

**SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FOR  
CABINET  
Thursday, 13 June 2024 at 7.00 pm  
Council Chamber, Civic Centre**

**AGENDA**

14. Creation of Disability Working Group (Pages 2 - 19)

This report contains an amended recommendation C and replaces the report circulated as part of the original agenda pack.

# Creation of Disability Working Group



<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	13 June 2024
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Dan Swords, Leader of Council
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive (01279) 446004
<b>Contributing Officer:</b>	Natasha Terrell, Assistant Director Governance, HR & Legal (01279) 446022
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Forward Plan number I017058
<b>Call In:</b>	This item is subject to call in procedures.
<b>Corporate Missions:</b>	Protect our Communities Delivering High Performing Services
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	None

## Executive Summary

- A** This report sets out the proposed terms of reference for the Disability Working Group following a motion at Full Council.

## Recommended that Cabinet:

- A** Approves the establishment of a Disability Working Group and approves the Terms of Reference and membership as set out in Appendix A to the report.
- B** Approves the Councillors appointed to the Working Group.
- C** Grants the Leader delegated authority to review, alter or amend the terms of reference.

## **Reason for decision**

- A** The Disability Working Group will provide a comprehensive and effective way for the views and experience of disabled people to influence and shape policy development in Harlow.
- B** Terms of reference are a requirement for the operation of the Working Group's report through to Cabinet.

## **Other Options**

- A** To not agree the terms of reference. This would mean the council would not fulfil the requirements of the Full Council motion.

## **Background**

1. The implementation of a new Disability Action Panel received cross party support at Full Council on 2 November 2023. The wording of the motion was:
  - a) This Council recognises that many disabled residents, their families, and carers believe that they do not have a voice and their opinion is often not heard. They are more used to having solutions to issues imposed upon them rather than as a result of consultation. Their lived experience and ideas for a better, more understanding and accessible Harlow should be at the heart of every relevant discussion and decision made by this Council.
  - b) To redress this historic failing, this Council confirms the creation of a new Disability Action Panel, which shall:
    - i) Have the purpose of giving disabled residents a voice and enable them to directly influence the way the Council responds to issues of concern to them;
    - ii) Be chaired by the Leader of the Council;
    - iii) Include cross-party councillors (no more than two from each party);
    - iv) Include, by invitation, representatives from charities and groups who work with disabled people and disabled residents. It shall also invite the MP for Harlow to attend meetings;
    - v) Be able to make, through the Chair, direct recommendations to Cabinet for implementation and approval of expenditure related to recommendations;

- vi) Be supported by appropriate officer support to ensure the Panel meets on at least a quarterly basis;
  - vii) Have its terms of reference discussed and confirmed at the first meeting of the Panel and ratified by Full Council in the scheduled December meeting of Full Council;
  - viii) Be established and first meet within the month of November;
  - ix) Be non-partisan in its recommendations and activities. Any actions taken as a result of such recommendations shall always be reported and presented in a non-partisan manner.
2. Residents were invited to attend the first ever meeting of the Disability Working Group on 8 February 2024.
  3. It was agreed that terms of reference were a requirement of the operation of the panel, discussion points raised at the first meeting included the need to ensure that roles on the panel were defined so it could work closely and collaboratively with disabled residents/residents living with a disability and disability stakeholders.

## **Issues/Proposals**

4. The terms of reference (attached as Appendix A to the report) have been developed to ensure the following aims have been met:
  - a) Providing strategic, expert and impartial advice to the Council on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of policy and policy development and associated action plan(s) or initiatives.
  - b) Championing the needs of Harlow residents with a disability / disability stakeholders and carers of disabled residents and ensure their voices are considered in the shaping of policy or service provision in key areas of council policy.
  - c) Highlight specific issues across the town which disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents face across the town for consideration.
  - d) Support the Council to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty, by prioritising accessibility when the Council considers developing or changing a policy, project or service or to support responding to relevant documents and initiatives from other organisations that require consideration by the panel.
5. It is important to have Group members who are people with lived experience of disability whether personally or through a caring and support role.

6. The Group shall consist of a maximum of 12 members:
- a) Four Councillors – two Councillors from both the Administration (one of which will be the Leader) and Opposition groups. The Leader will Chair the Group.
  - b) Two independent volunteers who are D/deaf, disabled people/ people living with a disability or neurodiverse people.
  - c) Six representatives volunteering from six varied organisations /charities who represent and support D/deaf, disabled people/ people living with a disability and/or neurodiverse people. The organisations on the Group shall include:
    - i) a disability organisation with a broad role of delivering and supporting disabled people/ people living with a disability within the town from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
    - ii) an organisation with a focus on working with children and young disabled people/ people living with a disability;
    - iii) an organisation with a focus on working with people with a learning or neuro-difference;
    - iv) An organisation with a focus on sensory impairment or long term, limiting condition;
    - v) An organisation with a focus on mental health;
    - vi) An organisation with a focus on non-visible disabilities.
7. A list of Group members shall be posted on the Council’s website.

## **Implications**

### **Equalities and Diversity**

An Equality Impact Assessment was required and has been completed - E619833118 refers.

### **Climate Change**

None.

### **Finance**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Resources to support the Disability Working Group are included within the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Author: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Assistant Director – Finance (Deputy Section 151 Officer)

**Governance**

Per Article 9 of the Constitution Cabinet may appoint Working Groups.  
Author: Julie Galvin, Monitoring Officer and Legal Services Manager

**Appendices**

Appendix A – Disability Working Group – Terms of Reference including Membership Working Group  
Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment - E619833118

**Background Papers**

<https://modern.gov.harlow.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=2577&Ver=4>  
<https://www.harlow.gov.uk/news/help-shape-harlows-disability-action-panel>

**Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

None.

## Appendix A

# **Disability Working Group – Terms of Reference**

## **Accessibility**

If you would like this letter or information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help communicating with us, please let us know on 01279 446655.

We provide a text relay service for people who are D/deaf, hearing impaired or have a speech impediment.

Our offices have audio induction loops, or if you contact us before your visit, we can arrange a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.

## **What is expected from Disability Working Group members?**

- support Harlow District Council to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty, by prioritising accessibility when the Council considers developing or changing a strategy, policy, project or service.
- help Harlow District Council understand the experience of any barriers faced by disabled people/ people living with a disability / people living with a disability.
- advise on potential solutions to removing barriers which might be found during the strategy, policy, project or service change development and implementation.
- highlight gaps in provision for D/deaf, disabled and neurodiverse people across all Harlow District Council departments, so that the gaps can be addressed by the strategies or policies that affect the towns life cycle.
- proactively offer guidance on how best to consult, engage with and involve disabled people/ people living with a disability / people living with a disability in developing and reviewing strategies or policies that have a wide-reaching impact on the town or potential disproportionate impact on disabled people/ people living with a disability / people living with a disability or their carers.
- advise Harlow District Council on the monitoring and reporting framework that should be set up to effectively implement strategy change or policy implementation.
- be prepared to voice their lived experience, but not be focused solely on a single issue, as group members are expected to speak for a range of disabled people/ people living with a disability / in the community.
- accept that once a particular issue has been sufficiently explored, it will not be revisited unless for a critical reason. respect confidentiality and not share confidential information outside the Group (including within their organisations, in the press or on social media, without prior written permission from Harlow District Council): this applies both during and after the Group Members' term of appointment.

**In its work the Disability Working Group must recognise it does not have the authority to:**

- expect their views wholly or in part, to be accepted and acted upon by the Council
- commit or expend resources on the Council's behalf
- commit the Council to any actions
- consider any matter outside its specific areas of activity
- direct Council employees in the performance of their duties
- represent the Council in any communication with the public or media
- act in the name of the Group outside the remit of the Group.

## **What is expected of Harlow District Council?**

- ensure that the Disability Working Group's expertise is used at the strategic level.
- consult the Group at all appropriate points of the strategy, policy, project or service change that affect the town's life cycle.
- provide a reasonable amount of time for the Group to undertake its work on any specific issue.
- adjust the way the Group runs to ensure it is fully accessible to Group members.
- report back to the Group on how their input has been incorporated and what actions or outcomes have been achieved as a result.
- provide a response to issues raised and discussed by the Group in as timely as possible a way, ensuring a clear feedback loop.
- give due reference to the Disability Working Group, wherever appropriate, in either the Community Engagement or Equality Impact Assessment sections of HDC committee reports
- facilitate a wider reference group of D/deaf, disabled and neurodiverse people's organisations to provide support and subject matter expertise to the Group

## **How the Group will operate**

### **1: Introduction**

The Disability Working Group is a key component in the effective development and delivery of Harlow District Council's (HDC) strategies or policies that affect the town. It ensures that D/deaf, disabled people/ people living with a disability and neurodiverse people and their organisations are centrally involved in the development and implementation of this strategy.

### **2: Role of Group**



The Group is created by the council for the purpose of providing strategic, expert and impartial advice to the Council on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Strategies or policies that affect the town and associated action plan(s).

### **3: Principles**

The following principles of good governance will guide the functions of the Group:

- Participatory;
- Respectful;
- Accountable;
- Transparent;
- Responsive;
- Effective and efficient;
- Equitable and inclusive;
- Ethical;
- Abide by the Nolan principles <sup>1</sup>

### **4: Conduct and Confidentiality**

Group members will need to declare any conflicts of interest and must adhere to HDC's policy and procedure in this respect.

### **5.Information**

Group members may be given access to information not yet in the public domain or which is policy under development. This information must not be shared outside the Group, including within their organisations, in the press or on social media, without prior written permission from HDC. This applies both during and after the Group Members' term of appointment.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## 6: Membership and Term

It is important to have Group members who are people with lived experience of disability whether personally or through a caring and support role.

The Group shall consist of a maximum of 12 members:

- Four Members – two Members from both the Administration (one of which will be the Leader) and Opposition groups. The Leader will Chair the Group.
- Two independent volunteers who are D/deaf, disabled people/ people living with a disability or neurodiverse people
- Six representatives volunteering from six varied organisations /charities who represent and support D/deaf, disabled people/ people living with a disability and/or neurodiverse people. The organisations on the Group shall include:
  1. a disability organisation with a broad role of delivering and supporting disabled people/ people living with a disability within the town from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
  2. an organisation with a focus on working with children and young disabled people/ people living with a disability;
  3. an organisation with a focus on working with people with a learning or neuro- difference;
  4. An organisation with a focus on sensory impairment or long term, limiting condition;
  5. An organisation with a focus on mental health;
  6. An organisation with a focus on non-visible disabilities

A list of Group members shall be posted on the Council's website.

The role of the Leader as Chair of the Disability Working Group will be to:

- lead and chair Disability Working Group meetings;
- determine the agenda for Group meetings;
- represent the Group in a wider Council context where required;
- Act as a conduit for other organisations not on the Group to ensure their views and ideas are heard within the Group.

The term of membership for individuals shall be two years with a right to reappoint for a further year. Individuals may serve for up to a maximum of three years.

Organisational membership will be reviewed every two years by the Council to ensure they remain representative of the sector.

Recognition can be in variety of forms including but not exclusively training, development, opportunities to group members.

A person or organisation ceases to be a Group member if they:

- resign;
- are no longer a Councillor or in a relevant Member position e.g. Leader/ Portfolio Holder/ Leader of the Opposition/ Shadow Portfolio Holder
- are absent from two consecutive meetings without notification or valid reason; or
- fail to follow these Terms of Reference.

Any member may resign by giving written notice to the Group's Chair.

To ensure consistency there is an expectation that organisations are represented by one nominated employee member throughout the term of membership, and that if need be one proxy is nominated to attend.

The Group may, at its own discretion, decide to co-opt members on to the Group to work on short projects or to bring a specific expertise/lived experience to an issue. Anyone co-opted on to the Group will be a member for an agreed timeframe and purpose. In addition, any co-optee will agree to work within these Terms of Reference.

The Group will be supported in its work by a Wider Reference Group consisting of disabled persons' organisations (DPOs), whose remit will be to support and inform the work of the Disability Working Group, providing further targeted expertise on specific disability issues as subject matter experts.

## **7: Recruitment**

Vacant individual positions on the Group will be proactively promoted via D/deaf, disabled people/ people living with a disability and neurodiverse people 's organisations, stakeholders, advocates and community organisations with a call for Expressions of Interest. Additionally, the vacancies will be promoted through a range of other channels which may include:

- social media;
- HDC website; and
- disability sector networks.

