

Disability and Carers Action Group Minutes

Wednesday 11th February 2026 11am @ Civic Centre

	<p>Those Present:</p> <p>Robert McAllister (RM) Chair, Hedley Brown (HB), Edna Phillips (EP), Barrie Andrews (BA), Angela Burrows (AB), Keith Ducker (KD), Phoebe Baker Resident Engagement Team Member & Graham Hart SEH Fire Manager,</p>	
	<p>Apologies: None received</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p>RB welcomed all those present and run through the January minutes. All agreed that they were a true record.</p>	<p>Actions</p>
<p>2,</p>	<p>Graham Hart showed the group many videos on different fires in the home and explained the use of Fire Blankets. Lots of questions were asked and Graham was able to answer them all.</p> <p>Advise around charging different items that we use was given with the emphasis on night time charging that is a no no. Many fire start when people charge items over night when they can not keep an eye on them. Also, he emphasised having a smoke alarm in the bedroom. He explained that many have them outside the bedroom in a corridor. But if a fire starts in your bedroom while you are a sleep, by the time the smoke gets to the alarm outside, you could be dead from the smoke in your bedroom.</p> <p>Why Buy a Genuine Fire Blanket?</p> <p>A fire blanket works by smothering the flames and starving the fire of oxygen, which it needs to continue burning.</p> <p>You should always replace a fire blanket after you've used it. That is because even the slightest imperfection can result in the blanket being completely ineffective.</p> <p>A fire blanket which doesn't work may actually help to spread a fire quicker, and it could instead escalate in severity.</p> <p>With more than half of all house fires originating from the kitchen, the fire blanket is an important piece of kit.</p> <p>Not only does it give you peace of mind, but it could quite easily stop a fire in your home and save your life.</p> <p>So, make sure you have one which works. And to do that, it's worth spending a little more on a tested, certified fire blanket.</p> <p>Use common sense when buying any safety equipment to make sure you're best protected. And if the price is too good to be true, then it is.</p> <p>Amazon sell one (Amazon Choice) for £4.75 but after reading the review that stated "This blanket caused us to fail our fire inspection, as the fire brigade said it would not put out a fire", I did not buy it. So, read reviews</p>	

	<p>first as a cheap one could kill you, by bursting it to flames rather than putting the fire out.</p> <p>Another one I looked (£5.29) at said 'Machine Washable'. Now that should tell anyone to stay away from that one as why would you wash it? Another (£5.99) said 'Tumble Dry it, why? The £5.99 one said hand wash. So just check the Materials and Care bit on the page and if it says anything about washing or tumble drying, stay well away.</p> <p>I would also advise to stay well clear of 'Made in China' as they do not have a standard and anyone can print on and they more do the BS standard EN 1869 and it's not to the standard.</p> <p>If you can afford it then one with a British Kitemark is best as they cannot use the Kite if it's not up to the standard and remember CHEAP IS NOT CHEAP IF IT DOESN'T DO THE JOB.</p> <p>At the end Graham said that he would like to give a presentation to the children of SEH as he is sure that most would not have an escape plan in place. KD said that he will speak to SEH about this and get back to him.</p> <p>He also said that when he held fire safety days for the SEH staff not many attended. KD said that when he attended one, there was 6 staff were there and that is disgusting that staff do not attend these. He will mention it to management.</p>	<p>KD¹</p> <p>KD²</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p>Guest for March. HB asked if we could have someone from Seuz the waste collection company in Southend to talk about the recycling. KD will speak to them.</p> <p>Sarah Gallagher will be in attendance at the March meeting to talk about the group going to other places to hold the meetings now.</p> <p>RM said that a city resident thinks that they are not welcome to the meetings as they were told they could not attend the big conversation. KD said he had already had a conversation with RM as we agreed that we would not name the resident as it was not needed.</p> <p>KD said that he had explained that the big conversation was held by using SEH residents money and it was not right for SEH to allow non-SEH residents to attend. The cost included the food and drinks provided and the taxi's to get to and from. They did not want to leave themselves or residents open to remarks or complaints so that is why some who wanted to come or had been invited by residents, were told that they were sorry but they could not attend. We hope that they understand but all are welcome to come to meetings and events that are open to all.</p>	<p>KD³</p>
<p>3.</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</p>	

	<p>Community Builders Age Concern 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>	
4.	<p>Date of the next meeting:</p> <p>11th March 2026 11am at the Civic Centre room 2</p>	
5.	<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>	
6.	<p>Future Meeting Dates and Venues:</p> <p>All meeting will be held at the Civic Centre on the 2nd Wednesday of the month until we know about the sheltered units.</p>	
KD ¹	<p>I have spoken to Sarah Gallagher and between us we have come up with a Plan to include ATF, resident involvement and Graham, having meetings with residents and their children across the city on fire prevention and safety in the home. We could give the children drinks, pizza and cakes also invent some games around fire safety as that would help attendance.</p>	