. | <p>InFO and AccessAbility Booklets</p> <p>Finbar informed members that staff had produced 2 pages of information on Access and Disability in the Council's Resident's Newsletter. Matthew added that similar information was contained in the AccessAbility Booklet.</p> <p>Members welcomed the development.</p> <p>Gerry asked officers for an update on the Card to help people with autism jump the queue. Matthew explained that officers were exploring how the 'PASS Scheme' Card could be used for this purpose. Members asked for an update at the next meeting. Caroline emphasised the need for staff to recognise the Jam Card or the UK Disability Card as well as the PASS Card.</p> <p>Action: Matthew to provide an update on PASS Card at next meeting.</p> | Matthew Nevin |
| | <p>Insert Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the PASS Scheme has taken place and a new registration form has been produced. • Staff at the Strule Arts Centre, The Ardhoven and Enniskillen Castle will be provided with training on the new process and how people with autism can use it to get priority during queueing. • Marble Arch Caves will introduce the process later in the year. • Staff will examine a way to extend the process to the other venues, including the Leisure Centres. | |

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| 7. | <p>Island Disco Consultation Event</p> <p>Matthew reported on the consultation event that took place at the Ardhowen’s Island Disco. He added that parents had provided the following feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Productions should have relaxed performances for Groups/ Schools/ Day Care Centres. • There is a need to make local businesses more aware of persons with disabilities and how to make access to shops etc. more disability-friendly. • The Council needs to emphasise that Awareness Training for staff on Autism etc. needs to be reviewed and delivered on a regular basis. Other organisations have Disability Toolkits for staff. • Great improvement on access to the big events, like Christmas Lights Switch-On. • More regular activities for Adults/Children with disabilities are needed. • Theatres should be providing day-time cinema screenings for adults with disabilities. <p>Gerry asked if staff could obtain feedback from the recent Relaxed Performance at the Strule. Seline also welcomed this idea.</p> <p>Action: Matthew to seek feedback on the Relaxed Performance</p> <p>Seline highlighted the importance of advertising all the activities on social media and giving people enough time to plan for the events. Caroline suggested having a Council Disability Facebook Page.</p> <p>Margaret explained that the Council doesn’t want to create too many facebook pages and lose the focus from the main corporate one, but that she would explore the options of setting one up.</p> <p>Action: Margaret to feedback on social media page at next meeting.</p> | <p>Matthew Nevin</p> <p>Margaret McMahon</p> |
| | <p>Insert Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Marketing Manager has examined previous social media posts relating to disability/ inclusive activities on the corporate pages. The Manager has indicated that all the posts have had lots of views and interaction. • One problem with a separate account is the time that it would take to manage the social media pages and | |

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| | <p>correspondence. Another problem with a separate account is that people may miss suitable inclusive activities which are not specific to people with disabilities. Furthermore, it will take a long time to build up a strong following on the page, which will result in people missing out on opportunities.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>Disability Festival</p> <p>Matthew provided information on the upcoming 'ican Fest' that is taking place in March throughout the District. Matthew encouraged organisations to partner with the festival either by organising activities or encouraging participation.</p> <p>Members welcomed the programme.</p> <p>Action: Members interested in joining the Festival to contact Matthew. Matthew to provide an update at the next meeting.</p> | Members |
| | <p>Insert Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An update on the events will be provided during the meeting. | |
| 9. | <p>Omagh Town Centre Ramble</p> <p>Finbar informed Members about the Omagh Town Centre Ramble event that is taking place on 12 & 13 February. Finbar added that there would be a chance to try and navigate Omagh Town Centre while using a wheelchair or mobility scooter.</p> <p>Karen queried whether people had considered visual impairments for this event. Finbar explained that Social Services were providing goggles to help illustrate various eye conditions. All welcomed the event.</p> <p>Finbar added that Omagh Chamber of Commerce and Dermot Devlin are organising the event.</p> | |

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| 10. | <p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Bob congratulated the Leisure Centre on introducing the Pool Pods. Bob added that members of the Omagh Access Forum were very pleased with the results.</p> <p>Bob added that the Group have some concerns that the Disability Changing Room improvements have not been acted upon.</p> <p>Action: Finbar to provide an update on Disability Changing at the next meeting.</p> <p>Bob queried whether Omagh Leisure Complex had arranged an Event to recognise its Disability Sports NI Meeting. Bob presented an invite from a similar event organised by Fermanagh Lakeland Forum over 11 years ago.</p> <p>Action: Matthew to contact Manager of Omagh Leisure Complex to find out more information.</p> <p>Bob asked members if there was any more information available on the improvements at Bridge Street. Councillor Thompson added that the improvements were a working progress, but changes would be happening soon.</p> <p>Gerry asked if members would be able to advise on the plans. Bob agreed and added that as the members had highlighted the issues at the start they should be consulted with.</p> <p>Action: Matthew to contact Head of Arts & Heritage regarding the Bridge Street plans.</p> <p>Margaret informed the Group of the AccessAble Project. Margaret explained that they had contacted the Council asking them to join the project at a cost per year. Councillor Warrington asked for the Project to be noted and not acted on at present. All agreed.</p> | |

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| | <p>Insert Update:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disability Changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An accessible changing cubicle has been moved to the area closest to the pool. ○ The main Accessible Changing Room remains located at the left of the changing village. 2. Omagh Leisure Complex 'Disability Sports Award' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Officers are working with Complex Manager to provide a recognition event. With Members approval, we could hold the next Omagh Access Advisory Group Meeting at the Complex and have the Celebration Event after it. 3. Bridge Street Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cobbles have been removed and will be replaced with smooth non-slip paving. ○ Wide pavement to allow ease of movement and ability for wheelchairs and prams to pass each other. ○ New lighting provided for dark evenings. | |
| 11. | <p>Date of next meetings The date of the next meeting will take place on Thursday 7 March 2019 at 2 pm.</p> | |