D/deaf, disabled people/ people living with a disability and neurodiverse people from diverse backgrounds will be encouraged to apply.

Applicants will be requested to express their interest in being on the Group by addressing the selection criteria which will be articulated in the promotional material.

A group made up of the Chair of the Disability Working Group, at least one other member of the Group and at least one senior HDC employee will oversee and determine the process for selection. Where more suitable people have expressed an interest than seats available on the Group, a recruitment exercise will be undertaken. If the same number of suitable people express an interest as seats available, these individuals may be directly appointed to the Group.

In the setting up of the Disability Working Group, adjustments will be made to the recruitment arrangements to ensure access requirements are addressed.

## **8: Selection Criteria**

An assessment of applicants' suitability will be undertaken against the following selection criteria:

- have demonstrated direct or transferable skills or experience in being part of a committee or advisory group;
- live, work or study in the HDC area;
- have a lived experience of disability whether personally or through a caring and support role; and
- demonstrated knowledge, experience or an interest in providing independent and/or strategic advice on disability access and inclusion issues that will support one or more of the focus areas of the strategy.

## **9: Meeting Administration and Protocols**

The Group will be convened by its Chair or their nominee. The Council will provide administrative support including:

- scheduling meetings of the Group and provide virtual meeting links where appropriate
- compiling and circulating agenda and attachments to all members
- taking and distributing minutes
- coordinating other meeting arrangements and ensuring the accessibility of meeting procedure and materials

The Group will meet a minimum of four times a year on dates and at places to be set out in advance for each year. However, additional meetings can be called and must be advised at least 10 working days before the scheduled date.

Where applicable and advised by Group members, adjustments will be made for all members including adjustments around communications and correspondence and business, for example, a sign language interpreter, printed material in alternate formats, audio captioning services, water bowl for guide dogs, narrative information regarding design plans, PowerPoint presentations prior to meetings and/or any other requirements.

## **10: Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation**

Make, through the Chair, direct recommendations to Cabinet for implementation and approval of expenditure related to recommendations.

Activities of the Group will be reported 6 monthly to HDC.

A formal evaluation with the Group will take place in the last meeting of the year and reported to the Cabinet as part of updates on the Strategies or policies that affect the town.

### **11: Disputes**

Where disputes within the Group occur, it will be the role of the Chair to seek resolution within the group. Where this is not possible, the involvement of the Council Lead for the Disability Working Group will engage with the Chair (and wider Group if appropriate) to determine the most appropriate resolution to the issue.

HDC reserves the right for the Council Lead for the Disability Working Group to follow the process laid out in section 12 of these Terms of Reference and move to dissolve the Group if they deem this is the most appropriate course of action.

### **12: Dissolution**

If the Group becomes unable to meet these Terms of Reference or the Council Lead for the Group determines it is no longer fit for purpose, HDC reserves the right to dissolve this Disability Working Group. It may be replaced in an alternative format or may not be replaced at all.

# Equality impact assessment

**E619833118**

**Date assessment completed** 03 Jun 2024

**Title of equality impact assessment** Disability Panel - Terms of Reference

**Service** Communities and Environment

**Team** Assistant Director

## **Focus / aim of equality impact assessment**

Promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between diverse groups. The Disability Panel will provide a comprehensive and effective way for the views and experience of disabled people to influence and shape policy development.

## **Names and roles of officers completing the assessment**

Natasha Terrell - Assistant Director Governance, HR & Legal

Yvonne Rees (in capacity of) - Assistant Director Community Resilience

**Contact telephone number of lead officer** 01279446022

## **Policy / service / function details**

This is a new policy/service/function

### **What is the purpose of the policy / service / function?**

The Disability Panel will provide a comprehensive and effective way for the views and experience of disabled people to influence and shape policy development in Harlow.

The Panel is created by the council for the purpose of:

Providing strategic, expert and impartial advice to the Council on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of policy and policy development and associated action plan(s) or initiatives. Champion the needs of Harlow residents with a disability / carers of disabled residents and ensure their voices are considered in the shaping of policy or service provision in key areas of council policy.

