



## **Equalities Committee**

11 January 2016

### **Report from the Strategic Director, Resources**

Wards affected:  
ALL

## **Update on Accessibility Improvements to the Civic Centre**

### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 Further to the progress report of 12 October 2015, this report sets out recent progress on the access related works undertaken to the Civic Centre to further improve the high level of accessibility to the building. The improvements are based on practical usage and feedback from residents, relevant groups and users of the building and in accordance with recommendations set out in the Accessibility Audit carried out in August 2014.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note the report and the further improvement works delivered to date.
- 2.2 To note the improvements programmed for the future and the process by which feedback received by building users will be monitored, considered and addressed.

### **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 Following on from the work already completed to improve accessibility measures within the Civic Centre (summary tracker attached) further detail on recently completed and forthcoming planned improvements are detailed within the body of this report.


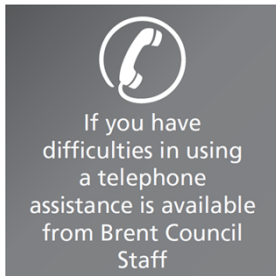
Since the last update a number of building improvements have been delivered and the original building architect Hopkins has been engaged to look into the

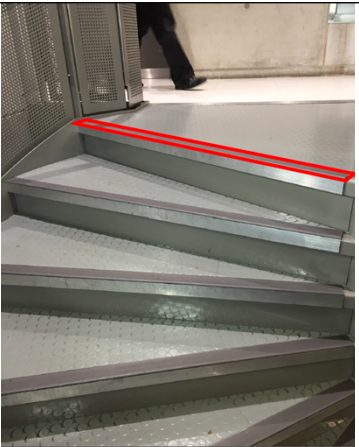



possibility of options for the following alterations to improve accessibility/ building user comfort:

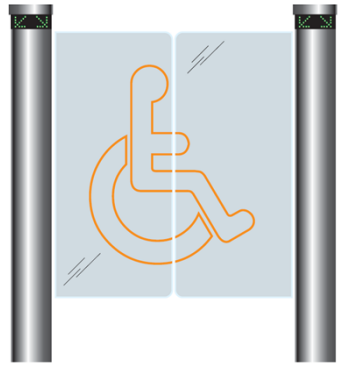
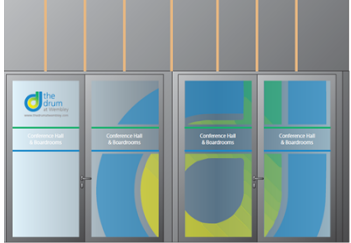






- Colour solution for pillars within the public areas only - the colour solution for pillars within the public areas has now been installed.
- Library (and other) accessible doors – push button access on the outside.
- Feasibility for regular staircase to replace the spiral staircase in the customer service area.
- Review of air flow issue from the main doors.

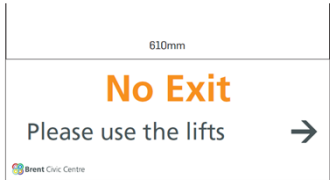


The remaining projects and improvements will be delivered by the end of 2015/16 financial year and in early16/17, subject to required approvals.

3.2 The recently completed accessibility improvements within the Civic Centre are detailed below:

<b>Improvement 1</b>	90 concrete columns across the public areas of the building now have blue/silver colour contrasted bands attached at 1500mm off the ground floor level. The band is 150mm wide which is compliant to BS8300 as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 2</b>	Signage has been added to all 36 telephones in public self-help areas as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	

<b>Improvement 3</b>	Yellow tactile paving and replacement stair nosing's have been added to top and bottom of spiral staircase from basement car park as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 4</b>	External step to front elevation of building has been painted in a contrasting colour to improve visibility as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 5</b>	Fire alarm linked hold open devices have been installed to 4 sets of doors within the public areas in response to building user feedback to improve access.	
<b>Improvement 6</b>	Vision dots have been added to the escalator rails to improve visibility for the vision impaired as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	

