

## Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 8th April 2016 (FINAL)

Present:	
Name	Organisation
Cllr Gul Khan (Chair)	RBC
Cllr Rachel Eden	RBC (Lead Member Adult Social Care)
Neil Scott	Reading Buses
Miriam Sparkes	
Nina Crispin	RBC
Tony Hall	Civil Service Pensioners Alliance, Reading Group
Shehla Minhas	New Directions, RBC
Cris Butler	RBC
Ashley Burton	RBC
Pearl Gibson	
John Walford	Whitley Community Development Association
Peter Staples	
Jan Staples	
Patience Odunsi	Unison
Roy Allum	Age UK Volunteer
Irene Percival	
Bob Percival	
Diane Hiles	
Douglas Dean	Thames Valley Pensioner Convention
John Wilkinson	Age UK Reading
Brian Tull	
Colin Ferguson	Firtree
Brenda Jenkins	Pegasus Court / MacMillan Cancer Support
Mary Thorne	RBC
Hilda Kirkpatrick	Readibus
Sylvia Millgate	
Frank Millgate	
Joy Adams	
Bridget Chubb	
Ann Coddington	
Barbara Hobbs	Age UK Reading
Derek Woad	

Joan Walker	NHS Retirement Fellowship
Brian Oatway	
Heather Cresswell	M.S. Society Reading & Wokingham Branch
Mark Drukker	
Laxmi Kachwala	Readibus
Judith El-Nager	
Caroline Langdon	U3A / Lower Caversham NAG
D M Heath	
Diane Seydoux	
Janice Scruby	Firtree
Laurence Napier-Peele	
Jill Hodges	Southcote Forum
Demelza Hookway	Ready Friends - Reading Voluntary Action
M Tallwin	Age UK
Elaine Jalland	
Sylvia Page	
Lorna Walker	
Ann Worsley	
Edna Wieser	
Valerie White	
Milly Lovegrove	
Carol Fisher	
Pat Llewellyn	
Barbara Hobbs	Grovelands Walking Group
Brigid Dos Santos	Reading & West Berkshire Carers Hub
Carol McLellan	
P Samtani	
Valerie Bond	
M E Robertson	
Brian Haines	Southcote Forum
Sarah Finch	Age UK Berkshire
Sarah Hunneman	Older People Neighbourhood Services
James Penn	

Apologies	
Name	Organisation
Anjam Chaudhary	DWP
Yvinee Antrobus	
Jennifer Ingram	
Sumita Nanda	Reading Crossroads
Gina Harris	

Cllr Sandra Vickers	
Jessie Serrano	
Liz Grugeon	
Barbara Annells	
Cllr Rose Williams	

Agenda item 1: Welcome & matters arising  
*Cllr Gul Khan*

The minutes of the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016 were checked for accuracy and approved.

The approved minutes from the meetings are available from the Older People's Working Group page on the RBC website at:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/opwg>

Agenda item 2: Library Services Reshape  
*Ashley Burton, RBC*

Presentation about the proposals to reshape Library Services across the borough.

An initial survey was carried out during Autumn 2015 to gather feedback on what people would want for their local library services. A total of 1792 responses were received.

The second stage of the consultation on the proposals is ending on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

The best used Libraries in the Borough are: Central Library (with a popular IT suite), Caversham Library, Tilehurst Library and Battle Library.

The proposals include:

- Reduce opening hours
- Reduce staffing
- Not close library branches
- Increase use of technology
- Increase use of Council buildings, i.e. Southcote Community Centre
- Toy Library: make use of it throughout the borough
- Keep the Mobile Library

