

## Waveney Disability Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 10.30.am

at "Riverside", 4, Canning Road, Lowestoft.NR33 0EQ

### Present

Andrew Provan (Chairman), Cllr. Frank Mortimer, Margaret Oldham (Secretary), Stuart Halsey (WDC), Jill Brough (Shopmobility), Teresa Goldson (Disability Advice North East Suffolk), Michael Bellward (Disability Employment Adviser, Jobcentreplus, Lowestoft), Jonny Hawes (Sue Ryder – Dementia Together), Dave Eagle (Community Action Suffolk), Tara Mullen (Travel Trainer), Valerie Cadmore (Alzheimer's Society), Sue Willgoss and Faye Churchill (NAS and "lift loud for danny"), June Ford (Shopmobility), Sophie Martin (East Coast Community Health Care), Brenda Joyce (Suffolk Coalition of Disabled People), Anne-Marie Battrick (Topcats) and Sharon Hobbs (Suffolk Parent Carer Network).

1. Welcome and Introductions – Frank welcomed everyone to the meeting on behalf of Andrew, and everyone introduced themselves.
2. Apologies – Allen Pettitt (Vice-Chair), Lesley Bruin, Jane Cantwell and David Perkins (Sanctuary Housing), Debbie Ellis (Realise Futures), Kerry Overton (Healthwatch), Alison Wright (D.E.A. JC+ Beccles), Donna Taylor (Sentinel), Christine Roe (The Befriending Scheme), Claire Taylor-Haigh (Women Like Me), and Katy Runacres (Suffolk Wildlife Trust).
3. Minutes of the last Meeting. The Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019 were proposed as correct by Jill Brough, seconded by Stuart Halsey, accepted by all and signed for Andrew by Frank Mortimer.
4. Matters Arising and Action Points:-
  - a) (4a) Access to the Beach – The beach wheelchairs have arrived and are in their huts near the Beach Officer's office along the lower promenade of the South Beach. There is no charge, but a £20 deposit is needed to borrow the wheelchair and your own chair or walker can be put safely away in the huts while you are using it. Thanks to Sentinel for organising and funding these.

The proposed boardwalk for the beach is still under discussion, whilst possible sources of funding are being explored.

- b) (4b) Blue Badge Enforcement and Parking – Sue Keeble, Operations Manager for Norse, used to be our link person for this, but she has been replaced. Mike Daniels at Waveney Norse is now our contact. When Sue left, we were told to keep an eye on the Suffolk County Council website for any updates. Margaret

has done this, and it says that the Department for Transport is drawing up guidance on the new “hidden disabilities” criteria. This will then be published and needs “revision of statutory regulations, planned for the end of April. The changes will come into force at a later date, to allow time for local authorities to make appropriate arrangements once the guidance is published.” So, watch this space!

Blue Badge misuse – Suffolk County Council do publish a good simple guide to this on their website with how to report misuse.

Margaret is keen to get people to take part in the “Baywatch” campaign being run by Disabled Motoring UK, for whom she is Vice-Chairman and which is supported by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson. Copies of the questionnaire were given out.

**Action:- Margaret will continue to monitor the situation and try to speak to the Council about a Business case for enforcement of the scheme.**

c)(4c) Wheelchair Tennis- Stuart has spoken to the County Tennis Coach who is looking at providing this in co-operation with Sentinel Leisure Trust. There is also the issue of providing the special wheelchairs needed for tennis, as ordinary wheelchairs are not suitable. The aim is to try and run a taster session during the summer.

d)(4d) Accessible Toilets with RADAR keys- Following the last meeting, we do now have RADAR keys for sale at the Marina Theatre box office, so thanks to Lowestoft Town Council for arranging this. Jonny said he would ask at the Sue Ryder shops to see if they will also stock them. The library and G.P. surgeries were also suggested, although we do not know if that would be possible. Any information about additional places from which they can be bought really needs adding to the notices on the toilet doors. Margaret had heard no more about the Toilet Strategy which Lowestoft T.C. are developing.

**Action:- Margaret to try to take forward.**

e)(4e) Information Day- This was held in Beccles at The Public Hall on the 8<sup>th</sup> May and 23 stall holders attended, with about 50 members of the public looking round which included older students from The Ashley School. Sharon suggested we needed more publicity, particularly outside the venue. Michael suggested we should inform the Colleges as well as the schools, and perhaps link in with their information days. Overall, it was a big success and they should continue to be held in addition to the quarterly WDF meetings.

It was suggested that we arrange the next information day in October, and the Fisher theatre in Bungay was suggested. Teresa suggested we make use of the new Pear Tree Centre at Halesworth when it is due to open in the New Year.

f)(6) Travel Allowance for People who cannot take advantage of a bus pass – It was agreed at the last meeting that the £100 a year is not enough to meet the costs of

taxis or even Community transport. Stuart found this helpful description of what is available and contacts:-

#### Concessionary travel

You may be eligible for an Age Related Free Travel Bus Pass or a disabled person free travel bus pass. Those eligible for a bus pass but unable to access the benefits of free travel on conventional buses can waive their right to a bus pass in favour of receiving vouchers to the value of £100 per year (1 April-31 March) to use on community travel, taxis or private hire vehicles. These vouchers can be used on participating operators only. For more information you can contact:

Norfolk County Council on 0344 800 8020 or visit: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-transport/buses/concessionary-travel-pass>

Suffolk County Council on 0345 600 0659 or visit: <https://www.suffolkonboard.com/concessionary-travel/free-travel-bus-pass-voucher-scheme/travel-voucher-scheme>

#### **Action:- Frank to contact them with our issue.**

g) East of England Park -Andrew had attended their meeting to see the sculpture which is going to be part of this development (see picture attached) and they are also hoping to have the longest bench there!

