

Introduction / Background

I host a learning disability expert reference (service user involvement) forum for the London Borough of Hillingdon. There are a number of different disabilities to cater for.

What was the equality issue?

We wanted local people with learning disabilities to contribute their views to our Learning Disability Partnership Board.

We have a group of people with mild and moderate learning disabilities who attend the group. We needed to welcome, communicate with them, record their contributions and find ways of feeding this back to the wider LD partnership board.

We have an attendee who is deaf and communicates via British Sign Language.

How was this addressed?

I was supported in advertising the group and recruiting group members by working in partnership with DASH, our local disability charity. An accessible meeting space was booked at the Civic Centre and planning for the needs of those coming was undertaken with the representative from DASH.

We were able to arrange a small amount of refreshments for the people who attended.

Many of the experts benefit from easy read minutes of the group so they can stay on top of what is discussed and to continue to share their views.

A BSL interpreter was booked for each of the sessions, where possible.

We gave support and encouragement for a spokesperson from the group to feedback to the LD partnership board.

What was the outcome?

We have now held 5 successful meetings with at least 6 people with LD attending each one.

We have had presentation from the Learning Disability Community Health Team, Safeguarding Adults Board and the Work Inclusion manager at the Civic Centre.

With encouragement, one of the experts felt confident to attend the main board and present his findings and thinking to those present, with concerns and ideas shared successfully.

The deaf expert continues to attend the group and remains enthusiastic and contributes.

We have an archive of easy read minutes – we recap the last meetings actions at the start of the next one.