

MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL INCLUSION FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Thursday, 3 February 2022 at 7.00 pm

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Jacq Paschoud (Chair), Joan Millbank, John Paschoud and James-J Walsh

ALSO JOINING THE MEETING VIRTUALLY: Councillor Samantha Latouche

ALSO PRESENT: John Bardens (Scrutiny Manager) Will Davis, Chair, Lewisham Speaking Up, Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager)

NB: Those Councillors listed as joining virtually were not in attendance for the purposes of the meeting being quorate, any decisions taken or to satisfy the requirements of s85 Local Government Act 1972

1. Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 July 2021

1.1 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a true record of proceedings.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 RESOLVED: That the following interested be noted:

Cllr Jacq Paschoud and Cllr John Paschoud both declared a personal interest in item 3 as they had a close family member in receipt of a package of social care.

3. Task and Finish Group - Draft Final Report

3.1 Cllr Jacq Paschoud introduced the report to the Task and Finish Group and welcomed Will Davis, Director of Lewisham Speaking Up to the meeting.

3.2 Cllr Jacq Paschoud tabled draft recommendations for the Task and Finish Group. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- Members of the Group felt happy that the tabled recommendations represented the task and finish group's key finding and would help support adults with learning disabilities with digital inclusion.
- The Task and Finish Group thanked Will Davis for the work of Lewisham Speaking Up which had contributed to the review.
- A colour key should be included on the digital map included in the report.
- Members of the Group thanked the Chair for her work on the review.

3.3 **RESOLVED:**

That the Task and Finish Group's report be agreed with the inclusion of the following recommendations and be submitted to Mayor and Cabinet:

- 1) During social need care assessments and at other key assessment stages such as during transition assessments from children's to adult's social services, or for Carer Assessments; digital needs should be considered. This could include consideration of access to suitable devices and data and to any on-going skills or support needed. Questions on assistive technology should routinely and consistently be completed as part of the assessment process.
- 2) Any work carried out by the Council on digital inclusion should be monitored for Equalities purposes to help build up a better picture of where there is greatest need and to understand intersectional needs to a greater extent. The importance of the socio-economic context should be considered, as data poverty, access to devices and stability of housing are all key determiners of digital exclusion.
- 3) Resources such as the Digital Exclusion Risk Index tool and the Indices of Multiple deprivation as well as other local data and insight should be used routinely by the Council and partners to help target those most in need when considering locations of in-person support. Data should be collected routinely to build up an increasingly accurate picture of where the greatest needs are.
- 4) The Council should work with partner organisations to increase understanding of those adults with a learning disability who are most at danger of digital exclusion and who would most benefit from additional support. For example those that live with family members as oppose to those who live in supported living. Support should be targeted to individuals and groups focussing on specific interests as this has been proven to be a successful approach in ensuring motivation.
- 5) All of the Council's day service provision should have access to wi-fi for their service users. In particular, the Council should urgently work with Ladywell Day Care Centre to ensure wi-fi is installed as soon as possible to benefit their service users.
- 6) The Task and Finish Group recognise the need for support to be provided to family carers, helping address concerns such as safety which can be a barrier to digital inclusion. This could be through training or through additional software/safety controls etc.
- 7) The Council should ensure it maintains a permanent role in providing continuity of digital support to those in need. This could be through a dedicated resource or programme that is consistent and accessible to all partner organisations.
- 8) The Council should work with partner organisations and commissioned services that work with people with learning disabilities to better understand where there are gaps in the provision and pro-actively assess where they can support.
- 9) When services are being commissioned for people with learning disabilities, weight should be given to organisations that commit to on-going IT training to

ensure staff have the relevant skills to support people who use their service with digital inclusion. As part of securing social value in our procurement processes going forward – the Council should ensure contractors meet standards around accessibility of digital services.

- 10) Council online services must be accessible. The Resident Experience Programme should include consideration of people with Learning Disabilities. Specific areas of the Council’s website such as pages relating to the Local Offer should be worked on and tested with key user groups such as those with learning disabilities and should be targeted to reach higher standards of accessibility than the general website. There should be more emphasis corporately to ensure that throughout the Council, all those who design and input information on the website have a strong focus on ensuring information is as accessible as possible
- 11) As a local authority we hold a vast amount of historical and current information in PDF format. The adoption of a framework and standards for accessible PDF production should be developed and adopted by the organisation for this information going forward.
- 12) The council should work with partners to develop a directory of proven digital activities and tools for partners to share. This could include information on access to affordable devices and internet connection such as social tariffs. This could also include an FAQ of key issues that can be shared with family carers. This should be kept up to date, readily available to providers, and signposted to any new providers. Sharing knowledge on online risks for example safeguarding and scamming is particularly important and helps build confidence in individuals and carers on what the risks are and how they can protect themselves and those they care for.

The meeting ended at 7.22 pm

Chair:

Date:
