

## **Briefing Note for Equalities Panel – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

### **Mandela House Lift**

#### **1. Background**

1.1 Mandela House has a lift which enables access to Environmental Health offices on the first floor, Community Development on the second floor and also access to \*Llandaff Chambers (voluntary and community sector services) on the second floor.

1.2 The lift had been in poor working order since September 2005 (when it was out of action for the whole month). It was continuously repaired and would work for a short time and then a fault would emerge and the lift would be out of order again.

1.3 In early summer of 2006, the lift was out of order for over a three week period whilst a component of the main circuit board within the lift control panel was sent away for repair. The repair took three weeks and the lift then functioned for a couple of days before failing again.

1.4 A quotation was obtained to replace the lift control panel and an order for the work was issued, at the same time the lift maintenance company was instructed to repair the main circuit board so that the lift could be put back into service while the new control panel was being manufactured.

1.5 The faulty component was obsolete and could not be replaced even temporarily so the lift could not be put back into action whilst the new circuit board was made. The manufacturers timescale for completing the work was 13 weeks. The lift was therefore continuously out of action for this 13 week period.

1.6 Out of order signs were intermittently put up on the lift doors but were removed after passers by wrote comments on them expressing their frustration at the lack of service.

#### **2. Implications and Impact**

2.1 During this whole period Mandela House was in direct contravention of the Disability Discrimination Act; the building and the services on the first and second floor were not fully accessible to staff or service users.

2.2 Meetings had to be re-arranged in accessible buildings, staff had to work from home on a number of occasions, service users struggled to access services on the first and second floors.

2.3 The Health and Safety implications of this situation also meant that staff and delivery services had to carry heavy goods up the stairs. Examples of this included: 19 litre bottles of water for water coolers on both floors, a photocopier, office furniture, stationery supplies, pushchairs etc.

\*Llandaff Chambers does have a lift of its own which can be accessed from the main entrance to the building on Regent Street, but there is a set of steps to go up in order to reach to lift so many people use the lift in Mandela House to access Llandaff Chambers.

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