



## Rugby Disability Voice

### Championing visible and non-visible challenges

#### Meeting Minutes – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2026

**Present:** Neil Sandison, Angela Thompson, Gina Dallison, Annelies Schonk, Emma Robert-Davies, Anne Teppitt, Michelle Gravatt

**In Attendance:** Junaid Hussain (EQuIP), Ahmed Ghumra (EQuIP), Jai Mistry (EQuIP), Rebecca Ewers (RBC), Sam Kemp (HEART), Warner (HEART), Sara Boldersten-Bowers (RBC), Sophie (RBC)

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

#### 2. Minutes of last meeting

- Update ToR emailed out, no feedback received, so now considered approved
- Name change to Disability Voice accepted
- Love Rugby application sent, requested feedback on why the application was unsuccessful
- RAGM funding request, Sally G to attend
- Parking spaces, COOP in Bilton, ongoing issues with disabled parking
- Report fall to WCC
- Translation survey sent out

#### 3. Terms of reference – Now approved and on the website

#### 4. HEART Partnership

Telephone: 024 7637 6294

Email: [HEARTnorth@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk](mailto:HEARTnorth@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk)

[Repairs and loans - private sector housing - Rugby Borough Council](#)

HEART covers all of Warwickshire, providing housing assessments and occupational therapists.

They are tenure-blind and can assess anyone, homeowners/renters, etc.



Possible to do minor or major works and support access to Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), which are means-tested, as well as other forms of grants to make homes accessible.

They also offer rehousing support where a house cannot be adapted to suit needs.

It is a self-referral service (although professionals can also make referrals), and an urgent pathway is available.

HEART only provides assessments for adults; children are assessed through other routes, and the information is then passed on to HEART to complete the work.

Can also support referrals for those living in HMOs (though to carry out works, there must be an intent to remain living there for a minimum of 5 years)

Unfortunately, there are long waiting lists (currently 13 months for non-urgent)

Reasons behind this:

- High-demand
- Lengthy process – limits capacity
- Gaining permission from housing associations (working on streamlining)
- Planning, architects, several other organisations involved in projects, particularly larger ones
- DFG process can be lengthy
- Overall capacity

They also provide support through hospital discharge grants, considered an urgent case, to help people return home, where they may be stuck in the hospital due to inaccessible housing.

Feedback was given that someone had previously used their services and thanked them for it. Only adding that communication could be improved.

## **5. Elections**

### [Elections and voting - Rugby Borough Council](#)

Starting to engage the public about voting accessibility and how to ensure that all residents feel able to vote, and that communication about how to reach out for support requirements was helpful in reaching the right people.



The Elections team feels they are currently missing the information needed to know how they can improve. Noted that most guidance provided to them centrally is around visual impairments, so audio ballots and braille are available.

Accessibility of polling stations – currently under review; it was noted that signage for the accessible entrance to the Indian Centre was inadequate.

Discussion of different routes available to vote and support available:

- [Postal vote](#) (can also do an informal pick up if unable to get to a post box)
- [Proxy vote](#)
- [List of support available at every polling station](#)
- [How to get a valid ID to vote if you do not have a passport or driver's license](#)

Raised use of social media to engage and get the message out.

Also raised the difficulty parents of children with disabilities face in accessing voting in the absence of childcare.

Translation was also raised as a barrier to accessing voting – EQUIP raised that they can offer support through community translators.

## **6. AOB**

Changing

E&D Working Group – AT asked that any items that people want raised at the WG be raised to Junaid. Raised today:

- Disabled parking
- General street accessibility (WCC)
- Active travel
- Parks and play areas

Communication/Attendance

Agreed that JH and RE will agree on dates for the next 3-4 meetings and communicate them as soon as possible – this will give people more time to make arrangements to attend, rather than polling people.

Discussed alternating morning/afternoon or a later start

Also floated the idea of providing a light lunch if an 11-1 meeting is arranged.



## Accessible exercise equipment

[Naidex - National Accessibility Inclusion and Disability Expo](#)

To explore the possibility of providing accessible exercise equipment, to be discussed with GLL