



**Disability Assembly**  
**Thursday 26 March 2026**  
**11.30am –1.00pm**  
**CR6, Civic Centre Uxbridge / Hybrid via MS Teams**  
**Minutes**

|   | Agenda Items                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| 1 | <p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p> <p>The Chair, Shahina Haider, welcomed attendees to the Disability Assembly and confirmed the meeting was being held in a hybrid format, allowing both in person and virtual participation. Housekeeping was covered, including microphone use, online meeting etiquette, and instructions for submitting questions through the chat.</p> <p><b>Officers present:</b><br/>Shahina Haider (Chair) – Resident Empowerment officer (Chair),<br/>Marion Finney – Resident Empowerment &amp; Relationship Manager<br/>Jasmin Buckley - Resident Empowerment Officers<br/>Alice Pringault - Resident Empowerment Officers</p> <p><b>Guest speakers:</b> Mel Lowe, Faisal Choudhary, Gary Collier, Sarah Durner</p> <p>Attendees: 40 residents in person, 2 online</p>                                                                    |
| 2 | <p><b>Encouraging Wider Participation &amp; Introduction to steering groups</b></p> <p>Shahina gave an overview of the Disability Assembly Steering Group, explaining its purpose, membership and the important role it plays in shaping the Assembly programme throughout the year. The Steering Group is made up of residents, carers and council officers who meet regularly to review feedback, suggest agenda items and ensure that each Assembly reflects the priorities and lived experiences of the community.</p> <p>Attendees were reminded that the Steering Group is not a closed or formal committee but a resident-led working group, open to anyone who attends the Assemblies and wishes to contribute more actively. Members help decide which speakers are invited, identify practical barriers faced by disabled residents, and advise the Resident</p> |

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|   | <p>Empowerment Team on how to make future sessions more inclusive and accessible.</p> <p>Grace (Steering Group Member) addressed the Assembly and encouraged residents to consider joining the Disability Assembly Steering Group.</p> <p>She highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lived experience representation is essential.</li> <li>• The Steering Group benefits when more voices and perspectives are included.</li> <li>• Members help shape future Assembly topics, speakers, and accessibility improvements.</li> </ul> <p>Residents were invited to speak to the Chair or officers after the meeting if they were interested in joining.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3 | <p><b>Presentation 1: New Hillingdon Hospital – by Mel Lowe- Health Planning Manager (Hillingdon Hospital)</b></p> <p>Mel Lowe provided an update on the redevelopment of Hillingdon Hospital and thanked residents for their feedback. She explained that, following a national review of the New Hospital Programme, Hillingdon Hospital was confirmed in January 2025 as part of Wave One and is the only London scheme selected to progress first.</p> <p>All new hospitals must now follow the national Hospital 2.0 design standard, so the updated design may look different from earlier versions. The Trust is updating its plans while continuing to reflect feedback from local people.</p> <p><b>Location of the new hospital</b><br/>The new hospital will be built on the existing hospital site, next to the current building, so services can continue during construction.</p> <p><b>Site preparation and temporary relocations</b></p> <p>Preparation work will take place between 2025 and 2028, including demolition, temporary relocation of some services and land clearance.</p> <p>Some patients may need to attend appointments at different locations temporarily and will be contacted directly if affected.</p> <p><b>Draft project milestones</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2026 – Main contractor selected and updated planning application submitted.</li> </ul> |

