

York Access Forum
19th September 2023, 10:30–13:00
Hudson Room, West Offices and on Teams
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Name	Organisation (if applicable)
Dave Smith (DS)	Access Officer, City of York Council (CYC)
Vicky Dixon (VD)	Community Links
Karen Gillespie (KG)	BSL Interpreter for Vicky Dixon
Hannah Hardcastle (HH)	Accessible Arts & Media
Iain Mitchell (IM)	TPT / York Sight Loss Council
Anne Norton (AN)	YDRF
Scott Jobson (SJ)	My Sight York
Flick Williams (FW)	Independent
Anna Baldwin (AB)	York Macular Society
Jan Tuson (JT)	Support Worker to Dave Smith
Eileen Strouhair (ES)	York People First
Abi Willis (AW)	OCA Y
Joanne Ellis (JE)	Shopmobility
Graham Titchener (GT)	Head of Parking, CYC
Helen Vergereau (HV)	Traffic and Highway Development Manager, CYC

Apologies:

Alison Wheatley	York Carers Centre
Sian Balsom	Healthwatch York
Lauren Talbot	Wilberforce Trust - YorSensory

Minutes

Sam Ross	Support worker to Will Orpin
Will Orpin	Apprentice, Access Team (CYC)

No.	Item
1	Welcome and introductions
	<p>DS welcomed all attendees (in person and online via Teams) and everyone introduced themselves.</p> <p>DS went through the agenda for the meeting.</p> <p>AB mentioned about everyone having input into the agenda of the meeting.</p>
2	Minutes from last meeting
	<p>Minutes reviewed.</p> <p>Matters arising from the minutes:</p> <p>AN/IM - No discussion about the terms of reference online meeting. This was also omitted from the meeting minutes.</p> <p>DS confirmed meeting minutes will not be changed retrospectively but any omissions or corrections noted in this section of the following meeting's minutes.</p> <p>FW – Pattern of minutes being circulated late and/or agendas not being provided in a timely way before meetings. Mentioned the council needs to operate in an accessible way. Also requested blue badge council data be shared in advance of the Blue Badge Discussion meeting on the 29th September.</p> <p>DS confirmed he has requested this as the data is available internally.</p> <p>SJ – Supplementary/sub-groups formed from the YAF should have a standing agenda item to report back to this group.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DS to amend agenda template to include sub-group feedback standing item.
3	Discussion – Graham Titchener – Car Park ticket machines
	<p>GT introduced the forthcoming consultation. Arose from officers being tasked in 2021/22 with looking at cash savings in parking.</p>

Thanked those who had commented already on the proposed content of the survey, which, once finalised will be made available online and in paper form for a 6-week consultation period.

The survey will look at ways people can pay for their parking, including cashless.

Aims to identify the impact cashless parking will have on people.

Promoting pay by phone system – also looking at other ways people pay for things online and bringing parking in line with this.

If we do go cashless, what is the best way of doing this?

Feedback from the survey will inform the next version of the relevant Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA).

Comments/Discussion:

FW – Is it a new objective to pay on exit as well as a cashless system as these are two different issues?

GT – New administration has no view currently on pay on exit (POE) as an objective. Currently two POE car parks — Coppergate (accepts cash) and Marygate (cashless). Need to look at how blue badges are scanned in Coppergate car park as system is currently an issue with people having to exit cars to scan blue badge.

Nunnery Lane car park – if barriered, would potentially cause congestion in the adjacent road. No current plans to implement POE.

FW – Scam warning – QR codes are being replaced by scammers who are taking other people's money via their own QR codes.

GT – Currently not an issue with QR codes in York. But where people are using online browsers to search for pay by phone apps rather than via app stores, this is taking them to unsecure sites operated by scammers.

AB – Suggested a system that recognises number plates linked with blue badge holders.

GT – Badges can be used in any car so a database with just reg plates may not be the best way to resolve this. Also potential GDPR issues in holding info on a database.

AN – CYC changed the residents parking scheme to an online scheme with exemptions (physical permit) – any relevant lessons learnt for this proposal and how does that cross over to the blue badge system? Does CYC have records of who is still using a paper permit and who may therefore act a starting point for who may require reasonable adjustments in terms of car parks?

GT – Approx. 800 people have registered offline for paper permits such as visitor permits but will also be registered online for their household permit. New upgrade coming in next few months but a lot of testing to do before rolling it out.

