

Date Thursday, 29/03/2018
Time 3.00pm
To Sub-committee on Accessibility
At Bridget's Meeting Room, Disability Resource Centre
Subject Meeting
Our Ref SCoA/29/03/18 - 01

MINUTES

1. Introductions and apologies

Present:

Martin Vinnell (MV – chair); John Harding (JH – secretary); Kirsty Wayland (KW); John Neve (JN); Margaret Glendenning (MG); Florence Oulds (FO); Myriam Lynn (ML); Linda Washington (LW); Nick Tamkin (NT); Micha Fazer-Carroll (MFC); Will Smith (WS); Mark Elsdon (ME); Katherine Stalham (KS); David Lyness (DL); Tom Sweet (TS – minutes)

Apologies:

Nick Bamos (NB); Alison Dunning (AD); Gary Reed (GR); Deb Taylor (DT)

2. Sub-Committee Membership

Paper SCoA 031801 lists members of the Sub-Committee

The length of membership was discussed with the possibility of two or four year terms for members.

MG – Highlighted the need for certain areas e.g. fire safety to be represented at all meetings and included in the membership of the committee at all times.

It was decided that membership renewal periods would last for three years and that if a member was unable to attend they could send a deputy along without prior notification. Student representation would rotate on a yearly basis, unless the sabbatical officer served for two years.

Two additional members, Nick Mattin from UIS and Ron Kay from Estate Management were suggested.

The committee agreed to extend membership to Nick Mattin of UIS.

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JN – Stated it was unnecessary to have three members from EM on the committee

3. Terms of Reference

SCoA 031802 set out the approved Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee which were received and noted.

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference should be reviewed in March each year.

4. Access, Egress and the University Estate

JN submitted and spoke to a paper for discussion on Estate Management Work-Streams and Policy Development

a) Design Guide; EM accessibility ‘work streams and Methodology for measuring value for money of accessibility policy proposals

JN – EM no longer has a Disability/Access Advisor/Officer, this role has been replaced by the Disability and Access Compliance Officer – Gary Reed. The new role focuses on developing the right policies and making sure these policies are put into contracts and Design and Standards Brief (D&SB) and that they are complied with.

JH – Suggested that Cambridge should be looking to develop a specific chapter/section with its design guide in line with examples which were discussed from the University of Oxford and UEA, to enhance the current statement on accessibility which was considered inadequate. JH felt that Cambridge should be setting a higher standard of accessibility for all new builds and refurbishments, recognising that in some situations derogations would be required, but that it was preferable to have a higher standard rather than having to present a case for enhanced accessibility from a lower standard in each project.

JN – Stated that there is a uniform approach across the board to building projects but that there is at present not a similar level of detail on accessibility as in the UEA and Oxford examples.

JN – The Disability and Access Compliance Manager is part of the Projects Quality Team (PQT), which meets twice a week at Project Engagement Meetings (PEMs) and the paper stated the activities of PEMs. EM is not aware of any policy for the University to go above and beyond current legal requirements in relation to accessibility and building design and there is no dedicated accessibility chapter in the D&SB.

JN - There is a cost implication when adapting buildings and there is a need to consider the value for money of adaptations. The University has adopted an approach similar to the HM Treasury Green Book for business cases forming part of Capital Projects Process, supported by Deloitte. Although, it was noted that it can be difficult to put a price on accessibility. A standardised approach could help to save money, for example adapting a range of different front doors across University buildings would cost a lot of money compared to the current individual approach.



MV – Stated that the committee could advise on policy in this regard and recommended that the University should go above and beyond current legal requirements (which did not ensure the inclusion of all disabled people) and should look to other Universities policies as a starting point. It was felt Cambridge, as a leading world university, should set a standard which was above the minimum legal requirement.

Action; JH and JN to meet to scope the development of an access/inclusion ‘policy’ to be included with the design guide

b) SSC/NMS Accessible Parking

NT – Reported that the NMS master plan includes five accessible parking spaces two of which are located in the Benet’s yard entrance to the new SSC. There will also be two limited bays for service parking. The lack of parking spaces is to encourage people to either cycle or use public transport and the fact that the site is generally lacking in space for parking. The DRC will be moving into the new SSC building in December 2018.

NT – Reported that the centre of the New Museums site will be the next project and as a result the accessible bays at the DAB will be out of use and there are currently no alternative arrangements.

KW – Asked what was the timeframe for completion for the site

NT – Stated it would be 2023 when the work was finished

JH – Three members of staff at the DRC require accessible parking spaces and currently have them outside the DRC. It has been raised at an SSC Project Meeting whether some spaces on Bene’t Street could be made available to DRC staff.