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2027 – Outline business case submitted.</li> <li>• 2028 – Construction expected to begin.</li> <li>• 2033 – New hospital expected to open.</li> </ul> <p>These dates may change due to national programme requirements and construction dependencies.</p> <p><b>How residents can participate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colour schemes and garden/outdoor spaces.</li> <li>• Signage, wayfinding, access and inclusion features.</li> </ul> <p>Residents were encouraged to visit the redevelopment website, request community presentations, or stay involved as plans develop.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 4 | <p><b>Presentation 2: Connect to Workability – Presentation by Faisal Choudhary- Community integration Officer (Shaw Trust)</b></p> <p>Faisal Chaudhry and Liz Chorley from Shaw Trust introduced the Connect to Work programme, which supports people with disabilities, long-term health conditions or other barriers to move into suitable paid work. They explained that Shaw Trust works to reduce inequality and help people access employment, learning, wellbeing and support services.</p> <p><b>About Connect to Work</b></p> <p>Connect to Work launched in May 2025 with the West London Alliance. It provides personalised employment support to help residents find work that matches their skills, needs and preferences, and to stay in work long term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with physical or sensory disabilities.</li> <li>• People with mental health conditions, autism, ADHD or learning disabilities.</li> <li>• Residents with long-term health conditions or complex employment barriers.</li> </ul> <p><b>What the service offers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-to-one coaching from a dedicated Employment Specialist.</li> <li>• Support with CVs, interviews, job searches and speaking to employers.</li> <li>• Help to find suitable roles and request workplace adjustments.</li> <li>• Ongoing support once someone starts work, including help with confidence, communication and settling in.</li> </ul> |

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|   | <p>Faisal explained that the programme follows a supported employment model, including engagement, vocational profiling, job finding, employer engagement and ongoing support.</p> <p><b>Customer journey</b><br/>The presenters explained that residents can self-refer or be referred by a professional, family member or service. After referral, an Employment Specialist meets the resident to understand their goals, skills, support needs and any adjustments required.</p> <p>Support continues after a person starts work to help them stay in employment and build confidence.</p> <p><b>Referrals and access</b><br/>Referrals are accepted from GP practices, health and social care teams, community and voluntary organisations, family members, services and residents themselves.</p> <p>Shaw Trust offered to speak with residents after the session or arrange one-to-one conversations for anyone wanting more tailored guidance.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 5 | <p><b>Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Consultation – Presentation by Gary Collier (Hillingdon Council)</b></p> <p>Gary Collier introduced the Draft Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, a borough-wide plan setting out how health and care services in Hillingdon may develop over the next five years. He explained that while some areas are shaped by national policy, local feedback from residents, disabled people and carers will help influence the final plan.</p> <p><b>Purpose of the Strategy</b></p> <p>The Strategy aims to align NHS, Council, Public Health and voluntary sector services so they work together more effectively, prioritise resources and improve access to proactive, inclusive support.</p> <p><b>Hillingdon's Key Health Challenges</b><br/>Gary outlined several major pressures facing the borough's health system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing long-term conditions and mental health needs.</li> <li>• Health inequalities across the borough, particularly in areas such as Hayes, Yiewsley and West Drayton.</li> <li>• Growing pressure on urgent care, hospital services and support for older residents.</li> <li>• Unpaid carers may not always recognise their caring role or access support early.</li> </ul> |

### **What Will Change for Residents and Carers**

Gary highlighted proposals to improve residents' day-to-day experience, including more care closer to home, quicker responses when people become unwell, better coordinated services, earlier intervention and clearer support for unpaid carers.

### **Services Working Together: Neighbourhood Health Teams**

The Strategy proposes three Neighbourhood Health Teams covering North, Southwest and Southeast Hillingdon.

- North Hillingdon (including Ruislip)
- Southwest Hillingdon (including Uxbridge)
- Southeast Hillingdon (including Hayes)

These teams would bring together GPs, nurses, mental health professionals, therapy and rehabilitation teams, social care, and voluntary sector partners to provide more joined-up local support.

### **Reactive Care Service – Faster Support at Home**

Gary outlined a proposed Reactive Care Service, offering urgent multidisciplinary support at home within two hours of referral for people who have fallen, become suddenly unwell or need urgent nursing or mobility support.

The aim is to avoid unnecessary A&E visits and hospital admissions by intervening early and safely at home. Referrals would be routed through a single point of contact to simplify access.

### **Supporting Quicker, Safer Hospital Discharge**

Plans also include stronger hospital-to-home pathways, with improved coordination between hospital, community and social care services to support quicker, safer discharge and recovery at home.