We want to know what impact the proposals will have.
<b>Questions &amp; Answers:</b>
Q1: What is a community hub? A1: A community hub encompasses children centres and community groups offering activities at one location. Having a library within existing community hubs will create another set of activities to offer to the local community.
Q2: Will it be more expenses for organizing this? A2: Yes, there will be a cost of utilising the building, but we can see the benefits of pooling staffing.
3: The use of libraries is reducing by 30%. We can use the library in Whitley to write a letter, use a PC/internet, <b>print documents*</b> . You have to go to the Central Library to get documents printed. It costs lots of money and is a waste of time. <i>*amended following review on 24/7/2016</i>
Q4: We should all pay for our library cards. The Minister answered it is illegal to charge for books, but the service can charge for cards. But charging for library cards is competing with other technologies. A4: We have recently introduced access to E-books.
Q5: Libraries are essential services. It educates people. Is it possible to open libraries on Sundays also? It won't cost much to RBC. A5: We did ask for feedback on Sunday opening hours. But this option was not as popular as expected.
Q6: How many books are being taken out and not returned? And what is the cost of replacing non-returned books? At any one time, someone can take out up to 15 books! A6: We have increased the fines for late returns; this has reduced the number of late returns occurring.
Q7: What might happen to Palmer Park Library? A7: A partner organisation might share the building with Palmer Park Library or we share their building. There is no actual recommendation on this at the moment and we don't have any current details available.
8: Biggest costs are staffing and purchasing of books. There is the issue of older people being able to access Information Technology (IT). Is there a need to access IT at libraries bearing in mind most people have access to IT at home. Is story time for kids a good use of library resources? Council tax has increased by 1.9%, most other Local Authorities haven't done that.
In response, Cllr Eden (Lead Cllr for Adult Care Services) mentioned that we have reached a point where library services are now delivering savings. It is important to keep library services and we are doing the best with the services we have. Other Councils are closing libraries, Reading is not. People in Reading value library services.
9: A lot of people can't get to a library, is there a Mobile Library? A9: Yes we offer a mobile library service.

10: The Southcote Library offers free coffee mornings on Tuesdays. People may not object at paying for tea/coffee as the benefits to people are greater: companionship / friendship / talks ....

Agenda item 3: The Reading Assistive Technology Strategy  
*Mary Thorne, RBC*

The Reading Assistive Technology (or Telecare) Strategy is aimed at reviewing and improving the use of Telecare in Reading. The aim is to have a strategy in place after a 6 month project to include a vision and plan for Telecare usage and to maximise the benefits offered by Telecare as well as improve wellbeing.

The benefits of Telecare are multi-folds. Telecare can:

- Increase independence
- Improve safety and prevent accidents
- Improve security
- Increase control and empowerment, offer more options and choices
- Improve quality of life, health and wellbeing
- Delay or prevent deterioration in conditions
- Reduce episodes requiring health/ doctor intervention
- Avoid a crisis by triggering early intervention
- Support carers and family
- Build confidence
- Reduce unwanted intrusion e.g. by care agencies
- Improve efficiency of services
- Enable new approaches to care
- Delay or prevent admission to a care home
- Prevent admission to hospital or support discharge
- Reduce GP visits
- Reduce care costs and avoid expensive crisis care being needed
- Support the aims of the council eg. The Wellbeing strategy
- Provide an assessment tool for staff
- Be accessible for private purchase for those not eligible for services

Telecare should be considered for all care planned by Reading. All staff who prescribe Telecare will have appropriate training and knowledge. Those prescribed Telecare will have it personalised to their needs and wishes.

Telecare will be used for assessment as well as care planning when it will provide more insight into needs and risk. Those who are not entitled to social

care services will be able to get advice and information on where to self-purchase Telecare equipment.

#### Questions & Answers

Q1: Can you tell me how it costs? Weekly/Monthly/Quarterly?

A1: There are several routes to get Telecare. If someone gets Telecare through Social Care Services and following a financial assessment it is decided that Telecare will be fully funded by the Council, the person will pay £5/week for the Telecare line: piece of kit and calls to the Call Centre.

Q2: if you are the main contact, it takes a long time for services to respond. Will Telecare help in this situation to get a quicker response?

A2: We are looking at Emergency Responders. The call centre will usually alert a friend/contact except for 999 calls. If you haven't got family or friends as contacts, the cost can be prohibitive. We need to work at improving what we are offering.

Q3: What equipment is available? The list is constantly changing. Nottingham Rehab Limited (NRS Healthcare) have a listing of all equipment. What is the relationship between RBC - NRS - Forestcare?

A3: NRS are the RBC equipment supplier, including Telecare (rails, hand rails etc....). Forestcare are the RBC call centre for Emergency Crisis. But they also do rental for pendant alarm. The big challenge for Telecare is knowing what is actually out there.

Q4: Need to have a latch key. It's no good calling people if they can't get inside a house.

A4: Will encourage people to give key code to people they know that can help. You can give the code to the Police. People can then contact the Police to get the code.

#### Agenda item 4: 'Have your say' on Adult Education

*Shehla Minhas, New Directions*

New Directions would like to have the views of older people on courses that would be relevant to them.

A questionnaire was distributed to all in attendance and the responses were collected. This will inform future course planning and choice of courses.

The cost of courses varies. It is free for English / Maths. For other courses, it can vary between £50-£100 for a term.

