

Disability and Carers Action Group Minutes

Wednesday 14th May 2025 @ 2pm Civic Centre

	<p>Those Present:</p> <p>Robert McAllister (RM) Chair, Hedley Brown (HB), Majzoub Ali (MA), Barrie Andrews (BA), Keith Ducker (KD), Terry Swinney & Angie Burrows (AB).</p>	
	<p>Previous Minutes can be downloaded and read on the following website strf.uk – click on Focus groups and Board – click Disability & Carers then scroll down to read the minutes you want.</p>	Actions
	<p>The Code of Conduct is at the end of these minutes and please read them and adhere to them.</p>	
1.	<p>Opening.</p> <p>RM welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if everyone knew each other? They all new each other so no introductions needed.</p> <p>8 Residents showed an interest in joining the group from the big conversation. 3 said that they would attend today. 1 arrived. I sent their apologies and asked for the minutes to be sent and the other one never turned up.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Edna Phillips, Elaine Turner & Carol Dench.</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of Interest:</p> <p>None</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>Matters Arriving from Previous Minutes:</p> <p>10.1 KD passed on the email contact details of members as requested</p> <p>10.2 KD asked Sam Elliott if the Disability & Carers Action Group could open up to the whole of the city regardless of them being a SEH resident or not. She agreed that this would be ok and Resident Involvement would continue to support the group as they do now.</p>	

<p>5.</p>	<p>KD said that he wished to make it clear that after last months meeting where two members said that he should not be attending these meetings as he was a board member, he had spoken with Sam Elliott, Sarah Gallager and Sarah Lander regarding this and they said that as a resident and also the resident engagement champion for the board, he should be attending these meetings if he wished to do so. No one had the right to suggest that he should be excluded, unless he broke the code of conduct and the chair asked him to leave.</p> <p>RM thanked him for that and TS & HB said that they agreed that as a resident KD had the right to attend. Also, as a board member he could give the group advice if needed.</p> <p>TS said it would help us if we could hold meetings in other places rather than at the Civic Centre so that people now that we exist and that anyone can attend.</p> <p>As there are still bed bugs around in some places the group did not feel that it was safe enough to move the meetings around until it is clear and safe to do so.</p> <p>If a place can be found that is available, accessible and convenient for people to attend, then we should consider holding the meetings there. RM asked if KD could make enquiries to see if SEH know of anywhere that we could hold the meetings and bring them back to the next meeting.</p> <p>TS said that we need to advertise this so that everyone knows this. It could be told to the local papers and see if they could run it.</p> <p>TS said while we are talking about meetings, is the meeting going back to 11am as it is difficult to come out at 2pm. When the meetings are 11am you have the rest of the day when it's over to do anything, but 2pm means that by the time the meeting ends at 4pm, the days over.</p> <p>RM said that yes, the meetings are going back to 11am as before. It was asked if we could hold a meeting in the afternoon by some residents as they wished to attend but could not in the mornings. The group agreed to do this and the residents asking for an afternoon meeting did not turn up. This has now happened thee times so the feeling is that we stick to the 11am start each month. All agreed that meetings will be 11am start.</p> <p>It was mentioned that the disability and carers group should be asked to advise when any alterations are being done to properties. Not resident's properties by places like sheltered places or other places that residents use as they have the knowledge as to what works and what does not work and could save SEH money by explaining how something could be wrong with what they are doing instead of them finding out after the works are completed and having to put it right.</p> <p>An example of this was when they were replacing the corridor doors in Adams Elms. They were putting in a small slope to the floor under each door, but were leaving this until that had completed the whole building and that left a step that was a trip hazard at every door. It was brought to the contactors attention that is would be safer if they completed each area under the door as they went, so that a poor sighted person did not trip up. They then did this while putting the new doors in so that it made it safer to walk along the corridors.</p>	<p>KD</p> <p>KD</p>
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	<p>KD was asked if he could pass on to the works managers this invitation to help them when doing any works that could impact on a disabled person.</p> <p>TS said that he has installed a ring doorbell so that he knows who comes to his door.</p> <p>There was then a discussion on the rights and wrongs of having a ring doorbell. It was pointed out that you have to ask SEH for permission to install a ring type doorbell due to their recording ability.</p> <p>TS explained what they did and how it made him feel a lot safer in his home for having one.</p> <p>MA said “ Is South Essex Homes expecting you to have a doorbell at each flat that they supply for residents. As you have been talking about security and seeing who is at the door then they should be provided by South Essex Homes”</p> <p>TS said “Goodluck in asking SEH to pay for that as they would not do that you have to supply them yourself. South Essex Homes do not supply doorbells. You will not get SEH or the council to pay for everyone to have a doorbell”</p> <p>MA asked if TS was speaking on behalf of SEH? TS said that he was speaking on behalf of himself.</p> <p>MA said if SEH is not supplying bells but want to come and see what sort of bell you want to use and have to agree or not that you can have one of these bells because it is not your property it is the property of the landlord so if they're not satisfied, they will say you can not have one. I'm not asking here, I want an official answer.</p> <p>BA tried to explain that putting a bell on a fire door of door frame you can not screw it on but can stick it on by the sticky bit that comes with it. He said that he has one that works by battery and a plug-in bell that he can move to his bedroom at night so that he can hear it.</p> <p>RB said that you can have a doorbell without asking permission but if it has a camera attached you have to ask permission to have it.</p> <p>MA said, so you don't have to have permission to have a doorbell but you do if it has a camera? RM said that is correct. MA asked if that was official and RM said yes, it is.</p> <p>RM asked KD if he knew about the new entry system being installed by SEH. KD said that he has seen the new system in action at Yantlet along the London Road and it is fantastic and explained how it worked allowing for blind and deaf residents to use it just as the other residents can use it.</p> <p>RM said that it sounds good and where are they going to be installed? KD said that the next one is to be Barringtons, but from then on, he does not know, but as soon as he does, he will let the group know.</p>	KD
6.	<p>Guest Speaker:</p> <p>The invited guest did not arrive.</p> <p>The group discussed that fact that there have been many months now that the guest has not arrived sometimes without advance apologies.</p> <p>The suggestion from TS is that we invite two guests to each meeting so that hopefully one will turn up. If they both arrive, then the time allocated could be split so that they had half each.</p> <p>This was agreed as KD was asked to invite two each month. KD said that next month the guest has already advised that they will be at the</p>	

