

The Equality Act 2010: What public bodies must do to make things fairer

Tell us what you think

Hello



Newcastle Learning Disability Partnership Board has looked at the Equalities Act consultation on public sector duty regulations. We are made up of people from different backgrounds and responsibilities including most importantly people with Learning Disability and carers.



So, we hope you will understand we didn't stick to the wording of the questions even in the easy read version as some of us found them too hard.

To be truly empowered local people should

- **Understand information.**
- Should know **how and where to get information**
- Should know **what they need to do to challenge or ask questions** about what public bodies say

So, we looked at the rules from this point of view

Our overall view was

- Government should lead by example
- People with disabilities are important
- Proper involvement can save money

- Don't weaken our ability to challenge

We didn't really answer



Question 3

If public bodies have to show people data about their staff, will this help make things fairer and more equal?

Please tell us why.

But we have tried to match the discussion we did have over two meetings to the other questions

We have put questions back to you and the Equalities and Human Rights Commission in purple

So, we hope you will find our comments useful.

Question 2



If public bodies have to show the data they used to plan, buy and check the services they offer, will this help make things fairer and more equal?

Please tell us why.

Our response below



Publish information

We found it hard to understand the word data

There seems to be no requirement to put things into easy read. At its most inclusive easy read is not just for people with learning disabilities. It can be for people whose first language may not be English for instance.

The Board would like to know "Will there be a requirement

and guidance in the EHRC code of practice?"



People with learning disabilities said

- We want to know we are being listened to
- We need to know what's going on – it's really important
- People like face to face meetings to explain things The Partnership Board is important for people with Learning Disabilities
- Don't forget people who don't read
- Acronyms are hard to understand
- We need to know about things in good time
- Giving information about what is used to buy and plan services might be useful but does not mean that things will be fairer or more equal

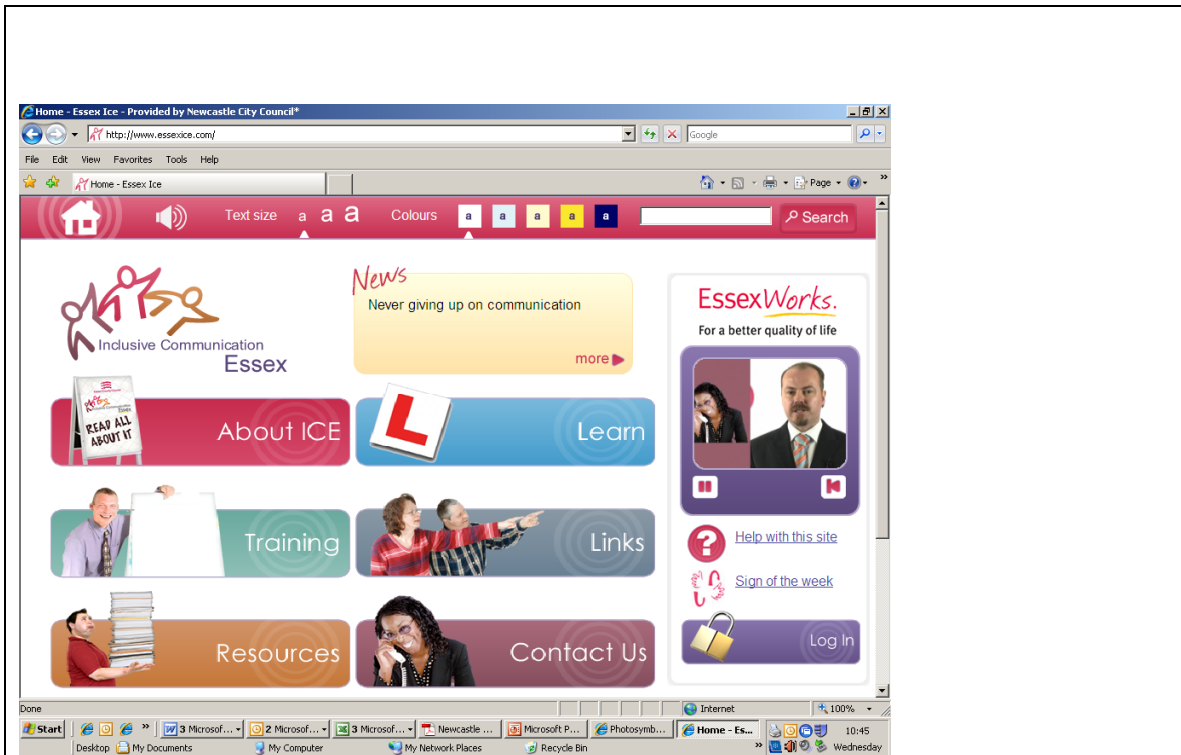


There is a strong view that just having to put information online will leave out people with learning disabilities. People with learning disabilities still do not have access to the internet on a regular basis and most would need support to do this anyway. All would need help to understand the information.

