

NOTES OF MEETING, Tuesday 2nd May, 2017

JOINT PHYSICAL DISABILITY PLANNING GROUP

1. **APOLOGIES:** Tom Welsh, Gillian Chapman
2. **ATTENDEES:** Jayne Lewis (Chair), Eric Johnstone, Marlene Gill, Mike Harrison, Catherine Acton, Jeff Adamson, Stuart McIntosh, Ann Morrison, Karen McGowan, Sara Taylor, Karl Vanter, Catriona Luff, Lesley Kelly, Rowan Berry.

3. **NOTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING, 10/01/17**

Agreed

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

Research Project – As a result of anecdotal evidence that disabled people are being impacted by an inability to access further education due to transport difficulties, Lesley introduced Rowan, an intern, who has begun work on research into barriers to travel to Edinburgh College (for disabled people). Rowan will be involving stakeholders and members of the JPDPG can help by identifying people affected, so their voices can be heard. It's likely an event will be held in the autumn to raise awareness. There was general recognition that taxi contracts are economically unsustainable; however access to further education is vital.

DRILL Funding – the submission was unsuccessful. Lesley read the notes outlining the reasons and suggested the group consider whether addressing the reasons and re-submitting in the next round of applications would bring success. The decision was to consider, as a lot of effort had gone into this, and carry forward to the next meeting.

New Employability Programmes – Karen provided information on these as follows:

The new programme of Employability Support Services devolved to Scottish Government include Work First and Work Able Scotland which are transitional one year programmes (Apr 2017 to Mar 2018) and Fair Start Scotland which will begin in April 2018.

Work First is delivering support to up to 3,300 disabled people in Scotland until March 2018 through existing DWP providers of Work Choice. Work Able is managed by Skills Development Scotland with 1,500 starts for people with a health condition who want to enter work.

The new programme of Employability Support Services will be called Fair Start Scotland and will begin in April 2018, providing support for unemployed disabled people claiming reserved benefits who are at risk of long-term unemployment. This programme will be delivered in 8 geographical lots across Scotland. The procurement process is underway and Midlothian Council is currently working with the City Deal regions (Edinburgh, East Lothian, West Lothian, Scottish Borders and Fife) to put in a joint bid to deliver these supported employment services. A number of national charities and organisations are also likely to put in bids.

Lothian Neurological Care Improvement Plan - Sue Ryder (national charity) has requested information regarding neurological care provision in Midlothian. Jayne is to respond and update on any progress generally.

5. ACTION PLAN UPDATES

Education & Employment

Sara spoke to the content of the updated action plan 1.1-1.3; 1.6. With regards to 1.2, it was noted that not everyone can access website information and this could be a barrier; however, information is available by other means.

1.4: The new Focus service will be officially launched on Thursday 11th May 2-4pm in Dalkeith Arts Centre. The service is for people aged 16-64 who live in Midlothian and are experiencing barriers to employment, learning and training; and/or are disabled; and/or have health issues. Beyond work with people on an individual basis, there is scope for group work on shared issues that are a barrier to employment such as anxiety etc. Referrals welcome now.

A Learning and Work Fair will be held on 15th June 1.30-5pm in Dalkeith Arts Centre – this will include a drop-in one stop shop for anyone wishing to move into employment, education or training. Also plan to have a live jobs hub.

Employment Learning Midlothian are working towards improved links to employers e.g. Fort Kinnaird.

1.5 Ann to obtain or provide update to action plan.

Transport & Accessible Environment

Karl spoke on the contents of the comprehensive updated plan. He drew attention to two useful booklets:

- Scotrail “Disabled People’s Protection Policy. Making Rail Accessible: Helping older and disabled passengers”
(https://www.scotrail.co.uk/sites/default/files/assets/download_ct/disabled_peoples_protection_policy_-_helping_older_and_disabled_passengers_-_october_2016_1mb.pdf);
- “Get on Board: A guide for disabled travellers on the Borders Railway”, funded by The Rotary Club of Jedburgh
(<http://www.borderscarevoice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/railwayleaflet-accessible.pdf>)
Suggested that The Rotary Club of Dalkeith could be approached to fund similar or further copies for Midlothian. Link and details to be included in Forward Mid’s next newsletter.

There will be one “Try a Bus” day per year.

Karl and Mike are to attend the Edinburgh Rail Awareness Day at Waverley Station on 3rd May.

Peer Support and Self Advocacy

As per updated action plan. Catherine advised that a save the date for the next event will be circulated soon and asked that members of the JPDPG disseminate widely through their networks to inform and encourage people to attend.

Communications sub-group

The first newsletter is near completion. Jayne will arrange another meeting.

The following items on the agenda were carried over, to take priority at the next meeting, due to time constraint.

SDS reference group

6. AOCB

7. Next Meeting