DISABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting held at the OPCC, Victory House Balliol Business Park, Benton Lane, Newcastle, NE12 8EW
Monday, 16th October 2014 at 5.30pm

ISSUES DISCUSSED

- The group discussed the need for further publicity to highlight the locations of safe reporting centres within rural communities. An evaluation is currently being undertaken to evaluate the use of centres. Northumbria Police are also looking to produce a safe reporting leaflet to provide information to victims on where they can receive help and the support that is available to them.

- Members from Your Voice Counts updated the group on the work they have been undertaking with a group of their members called "Talk to Us". The group of service users meet to discuss the effects of hate crime and what can be done about it. They have produced an information pack which has been presented to schools and universities. The group have also undertaken a "secret shopper" exercise which saw the group making visits to safe place venues and monitoring the support they received from staff at the location.

- The group discussed the new Forth Banks Police Station in Newcastle City Centre was opened in September 2014. The group discussed accessibility for disabled users and support for disabled individuals in custody. The group were informed that disabled parking is available at the station which also has disabled access to all areas of the building. Interview rooms and the custody suite are also accessible with specially adapted cells available for disabled detainees.

  Carol Taylor from Northumbria Police HR was to produce a fact sheet for disabled users to highlight access options to the new station which could then be forwarded to group users.

- Group members raised the issue of cars parking on pavements which causes distress and unnecessary risk to disabled members of the community. It was agreed that discussions would take place with the local authorities who are responsible for the enforcement of parking issues.