

Disability Advisory Group

Wednesday 24 November 2021 at 2.00pm

Online Meeting via Zoom

Present:

Eileen Drumm	Bob Lingwood
Dermot Devlin	Gerry Knight
Councillor Donal O’Cofaigh	Joanne McDonald
Councillor Stephen Donnelly	Councillor Garbhan McPhillips
Councillor Errol Thompson	Councillor Victor Warrington
In attendance: Margaret McMahon, Matthew Nevin, Finbar Maguire and Melissa Little.	
Presentation: Barry Grimes (Royal National Institute for Deaf People)	

No	Item	Action By:
1.	Welcome and Introductions Councillor Warrington welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	Apologies Received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Tommy Maguire • Andrew Wilson 	

No	Item	Action By:
3.	<p>Presentation from Royal National Institute for Deaf People Barry Grimes, Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) gave a presentation to the Group and some of the key points to note were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RNID has been a registered charity since 1911 and work to connect people to create a fully inclusive society. The charity achieves this through research, campaigning and community work. • 1 in 5 adults in the UK have some form of hearing loss. • 300,000 adults in Northern Ireland have a form of hearing loss. • On average there is a 10-year delay in an individual identifying a hearing loss and seeking help. • There are 4 levels of hearing loss; mild, moderate, severe and profound. • RNID provide a hearing test service on their website and it takes approximately 3 minutes to complete. • Only approximately 40% of people who require hearing aids actually have them. • RNID staff and volunteers provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hearing aid maintenance, this includes: tubing, minor repairs, battery replacement etc. - Information and signposting to other services including referrals to audiology. - Support for hearing aid users from people who use them. - Drop-in sessions whereby hearing aid maintenance, support and information is provided. - Home visits are provided to carry out hearing aid maintenance • RNID is funded by the Health and Social Care Board and works in partnership with local audiology and sensory support teams. <p>Dermot advised that he hadn't been aware of the RNID drop-in sessions and he queried how these were publicised.</p> <p>Gerry K advised that the RNID drop-in sessions are advertised in the local newspapers and that the next local drop-in session is scheduled for 28 December from 11.00am-2.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Omagh.</p>	

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	<p>Barry noted that where replacement batteries are provided, RNID record the individual's names and addresses and provide this information to local audiology teams so that they have a record and can tell who is using their hearing aids. Barry highlighted that only hearing aids that had been provided by national health can be maintained/repared by RNID.</p> <p>Cllr S Donnelly queried how visiting restrictions in care homes in relation to Covid, impeded on RNID's ability to carry out maintenance/repairs to care home residents who use hearing aids.</p> <p>Barry advised that over the Covid pandemic some care homes had provided a room in the care home which RNID staff/volunteers worked from to carry out repairs/maintenance. In other cases, RNID arranged to pick up hearing aids, take them away to carry out repairs/maintenance and then bring them back to the care home.</p> <p>Barry highlighted that hearing aid maintenance does not currently form part of the checks by The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) in Northern Ireland whereas in other parts of the UK it is included within checks. RNID are keen for this to be included within the RQIA checks in care homes in Northern Ireland in the future.</p> <p>Gerry K advised that he is a volunteer for RNID and he encouraged members of the Group to get in touch with him if they knew of a hearing aid user that required help or support.</p>	
3.	<p>Updates on actions from the last Disability Advisory Group meeting on 29 September 2021</p> <p>Shopmobility Eileen advised that a meeting had recently took place between Shopmobility and Erneside and discussions were ongoing in relation to re-locating the Shopmobility service from Erneside.</p> <p>Inclusive Fishing Jetty Finbar advised that discussions were ongoing between the Council and DAERA in relation to identifying suitable locations within the Neighbourhood Renewable area for an accessible fishing jetty location.</p> <p>Action 1: Finbar to update the Group with any developments in relation to identifying a suitable location for an accessible fishing jetty.</p>	Finbar

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	<p>Advertising Boards Margaret advised that following discussions at the last meeting a report is to be brought to a future Environmental Services Committee meeting to propose that the Council consider what could be done in relation to placement of advertising boards on pavements/streets.</p> <p>An update will be provided to the Group when available.</p> <p>Invites for future Advisory Groups Group meetings. Margaret advised that Matthew had added Andrew who represents Guide Dogs NI and Colum who represents RNIB to the advisory group circulation lists so that they receive invites for future access advisory group meetings.</p> <p>Promotion of the ‘Just a Minute’ Cards Finbar gave the following update on work which is underway to promote the JAM cards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NOW Group is providing an online zoom session as part of the activities planned for DisAbility Awareness Week 2021 (26 November – 03 December). - An Age/ Disability Friendly event is being organised for 2022 and it is hoped that the NOW Group will take part in this. - The Economic Development Team has organised training on the JAM Card for businesses in Enniskillen and Omagh during December 2021. - Further training for Council staff is to be organised in 2022. <p>Steps between Market Street Omagh/Car Park at back of Supervalu Margaret advised that she had liaised with the Economic Development Team in relation to the accessibility issues in the area between Market Street, Omagh and the car park at the back of Supervalu Omagh. The Economic Development Team advised that if funding became available they would proactively look at ways to improve accessibility in the area.</p>	