Questions & Answers
Q1: There are classes for beginners, but after that there is nothing else to do. A1: We will feedback this comment to the Course planners.
Q2: The courses on offer at New Directions are 'leisure' type courses. Does New Directions provide courses that are in demand by the community? Are there further education courses offered at New Directions? A2: I will take those questions back.
3: There is a lack of recreational further education courses. Older People do not want courses offered by New Directions. They are too expensive for pensioners on low income. U3A out on more interesting courses.
Q4: What portion of men vs women attends courses? They appear to be more female orientated? A4: You are right, more female attend as well as a lot of young mums. But we cover all ages. We are looking into this and are trying to address it.
Q5: Do you offer courses to people in the community? A5: Yes we also go out in the community on demand to teach courses, but they are not all free.

Agenda item 5: Update on Broad Street Cycling Consultation <i>Cris Butler, RBC</i>
<p>The purpose of the consultation was to seek people's views on whether to allow cycling the full length of Broad Street.</p> <p>Cycling is currently banned in Broad Street west - between St Mary's Butts and Queen Victoria Street - as a result of it being pedestrianised in the 1990s. When the remainder of Broad Street east was pedestrianised in 2000, the existing cycle links at the eastern end, via Cross Street and Queen Victoria Street, were retained.</p> <p>An earlier survey had found that people were in favour of cycling in Broad Street. But, following a statutory consultation in February 2016, there was 1000 responses, with 50% = YES and 50% = NO.</p> <p>At the Transport sub-committee on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016, it was decided that cycling will NOT be allowed the full length of Broad Street.</p> <p>This is a good example of how a consultation can run and influence the final decision.</p>
Questions & Answers
Q1: Why are cyclists allowed in the pedestrian area of Broad Street? Cyclists

<p>could injure pedestrians.</p> <p>A1: Cycling is not permitted in the pedestrian area of Broad Street. Police have found it difficult to enforce restrictions laws.</p>
<p>Q2: Why are cyclists allowed in the area at all?</p> <p>A2: Cycling has been in place in part of Broad Street for a number of years. Both cyclists and pedestrians have a need to cross the town. It forms part of the Council's Cycling Strategy since early 2000 when Broad Street was pedestrianised.</p>
<p>Q3: Do people working at the Council walk up and down Broad Street to see what's going on? There used to be people patrolling Broad Street.</p> <p>A3: Council officers do walk on Broad Street as we all travel to and from work.</p>
<p>4: We need to stop cyclists on pavements. Police Commander to come to next meeting to get our views of what needs to be done.</p>
<p>5: Better signage is needed on Broad Street - with clear indication of penalties. This is the first time we have been consulted on this.</p> <p>A5: There is a resolution to improve signage along Broad Street. This needs to be completed.</p> <p>We did engage the best we could with all part of the community for this consultation.</p> <p>We are relying on the Police to enforce rules in cycling or non-cycling areas.</p>
<p>Q6: Could there be a cycling area marked out on the street?</p> <p>A6: Many people asked for that. We are not keen on that idea. If we segregate cycling in a pedestrian area, cycling speed could increase.</p>
<p>Q7: What are the cycling areas?</p> <p>A7: Cycling is not permitted between St Mary's Butts and Queen Victoria Street (West side). Cycling is permitted between Queen Victoria Street and King Street (East side). There is signage but it's not clear.</p>
<p>Q8: Is someone is knocked down, will they get compensation from the Council?</p> <p>A8: If someone is knocked down, the involvement is between the two parties, it doesn't involve the Council.</p>
<p>Q9: Signage is appalling/Notices for cycling covered with flowers. We need to engage with Police Community Team, Broad Street needs to be looked at. Cycling strategy in Reading is poor; cycling area needs to be improved especially for people visiting the town.</p>

<p>Agenda item 7: Current issues</p>
<p>Suggested items for future meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Street lights / lights pollution - difficult for older people to see at night</li> <li>- Bus routes</li> </ul>

- Cycling / Litter enforcement - Police Community Team
- Highways - state of roads and pavements. Sustainable strategy for pavements in town centre
- The work of the Police Commissioner
- Initiatives in Reading for affordable housing, sheltered housing etc....
- Is there anything that can be done to slow invasion of 'buy to let'?
- Information on Legionnaire's Disease
- Concerns over the increased incidence of beggars in central Reading (Housing/Homelessness section/Police Community Team)
- Overview of the work done by Reading Voluntary Action.
- Advice agencies which help substantial numbers in the community (Reading Community Welfare Rights, Communicare, CAB....)
- Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust / Talking Therapies
- The new service for Carers in Reading
- RVA Social Isolation project
- RBC Parks and Gardens (and the work of the Trees Officer)
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Next Meeting:

- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016  
2 - 4 pm, Council Chamber, Civic Centre