	<p>meeting and if something unforeseen happens they have arranged that one of their colleague will attend. KD asked did the group wish him to ask a second guest to attend, it was felt that it would not need one for next month, but yes two from then on.</p> <p>TS said could we name and shame these people that do not turn up without letting us know.</p> <p>* RB asked that if anyone knows of someone who could come and give us a talk or an organisation who are willing to attend and give information or to just chat to the group, please let him know so that we can ask them along as we have trouble getting people along to the meetings.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Key Outcomes:</p> <p>This month the group want it notified to the bus companies that their drivers have gone back to their old ways of not coming near to the curb, dropping the bus to allow easy access, not bringing the ramp out for those that need it & pulling away from the stop before the passengers have seated themselves.</p> <p>The driving away before the person is seated is very dangerous act, especially for those that have walking difficulty.</p> <p>KD to ask if SEH could contact the bus companies on behalf of the residents, explaining the problem and asking if they would like the group to mystery shop the busses at no cost to the companies.</p> <p>AB said that she has seen a wheelchair person not being able to get on to a bus due to a collapsible pram being in the place that is reserved for wheelchair users and the driver would not make the pram owner collapse it, so that the person in the wheelchair could get on.</p> <p>RM said that is the sort of thing that needs to be reported. Take the time, stop and bus number so that the company can check it out. They all have CCTV installed on the buses so it can be checked if they have the information needed to check. RM said that the buses have a four number digits on the back of the bus so as to identify it, so take that number down or ask the driver for it.</p> <p>AB said that they would tell you the number, RM said then in that case it should also be reported to the company that the driver is not giving you the information.</p> <p>TS said, that now they do not have inspectors like they used to have, there is no check on the drivers.</p>	<p>KD</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Guest Speaker for 11th June at 11.30.</p> <p>Sam Smith (Team Manager) from the Adaptations & Equipment Services Team of Southend City Council will be attending.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Items for Future Meetings:</p> <p>Departments or organisations who have agreed to attend: Occupation Therapy SCC (June 25 Speaker) Adults and Communities Lead - JSCC Community Builders Age Concern</p>	

	<p>Achieve, Thrive & Flourish Breathe Easy Everyone Health SEH Fire Manager Send the Right Message (Tricia Cowdrey) Dial (from SAVS) (May 25 Speaker)</p> <p>If you know of anyone who would be willing to attend and give us a talk on their organisation or department that could help the disabled or carers in Southend, please let us know and we will contact them on your behalf.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Any other Business:</p> <p>RM said at last his shower has been fixed and he had a reply from his complaints but he is not happy with it and has asked that it goes to stage two.</p> <p>BA said that on the 9th May at 7.24am the fire alarm went off at Westwood House so the gas was cut off as is normal for safety. But Sureserve (Arron) did not attend to reset it until the same evening. He thought that it was an hour for them to attend and reset it. He had no hot water all that time. Could KD when he has his meeting with them ask why they did not attend to reset the gas after it was found that there was no fire?</p> <p>TS said that he had a problem with his boiler as it showed the spanner in the window of the boiler that meant the pressure was dropping. So, he called the call centre to ask that someone comes out to sort it out for him. He was asked if he still had hot water and he said that he had. So was told to ring back when he hasn't got any hot water and they would then tell Sureserve to call. He said that surly they would rather be told before it goes completely wrong and as it's a gas boiler he thinks it need attention as soon as not when it goes wrong completely. KD to mention it when he has his monthly meeting where the call centre manager is in attendance.</p> <p>HB said that his radiator has still not been replaced as was agreed by Sureserve. Since KD arranged for them to visit for him, he has had three engineers attend and the last one said it's a leak. He told them that it has been agreed to replace it and that they have got it to replace, but the last engineer took the measurements and said he will be back to do it. HB has not seen anyone since and no one has called him. KD will speak to Sureserve on behalf of HB about this.</p> <p>RM said that the notice boards at Nicholson House are still behind the doors on each floor so can not be seen by the residents and he also has not got a key for them. Could KD speak to Sarah Gallager for him please.</p>	<p>KD</p> <p>KD</p> <p>KD</p> <p>KD</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Meetings.</p> <p>Would people please not talk over each other or hold individual conversations, as it is impossible to hear what is said on the recording when this happens. Then it's not possible to produce an accurate account for the minute.</p>	

	<p>Please remember this is a disability and carers group and all meetings have a set agenda, you can bring anything that has to do with disability or caring to the meeting. we welcome any concerns or ideas you have and will discuss anything that is of concern or worry to you as a disabled resident or carer within the city.</p> <p>Any other concerns, complaints or help not related to the meeting subject, must be after the meeting. you will then have time to bring to the attention of the correct person, anything that is not disability or carer related.</p>	
12.	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>11th June 2025 11am at the Civic Centre room 6</p> <p>We hope to see many more residents joining us soon, as the response from the Big Conversation was good with many residents wishing to attend the Disability and Carers Action Group.</p>	
13.	<p>Future Meeting Dates and Venues:</p> <p>All meeting will be held at the Civic Centre until the Sheltered are clear for us to return visiting.</p> <p>Please provide me with an email address if you have one, as it cost a lot to send through the post. A copy of the agenda and minutes will be emailed or posted out.</p>	
	<p>Code of Conduct:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residents are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion, always respecting other residents, both in meetings and on the premises. 2. Offensive, disruptive, threatening or abusive behaviour and language including racist, sexist, disabled or homophobic inflammatory remarks shall not be permitted and will constitute a breach of reasonable behaviour. 3. Residents will be aware of the equal opportunities policies of South Essex Homes and will at no time act in a manner which is intentionally contrary to the spirit of these policies. 4. Residents wishing to speak should indicate to the Chair, and then wait to be called upon to speak. All speakers should address the Chair. The Chair's role is to make certain everyone has the opportunity to speak. Residents should be careful not to dominate the discussion. 5. Speakers should <u>stick to the subject matter in hand</u> and not stray from the point. 6. Only one person shall speak at a time and there should not be any private debates within the meeting. 7. Any breach of reasonable behaviour will result in a vote of no confidence being called against the offending member and the 	

	member will be asked to leave. The meeting will be stopped until that person has removed themselves from the meeting.	
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