

Accessible Southampton Scrutiny Inquiry

Terms of Reference and Inquiry Plan

1. Scrutiny Panel membership:

Councillor Vaughan
Councillor Coombs
Councillor Guest
Councillor Rayment
Councillor Streets

2. Purpose:

To identify whether the physical infrastructure of the city creates barriers for people with disabilities to access all that Southampton has to offer, and, if so, to determine what we can do as a city to address this.

3. Background:

- In the UK 14.1 million people are living with a disability, that is over 1 in 5 of the population. It is a number that has continued to rise as people are living longer and treatments and technology in healthcare improve.¹
- If national data is extrapolated to reflect the city's population, over 50,000 residents of Southampton are living with a disability.
- The Government has recently published a National Disability Strategy. The vision outlined within the strategy is to transform the everyday lives of disabled people. The Foreword from the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and Minister for Disabled People states that:
'Whoever you are, wherever you live, whatever your background, whether or not you have a disability – either visible or hidden – everyone should be able to participate fully, safely and free from prejudice in everyday life, enjoying all the freedoms and opportunities that entails.'
- In recognition that everybody should be able to participate fully in everyday life, the European Union has been running an Access City Award since 2010. The scheme recognises that people with disabilities and older people may not be able to take a full and active part in the community and will be left out if cities are not accessible.
- The Access City Award scheme identifies an accessible city to be one where all people can live in it and use all things and services without problems. The criteria used for the EU Access City Awards are as follows:
 - a. Accessibility to the built environment and public spaces
 - b. Accessibility to transportation and related infrastructures
 - c. Accessibility to information and communication, including information and communication technologies
 - d. Accessibility to public facilities and services.²
- Across the UK and Europe there are examples of local approaches that are improving the accessibility of cities and transforming the lives of residents.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020>

² <https://op.europa.eu/s/pDUr>

4. Objectives:

- a) To identify whether the physical infrastructure of the city creates barriers for people with disabilities to access all Southampton has to offer.
- b) To identify good practice being employed to improve the accessibility of towns and cities elsewhere.
- c) To identify what initiatives and approaches could work well in Southampton to improve the accessibility of the city.

5. Methodology:

- a) Seek the views of people with disabilities and stakeholders
- b) Undertake desktop research
- c) Identify best practice

6. Proposed Timetable:

Six meetings between October 2021 and April 2022.

7. Draft Inquiry Plan (subject to the availability of speakers)

Meeting 1: 7 October 2021

- Introduction, context and background
 - The key features of an accessible city
 - An overview of accessibility challenges experienced by people with disabilities in Southampton as a result of the physical infrastructure of the city

To be invited:

- Anna Nelson, Chief Executive, AccessAble
- Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living
- Guy Van-Dichele, Executive Director Wellbeing (Adults & Health), SCC

Meeting 2: 18 November 2021

- Accessibility to the built environment and public spaces

(EU Access City Award Criteria - City centre design, streets and pavements, parks, squares, monuments and open spaces, work environments, markets, festivals and other outdoor events.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- People with disabilities

Meeting 3: 2 December 2021

- Accessibility to transportation and related infrastructures

(EU Access City Award criteria - measures related to the car parks, airports, railway stations and bus stations, taxis, trains, buses and trams, proximity, interconnectivity of public transport and journey information availability.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- People with disabilities

Meeting 4: 20 January 2022

- Accessibility to information and communication, including information and communication technologies

(EU Access City Award criteria - measures related to access to the city authorities' official information. For instance: accessibility of promotional multimedia information of the municipality, advice and citizen feedback procedures on the accessibility of the website, online information provision in arts, culture, entertainment, sport facilities, signage and guidance in public places, outdoor or indoor, tourist/visitor information, accessibility of the public information kiosks, provision of assistive technology and inclusive ICT resources for the whole community in public libraries and online centres.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- People with disabilities

Meeting 5: 24 February 2022

- Accessibility to public facilities and services

(EU Access City Award criteria - How accessibility is considered and integrated in the public services provided by your city - eg services provided in multimodal way and by different channels.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- People with disabilities

Meeting 6: 21 April 2022

To approve the final report of the inquiry and recommendations.