

Disability Advisory Group
Wednesday 29 September at 2.00pm
Online Meeting via Zoom

Present:

Eileen Drumm	Andrew Wilson
Dermot Devlin	Gerry Knight
Councillor Donal O’Cofaigh	Joanne McDonald
Councillor Stephen Donnelly	Gerry Maguire
Councillor Tommy Maguire	Councillor Victor Warrington
In attendance: Margaret McMahon, Matthew Nevin, Finbar Maguire and Melissa Little.	
Presentation: Colum Delaney (Royal National Institute of Blind People) and Andrew Murdock (Guide Dogs).	

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 Garbhan McPhilips • Cllr E McAleer • Cllr E Thompson 	

No	Item	Action By:
3.	<p>Updates on actions from the last Disability Advisory Group meeting on 30 October 2020</p> <p>Shopmobility At a previous meeting Councillor Warrington advised that he had raised the issues experienced by Shopmobility at the Council Meeting on 03 December 2019, and that the Council had agreed to issue a letter to Erneside Shopping Centre, highlighting the importance of Shopmobility within the shopping centre in terms of providing a fully inclusive shopping environment.</p> <p>Action 1: Councillor Warrington advised that a meeting between Erneside and Shopmobility is due to take place soon and that he would update the Group on the outcome of this meeting.</p> <p>Inclusive Fishing Jetty Finbar advised that the disappointment of the Group had been conveyed to both the Council's Leisure Recreation and Sports service and DAERA and that conversations were ongoing in relation to identifying suitable locations within the Neighbourhood Renewable area for an accessible fishing jetty location.</p> <p>Action 2: Any developments in identifying a suitable location for an accessible fishing jetty are to be communicated to the Group.</p> <p>Seating/Resting Area at Omagh Leisure Complex (OLC) At a previous meeting, Joanne highlighted that due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic there is a requirement to book leisure sessions at OLC in advance. This can result in customers having to wait outside the building for some time as they are not permitted to enter the building until the start time of their session.</p> <p>Finbar advised that he is liaising with OLC staff to see if it would be possible to provide a bench/seated area outside the leisure centre.</p> <p>Action 3: Finbar to provide an update to the Group once a response from OLC staff is received.</p>	<p>Cllr Warrington</p> <p>Finbar</p> <p>Finbar</p>

No	Item	Action By:
	<p>Insert Update: Action 1 (Cllr Warrington): Action 2 (Finbar): Action 3 (Finbar):</p>	
4.	<p>Discussion in relation to Pavement Café Licences with representatives from the Royal National Institute of Blind People and Guide Dogs.</p> <p>Colum Delaney (RNIB) thanked the Group for the invitation to join the meeting and advised that a joint letter from RNIB and Guide Dogs had been issued to all Councils in Northern Ireland in May 2021. The letter highlighted issues around pavement café licences and how they felt Councils could play an important role in ensuring that pavements remain clutter free. He advised that RNIB recognise the importance of businesses re-opening following the Covid-19 pandemic however where there are pavement cafés, they need to be undertaking their business in a safe and responsible manner that respects the rights of blind or partially sighted individuals.</p> <p>Andrew Murdock (Guide Dogs NI) advised that service users had expressed concerns regarding the lack of screening around pavement café licences. He noted that without screening it can be easy for cafes to grow/expand further across the pavement.</p> <p>Andrew (Guide Dogs NI) queried the process in relation to the issuing of pavement café licences.</p> <p>Margaret advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Licensing is controlled by the Community and Well-being department within the Council and there are certain criteria that applicants must meet in order to have a licence granted. - When an application is received a public notice is displayed in the applicants premises for 21 days and is also published on the Council website. - Prior to making decisions on new pavement café applications the Licensing Team consult with Members of the Access Advisory Groups. 	

No	Item	Action By:
	<p>Andrew (Guide Dogs NI) advised that this very proactive approach would be a model that they would be sharing with other Councils.</p> <p>Colum (RNIB) queried the Council's process in relation to monitoring and compliance of businesses with existing pavement café licences.</p> <p>Margaret advised that under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act the Council has a duty to inspect premises that are causing issues e.g. by not having appropriate screening or by expanding across the footpath. When issues are brought to the attention of the Council, Officers visit the premises and conduct the appropriate engagement. In addition, Community Voluntary Members of the Access Advisory Groups are encouraged to proactively raise any possible non-compliance issues that they may have noticed with Officers so that the appropriate action can be taken.</p> <p>Andrew (Guide Dogs NI) suggested that the Council consider an approach that was piloted by Council's in Scotland to temporarily ban advertising boards from being placed outside businesses on streets/pavements. He advised that following the success of the pilot scheme they did not revert back to allowing the placement of advertising boards on pavements.</p> <p>Following discussions, the Group requested that a proposal is brought to the next Policy and Resources Committee for Council to consider what measures could be taken in relation to placement of advertising boards on streets/pavements, taking into account the accessibility issues that these can cause.</p> <p>Action 4: A report to be brought to a future R&C Committee to propose that the Council consider what could be done in relation to placement of advertising boards on pavements/streets.</p> <p>Andrew (RNIB) and Colum (Guide Dogs NI) advised that they would be interested in attending future Advisory Group meetings.</p> <p>Action 5: Invites for future Advisory Group meetings to be issued to Andrew representing RNIB and Colum representing Guide Dogs NI.</p>	<p>Margaret</p> <p>Matthew</p>
	<p>Insert Update Action 4 (Margaret):</p>	

