

York Access Forum
(Formerly the Disability Independent Advisory Group)
6th March 2023, 11:00–13:30
Hudson Room, West Offices and on Teams
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Name	Organisation (if applicable)
Dave Smith	Access Officer, City of York Council (CYC)
Lauren Talbot	YorSensory (Wilberforce Trust)
Scott Jobson	MySight York
Belle Whitely	Thomas Pocklington Trust
Helen Jones	York Disability Rights Forum
Stu Brown	(Supporting Helen Jones)
Rachel Bean	York Business Improvement District (BID)
Flick Williams	Independent
Jennie Hitchins	Parent Carers Forum, York Inspirational Kids
Hannah Hardcastle	Accessible Arts and Media
Srish Jain	The Snappy Trust
Tim Milner	Brunswick Organic Nursery (BON)
Kim Otterburn	BON
Katie Morris	BON
Rachel Barber	Living 4 Moments
Jane Burton	York Accessibility Action

Apologies:

Karen Wilson	York St John University
Mick Phythian	York Accessibility Action
Jane Phythian	York Accessibility Action
Diane Roworth	Independent

Minutes

Jan Tuson	Support worker to Dave Smith
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No.	Item
1	Welcome and introductions
	Dave Smith welcomed all attendees (in person and online via Teams) to the first meeting of the group and apologised for some technical issues.
2	Minutes from last meeting
	Not applicable as this was the first meeting of the group.
3	Naming the group
	<p>The City Centre Action Plan and the council decision in October 2022 to adopt the social model of disability both included setting up an 'Access Forum'.</p> <p>Agreed: The group will be renamed the 'York Access Forum'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions followed about the purpose of the group and identifying the membership from a diverse range of individuals and organisations. • Fine-tuning of membership will evolve over time as agreed by the group. • There is a benefit to having a good mix of individuals and organisations that will bring lived experience, knowledge and expertise to the group. • Terms of reference to be agreed separately outside of today's meeting.
4	What does the group mean to you?
	<p>We need to ensure that this is not another talking shop that changes very little. How do we do this?</p> <p>Joint working and consultation as stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right from the start of any project and across a range of project types (e.g. new buildings, transport, bridges etc). This includes seeing any reports that are written to give the opportunity to feed in meaningfully. • Avoid repetition in terms of previous consultations. Beneficial to try and capture data gathered to build up a database of feedback for future relevant projects.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions asked in a consultation also need to be appropriate to ensure a meaningful response. • The group needs to be a two-way process that enables members to raise issues for the council to consider and to feed into projects that the council undertakes.
	<p>Human Rights and Equalities Impact Assessments (HREIAs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness of the need for these to be completed at the start of a project is being raised within the council and these will increase in number. But we need to be mindful of how these high volumes are managed so the group is not overwhelmed and overburdened. Plan to send them out and those who wish to contribute can do so, but also potentially filter the information presented to the group. <p>Compensation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question raised around the budget to reimburse the group for providing their expertise in consultations. The council is currently looking at this group as a model for other groups for other protected characteristics.
5	Chairing of the group
	<p>Options discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chaired by the Access Officer 2. Chaired independently by a member of the group – but facilitated by the Access Officer 3. Jointly chaired <p>Discussion around the level of independence with each option, and the (unpaid) time involved in the chairing role and possible bias of an independent chair.</p> <p>Agreed: The Access Officer will facilitate the meetings, with no Chair, for the time being.</p>
6.	Frequency of meetings
	<p>Discussion around the balance in terms of the level of need against the demand on members' time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed quarterly with interim emails as required to share key information. Risk of information overload with multiple emails. However, it is also important that members have enough time to consult with their own

	<p>organisation's members and feed back, so adequate notice is needed.</p> <p>Agreed: Meetings to be held initially every other month (subject to review in the future) as there is currently a high need.</p>
7.	<p>Supplementary Planning Group</p> <p>This would be a sub-group that would focus solely on consulting on planning applications and new projects and would receive training from the council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would mean that the planning teams receive independent input as early as possible. Example of the York Central Plan given and the need to ensure it is accessible from the outset. • The Access Officer will remind the planning teams of the need to be compliant with regulations. The group's work will be to give feedback on the impact of the proposed plans in terms of accessibility and what needs to be considered. • The group has the potential to influence projects significantly by having the opportunity to feed back on any projects affecting the public realm before planning applications are passed. <p>The Access Officer will support the group by working together to draw up a supplementary planning document to use as a toolkit in the work.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members to contact the Access Officer if interested in joining this group. • Access Officer to find out whether financial reimbursement will be given for the group's time. • Access Officer to support the group to producing a supplementary planning toolkit document.
8.	<p>Consultation strategy for the new transport strategy</p> <p>Presentation given by Claire Foale, Assistant Director Policy and Strategy (CYC)</p> <div data-bbox="333 1897 392 1964" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Draft for consultation_consul</p>

Questions and comments from the group during the presentation:

- The interactive map – needs space to add in free text
- The group needs to have the opportunity to review the questions to be asked in the consultation to ensure they allow for meaningful representation.
- Suggestion that a CYC employee speak to people sitting on buses to gain views or stand at train station/bus stops.
- Need timely and effective advertising of the events being held (e.g. the BSL webinars, pop-up discussions). Many people do not use social media or the internet.
- Need to ensure the Interactive Map is accessible to a range of people including those with neurodiversity, dyslexia, visual impairment, reduced manual dexterity etc.

Further discussion followed after Claire left the meeting.

Discussed benefit of holding a joint consultation workshop with Age Friendly York or whether there should be one or more workshops dedicated to people with disabilities.

Pros and cons identified included:

- People have different needs at different stages of life
- Suggestion to have two meetings at different times of day to offer more choice
- Needs often overlap, so benefit of a joint discussion
- Young disabled people may be put off attending a group that includes older people, as their needs will differ.
- Meeting solely with people with disabilities or representing those with disabilities feels a 'safer' space.

Most of the group agreed that separate meetings for those with/representing people with disabilities would be preferable. Also need to have more than one at different times of day.

Concern raised that the Human Rights and Equalities Impact Assessments (HREIAs) for each of the Stages 3–5 (see presentation) will not be completed at the outset and vital feedback will be missed.

The Access Officer confirmed that he has suggested that CYC has an overarching HREIA for the project linked into an HREIA for each individual element of the project (this has since been suggested to Clair Foale).

	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Officer to send out information on the BSL webinars to the York Access Forum members, which includes relevant organisations. (Done) • Claire to check whether the group can have access to the Interactive Map to trial it for accessibility. • Access Officer to feed back to Claire Foale the request for two meetings (daytime and early evening) dedicated to people (representing those) with disabilities. (Done) • York Access Forum members to feed back any comments/suggestions on the strategy to the Access Officer for sharing with Claire Foale. (Done)
9.	Communications
	<p>Discussed the volume of information currently needing to be shared with the group by the Access Officer. This has been high recently due to getting the group set up but should settle moving forward.</p> <p>The Access Officer agreed to minimise the number of emails, which may result in them being longer.</p>
10.	Any other business
	None.
11.	Next meeting
	Next meeting to be arranged for May (date and venue to be confirmed).