Highlight specific issues across the town which disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents face across the town for consideration.

Support Harlow District Council to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty, by prioritising accessibility when the Council considers developing or changing a policy, project or service or to support responding to relevant documents and initiatives from other organisations that require consideration by the panel.

### **Who are the key stakeholders?**

Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

Disabled people's organisations and other interested parties that are based or provide services in Harlow, Essex including disabled charities/ charities for the support of the Disabled, business in Harlow and visitors to Harlow

Harlow Council, Members & teams who work for Harlow Council.

**Are there any other documents / strategies linked to this policy / service / function?**

Disability Panel - Terms of Reference  
Community Resilience Service

**Who is affected by the policy / service / function?**

Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

Disabled people's organisations and other interested parties that are based or provide services in Harlow, Essex including disabled charities/ charities for the support of the Disabled, business in Harlow and visitors to Harlow

**Who has been involved in the development of the policy / service / function?**

Harlow Council, Members & teams  
Disability Panel appointees - representing particular groups or areas of disability  
Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

**Which staff carry out the policy / service / function?**

The Disability panel aims to be as inclusive and non-discriminatory as possible. Consideration will continue to be given to the terms of the Equality Act in all research activities the panel engages with, and panel members will be required to sign up to a code of conduct which includes ensuring panel members do not act or talk in discriminatory ways. We will ensure that all reasonable requirements and reasonable adjustments are made where possible and will aim to provide alternative ways of engaging with the resident panel where possible.

## **Quantitative and qualitative data**

### **Quantitative**

Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables – and generalise results from a larger sample population.

**What quantitative (numerical) data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?**

Census 2021 data has been used to inform the following:

Age – 21.6% of the population are aged 0-15, and 14.6% aged 65 and over. According to the 2021 census data Harlow is younger than the English average but the 65+age group is expected to rise faster than younger cohorts.

3 schools are currently used as polling stations but this will be reduced to 2 as a result of this

review.

Disability - 7.5% of Harlow residents were identified as disabled and limited a lot in the 2021 census. In the same census the proportion of Harlow residents who were not disabled increased from 80.5% to 82%.

Religion - Christianity at 44.7% of residents is the reported most common religion in the town, followed by 43.4% who reported as having no religion, 5.4% did not provide an answer, 4% Muslim, 1% Hindu, 0.7% other, 0.3% Jewish, 0.3% Sikh.

There are currently 7 out of 26 buildings in use which belong to a particular faith group. For the majority of these, the voting takes place in a function room / church hall.

Race - The top three ethnicity groups in Harlow are White (82.7%), Black/Black British/Black Welsh/Caribbean/African (6.2%), Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh (6.0%).

The Harlow Local Plan EiP Localised information in respect of disability data considered 2011 Census Data, this drew the following conclusions in assessing the qualitative data:

- That local health indicators for the area are generally worse than the national average.
- The proportions of residents with limiting illnesses across Harlow are generally consistent with the equivalent national rates for market housing residents and marginally lower than the national rates for affordable housing residents; but within each age group, the proportion of residents living in affordable housing remains notably higher than the proportion who live in market housing.

- <https://www.harlow.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/HEBH21%20-%20Localised%20information%20in%20respect%20of%20disability%20data%20February%202019>.

### **What gaps are there in the quantitative data?**

The qualitative data only provides for information from those that were participants to the census at the time the data was collected.

Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

### **What other quantitative data do you need?**

Further resident or qualitative data may be identified by the panel for further review/ consideration

### **Qualitative**

Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. It focuses on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relies on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives.

### **What qualitative data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?**

Resident's survey 2023 - Demographic profile of participants - Longstanding physical or mental condition or disability Yes 20% No 76% Prefer not to say 5%

The resident's survey took views from a greater proportionate number of disabled residents than the census 2021.



Sense of belonging is highest among those aged 65+ (82%) and consistent across gender and disability.

Harlow residents are significantly less likely than the general population to feel safe in their local area after dark (49% compared to 71%) and are significantly more likely to feel unsafe (32% compared to 17%). They also have lower levels of safety during the day (84% compared to 90% nationally). Men are significantly more likely than women to feel safe both at night (59% compared to 37%) and during the day (87% compared to 81%), while women are more likely to feel unsafe at night (44% compared to 21%) and during the day (11% compared to 6%). Those with a disability are also more likely to feel unsafe after dark (43%).