No	Item	Action By:
	Action 5 (Matthew):	
5.	<p>Report from the Fermanagh and Omagh Access Advisory Groups</p> <p>Andrew gave the group a presentation with updates following the recent Fermanagh Access Advisory Group meeting, some of the key points to note were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group met two weeks ago and approved the Action Plan. • Andrew, Eileen and Fresh Focus are set to create videos that will be shared on social media. • Andrew, Eileen and Fresh Focus are set to carry out mystery shopper audits at the Broadmeadow, Forthill Redevelopment and Fermanagh Lakeland Forum. • Genevieve Irvine carried out an accessibility audit on how accessible it is to register a dog online. • The Group had been involved in the same consultation on the 7 Council projects as the Omagh Access Advisory Group. • The Group is currently reviewing it's membership and hopes to recruit to new members in the coming months. <p>Gerry K gave the group a presentation with updates following the recent Omagh Access Advisory Group meeting, some of the key points to note were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joanne created a video to highlight Learning Disability Week. • Dermot recorded information on the new Changing Places facility at the Strule Arts Centre, Omagh for Changing Places Awareness Day. • Gerry K took part in a video to highlight the work of the Omagh Access Advisory Group. • Gerry K and Dermot carried out an audit of Arleston Park, Lover's Retreat, Riverside Walk and the Dog Park, Omagh. • The Group had been involved in providing advice on the following projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reminiscence Pathway, Enniskillen. - Equestrian Mounting Block, Gortin Glens Forest Park. 	

No	Item	Action By:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strule Arts Centre Urban Garden. - Buttermarket resurfacing. - Connecting Places walkways. - Gateway Signage. - Accessible picnic tables. <p>Gerry K advised that he represents the Group on the Omagh Town Regeneration Forum and at a recent meeting there had been conversations in relation to the Just A Minute (JAM) cards. It was recognised that not many people knew what the JAM cards were. Gerry K suggested that an information leaflet on JAM cards be distributed to business owners and as many people as possible.</p> <p>Dermot suggested that Joanne creates a video showing her using the JAM cards in a shop and the Council could post this on the website and social media channels to help raise awareness.</p> <p>Joanne advised that the NOW Group developed the JAM cards and it may be necessary to liaise with them prior to creating any promotional materials.</p> <p>Action 6: Matthew/Finbar to liaise with the NOW Group to look into possible ways to promote the JAM cards.</p>	<p>Matthew/Finbar</p>
	<p>Insert Update: Action 6 (Matthew/Finbar):</p>	
6.	<p>Disability Advisory Group Action Plan</p> <p>Matthew provided the following update:</p> <p>Raising Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerry K to enquire if a member of RNID could join a future meeting of the Group. • Joanne and Andrew to enquire if Mencap could join a future meeting of the Group. 	

No	Item	Action By:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dermot to enquire if a member of the Department for Communities Disability Strategy and Co-Design Group could attend a future meeting of the Group. • Finbar had been involved in creating videos to be used on social media with Joanne, Gerry K and Dermot. • Eileen and Andrew are next to be involved in creating videos for social media. • Work is ongoing on improving the accessibility of the Council website. • Members have been involved in providing advice on projects such as the Equestrian Block, Strule Arts Centre Urban Garden, picnic tables etc. • Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and rise in cases in the Fermanagh area there has been less face-to-face events, however, over the summer an event for adults with learning disabilities took place. There were 15 participants and the event went well. • A number of pre-recorded online workshops have taken place recently and Members of the Group have attended these. <p>Improving Council Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes for future events will be made accessible and will be available in alternative formats upon request. • Finbar has procured the Video Relay service for a further 12-month period. <p>Finbar provided the following update:</p> <p>Building Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of training events involving Members of the Group and staff had taken place to date. Another staff training event is due to take place as part of International Day for People with Disabilities. • Andrew is creating a video to promote the Access Advisory Group. • Eileen is creating a video of her carrying out the accessibility audit at the Forthill Redevelopment once works have been completed. 	

