

Minutes of the General Meeting held at 10.00am on Tuesday 23rd February 2016 at Stoke Town Hall.

Attendees:

Geoff Bryan (Acting Chair)
Stuart Barker
E. Bloomfield
Pam Bryan
Angie Bunn
John Burgess
Pat Dixon
Teresa Fox-Wells (Middleport Pottery)
H. Hodson
M. Jones
Robert Lamonby
B. Loton
Lisa Nixon (Rob Flello's office)
Jennifer Pardue
Jean Simpson
Leslie Smith (Access Officer)
Noreen Stokes
Brian Turnock
Adam Willatt

Apologies

John Beech
Cllr Jack Brereton
Cllr Janine Bridges
Mike Dixon
Cllr Terry Fellows
Barry Simpson
Cllr Gurmeet Singh
Ruth Smeeth MP

2. Middleport Pottery

Teresa Fox-Wells explained that she represented the Prince's Regeneration Trust which leased Middleport Pottery to Burleigh. She said that limited funds were available to find a solution to making the cobbles at the factory more accessible to people with disabilities. Additionally, there was a problem with drainage. Various solutions were discussed. Leslie suggested contacting English Heritage who used a 'rola track' method which could be used to create a pathway through the cobbles to the main entrance to the factory. Geoff said that in order for the bitumen method to work that the cobbles had to be taken up and bedded in the bitumen. The cobbles also had to be clean and dry. Howard also suggested the use of a 'rubber driveway' method, however Jennifer pointed out that this could cause a tripping hazard.

Teresa and Pam would arrange to meet with STAND members on site to discuss options further.

3. **The minutes of the general meeting held on 8th December 2015 were confirmed as a true record.**
4. **Meir Drainage Channels**

Leslie reported that she had been incorrectly informed that the work had been completed. The delay was due to long term sickness of the person dealing with the problem. She had contacted his colleague regarding any further progress and was awaiting an update.

Pam also reported a large pothole outside Meir Health Centre and advised that this could be reported online.

5. Tontine Street Hanley

Leslie reported that a site visit had resulted in agreement by the Council to insert three courses of light brick by next month to increase awareness of the kerb drop to the drainage channel. Pam had publicly thanked Councillor Jack Brereton and the Sentinel for their support with this matter.

6. Trinity Street Plans

Deferred to the next meeting due to John's illness.

7. Disabled Access to Carmountside

Deferred to the next meeting due to John's illness. Leslie would contact the Council re. STAND involvement if there were plans to extend the cemetery.

8. Pavement Parking

Pam reported a reply from the Prime Minister's office in Feb issue of Disabled Motoring which stated that 'any local authority can ban pavement parking'. She would put this on the website and chase up a reply from Matthew Ellis regarding enabling PCSOs putting leaflets on cars regarding pavement parking. Pam would also contact Barry Brockbank to see if the Council had any plans to implement this.

9. Chiropody Services

Pam had received replies from Ruth Smeeth and Rob Ffello in which Andrew Bartlam (RSUH) stated that the criteria set for appointments was satisfactory. STAND members were concerned that the criteria for arranging time between appointments was not working in the interest of patients. Pam would follow this up.

10. Wheelchair Transfers at RSUH

Pam had written to John Simpson at the North Staffs Hospital Trust outlining the problem of wheelchair users being abandoned at the front entrance to the hospital. Porter's contracts apparently end at the front door. Pam to make enquiries with other hospitals to find out what they do in this situation.

11. Theatre Group

Leslie confirmed that the Regent Theatre and Victoria Hall would be holding an open day for disabled access on Saturday 12th March.

12. STAND Publicity

Deferred to the next meeting due to Michelle's absence.

13. Parking Charges for Disabled

Pam confirmed that charges would remain for multi storey car parks but open car parks would be free.

14. Community Transport Update

Leslie had not yet received the promised report from the Passenger Transport Manager at RSUH. Les would chase this.

15. Any Other Business

a) Care Act

STAND exec. had met with Rachel Stone who is compiling a list of useful organisations. Rachel may be able to come to our next meeting.

b) Green Door Fun Day

Volunteers from STAND were needed to help with a tombola stall on Saturday 2nd July.

c) Overcharging by Private Hire Cars

Pam referred to Michelle's excellent letter and asked to be notified of any other incidents of overcharging. She had emailed Rachel at the Council for her comments.

d) Thomas Cook Charges for Allocated Seats

Mick raised the question of Thomas Cook introducing charges for booking pre-allocated seats for a disabled person and carer. Pam had contacted Thomas Cook and they had confirmed that they were now not charging for this facility.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next general meeting would be held on Tuesday 3rd May at 9.30am Committee room A at Stoke Town Hall.