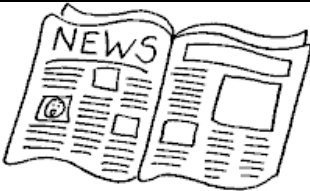
Very few websites are accessible for people with learning disabilities as they usually have to be specially designed. The rules seem to only look at existing internet rules on making things accessible i.e. mainly for people with physical disabilities like W3C standards

Please see a really good example of this

www.essexice.com



The Board would like to know “Will the code of practice say anything about this and will the design of data.gov.uk reflect the needs of people with learning disabilities?”



Publicising information

The Board would like to know “How will information be publicised?” Surely there should be a requirement to tell people that information is available.

People said really good ways of publicising information

- Put things in the libraries – they are really good at helping people understand
- Have workshops for all bodies to find out what is accessible and useful to people with learning disabilities



Comparing data

Data needs to be easy to compare otherwise people with learning disabilities will be excluded.

The Board would like to know “Will there be a requirement and guidance in the EHRC code of practice?”



Equalities schemes

The Disability Equality Scheme in particular has brought many benefits brought to the LDPB . It has enabled the Board to link with the appropriate parts of the Council and to emphasise the learning disability perspective in addressing a range of issues.

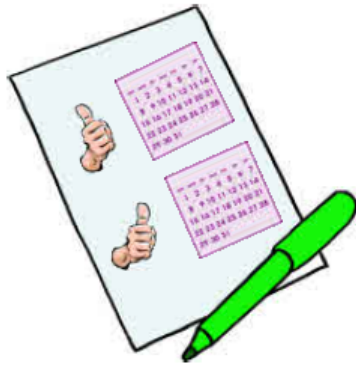
We can influence now through e.g. the Disabilities Equalities Group, of which the Board has membership. This is how we got involved with the Changing Places campaign and new standards have been put in place

In Newcastle this has not be seen as red tape -its giving people power to make sure things happen, The Board has members on the Council’s , local NHS Trust and Nexus (PTE) groups. These are the voices we think are really important



So we think that not having this as separate is a bad

idea.



Question 4

Will making public bodies say what they will make better and by when help?

Please tell us why.

We think public bodies already have to do this through their Single Equality Schemes



Involving People :

Before Equality Laws and Valuing People Now, people with learning disabilities said “they

- Didn't have a voice
- Their ideas didn't go anywhere
- People didn't listen
- People with learning disabilities didn't get heard

So, we have come a long way since then

We want to make sure we always have a voice”

The Board would like to know “What reassurances will these regulations or the Code of Practice give to people with learning disabilities?”



The right way to challenge

How will people feel empowered if they don't have the mechanisms through which to challenge. Its one thing to say people will have power to challenge with the right information but you need to know how to make the most of it .

As one member said “We need to keep knocking on doors and asking questions” and how will these rules make this easier to do?

Another member asked “Who will have responsibility for listening to us ?”



The Board would like to know “What requirements will there be to involve people in **setting** agendas as well as **responding** to them?” As we have discovered ourselves, local people are best at prioritising and saving money – and this seems to be at the core of this government so we are bit surprised at this. **The Board would like to know Is this what you mean?**

As people with learning disabilities said “If you go to something you can influence it – e.g. Ward meetings”

We know you public bodies want to set the agenda locally but we don't think it says how you want local people to be involved in doing this - only in saying public bodies have engaged.

We would like to know “Will how people should be involved be part of the Code Of Practice?”

Involving the third sector

The Board would like to know

How do you stop third sector organizations being excluded if you don't define who public bodies need to engage with and why?

Will there guidance on this in the Code of Practice?



Council

Equality being part of everybody's business

Who will own equality if it's expected to be part of everyday working? There is one view that staff will start to think more about it because they own the idea more. However against this is

- How will people keep pushing and getting better-what incentive will there be to do this
- Could departments only do what they do now or even less?



So , we don't think this is a good idea

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