**Minute of Meeting of the Tweeddale Access Panel held in Dovecot Court, Dovecot Road, Peebles, on Wednesday 29 January 2020 at 7.00pm**

**PRESENT:** *Paul Nichol (Chairman), Yvonne Armstrong Spencer Cobley, Frank Drummond, Callum Macdonald and Elaine Thomson.*

**IN ATTENDANCE:** *Mags Greig (BSL interpreter) and Councillor Robin Tatler.*

**APOLOGIES:** *Michael Davis,*

1. **Minute of Meeting held on 27 November 2019**

The Minute of the Meeting held on 27 November 2019 had been circulated.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED** as a correct record.

1. **Matters Arising**
2. **Wheelchair – accessible Housing**

Paul advised that the information supplied by Kenny Harrow, Locality Co-ordinator, Scottish Borders Council subsequent to the last Panel meeting appeared to indicate that there were around 100 general needs houses and only 1 fully accessible house in the pipeline for Tweeddale. He was not clear how soon the Wheelchair Housing Strategy currently being finalised would be taken into account in the preparation of the Strategic Housing Investment Planning 5 year programme documents.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Paul clarify the position with Lindsey Renwick.

**(b) Mental Health Counselling Services – Withdrawal**

Kenny Harrow (Locality Co-ordinator, Scottish Borders Council) had not yet responded to the concerns expressed by the Panel on the withdrawal of mental health counselling services at Hay Lodge Health Centre.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Frank remind Kenny that a reply was awaited.

**(c) A-frame Advertisements**

Frank reported that Kenny Harrow had confirmed that roads staff regularly inspected streets to ensure compliance with Council policy that A-frames be positioned close to the kerb or close to a building, so as to minimise obstruction of streets.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

**(d) Hearing Induction Loop – Peebles Contact Centre**

Frank reported that Kenny Harrow had confirmed that the hearing induction loop and relevant sign were in place on the Peebles Contact Centre counter. An item had been placed on the agenda for the next staff team briefing to ensure that all were familiar with operation of the equipment.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

**(e)** **Footways and Dropped Kerbs – Proposed Review**

Paul expressed interest in exploring further the idea of applying for funding from the Council to engage a consultant to carry out a review of footways and dropped kerbs, but felt there was also a role for the Panel to play in this.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Paul be authorised to explore the idea further.

1. **Salt Bin Location – Eddleston**

Callum advised that he had not yet progressed his request for a salt bin to be located in Old Edinburgh Road, Eddleston.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Callum contact Councillor Chapman to progress this.

1. **Chairman’s Report**
2. **Online Access Guide - Publicity**

Paul reported that the Peeblesshire News had published a good article in that week’s edition, based on information he had given them about the online Access Guide, but had attached a rather negative headline, “Access woes highlighted as Panel goes online”. The article had encouraged businesses to get in touch regarding updates and improvements to their Guide entries, and the Eastgate Theatre had already done so.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Paul would:-

1. write a letter to the Peeblesshire News, thanking them for their article, but distancing the Panel from the negative headline attached and stressing the positive aspects; and
2. ask Fiona, the Panel’s website developer, whether it would be possible to tell how many extra hits had been generated as a result of the recent publicity.
3. **Logo Design Awards – Publicity**

Paul advised that he had presented the logo award design prizes and submitted an article and photo to the Peeblesshire News for publication.

The winners had been dellghted to receive their prizes, and were planning to provide more publicity to raise awareness of the Panel among their fellow students at Borders College.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

1. **Secretary’s Report**
2. **Locality Working Group – Health and Social Care**

Frank advised that a Locality Working Group, to consist of professionals and community representatives, was being set up to discuss Health and Social Care aspects of the Locality Plan. The Group would meet four times each year, with the first meeting to be held in the Memorial Hall, Innerleithen, on Wednesday 5 February, from 6.30 – 8.00pm.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

**(b) Proposed Meeting Centre – Public Meeting**

Frank advised that Dr Shirley Evans, Association for Dementia Studies, University of Worcester, would speak to a public meeting in the Drill Hall, (aka Peebles Community Centre), at 7:30pm on Wednesday 25 March, about how a Meeting Centre might benefit people with dementia and their families in Tweeddale.

He explained that a Meeting Centre was a local resource, operating out of ordinary community buildings, that offered ongoing warm and friendly expert support to people and families affected by dementia. At the heart of the Meeting Centre was a social club where people met to have fun, talk to others and get help that focused on individual needs. Meeting Centres were based on sound research evidence on what helped people to cope well in adjusting to change.” The meeting had been arranged by Peebles Baptist Church, which had over ten years' experience of hosting dementia-friendly events. Further information could be obtained by contacting Christine Drummond, by phone on 07958084056, or by emailing [cdrum65206@aol.com](mailto:cdrum65206@aol.com)

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

**(c) Hearing Aid Battery Distribution**

Frank advised that the Hay Lodge Lip-reading Class had expressed concern that Hay Lodge Health Centre had halved the number of hearing aid batteries which they would issue at any one time to hearing aid users, with the result that hearing aid users had to make the journey to collect batteries from Hay Lodge twice as often and the relevant staff workload was doubled. As hearing difficulties increased with age, the majority of hearing aid users were elderly. Some had given up driving, some had never driven, and many had walking difficulties. Doubling the number of trips to Hay Lodge caused additional pain for some of those with mobility issues and inconvenience for all.

Another Panel member pointed out that cochlear implant batteries were sent out by Crosshouse Hospital, Kilmarnock on receipt of a text message from the user, and arrived promptly within two or three days.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Frank ask Borders Health Board to revert to their previous distribution policy and/or to consider introducing alternative supply methods.

**(d)Tweeddale Area Partnership**

Frank explained that he was no longer able to attend meetings of the Tweeddale Area Partnership, as he had another regular commitment on Tuesday evenings.

Callum confirmed that he had attended the last Area Partnership meeting in Eddleston, when concern had been expressed at the poor recycling statistics in the Scottish Borders, compared with neighbouring areas. Discussions had also covered recycling at Peebles High School, and how Changeworks could help people to make their homes more environmentally friendly.

Robin advised that the outcome of the recent public consultation exercise on Area Partnerships would become known in February or March. The Partnership had awarded a grant to Tweed Wheels towards a new vehicle, and awarded another grant towards the cost of new chairs for the Memorial Hall.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

Michael had advised Frank prior to the meeting that, following recent expenditure, the Panel’s current bank balance was £1,424.68

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

1. **Website Improvements**

Paul advised that he would like to invite Panel members to suggest improvements to the Panel website and to set up a small sub-group to progress improvements in discussion with Fiona, our website developer.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Paul email the membership for their suggestions and to invite those interested to participate in a website improvement sub-group.

1. **Tweeddale Area Partnership – Off-street Parking Sub-Group**

Robin advised that the Tweeddale Area Partnership had agreed to set up a Sub-Group to look at Off-street parking in Peebles, and invited the Panel to nominate a representative. He expected the group to meet perhaps four or five times in the year, with the first meeting to be held in the Council Offices, Rosetta Road, Peebles, on Wednesday 12 February, at 3.00pm.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** that Callum Macdonald represent the Panel on this group.

1. **Date of Next Meeting**

**Wednesday 1 April 2020, at 7.00pm**

**(PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE TO AVOID CLASH WITH DATE OF MEETING CENTRE MEETING.)**