

## MINUTE OF EQUALITY FORUM MEETING, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010, Moray College Boardroom

**Present:** John Ferguson, Moray Council – Chair  
 Amanda Walker, Moray Council – Project Officer  
 Lansana Bangura, Moray Islamic Group  
 Irena Paterson, Patient Participation Forum and Moray Disability Forum  
 John McConachie, Moray Sensory Services  
 Cathy Coverly, Enable  
 Linda McRobbie, Enable  
 Mary Scott, Enable  
 Robert McGillivray, Enable  
 John Ellwood, Moray College  
 John Black, Moray Council – Head of Estates Services  
 Mike Whelan, Moray Council – Designing Better Services

**Apologies:** Tracy Grant, SAMH  
 Judith Franklin, Moray Women’s Aid  
 Andi Watson, Terrence Higgins Trust  
 Ann Marriot, LGBT Youth Scotland  
 Jim Maguire, ESOL  
 Monica Lee-MacPherson, SHIMCA and CEMVO  
 Ewan McNeil, Scottish Polish Society  
 Lucyna Elliot, Polish Philanthropic Society  
 Sarah El-Saragy, Muslim Women’s Resource Centre (AMINA)  
 Debbie Taylor, Jewish Community of Grampian  
 Fiona Hird, FABB  
 Carole McFadden, Who Cares? Scotland  
 Suzy Gently, Help the Aged and Age Concern  
 Russell Stewart, LEAD  
 Eileen Rutherford, RNID  
 Donna Petrie, Capability Scotland  
 Iain Stephen, Moray Access Panel  
 David Dick, Moray Access Panel

Welcome	Action
John welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.	
<b>Designing Better Services - Presentation</b>	
<p>John Black, Head of Estates Services with The Moray Council, gave a presentation on the layout of the new Moray Council Access Point.</p> <p>This 1 access point will replace the 11 which currently exist, making Council services more easily accessible to the wider community.</p> <p>The access point will have the following physical aspects:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrance positioned on the High Street</li> <li>• Wheelchair access</li> <li>• Electronic double doors</li> </ul>	

- Disabled toilets
- Baby changing facilities
- 50 car parking spaces
- 10 disabled parking spaces
- 8 motorcycle spaces
- Cycle racks

The building will also be environmentally friendly by maximising the use of natural light, and also by recycling the heat produced in the building.

Mike Whelan, Senior Project Officer on the Council's Designing Better Services Project explained how the access point will be equipped to deal with customer enquiries.

The access point will provide the following services:-

- 6 – 8 receptionists on duty to provide information and support to customers at the first point of contact.
- Approximately 6 interview rooms for private discussion.
- Self-service terminals which will enable customers to access services independently.
- Information Technology which will enable receptionists to access the history of a particular customer enquiry.

Customer services will be further improved by the following:-

- Replacing the existing 250+ Council phone numbers with 6 contact numbers.
- Extended hours for telephone queries – 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.
- Restructuring the layout of the Council internet site to ensure it is accessible and easy to use.

The Council has used an Accessibility Consultant to work on various aspects of the development both in terms of the physical layout, e.g. wheelchair access, and accessing services e.g. website redesign.

### **Question and Answer Session**

Questions were raised concerning the following topics:-

#### Physical Access

- Will the reception desks be at a suitable height for wheelchair users?
- Do the interview rooms and disabled toilets have adequate room for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre their chair around independently i.e. rather than being pushed into and reversed out of the space?
- Will the automatic doors be sliding or open inwards/outwards?

John Black answered that these factors had all been taken into account in the design, and the discussion with the Accessibility Consultant.

#### Customer Service

- Will there be adequate signage – both pictorial and written, using appropriate fonts and colours for those with visual impairments?
- Will there be training available for customers to use the self-service

terminals?

- Will the receptionists be thoroughly trained to deal with the different needs of customers e.g. awareness of interpretation and translation services, help for those who have difficulty reading/writing?
- The aim is to deal with the majority of enquiries on first point of contact - will the reception staff have adequate training to meet this aim?

Mike Whelan agreed that training of front line staff was of the utmost importance in this project if it is to be a success.

In terms of signage, the Accessibility Consultant will help to ensure that the appropriate signage is provided.