

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

BI-ANNUAL MEETING BETWEEN EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL AND THE FORUMS ON DISABILITY

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2002 AT 1400 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors David Macrae, Harry Wilson, Jane Darnbrough, Eric Jackson and Alan Campbell.

ALSO PRESENT: Representing Kilmarnock Forum on Disability: Jim Bryan, Dorothy McGowan, Nancy Mair, Linda Thomson and Alan Harley; representing East Ayrshire (South) Forum on Disability: William Frew, Kevin Dorman, Jim Cassells, Jim Johnstone, Jean Smith and Rebecca Dorman.

ATTENDING: David Montgomery, Chief Executive; Fiona Lees, Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources; John Crawford, Head of Protective Services; Janette Nightingale, Assistant Area Manager, Central Team, Homes; David McDowall, Building Control Manager; Sandy Gillatt, Chief Engineer, Roads; Elaine Gerard, Employee Relations Officer, Corporate Resources; Susan Taylor, Service Unit Manager (Adults); Morven Gemmill, Service Manager, Independent Living, Educational and Social Services; and Robert Beaton, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Drew McIntyre and Julie Faulds.

CHAIR: Councillor David Macrae, Chair.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Minutes of the previous meeting of 27 March 2001 (circulated) were agreed in terms of accuracy.

MATTERS ARISING

2. There were no matters arising.

INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY CONFERENCE - 30 NOVEMBER 2001

3. There was submitted and noted report dated 15 February 2002 (circulated) by the Conference Planning Group which advised of details of the successful outcome of the Conference.

Members of the Disability Forum expressed their appreciation to the Council for the support given and particularly thanked Robert Beaton for his guidance and assistance.

PROVISION OF PREMISES FOR DISABILITY FORUMS

4. The Service Manager, Independent Living provided a verbal update on the current progress of identifying suitable accommodation for both Disability Forums as follows:-
 - accommodation at St Joseph's Academy, Kilmarnock as an office base had been agreed in principle with the Kilmarnock Forum on Disability. It was noted that alterations to the building would be completed shortly, power points would be

provided, and heating and lighting costs would be met by the Council. In addition, the provision of a telephone line would be investigated under the E-Government Strategy.

- the use of accommodation within Cumnock Academy had been agreed in principle with the East Ayrshire (South) Forum on Disability. It was noted that the cost of decoration would be met by the Disability Forum, and that heating and lighting costs would be met by the Council.

Following discussion it was agreed:-

- (i) to welcome progress to date on provision of accommodation to both Disability Forums;
- (ii) to note that both Forums were being encouraged to affiliate to the East Ayrshire Council for Voluntary Organisations to access further administrative support;
- (iii) in response to a request from both Disability Forums, the Head of Community Support would arrange for a further site visit to both premises to view progress of work;
- (iv) that arrangements would be made by the Head of Community Support with both Disability Forums regarding the signing of the Letter of Agreement, which would encompass housekeeping arrangements and to hand over the accommodation from 1 April 2002; and
- (v) to note that East Ayrshire (South) Forum on Disability were in the process of applying for funding for decoration and furniture costs and for grant application purposes, it was confirmed that accommodation would be provided by the Council on a long-term basis.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACCESSING SERVICES BASED AT FORMER DALSALLOCH CENTRE, AUCHINLECK

5. The Service Unit Manager (Adults), Educational and Social Services advised of the loss of the Council's premises at Dalsalloch due to a fire on 26/27 December 2001.

As a result, staff had been redeployed to various alternative locations and contact details had been widely circulated.

Following discussion, it was agreed:-

- (i) to note that arrangements had been put in place to ensure that text messages from service users were routed to Reception at Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock, fax and telephone messages from service users were directed to the Civic Centre, Kilmarnock;
- (ii) to minimise any difficulties service users may have with contacting services formerly based at Dalsalloch, the Service Unit Manager, Independent Living would review current contact arrangements and would issue further guidance through radio, tape and braille on contact details for services as necessary;
- (iii) to note that the views of service users would be sought as part of the planning exercise for the delivery of services to users and help inform on proposals for replacement of the accommodation; and

- (iv) to note that the fire had caused a loss of equipment and files for the Sensory Impairment and Aids and Adaptations Service, however, it was confirmed that ten cases were outstanding and that these would be given a priority by staff.

