

HUTT CITY COUNCILACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held in the Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, 30 Laings Road,
Lower Hutt on

Wednesday 12 June 2019 commencing at 3.33pm

PRESENT: Cr G Barratt (Chair) Ms J Dale
Mr P Gruschow (from 3.51pm) Ms H Henderson
Ms L Ledingham Ms A Masina
Ms G McLachlan

APOLOGIES: Mr Sexton.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms W Moore, Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning (part meeting)
Ms L Knowles, Community Facilitator
Ms R Grigg, Parks and Recreation Planner (part meeting)
Ms R Bowman, Minute Taker

PUBLIC BUSINESS1. APOLOGIES

RESOLVED: (Cr Barratt/Ms McLachlan) **Minute No. AIPS 19301**

"That the apology received from Mr Sexton be accepted and leave of absence be granted."

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

There were no conflict of interest declarations.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: (Cr Barratt/Ms Ledingham) **Minute No. AIPS 19302**

"That the minutes of the meeting of the Accessibility and Inclusiveness Plan Subcommittee held on Wednesday, 10 April 2019, be confirmed as a true and correct record, subject to amendments to page 2 to read 'would ask' instead of 'asked', and 'in the Lower Hutt CBD' instead of 'outside the Naenae chemist.'"

5. **LIME SCOOTERS** (19/726)

The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning advised that Lower Hutt was currently undergoing an evaluation of Lime scooters. She noted Lime scooters were temporarily withdrawing from Lower Hutt from 16 June 2019.

Ms McLachlan suggested that Upper Hutt was probably in a similar situation as the Lime scooters had been removed due to vandalism. She noted that further information would be acquired as the update would be of interest to members. The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning advised that she would email an Upper Hutt correspondent with lime scooter intel.

6. **UPDATE ON BLIND SQUARE WORK** (19/728)

The Chair advised that the Community Plan Committee meeting held on 11 June 2019 approved \$20,000 for work on the Blind Square app in both the CBD and Jackson Street. The aim was to improve accessibility for those visually impaired. The Community Plan Committee meeting also increased funding by \$50,000 to improve footpath discrepancies in Lower Hutt. The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning advised that the \$50,000 would be matched by the New Zealand Transport Agency, making the funding \$100,000 in total.

In response to a question from a member, the Divisional Manager Strategy and Planning advised that once the funding was approved at the Council meeting to be held on 27 June 2019, progress with the Blind Square app would continue from 21 July 2019.

Ms McLachlan noted that the Blind Square app did not work for Android as it was primarily developed for iPhones. She also noted that the issue needed to be addressed when developing the app in the future.

The Chair asked members if they had noted any specific places in Lower Hutt where footpaths needed upgrading. She advised that the Divisional Manager Strategy and Planning, and the Community Facilitator were to be contacted regarding any future sightings of footpath discrepancies.

Ms Lendingham advised that footpaths around Lower Hutt were not wide enough. The Chair responded that the \$50,000 could only go so far. She thanked Ms Lendingham for the feedback with new housing coming into the CBD regarding footpath width.

Ms McLachlan noted that Cambridge Terrace had an unstable footpath due to tree roots. She asked if this area could be improved. The Chair supported Ms McLachlan's comments. Ms Dale noted there were many areas where the grass had sunk.

Mr Gruschow joined the meeting at 3.51pm.

7. **ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES AND THE LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS** (19/727)

The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning advised that Mr Gruschow had requested that accessibility issues and the elections become a standard item on the agenda. She advised that the upcoming local body election would be postal. In response, the Chair asked members what could potentially be accessibility hindrances in the upcoming local body elections?

Ms McLachlan stated that she would like to independently access the voting forms as she believed disabled people generally felt uncomfortable asking for assistance.

The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning advised that the Electoral Commission had made information more accessible, noting that further improvements were still required. The Chair suggested an Electoral Commission officer attend the next meeting. The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning responded that the Electoral Commission did not have control over the documentation. She agreed to speak with the Electoral Commission officer about making the disabled access easier to the documentation and have a representative attend the next meeting.

Ms McLachlan said the assumption was that the blind community was the priority of the Electoral Commission. She advised that those visually impaired could actually use screen readers to read the voting papers online. Mr Gruschow suggested that online voting would assist the wider disabled community to access the voting papers more easily.

8. **MOBILITY PARKING APP WORK** (19/729)

The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning advised that the mobility parking app, which went live in Lower Hutt in May 2019, allowed people to report illegal parking in mobility car parks. She said that through the CCS Disability Action software, the app also allowed users to locate disabled car parks. She believed that in the future, with additional resourcing, the mobility parking app's focus would be to get all of the public mobility car parks accurately loaded into the system.

Ms McLachlan noted that the initial project was large scale and whether or not disabled toilets could be incorporated into the mobility parking app in the future. The Divisional Manager Strategy and Planning responded that this addition was unlikely at this stage of the mobility parking app's development, but could be incorporated in the future.

The Chair noted that the mobility parking app was particularly useful helping the disabled community to feel safer when asking able-bodied people to move their illegally parked vehicles. Ms McLachlan supported the Chair's comments, stating that the disabled were paying for the use of the carparks and thus should be able to access them.

9. **UNIVERSAL DESIGN STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL NEW BUILDS TO ENSURE ALL NEW HOUSING IS ACCESSIBLE FOR THE DISABLED** (19/730)

Mr Gruschow advised that the Building Act was currently being reviewed, with submissions closing on 16 June 2019. He noted there was not enough time to submit a formal submission. He advised that enforcing standards of new builds to allow wheelchair access was ideal and had already gained support from other Councils.

