
Meeting Notes

13 September 2006

Notes of the Disability Equality Duty Steering Group held at 6 Middle Street, London EC1A 7JA on 13 September 2006

Present

John Cartledge	Chair of Steering Group, Deputy Chief Executive
Dolores Keane	Group Coordinator, Accessible Transport Officer
Gail Engert	Member
Patti Tobin	Director, Finance and Personnel
Bryan Davey	Director, Public Liaison
Jo deBank	Communications Officer
Greg Hargest	Notes, Research & Development Team Support

1. Apologies for absence

Virginia Rounding	Member
Tim Bellenger	Director, Research & Development
Valeria Coots	Member
Ron Brewer	Member
Lisa Egan	Member (no apologies received in advance)

2. Discussion of August Meeting Notes and Action Points. Matters Arising

New point 1

The meeting was informed that the inclusion of an evacuation chair in the Fire Risk Assessment would not entail the complete re-writing of the Assessment but only its updating. The issue of deciding whether a Chair is required, plus any associated costs, is yet to be decided.

New point 2

As Tracey Proudlock will be unable to complete her building audit due to resignation from the Committee, it was questioned when this audit will be actioned and by whom. PT said that two possible consultants were under consideration, including Nick Ross. Patti was asked to take this forward to obtain formal quotes.

New Point 4

In her absence, it was wondered whether Lisa Egan would be going ahead with the presentation/co-presentation of DED issues to the October S&I meeting, where the DED will be explained to the full Committee. John said he would liaise with Lisa once the details of the paper have been further considered. In the first instance he said he would be discussing this with the Executive Group the day after this DED meeting.

Ongoing Point 5

It was pointed out by John that this point was not clear; amplification was needed. Jo had offered to consider (and report back if appropriate) on the DRC paper on guidance for organisations: "Guidance for public authorities on how to effectively involve disabled people"; also John and Dolores to consider "Guidance on gathering and analysing evidence to inform action". Both of these documents are lengthy (79 and 65 pages respectively) and are therefore being used by Jo, John and Dolores more to 'background inform' the Group's work on the Duty.

Ongoing Point 17

BD has spoken to our website developers who have recommended a software audit rather than a more expensive manual audit. DK mentioned an offer made for a qualified Access officer, who is also visually impaired, to look at the website informally and make comments on its accessibility. It was also said that there was due to be a meeting with Premier IT on 15 September at which this point would be discussed.

3. SMT-led discussion/presentation

Jo: Communications, including publication issues

The Duty will be published on the website with a large-print version available on request.

Jo has been trying to make these more accessible but said that while large print documents were relatively cheap to print, because of their expense, LTW could only afford to produce taped audio versions on demand.

She said that accessibility was included in how and when documents were published, and that we have to make clear on each the options to receive the publication in another format. She will find out if we can use GLA resources to produce alternative formats to save us having to purchase expensive copying equipment. Meanwhile, perhaps we could start a contingency fund.

A sentence should be included on published documents offering other formats, and it could be considered unreasonable to refuse to provide these.

Jo said it was hard to plan as she does not know when reports are to be published. We need to consider first the audience we are targeting and then the related accessibility issues.

"Easy Read" for those with learning difficulties was mentioned and a brief explanation given.

JC: Accessibility of external meeting venues

Comments received were largely in approval of the document produced by DT and revised after last month's meeting.

A suggestion to remove phrases such as 'where possible' to make recommendations mandatory was rejected as this would make the scheme unworkable. The items in bold were considered essential (using the word 'must') and the rest as desirable (using the word 'should', for example).

Going through the document the following points were made:

2. To be split into two points. 'Should' to be 'must', 'ideally' to be 'usually'. Walking times could be replaced by distances.
3. 'Level access' may include lifts.
4. Both PA and induction loop may be needed so item to be subdivided. Regarding the loop, it was said that the use of our own equipment gives us the responsibility for its operation so ideally the venue should be equipped already and ours will be a backup. The financial and logistical implications were discussed and will be investigated by Bryan. The need for good acoustics was mentioned.
5. 'Should' to be 'must' in both cases.
6. Whole item to be in bold.
7. Un-bold the first part of this item. Rearrange with wheelchair sentence first, in bold and as a 'must'.
8. For 'movement between rooms' put 'internal circulation spaces'.
9. Amalgamate with item 14. Remove 'where possible'.
11. 'Must' to be 'should'.

4. **Group discussion of the Duty** – the way forward, Action Points

Chairmanship: The training implications were mentioned in order for meetings to be conducted in an accessible and inclusive manner.

Patti said that new members were to be appointed in line with the new Committee structure. It was also mentioned that Chairs of meetings should be given a standardised list of pre-meeting announcements to be made at the start of all meetings, both external and in-house, which would include relevant 'housekeeping' and safety information. The group also discussed good microphone technique and behaviour of attendees which might be distracting for others.

Good room layout was discussed, in order to enable people to sit comfortably through lengthy presentations.

5. **Next and future meetings**

The next meeting is scheduled for **11 October 2006**. There are already advance apologies from Dolores and Virginia.

Note that there will be a Strategy & Integration meeting on 31 October at which the DED will be discussed. This will be led by John, possibly in conjunction with Lisa.

6. **Round-up of agreed Action Points**

These are summarised on page 4.

7. Any other business

The difficulties of coping with temporary disability when attending meetings at external venues was raised. The use of a feedback form (with the right to anonymity) to highlight such issues was suggested. John and Patti will consider this in conjunction with the paper on guidelines for accessible meeting venues.

End of Notes

Summary of Action Points carried forward from this meeting

Action Point	Owner
<i>NEW</i>	
1. Check availability of GLA resources for other formats for publications	JdB
2. Update sheet of minimum standards for external venues before 31/10	DK, DT
3. Consider use only of venues that supply all the equipment needed	DT, AK
4. Check if Lisa still able to do presentation	JC
5. Consider the introduction of a feedback form for post-meeting comments	PT, JC
<i>ONGOING</i>	
1. Evacuation chair to be included in Fire Risk Assessment update	JS, PK, PT
2. Update fire safety procedures	AK, JS
3. A new Accessibility Audit for the building will be commissioned	PK, DT
4. Compliance of public areas of the building	PK, CPF
5. Redrafting of guidelines for booking of meeting venues	Group
6. Provision of individual costings for DED implementation	Budget holders
7. Website audit and costing	BD
8. Screen readers for blind people and website accessibility	BD
9. Consider preparation of briefing paper for October S&I	JC, DK, JdB
10. Presentation of short briefing paper on implications for LTW of DED	JC, LE?
11. Allocation of ownership of two guidance documents	JC, DK
12. Discussion of IT and telephony	BD, PK
13. Budget implications to be discussed.	PK, SMT
14. Liaison with GLA and other bodies, e.g. DfT, DPTAC, City Police, etc,	DK & PT
15. Implications for External Relations Panel	JdB, GE
16. Training for relevant staff in dealing with disability issues	PT, SMT, Line Managers
17. Training for members in dealing with disability issues	PT
18. Estimation of modifications needed for fixtures and fittings	PK, SMT
19. Production of information sheets for disabled visitors	JdB, BD
20. Portable induction loop and portable PA equipment, acquisition and use	BD
21. Discussions on the production of a disability Action Plan for the website	JdB, Group