FORMATION OF ACCESS PANEL

6. The Building Control Manager advised of a proposal to establish an Access Panel for the North area of the authority (former Kilmarnock and Loudoun Area) with the following aims:-
- to provide disability awareness for developers in relation to planning and building warrant applications;
 - to provide a reference point for access issues within the area.

Following discussion it was agreed:-

- (i) to welcome the initiative to establish the Access Panel;
- (ii) that the Building Control Manager progress in conjunction with representatives of the Kilmarnock Forum on Disability to constitute the Access Panel and to explore funding and support arrangements.

REQUEST FOR REHABILITATION OFFICER FOR THE SENSORY IMPAIRED AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED AND REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SIGNERS

7. The Service Unit Manager, Independent Living, advised that the Social Work Committee had recently agreed to establish an additional post of Rehabilitation Officer for the Sensory Impaired and Partially Sighted and that the recruitment and selection process would commence in due course. In relation to the vacant post of Sign Language Interpreter it was confirmed that arrangements would be made to fill this vacant post.

Following discussion It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress of filling the staff vacancies;
- (ii) that the Service Manager, Independent Living, would investigate the provision of a Signer for a planned Equalities Awareness day to be held in March 2002 and to liaise with the Kilmarnock Forum on Disability.

PROPOSED SHOPMOBILITY SCHEME

8. The Chief Engineer (Roads) advised that unfortunately, the Scottish Executive had considered the Shopmobility Scheme was not eligible for funding as part of the recent bid to the Public Transport Fund. However, further work was being undertaken to progress the establishment of a Shopmobility Scheme.

Following discussion, it was agreed:-

- (i) to note that the next meeting of the Shopmobility Steering Group was being held on 8 March 2002 and that the Council's External Funding Officer would assist the Steering Group to access funding; and
- (ii) to note that the Funding Officer, Coalfield SIP was formerly the Ayr Shopmobility Manager and it was suggested that the Steering Group may wish to informally draw on her experience of an operational Shopmobility Scheme.

PARTNERSHIP WORK WITH THE COUNCIL

9. The Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources advised of a proposal to formalise arrangements with the Disability Forums in the form of a partnership agreement in relation to disabled issues and to involve Community Planning partners such as the Health Service.

Following discussion it was agreed:-

- (i) to welcome the establishment of a formal partnership with the Disability Forums, East Ayrshire Council and Community Planning Partners; and
- (ii) that the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources initiate discussions with all parties and report back further on progress of the establishment of the partnership agreement.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1995

10. The Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources advised that an audit of buildings in educational use was being undertaken for health and safety requirements and particular attention would be given to access arrangements for the disabled. The intention would be to roll-out this review across all services of the Council.

The Council would be dedicating funds towards disability access issues and the establishment of an Access Panel in the North area, in addition to the existing Cumnock and Doon Valley Access Panel, would greatly assist the Council in its response to access issues.

Following discussion it was agreed:-

- (i) that the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 be made a standing item on the Agenda of future meetings with the Disability Forums;
- (ii) otherwise, to note the position in relation to the review of Access arrangements for the disabled.

UPDATE ON EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL AS A DISABILITY SYMBOL EMPLOYER

11. There was submitted a report dated 15 February 2002 (circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources which advised of the review of the Employment Service of East Ayrshire Council as a Disability Symbol User.

It was agreed to note the Council's continued status as an employer that was recognised by the Employment Service as being positive about disabled people.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12. The Chair confirmed that contact would be made shortly with Disability Forums regarding the date of the next meeting to take place in 2-4 months time.

The meeting terminated at 1510 hours.

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