

Meeting	Disabled Access Scrutiny Task Group
Date	2 December 2014
Present	Councillors Brooks, Fitzpatrick, Gunnell (Chair) and Barnes (Co-opted Non-Statutory Member)

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## **6. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

## **7. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Disabled Access Task Group held on Tuesday 26 August 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **8. Public Participation**

It was reported that there were no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme

## **9. Disabled Access to York's Heritage & Cultural Offer - Interim Report**

The Task Group received a report that presented information gathered to date in support of the ongoing scrutiny review of Disabled Access to York's Heritage & Cultural Offer and asked them to agree an appropriate way forward.

The Chair welcomed the Account Manager from DisabledGo to the meeting. He had been invited to discuss the current York offer and what could be done to develop this.

He explained how DisabledGo were the leading providers of access information for disabled people in the UK. Their website featured over 120,000 places of interest, which included over 1000 for York with 300 of them displayed in full detail. Their aim was to provide as much information

on any type of venue, including travel options, to allow a disabled person to decide if it was accessible to them.

Before uploading the information to their website a venue was visited and inspected by DisabledGo using a survey method that over 800 groups of disabled people had fed into. Contact was also made with the sites on a yearly basis to check for any modifications. Their current contract with City of York Council allowed them to inspect 25 new venues per year.

He discussed the barriers they faced and the opportunities that were missed especially when some venues, including City of York Council and Visit York, did not advertise a link to their website. It was noted that DisabledGo could customise their link to match the venues own branding.

The Account Manger proceeded to log into the DisabledGo website to demonstrate how it operated and how informative it was. He explained how the pages could be altered so they were suitable for all users. Some options available were, text to speech, altering the font size which also included a special dyslexic font, changing the contrast or language.

In answer to Members questions he confirmed that:

- other York providers could be listed on the DisabledGo website free of charge because of the sponsorship from City of York Council.
- an app containing all the places of interest was available to download to electronic devices and once downloaded to a mobile phone it could be used offline.
- York Council had not paid the additional cost to use the app.
- Users do have the option to leave feedback on a place they had visited. DisabledGo would also consult with the venue before the comments were uploaded to give them the opportunity to respond.
- An annual report was produced for each venue.

Members thanked the Account Manager for attending the meeting and agreed that this facility should be utilised more effectively.

Members also agreed that:

- a campaign should be organised in partnership with York Press to raise awareness and promote this offer.
- a uniform approach was essential and that DisabledGo was a good example to practice.
- support should be offered to the voluntary sector and smaller businesses to encourage them to use this facility.

- a discussion with Visit York regarding a link being placed on their website was required.
- a briefing note from ICT should be produced to clarify the costs of using the app and explain why the DisabledGo logo was not displayed on the Council's home page.

Members thanked the Scrutiny Officer for producing her reports in such a factual manner. She agreed to draft and circulate the final report, which would also include the briefing note from ICT and a venue report from DisabledGo.

Resolved:

- i) That a full analysis of information gathered to date be carried out
- ii) Additional information as listed above be required in support of objectives (ii), (iii) and (iv)
- iii) Consultation dates to be agreed by the Scrutiny Officer
- iv) Future meeting dates be arranged by the Democracy Officer

Reason: To progress the review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

Cllr Gunnell, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 5.45 pm].