No	Item	Action By:
7.	<p>Department for Communities – Access and Inclusion Capital Fund 2021/22</p> <p>Matthew advised that funding of £114,467 had been secured for five of the six applications that were submitted to DfC. The successful and the successful projects were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminiscence Pathway – Omagh. Signal signs and seating to be installed along the Riverside Walkway, Omagh. • Inclusive Playpark Equipment. 4 inclusive roundabouts and 6 ‘Who Pairs Wins’ Interactive Panels are to be installed in the District. • Tactile Maps. 4 Inclusive layered maps are to be installed in Park areas across the District. • Inclusive Community Garden. As a pilot project, there will be an Inclusive Community Garden beside Killyvilly Play Park, Enniskillen that will allow people with disabilities to grow their own fruit and vegetables in an inclusive and safe space. • Accessible Picnic Tables are to be designed and installed across the District. 	
8.	<p>Update: International Day of People with Disabilities</p> <p>Finbar gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PHA funding has been secured to deliver events this year. - This year the Council will be working in partnership with Derry City and Strabane District Council to deliver a joint programme of events. - The date of International Day of People with Disabilities is 03 December each year and in the past there had been a number of events on around that time. To prevent any potential clashes Council events will begin on 26 November leading up to 03 December. - The overall Theme for this year has not yet been released. Various organisations and local groups in the District had been contacted to seek their suggestions on themes. Some of the suggestions included; Health and Wellbeing, Social Enterprise, Family and Friends, Creativity, Sustainability, Accessibility and Recreation. It is proposed that there would be a workshop on each of the suggested themes each day and the final event would focus on the overall theme. 	

No	Item	Action By:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is likely that the events will be mainly delivered online again this year with some face-to-face events, if appropriate. - As part of the programme this year, there are plans to include training on recovering from the pandemic to local businesses, community groups and Council staff. The training will highlight the need to include people with disabilities in plans to recover from the pandemic rather than this being an afterthought. <p>Finbar welcomed Members becoming involved in delivering the training which is proposed to last approximately 10-15 minutes each and could include; outlining their disability, the difficulties they face due to their disability and 2/3 suggested changes that a business could make to improve their experiences.</p>	
9.	<p>Consultation: Shaping Future Support – The Health and Disability Green Paper</p> <p>Finbar advised that an email was sent out to Members on 03 September looking for feedback on the consultation. Good feedback had been received and this had been incorporated into the Council’s response which is being reported to the Environmental Services Committee on 06 October.</p> <p>Finbar highlighted that the Consultation remains open until 11 October 2021 if Members wish to send individual responses.</p>	
10.	<p>AORB</p> <p>Steps between Market Street Omagh/Car Park at back of Supervalu</p> <p>Dermot advised that there are steps at the alley way between Market Street and the Car Park at the back of Supervalu, Omagh which leaves access to some businesses in that area inaccessible to wheelchair users. Discussions in relation to installation of a ramp had been ongoing between the Council and DfI for several years, however, a letter from the Council’s Head of Economic Development had been recently received advising that it would not be possible to put the ramp in place.</p> <p>Action 7: Dermot to send the communications he received from the Head of Economic Development to Margaret so that she can follow up on this.</p> <p>Traffic Lights at County Hall, Omagh</p> <p>Dermot advised that at the traffic lights at the double crossing at the end of Bridge St across to County Hall there are devices to alert people with visual impairments to know when it is safe to cross the road. One of</p>	Dermot/Margaret

No	Item	Action By:
	<p>the devices is not working and he highlighted the requirement for these to be installed on both the left and right side of the crossing, in case one side is blocked by pedestrians.</p> <p>Action 8: Dermot to liaise with Omagh Town Councillors to progress the issue with DfI Roads.</p> <p>Dergmoney Heights Dermot advised that at a previous meeting Cllr E Thompson had advised that he had been in contact with DfI -Roads in relation to the possibility of installation of a ramp at Dergmoney Heights and he queried if there had been any update on this.</p> <p>Action 9: Cllr E Thompson to provide an update to Dermot on the status of the issue relating to Dergmoney Heights, Omagh.</p> <p>Covid Testing Eileen highlighted the difficulties people with disabilities face when they are required to do a PCR Test at St. Angelo airport, Enniskillen and advised that she had become aware of a testing facility at The Hope Centre, Enniskillen for employees of the Western, Health and Social Care Trust and people referred via their GP.</p> <p>Cllr O’Cofaigh suggested that the Council writes a letter to the Trust to propose that the testing facility at The Hope Centre is opened up to people with disabilities.</p> <p>Action 10: Council approval at the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting to be sought to write a letter to the Trust in relation to opening up the testing facility at The Hope Centre, Enniskillen to people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Dermot</p> <p>Cllr E Thompson</p> <p>Margaret</p>
	<p>Insert Update: Action 7 (Dermot/Margaret): Action 8 (Dermot): Action 9 (Cllr E Thompson): Action 9 (Margaret):</p>	
11.	<p>Dates of future meetings: Wednesday 24 November 2021 at 2.00pm</p>	

No	Item	Action By:
	Tuesday 25 January 2022 at 2.00pm	

DRAFT