

# **Executive Committee**

Tuesday, 21 August 2012

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## **MINUTES**

### **Present:**

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Rebecca Blake, Michael Braley, Carole Gandy, Mark Shurmer and Debbie Taylor

### **Also Present:**

Councillors Andrew Fry and Alan Mason

### **Officers:**

C Flanagan, S Hanley, S Jones, T Kristunas, J Pickering, J Staniland, A de Warr and M Wright

### **Democratic Services Officer:**

J Bayley

### **Minute 48**

#### **ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE TASK GROUP**

Councillors Andrew Fry and Alan Mason, joint Chairs of the Access for Disabled People Task Group, presented the final report prepared on behalf of the Group to the Executive Committee.

The Committee was advised that the review had been launched by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee because Members believed it was important to ensure that people with all types of disabilities could access Redditch town centre. The review had focused specifically on access arrangements for people travelling by bus or taxi and had also considered provision of disabled parking spaces in the town centre.

The review had been completed in two stages. The majority of evidence had been gathered during the first stage of the review, which was completed in April 2012. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed that further work was required and this had formed the basis of the second stage of the review from May – August 2012.

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Chair

Members were advised that Councillor Fry had replaced Councillor Mason as the Chair of the review in May 2012. This change had occurred because there was a constitutional requirement for the Chairs of Task Groups to also be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, Members expressed concerns that changes to the chairing arrangements for a Task Group in the middle of a review had implications for the consistency of the exercise. For this reason Members commented that this requirement should be considered in further detail by the Constitutional Review Working Party.

The map displaying the location of disabled parking spaces in the town centre, which had been produced at the request of the Task Group, was discussed by the Committee. Members suggested that the map would need to be produced in a simplified format in order to be a useful tool for residents and visitors. Furthermore, The Committee agreed that a small number of paper copies of the map should be made available to the public on demand.

The Committee noted that one of the group's proposals was for a disability awareness training session to be delivered to Members. The subject was considered to be particularly useful for new Members and it was suggested that this session could be incorporated into the Member induction process.

Arrangements in place to enable Members to report dropped kerbs were also considered. The Committee acknowledged that many experienced Members would be familiar with the process. However, newly elected Members would appreciate further information about the process for requesting dropped kerbs to Worcestershire County Council.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) a user friendly version of the map (detailed in Appendix E of the main report) demonstrating the location of disabled parking spaces and Shopmobility in Redditch town centre should be produced and promoted on the Council's website, on the Redditch Matters e-magazine and on the Palace Theatre's website and should be promoted to local businesses to use;**
  - a) the contents of this map should be reviewed every twelve months to ensure that the information remains accurate;**
- 2) Redditch Borough Council should work with the Redditch Town Centre Partnership, Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department and the Kingfisher**

- Shopping Centre to introduce collection and delivery points in the town centre that could be used by vehicles transporting people with disabilities;**
- 3) a disability awareness session should be delivered as part of the Member Development Programme at Redditch Borough Council;**
  - 4) ward Members should be made aware that they can use their knowledge of the local community to assess the condition of the pavements and dropped kerbs located in their wards and report their findings for the consideration of Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department and Redditch Borough Council's Environmental Services;**
  - 5) the Council's Planning Department should consider arranging for funding from Section 106 agreements to be allocated to the installation of tactile signage in the town centre for the use of people with sensory impairments;**
  - 6) Officers undertake further work into the following areas that should be reported for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequently by the Executive Committee at a later date:**
    - a) a review of the potential to install a canopy over the ramp access to Shopmobility; and**
    - b) a joint review in partnership with Apollo 2000 of the potential for the Council to undertake landscaping work in the company's car park in return for using the car park as a collection and delivery point for Dial a Ride vehicles;**
    - c) a joint review with the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, concerning the potential activation of the RNIB React system in the centre;**
    - d) a review of the implications of introducing disabled parking spaces and a Dial a Ride collection and delivery point in the former covered market area, as detailed in Appendix E;**
  - 7) to note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's decision in relation to the group's following eleventh recommendation, which was determined on 14th August 2012:**

**the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive the following update reports in six months time:**

- a) an update concerning the support provided by Officers to the Redditch Disabled Access Group in relation to disability issues;**
- b) a report monitoring the implementation of the group's recommendations;**

**RECOMMENDED to the Licensing Committee that**

- 8) taxi companies should be offered licences to operate adapted vehicles for a longer period of time than standard vehicles to incentivise taxi firms to increase the number of adapted vehicles in their fleets. The vehicles should be permitted to operate for these lengthier periods of time subject to passing the three inspection tests and the MOT that the Council's licensing regime requires for each vehicle;**
- 9) taxi drivers should be offered disability awareness training, which would include information about manually assisting people with disabilities, by Redditch Borough Council;**

**RECOMMEND that**

- 10) Worcestershire County Council's Transport Department should work with local bus operators to apply for any future Better Buses Area Funding from the Department for Transport to finance the installation of audio-visual equipment on buses operating in Redditch Borough; and**
- 11) Redditch Town Centre Partnership work with the Kingfisher Shopping Centre to introduce additional seating in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, involving an investigation of the ergonomics of the seating provided.**