AN – For people needing to top up a prepayment card, post office in city centre is not accessible for those with limited mobility as it is further than 50m away.

GT – There is more of a national push for paying for everything online. But this is the purpose of the consultation — to find out how this would impact on people.

GT – Cashless parking initiative

IM – Asked if consultations such as this are brought to this group to be sense checked by people with a range of impairments. Many people with a disability do not have access to digital means to provide their input. Recommended people able to phone in to give their responses.

GT – thanked IM for raising the inclusivity point and confirmed consultation will go online and in paper form via libraries.

DS – Access team have a process for calling people back to take their responses by phone to fill out forms online.

VD – is the questionnaire in BSL format?

GT – Will ensure it is accessible.

DS/JT – we have a process in place for alternative formats, including BSL, and will help GT with that.

	<p>AN – What will be standard consultation procedure to include offline, BSL, Braille, Easy Read etc? This needs to be budgeted for every consultation.</p> <p>DS – The council agrees that everything should be in accessible formats. Would be helpful for access team to work together with external organisations and via YAF to pull together minimum expected standards for accessible communication for consultation or engagement.</p> <p>DS – Council is in agreement on this issue. The challenge internally is funding.</p> <p>DS – Lesson learned on previous BSL video was the audio was missing. Need a minimum of 2 weeks’ notice so that the accessible content goes out at the same time as everything else.</p> <p>FW – A lot of the current consultations affect disabled people more than the non-disabled population; these are the people affected most by the cost of living crisis. Yet need to recognise the barriers faced by disabled people in contributing to so many consultations simultaneously.</p> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS to contact YAF members regarding conversation around minimum standards for accessible consultations.
4	<p>Discussion – Helen Vergereau – Gold Standard Car Parks</p>
	<p>HV – Presented the findings from independent report with recommendations from consultants MIMA on gold standard car parks. PowerPoint presentation to be shared. The audit was completed with a different consultation group (1st stage) as the YAF was not in place at that time. Now seeking feedback and further input from YAF members (2nd stage) – to include what people agree/disagree with, any other issues omitted from the report etc.</p> <p>Focus on four off-street car parks (all council managed) and access to pedestrianised area in city centre.</p> <p>Overall recommendations –</p>

Castle and Bootham Row to be prioritised for 'gold standard' improvement for accessibility. Coppergate Car Park as potential third option.

Coppergate

GT – confirmed some car parks (including this) are leased to other companies so some MIMA recommendations may be outside CYC's direct control (e.g. changing pedestrian doors).

Shopmobility

- DS - should be moved to another car park altogether after seeing other car parks in other cities. Also raised issues about working conditions in car parks.
- FW – there is no ground level at Coppergate so would need to be moved to another car park.
- JE – sought clarification about whether Shopmobility recommendation is just for Coppergate or an overall recommendation. HV – confirmed overall recommendation.

IM – wayfinding and lighting in this car park need to be improved so signage is visible.

Castle Car Park

FW – The photo shows some blue badge bays were redone but the opposite ones are incomplete because of a lack of asphalt.

GT – The original intention was only to repaint the lines, not resurface. However, denigration of the surface in some parts required resurfacing.

Castle Gateway decision yet to be made and will inform plans on the car park's resurface and redesign.

DS – internal work on resizing the accessible toilet at castle car park pending funding.

Bootham Row Car Park

IM – Will this be the standard of how EV points are installed so not sticking out and obstructing people walking?

GT – this will be the standard but needs to be a buffer zone between them. There will be no individual EIA for each car park but will be one for the overall project.

DS – Working with the team on this as in the next 5 years over 95% of vehicles will be EV or Hybrid. Need to ensure chargers are accessible for wheelchair users.

Monk Bar Car Park

DS – although it is not a gold standard priority car park, some quick-win recommendations are possible (e.g. signage and demarcations).

FW – All of the disabled participants chose Castle Car Park and Bootham row as the priorities. Coppergate is multi-storey and generally not liked by disabled people – due to low entrance, poor and flickering lighting, and feeling unsafe. Only disabled people who use it do so for Shopmobility. Because there is no ground floor, people are restricted to lift access. There is a risk that the lifts become unusable during the time a person is shopping, preventing return access to their car.

Bootham Row – some blue badge bays have been reused for EV usage, with none wide enough for a blue badge holder.

Castle Car Park – Blue badge parking must be retained here, ideally with Shopmobility moved to this location.

DS – The access team shares FW's views on this.