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	<p>Dergmoney Heights Cllr E Thompson advised that he had liaised with Dfl to highlight the need for installation of a ramp in the Dergmoney Heights area and they did not rule out carrying out work however they noted that it would not be a priority.</p> <p>Dermot noted that he had not had received any recent update from Dfl on this issue.</p> <p>Action 2: Cllr E Thompson and Dermot to continue to pursue Dfl in relation to the accessibility issue at the steps at Dergmoney Heights, Omagh.</p> <p>Covid Testing Eileen advised that she had highlighted the difficulties people with disabilities face when carrying out lateral flow tests or if they require a PCR test with the Department of Health and they had recently responded with some suggestions including, making tests more accessible and training carers to assist with swabbing.</p> <p>Action 3: Matthew to share the response Eileen received from the Department of Health with the Group.</p>	<p>Cllr E Thompson/Dermot</p> <p>Matthew</p>
	<p>Insert Update: Action 1 (Finbar): Action 2 (Cllr E Thompson/Dermot): Action 3 (Matthew): Matthew forwarded Eileen's email from the Department of Health to Members after the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Report from G Knight from the last Fermanagh and Omagh Access Advisory Group Meeting</p> <p>G Knight advised that the Fermanagh and Omagh Access Advisory Group met on 04 November 2021 and he gave the following update from the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Membership of the Access Advisory Groups had recently been revised. - Topics within the upcoming training programme were discussed and these include, learning disability, physical disability, sight loss, hearing loss, autism, sign language and dementia. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of the Group have agreed to participate in the training programme. - Dermot recently took part in a video to highlight the new changing places facility at the Strule Arts Centre, Omagh. - Mystery shopper audits had recently been completed and feedback from these had been reported. 	
5.	<p>Disability Advisory Group Action Plan Finbar gave the following update:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Publicity and Awareness Raising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two information events are being organised for early 2022 whereby people will be able to find out more information about age and disability friendly services that are available to them. Providing restrictions allow, the events will be physical rather than virtual and it is hoped that other organisations will attend these and carry out e.g. health checks or RNID to provide hearing checks. - A number of physical and virtual events will take place as part of Disability Awareness Week which will run from 26 November – 03 December 2021. <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Presentations on Council Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The leisure team are hoping to attend the next Access and Inclusion Advisory Group Meetings to provide information on the Accessible Bike Scheme. - Mencap will provide a presentation at the next Disability Advisory Group meeting on 25 January 2021. 	
6.	<p>Update: International Day of People with Disabilities</p> <p>Matthew noted that the programme of events which are taking place as part of Disability Awareness Week which runs from 26 November – 03 December had been shared with the Group and he gave the following update:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This year FODC partnered with Derry and Strabane District Council to deliver the programme which is funded by the Public Health Agency. - A number of other organisations such as, Libraries NI, University of Atypical, NOW Group, Department for Communities, Action Mental Health and Epilepsy NI are facilitating some of the events and information sessions. - Social media messaging to highlight the programme is ongoing. - Department for Communities Sign Language Division, NW Spectrum and the University of Atypical will be presenting at the Annual Conference on Friday 26 November at 11.00am. <p>Matthew encouraged members of the Group to attend the events and to get in touch with him, Finbar or Melissa to register.</p>	
7.	<p>AORB Omagh Hospital Bob highlighted that vehicles had recently been parking at the drop-off point at the Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex for long periods and that this had been causing difficulty, particularly for wheelchair users who had been unable to use the drop-off point.</p> <p>Action 4: Cllr V Warrington to highlight the parking issues at the drop-off point at the Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex at the next quarterly meeting with the Western Health and Social Care Trust.</p> <p>Radar Keys Dermot queried if information could be provided on the public conveniences in the District that have the radar key facility.</p> <p>Action 5: Matthew to provide information on the Council-owned facilities that have Radar Keys.</p>	<p>Cllr V Warrington</p> <p>Matthew</p>
	<p>Insert Update Action 4 (Cllr V Warrington): Action 5 (Matthew): Information on what Council-owned public conveniences have radar key access can be found on the Council's website - https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/services/parks-and-open-spaces/public-toilets/</p>	

No	Item	Action By:
8.	Dates of future meetings: Tuesday 25 January 2022 at 2.00pm Wednesday 30 March 2022 at 2.00pm	

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