<b>Improvement 7</b>	International Symbol of Access manifestation has been added to 4 staff access gates as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 8</b>	Improvements to manifestations on doors to Grand Hall and Conference Hall/ Boardroom level as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 9</b>	Improved hanging and wall signage in 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor boardroom area in response to building user feedback to improve access.	  <small>Sign Type 7: Infinity Wall Mounted Sign</small> 
<b>Improvement 10</b>	Raised boardroom numbering installed to all boardrooms on level 3 to assist way finding and improve access in response to building user feedback.	
<b>Improvement 11</b>	Designated Mobility Scooter parking area with signage has been created at rear of Atrium as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	 <p>Mobility Scooter parking area</p>  <p>To access please ask at reception for key</p>

<b>Improvement 12</b>	Hanging signage installed to encourage lift use instead of spiral stairs for building exit areas as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 13</b>	Additional signage for disabled bays has been installed to car park as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 14</b>	Barriered walkway in basement car park has been installed as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 15</b>	Entire car park to be painted with improved signage to be installed (Spring 2016) to improve accessibility and way finding as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	
<b>Improvement 16</b>	All 9 reception desks within the public areas of the building have had induction loops fitted with clear signage for usage as per recommendation set out in Civic Centre Accessibility Audit (August 2014).	

3.3 As detailed above, progress has been made to complete all planned improvements identified within the tracker document by the end of the current financial year, in line with the recommendations and timescales set out in the audit report. These improvements are in addition to the 'high priority' improvements already delivered including:

- Installation of a specialist 'Changing Places' toilet which is publically advertised and which has many more features than a standard accessible toilet facility.
- Signage improvements, particularly in the public areas of the building.
- Improvements to signage from Wembley Park Station installed in partnership with TFL.
- RADAR key access implemented to public accessible WC facilities.
- IT stations in customer service areas made height adjustable to aid wheelchair users or people of short stature.
- Implementation of a dedicated customer waiting area in the foyer with accessible seating.

All staff have been kept abreast of changes and decisions made as a result of the Access Audit through regular internal communication.

- 3.4 On 28 October 2015, Brent Council was awarded the 2015 Disability-smart Award under the 'premises' category in recognition of the accessible and inclusive Civic Centre building, which was also awarded for becoming a best practice example in the government's Accessible Britain Challenge.
- 3.5 On 3 December 2015, the Facilities Management team delivered a presentation on planned and implemented building improvements to the building at the International Day of People with Disabilities event. Feedback on further improvements was sought from attendees and suggestions will be taken forward where appropriate in the next financial year.
- 3.6 We will continue to seek ways to improve the building for our residents, visitors and staff through feedback channels and intend to carry forward work in a structured way where suggestions for improvements are considered in the context of the wider use of the building and decisions taken balancing the necessity of the proposals and cost and feasibility of undertaking the work. Updates will be provided to the Equalities Committee when required.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 A budget has been identified for Civic Centre Improvement works and to date all such works have been delivered within budget.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The building is compliant with DDA requirements and other relevant regulations.

#### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a duty to consider and make reasonable adjustments to its services, facilities and practices for disabled people, including Deaf people, people with partial or full sight loss, people with Learning Disabilities, etc. The duty is anticipatory and continuing which means that the organisation must proactively think in advance and on an ongoing

basis about what disabled people with a range of impairments might reasonably need in order to remove any disadvantage faced by them.

The council must therefore ensure that its premises are as far as practically possible accessible to disabled staff, Members and visitors with disabilities. While not all adjustments will be considered reasonable, the council must be able to demonstrate that it has proactively considered all available options and can objectively justify its decision not to implement certain adjustments.

Any future suggestions for accessibility related improvements made by building users will be considered and where identified for progression, these will be shared with the Council's Equalities Team.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

- 7.1 Staff considerations for improvements across the building are taken into account through a number of channels. Generally suggestions for building improvements can be made through the staff suggestion scheme or via the regular Civic Centre Stakeholder Group meetings with suggestions that are approved for delivery funded from the Civic Centre development programme.
- 7.2 It is anticipated that the identified work will be carried out within existing staffing resources.

## **Background Papers**

Appendix 1 - Accessibility Audit Progress Tracker

## **Contact Officer**

Russell Burnaby  
Facilities Management