AN – Echoed FW's comments – and emphasised the recommendation that Shopmobility location needs to be moved and that this is a wider issue, so should be kept separate in the report from the Coppergate Car Park as a standalone recommendation.

DS – referred to facilities available in Chester for Shopmobility and Dial and Ride – recommended a linked up service between these two providers. Importance of providing reassurance for those travelling into the city especially with the rise of travel anxiety.

Next Steps

DS – suggested people send feedback via email to CYC access team email address.

HV – asked for responses to be in by first week of October.

	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS to send out presentation slides to all attendees • Group member feedback to be submitted via email to Access Team inbox by end of first week in October. • DS to share comments and feedback provided today by YAF attendees with Helene.
5	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Blue Badge Consultation phase 1 has closed and report is being produced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over 20% of responses received in paper form. <p>AN – asked about how many people accessed the various formats.</p> <p>DS – will ask web team to find out the hits on the BSL video and website & YouTube.</p> <p>SJ – 1300 copies sent out in large print, plus audio and braille.</p> <p>JT – suggested future questionnaires could include a question to identify how people accessed the questionnaire, in order to provide future data.</p> <p>Not appropriate to discuss expectations around Phase 2 in this meeting due to the constraints of the meeting.</p> <p>Reminders for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Bus event — 23rd September <p>FW – First Bus representative claim to have 2 wheelchair spaces on each EV bus, but this is untrue as the second space is not safe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acomb front street seating trial — 27th September • Blue Badge Applications Meeting – 29th September <p>DS confirmed all comments provided to him, including YDRF feedback, have been shared with Pauline Stuchfield. He will seek agreement to share the council blue badge data before the meeting, as this is now available internally.</p>

Haxby Station

FW requested a further discussion about Haxby Station, including level boarding.

Inappropriate citing of YDRF

FW – Issue of papers being submitted by officers to council meetings that refer incorrectly to 'consultation with YDRF' (which has not taken place) or inappropriately replace YDRF with YAF (e.g. in papers for the Transport Exec Decision Session last week). Also seen YDRF referred to as York Disabled Residents Association by an officer.

DS – requested FW highlight instances of this, as identified, which he will challenge internally.

Timely advance provision of meeting papers

IM – requested presentations are provided in advance of the meetings so that people who are visually impaired can read them beforehand.

DS – explained our process of getting presentations beforehand, but we are reliant on people sending these on time.

Bus stops

IM – existing bus stops are not being upgraded to include audio and visual. There are a few new ones being installed (4 in York) to include both audio and visual.

DS – asked that this is picked up within the Local Transport Plan.

Supplementary Planning Group

Updates:

AN – requested feedback from the SPG meetings into the YAF. See Action under section 2. of these minutes.

Group Meeting:

FW – Supplementary planning group – link sent with adequate template to work with from Leeds. Expressed frustration at

receiving documents only 30 mins before the meeting.
disappointment with a recent meeting with Neil Ferris.

DS – will forward on a template from Manchester. There was a general consensus that the Leeds template will be the one we use going forward.

Blue Badge Phase 2

Raised by **AN**. **DS** confirmed will update following the scoping meeting.

Terms of Reference (TORs)

AN – Asked about the TORs meeting and suggested it be added to the next agenda, as still outstanding.

IM – suggested that if CYC will not ratify the TORs, that YAF meetings are suspended pending ratification.

DS – explained that currently he is unable to progress or comment on the TORs but reassured the YAF that the intentions in relation to this are genuine and asked that the group carry on until he is able to say more. Apologised for his part in the delay in producing the draft TORs.

FW – expressed a frustration with the lack of transparency (including the inability to see other members' email comments), given the significant time dedicated to CYC activities.

DS – explained part of the delay in the email sharing in terms of transparency has been due to the need to follow GDPR guidelines.

IM – asked that the frustration is fed back to the appropriate people, which **DS** agreed to do.

Actions:

- **DS** to seek data from web services re number of online 'hits' for the Blue Badge phase 1.
- **DS** to consider incorporating question in to Blue badge Phase 2 consultation re how people accessed any survey produced.
- **DS** to feedback comments from the group re the outstanding TORs to senior management.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS to seek agreement to the sharing of the council blue badge data in advance of the meeting on the 29th September.
11.	Next meeting
	<p>The meetings for the rest of 2023 were confirmed as: 22 November 10:30 to 13:00</p> <p>All at West Offices and online (Teams)</p>