KW – Raised the fact that in 2014 five accessible bays were required and promised and that in 2018 there is a need for five accessible parking bays for staff who will be working in the new SSC. The SSC will not have enough accessible parking spaces on current plans.

NT – Stated the City Council wants to reduce parking availability in the City Centre

MV – Thought that this policy should not include accessible parking spaces

NT – Was unsure whether this was the case, it was agreed that the committee needed more information on this point

MV – The committee should inform the project board on the needs of accessible parking bays and request that the project board detail how it plans to accommodate staff with accessible parking needs. MV stated that it was important that this situation was satisfactorily resolved before the DRC moved to the SSC.



JH – Reported that a paper had been submitted for the NMS project board and that a review of the current situation had been strongly advised.

e) Accessibility Information/Accessibility Audits

JH – The original audits date back to 2002, and whilst there had been a pilot project to record this data digitally and then to update these records current status was unclear. The DRC still hosts a Buildings Access Guide on its website but relies on departments and colleges for updates or changes. Therefore there is concern that some of the information on access guides could be out of date and that the design of the guide is over 10 years old and not interactive.

MV – The audits are most likely obsolete by now and wanted three options by the next committee to update the information

MV – Asked whether student representatives are asked about accessibility?

MFC – Reported that they do but there is a lack of centralized information available

Action: JH to ask for update from EM and UIS on current projects related to accessibility information and report at next meeting

f) Accessibility App

JH – The DisabledGo app would cost £20,000 for the initial audit and have an annual running cost of £5,000 - £10,000. The app can be accessed to provide staff, students and visitors with relevant information on the accessibility of a building.

MV – The cost implications of DisabledGo should be established and reported back to the committee

Action: JH to ask Dawn Birch EM) for update on MiCad project which may preclude the requirement for assessment of other options

5. Individual Student Access/Egress Process

a) Access Audits in Response to Reported Issues

JH – A Graduate Student in Sociology reported some issues with accessibility in MT2017. An audit was carried out (by JH & GR) and it highlighted the need to have an agreed process to report issues, undertake an audit and have the issues acted upon.

MV – Access issues should be included on the Accident and Incident Report Forms

Action: GR to design template for Accessibility Audit Reports

Action: JH to send report to KS once completed

b) Funding Process for Remedial Works



NT – Remedial works are counted as minor works (works costing under £100,000) such as induction loops, assisted doors and ramps. No remedial works in the last four years have had a significant cost. Minor works is a simpler process to achieve remedial works

This process was viewed by the Sub-Committee as working effectively and not in need of any revision or development at this stage.

c) PEEPs

MG – Many PEEPs are outdated and the terminology used may need to be revisited. A system needs to be created that is fit for purpose

MV – Asked whether the current system was statutory compliant

MG – The current system is statutory compliant but the terminology and usability of the process needs to be updated

ML – Equality and Diversity would be happy to help in this process

KW – Also offered to be part of this process

Action: ML/MG/KW to work on development of updated PEEP template and guidance

6. Access to Learning and Information Systems

a) EU Web Accessibility Directive

AC – The EU Directive will be adopted by the end of the year and an interest group has been created. A baseline audit of web accessibility has been undertaken and the accessibility statement will be reviewed and updated and there are immediate steps that need to be taken

b) Ally Software Pilot

JH – Ally integrates with Moodle and evaluates and rates a documents accessibility and can produce documents in an accessible format. Engineering, English and Education are taking part in the pilot program and will hopefully be in place for the start of the 2018/2019 Academic Year. The pilot scheme will cost around £13,000 for the year and the ongoing costs would be £20,000 - £25,000 if rolled out across departments.

Funding has been approved from the Teaching and Learning Innovation Fund and the project is currently passing through procurement and legal processes with a view for the pilot to start at the beginning of the 2018/19 academic year.

7. Libraries and Accessibility

a) Alma and Confidentiality

JH – Concerns had been raised about confidentiality/sensitive personal data and the Alma System. JH reported that he had work with Lesley Gray at the UL to investigate



these issues and that solutions had been put in place and a communique sent to all participating libraries.

LW – A local note could be created from a template form to prevent the sharing of information

8. Any Other Business

ME - Problems with the lifts in 17 Mill Lane were reported. The accessible lift is small and the best lift for people with accessibility requirements is a card activated lift. This leads to problems for visitors who do not have card access.

Date of next meeting.

A doodle poll will be sent for the next meeting which is planned to be held in late June/early July