52% of local residents agree that Harlow Council keeps residents informed about the services and benefits it provides, which is in line with national perceptions (55%). A third feel not very well informed (34%), while a further 13% feel that residents are not well informed at all. Perceptions are consistent across gender, age, internet access and disability.

Around a third of residents speak positively about Harlow Council (35%), while significantly fewer speak negatively (22%). Residents generally speak positively or negatively about the Council after being asked about their views, rather than sharing their views to others unprompted. Likelihood to recommend is stable across gender, age and disability.

**What gaps are there in the qualitative data?**

None identified, but could consider future residents survey results/ feed in, where possible on matters affecting people with a disability/ carers of people with a disability.

**What other qualitative data do you need?**

None, but could consider future residents survey results/ feed in, where possible on matters affecting people with a disability/ carers of people with a disability.

**Consultation**

**Number of formal or informal consultation that have taken place or that you are planning to hold to inform your Equality impact assessment 1**

Title of consultation	Date	Who did you consult with?	What were the main issues raised?	Gaps in data	If further consultations are needed to fill these gaps – state with whom, by whom, when and how is this going to be done?

Title of consultation	Date	Who did you consult with?	What were the main issues raised?	Gaps in data	If further consultations are needed to fill these gaps – state with whom, by whom, when and how is this going to be done?
Discussion Disability Panel	February 2024	Person's with or living with a disability, interested residents, Members in attendance, Carers of person's with or living with a disability.	The support for a new Disability Panel to support working closely and collaboratively with disabled people and disability stakeholders was welcomed by attendees. Accessibility challenges extend beyond the home, to public buildings and spaces - e.g signs outside of shops and their placement. Accessibility barriers faced by disabled people in Harlow included the challenges driven by waiting times of getting a new / updated disabled badge from Essex CC were discussed.	Data was only supplied by participants at the meeting.	The panel will be assessing data that has been gathered for any strategic policy change and will be particularly interested in disability data/ impacts/ considerations.

## Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010

**Assessment of Impact – Based on the data you have analysed and provided, and the results of the consultation or research you have undertaken, list below how the policy or function will or does work for each of the following equalities groups.**

**Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010 - Age, Disability, Pregnancy and maternity, All of the above**

### What do you know?

The proposal considers the needs of disabled people, people living with a disability and relevant stakeholders including carers. families.

The panel was welcomed to support working collaboratively with disabled people, / people living with a disability and carers amplifying their voices in consideration of policy changes.

### What do people tell you?

The panel will be assessing data that has been gathered for any strategic policy change and will be particularly interested in disability data/ impacts/ considerations.

### What does this mean?

Harlow Council have made it a priority to learn directly from disabled people/ people living with a

disability and carers. Disabled people/ people living with a disability and carers know better than anyone else what matters most to them.

This has shaped the development of this panel, and is central to how we will take actions forward – by working collaboratively with disabled people, / people living with a disability and carers amplifying their voices, and taking action to embed disability-inclusive approaches on the issues that disabled people care about most.

### What can you do?

By having representation on the panel from a wide cohort we hope that policy, service design and solutions to issues are informed and appropriate for a wide range of needs, and by being representative of differing needs, services will in turn help to advance equality of access to the support people need.

### Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

This approach should actively encourage good relations with all parties. By breaking down barriers to engagement and encouraging positive two-way communication.

## Action plan

### Number of action plans 1

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Time frame
Disabled persons/ persons with a disability	Introduce Disability Action Panel	Disabled people/ people living with a disability face barriers across many areas of their lives. The Disability Panel is a key component in the effective development and delivery of Harlow Council's support to give disabled residents / residents living with a disability a voice and enable them to directly influence the way the Council responds to issues of concern to them.	Panel that is bringing forward positive change for disabled people/ people living with a disability in Harlow	June 2024 - agree terms of reference. Agree a plan of action at next Disability Panel - for recruitment of any outstanding panel member places.

## Project Manager

**Project Manager** Natasha Terrell

**Date** 03 Jun 2024

**Assistant Director** Janet Jackson

**Date** 03/06/2024