The Divisional Manager Strategy and Planning noted that installing wheelchair access in a residential home for able-bodied people could prove to be unwanted extra expenditure. She also noted there was no guarantee of knowing whether or not the future owners might be disabled.

Ms McLachlan believed it would be difficult to enforce disability access in the private sector. However, the notion to incorporate disability access into new homes would likely succeed in the public sector as often public housing was built where homes could potentially be made accessible to the disabled.

The Chair noted that Council buildings like the Events Centre should be made available to all. She also noted that newly installed automatic doors, which enable the disabled better access, was a measure of success in the community. Ms Ledingham supported the Chair's comments, noting that Huia Pool now had an electronic door into the hydrotherapy pool, making it more accessible to the disabled.

Mr Gruschow considered that disabled renters had difficulty finding housing that suited their requirements.

Ms Henderson questioned why the Events Centre initially received sign off without automated doors. The Chair responded saying that examples like this were why the subcommittee was established as there were issues around the Hutt for those with impairments. Mr Gruschow noted buildings were designed to be earthquake proof but not accessible to the disabled. The Chair noted a lot of buildings only had steep stairs. Ms Henderson noted that ramps were often around the back of buildings.

The Chair suggested that a Council planner or building officer attend a future meeting in order to discuss small alterations in future regulations. The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning agreed to follow this up.

Ms McLachlan noted that the Walter Nash Centre had the same issue as the Events Centre where automated doors were not initially installed due to the cost. Ms McLachlan believed that accessibility was perceived as an extra cost that was ignored a lot more than it should be. She stated that the Upper Hutt Library had a button to wave at by the toilets, which was not an expensive option. She also stated the ongoing issue could be resolved by educating people around the minor expense of planning ahead, in comparison with rectifying inaccessible buildings later on.

10. **PREPARING A BREAKDOWN OF THE COST IMPLICATIONS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION, A TIMELINE AND PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION** (19/731)

The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning asked members to think about future projects to initiate between now and the next meeting, in order to generate a work programme. She advised she would incorporate the work programme in a report to the Community Services Committee meeting, which would then be presented to Council for approval. She said that funding allocations to the subcommittee could then be implemented at next year's Community Plan Committee meeting.

The Chair advised that requests from the subcommittee were presented at the Community Plan Committee meeting held on 11 June 2019. She stated that a formal work programme needed to be incorporated in the Long Term Plan process in order to move the projects forward.

11. **REPORT BACK ON IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE IN THE CITY LIVING WITH DISABILITIES** (19/732)

The Divisional Manager, Strategy and Planning advised that a work programme needed to be presented to Council as discussed in the previous item.

12. **MINOR ITEM NOT ON THE AGENDA: BEACH MATS FOR THE DISABLED**

The Parks and Recreation Planner advised members that ideally this summer Lower Hutt beaches should have new beach mats to enable the disabled community beach access. She stated that the beach mats would be dependent on funding. She asked members if they preferred the mats remain by the water side or be submerged, noting that submerging the mats would require a lot more maintenance. Ms Mclachlan responded that wheelchairs were not designed to go into the water, whereas the mats were. Members agreed that submerging the mats into the water would be pointless unless there was something else in the water, for example a handrail.

The Parks and Recreation Planner presented colour options of brown or blue. She believed blue was a better option as previously discussed for the visually impaired. Members agreed paint lines on the beach mats would be useful.

The Parks and Recreation Planner advised that the mats could ideally be left out all summer, providing local businesss assisted with storage. She suggested one potential site of Petone Beach, where there was additional parking. Members suggested the site would have too many stones. Ms Lclachlan advised that guidedogs were only permitted in several areas of the beach. The Parks and Recreation Planner agreed that a flat smooth surface was crucial for the location of the mats. She proposed another Petone location near the Petone Settlers Museum and two more potential sites in Days Bay, Eastbourne. Ms McLachlan suggested trialling the proposed locations of the beach mats to determine

the best outcome for the disabled community in Lower Hutt.

Members agreed the mats with wings were a better option as they allowed access to water.

The Parks and Recreation Planner advised that a contractor would manage the maintenance of these mats, noting the cost depended on the length of the mat.

The Chair asked the the Parks and Recreation Planner to investigate pricing of the floating wheelchairs. The Parks and Recreation Planner advised that she could do this with the pricing of the mats also. The Chair asked for some samples and measurements, and to further investigate the beach mats location in relation to accessible toilets.

13. QUESTIONS

Ms Ledingham asked when the disabled toilets were going to be added to the Mobility parking app? Ms McLachlan responded that CCS Disability Action was looking into it.

Ms Dale noted that providing free food for the homeless in the Hutt Valley would be a good idea, as she was part of a homelessness group who wanted to give back to the community. Ms Dale asked the Chair how members could be more visible in aiding the less fortunate in the community.

Ms McLachlan advised that Upper Hutt had drop off points for excess produce, which the less fortunate could collect from. The Chair advised that she attended a wellbeing hui recently, noting it was important to look after one another. She also noted that Lower Hutt also has anonymous drop boxes for left over food.

The Community Facilitator proposed holding a separate meeting with Ms Dale as she was involved with community projects groups. The Chair and Ms Henderson asked to be involved. The Chair stated that there should be joint projects between the subcommittee and working groups to share knowledge ,experience and lend a hand to one another.

The Chair proposed an informal meeting in one month to allow the Electoral Commission officer to speak to the members. The Chair asked the Community Facilitator to look at potential meeting times.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 4.50 pm.

Cr G Barratt
CHAIR

CONFIRMED as a true and correct record
Dated this 14th day of August 2019