

From: Geraldine Desmoulins [mailto:Geraldine.Desmoulins@thefedonline.org.uk]
Sent: 19 January 2012 09:20
To: Sarah Tighe-ford
Subject: FW: RNIB Talking Book subscription cancellation

Morning Sarah

Yes I did mean to say something about the loss of the Access post. That this has created a huge gap within the communities and equalities team, there is now nobody who has the skills knowledge of the barriers that disabled people experience when accessing council run services or to work with other departments to ensure they are disability aware. There is a need of greater support not less as disabled people are under threat with the current proposed welfare reform which if implements will drive more disabled people into poverty.

Below is an email from someone who uses the RINB service which speaks for itself. It is obviously a specialized service. Diane is wheelchair user who has very limited mobility, a fluctuating health condition as well as being blind her personal budget is already stretched to the limit. This is a valuable service. I have written to the RNIB to ask them to contact you directly a.s.a.p.

Regards

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The Fed Centre for Independent Living is a user led organisation that promotes independent living for all. The Fed works towards equality by inspiring disabled people to identify barriers and define solutions. To find out more about our work please go to our website www.thefedonline.org.uk or Facebook here

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-----Original Message-----

From: Diane Fazackarley [mailto:dfazackle@sky.com]
Sent: 18 January 2012 12:13
To: Geraldine Desmoulins
Subject: RNIB Talking Book subscription cancellation

Dear Geraldine

Re: Brighton & Hove Council stopping RNIB Subscriptions

I am writing to you in the hope you will be able to bring some pressure on the council to stop their proposed cutting of essential services for blind people.

Background:

Many years ago the B & H council began paying for blind people (registered blind/severely sight impaired) to have a subscription to the Royal National Institute of the Blinds talking book service. The cost of this currently is £70 per year including a loan Daisy player. This service stopped taking on new members about 15 years ago so only the few people who were already on the list could enjoy this service, I am one of them. Today I received a letter from the council stating that they are no longer paying for the service with effect of the 1st of April (it's no (April fool's joke though)

I just feel this is disgusting, realistically there are probably only 100 to 150 people who receive this service paid for by the council so we are talking about a very small amount of money but something that will greatly impact upon the lives of the people who receive them. I am sure you are aware but the RNIB talking book service allows you to have a permanent loan of a talking book machine and as many books as you can read in a year. The books are professionally read by actors and are of a very high quality. Daisy books also have the advantage of being able to jump to the parts you want. For example if you are reading a cooking book and you know there is a recipe for chocolate cake (Had to be chocolate cake) then you can navigate directly there. The other services offer either CD, tapes MP3 format none of which have the ability to jump to the section of your choice.

I hope you can appreciate that having access to books that come directly to you at home, with a huge range of books & other services such as the book club which I belong to, is vital and it is disgusting that they are stopping it. The amount of money we are talking about could be saved by stopping sending out so many stupid letters to people rather than stopping a service that is a lifeline to those who cannot fight for themselves.

Sorry about the rambling but I just feel quite strongly about this.

If you want any more information I'm in on Thursday so maybe we could chat about it then.

Take care

Best wishes

Diane x