#### 5. Promotion of Organisations:-

##### a) East Coast Community Health Care – Sophie Martin

Sophie explained that there were many developments to their services in the Primary Care Network. Referrals to their services are via the G.P. Whenever possible they want to keep people in their own homes and out of hospitals.

(Sophie had a lot to tell us, but we were running out of time to vacate the room, therefore she was invited to attend the next meeting when we will make “Health” the main topic)

##### b) Disability Employment Adviser, DWP, Jobcentre plus Lowestoft – Michael Bellward

Michael gave a brief explanation of his role in Jobcentre plus, and explained that they were holding a Health and Well-being event in Beccles. They are planning more of their Information days which he hopes will include a lot of the organisations present.

##### c) Dementia Together – (Sue Ryder) – Jonny Hawes

Jonny explained their organisation and the on-going support they could give to people with Dementia and their carers wanting to plan the way forward.

(Leaflet attached)

##### d) Alzheimer’s Society – Valerie Cadmore

Valerie explained the work which she and Alice do and told us about the Picnic in the Park and the Cup-cake days coming up. (Leaflet attached)

e) Suffolk Travel Trainer – Sara Mullen

Sara explained her work, mainly with younger people with Learning disabilities or Mental health issues which affect their ability to get from A to B. This can be from home to school and back, or from home to work and back.

f) Community Enabler (C.A.S.) – Dave Eagle

Dave said his post from Community Action Suffolk was to support the voluntary sector locally with various initiatives underway. Between him and 2 colleagues they cover specific wards in Lowestoft and Kessingland.

g) Disability Advice North East Suffolk – Teresa Goldson

Teresa explained the change of name from D.I.A.L. to Disability Advice North East Suffolk, saying that it was still the same organisation, in the same building, with the same people and the same aims. She also explained the “Workability” project that they are doing, which involves getting people with disabilities “work ready”.

(Leaflet attached)

h) Suffolk Coalition Of Disabled People – Brenda Joyce

Brenda explained that they are mainly involved with three projects at the moment:-

- Working with the Police to try and eliminate Disability Hate Crime
- Looking at the escalating charges for Care Services.
- Having mystery shoppers for certain services e.g. swimming, taxis

i) Mental Health support and Lift Loud for Danny – Sue Willgoss

Sue explained their ongoing fight to improve Mental Health services as well as public awareness of the problems, particularly of young people.

(Leaflet attached)

j) National Autistic Society, Lowestoft and North Suffolk branch – Faye Churchill

(Leaflet attached)

k) Suffolk Parent Carer Network- Sharon Hobbs A free organisation and parents can link up with them via email at [admin@spcn.org.uk](mailto:admin@spcn.org.uk) their website [spcn.org.uk](http://spcn.org.uk), or Facebook: [www.facebook.com/suffolkpcn/](http://www.facebook.com/suffolkpcn/) where they can find out about their regular meetings, activities and training sessions. She asked that organisations present spread the word.

(Leaflet attached)

l) Topcats – Anne Marie Battrick

They are situated next door to the Seagull Theatre in South Lowestoft and have a number of Support Groups for people with disabilities aged 1-30 yrs. On a Wednesday afternoon they have a Tiny Tots group.

m) Bungay Area Community Transport – Jill Brough

Jill explained how wonderful this community transport scheme was, which enables her to get to meetings like this, as well as to socialise and go on various shopping trips.

n) Lowestoft Shopmobility – June Ford

June explained that being able to borrow pavement scooters and wheelchairs gave people with mobility problems their independence. Margaret added the news of a new dual control powered wheelchair, which would be ideal for carers of people with visual impairment or dementia, which prevented them from using the wheelchair themselves.

6. Health Services

- a) New System for People in Need of Joint Replacements or Revisions – Margaret was asked to write to Ann Filby at J.P.H. and ask her for the reasons, and it appears it is down to the Gt. Yarmouth and Waveney C.C.G.

**Action: - Bring this up at the next meeting.**

- b) Lesley had asked what was happening to the Lowestoft Hospital sight. Margaret had been told that “Brainwave” was having one of the buildings.

**Action: - Another item for the next meeting.**

- c) Healthwatch had sent Margaret an email about G.P. surgeries and complaints about long waits for appointments. She has asked that we let Healthwatch know if similar situations are arising at your surgery.

7. Issues and Concerns to feed back to the Council

It was suggested that the Council should provide free parking when we have information days. This would be particularly good when they were held in town, like the ones at Jobcentreplus.

8. Agree Agenda Items and Visitors for next meeting

Health Services, including Mental Health Services to be the key topic for the next meeting, with speakers from –East Coast Community Healthcare, Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust and the C.C.G.

The Meeting had to end here as the room was required by another group, so please see below for points not covered.

9. Any Other Business We had had an email about the Disability Forum for Suffolk from Linda Hoggarth. The funding has been withdrawn for Avenues East to run the Annual Disability Focus Days. It will be a great shame if these cannot go ahead, as it is an important event of the year.

10. Dates of Next Meeting –

Tuesday 3rd September 2019, 10.30. – 12.30. at “Riverside”  
(please note a morning meeting again next time).

Signed .....

Date .....