### **Four Long-Term Priorities**

- Best Start in Life – support for children and families.
- Live Well – helping adults stay healthy and manage long-term conditions.
- Age Well – supporting older residents to remain independent.
- Healthy Places – improving neighbourhoods, housing and community spaces.

Residents were encouraged to share feedback so the final Strategy reflects local needs and lived experience.

## **Age-Friendly Plan Consultation – Presentation by Sarah Durner (Hillingdon Council)**

Sarah Durner, Senior Public Health Officer, Hillingdon Council  
Sarah Durner provided an update on Hillingdon's Age Friendly Plan, which aims to support older residents, including those with disabilities and long-term conditions, to live healthy, connected and independent lives. She explained that Hillingdon's population aged 65+ is expected to increase from 13% to 17.7% by 2047, creating additional pressure on health, social care and community services.

### **Why the Age Friendly Plan is Needed**

Sarah explained that the Plan is needed because more older residents are living with frailty or multiple health conditions. It focuses on prevention, inclusion, independent living and creating supportive neighbourhoods so residents can remain independent for longer.

### **Sarah outlined the extensive engagement undertaken so far:**

- 256 residents responded, including 91 paper surveys to support residents less confident online.
- Most respondents were aged 66+, with responses received from across the borough.
- Feedback was also gathered from community groups, libraries, local organisations and carers' networks.

### **Key Findings from the Age Friendly Consultation**

#### **1. Outdoor Spaces & Buildings**

Residents valued parks and libraries, but concerns were raised about safety and the lack of public toilets.

#### **2. Transport**

Public transport was generally seen as accessible, but confidence with journey planning reduced with age, and residents raised concerns about hospital transport and parking.

#### **3. Housing**

Older residents valued safe, accessible homes and local amenities, but some were unclear about how to access home adaptations.

#### **4. Social Participation**

Residents wanted more affordable, regular and accessible activities, including non-digital options.

#### **5. Respect & Inclusion**

Feedback was mixed on respect and representation, with calls for better communication routes beyond digital channels.

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|   | <p><b>6. Communication &amp; Information</b></p> <p>Digital confidence was lower among the oldest residents, with strong demand for face-to-face advice, simple contact options and fraud awareness support.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 7 | <p><b>Future Events and Engagement</b></p> <p>The next Disability Assembly is scheduled for 16 September, with parking and the new hospital build to be included as key topics following resident feedback. The next Steering Group meeting will take place on 23 July.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation slides can be emailed or posted to residents on request.</li> <li>• Residents were invited to join tenant and leaseholder Special Interest Groups.</li> <li>• Residents were also encouraged to join the Accessibility and Editorial Panel, which reviews council publications for clarity and accessibility.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 8 | <p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Residents were encouraged to contact the Chair with any further questions or feedback after the meeting.</p> <p><b>Transport:</b> Officers explained that wider transport arrangements have changed and residents may need to use services such as Dial a Ride. Transport for the Disability Assembly can be arranged if requested in advance when booking.</p> <p><b>Carer identification:</b> Officers confirmed that unpaid carers can apply for a National Carers Card online. The card costs £20 for two years, and information was available at the meeting.</p> <p><b>Presentation slides:</b> Slides can be shared by email or post, depending on residents' preferences noted on the feedback forms.</p> <p><b>Steering Group:</b> Online attendees interested in joining were advised to email the Disability Assembly mailbox or leave their contact details so officers could follow up.</p> <p><b>Hospital access and parking:</b> Officers confirmed they would liaise with the Hillingdon Hospital team and aim to provide further updates at a future Assembly.</p> |
| 9 | <p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p>Shahina thanked all residents, presenters, and online participants for attending the Disability Assembly and for taking the time to share their</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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|  | <p>views, questions and experiences.</p> |
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|  | <p>She acknowledged the valuable contribution residents make in helping to shape future Assembly discussions and improve local services. The meeting closed with appreciation for everyone's engagement, and residents were reminded that the minutes would be circulated in due course.</p> |
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