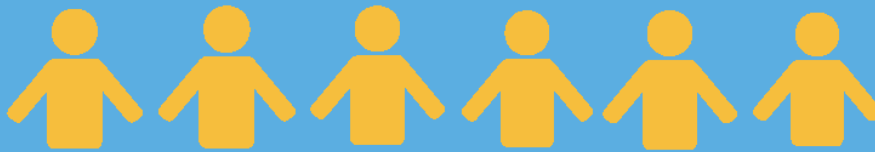


# Lewisham People's Parliament

October 2016 to December 2017

**6** People's parliament reps elected



**360 hours**

Paid work for people  
with learning disability



**4** people's parliaments

Friendships and loneliness  
Employment  
Health  
Housing and Support

**57**

Average number of people with learning  
disability coming to parliaments



**21**

Meetings with decision makers

**15**

Decisions influenced

**35 hours**

Volunteer support for the  
people's parliament



# Evaluation of the Lewisham People's Parliament on 'Impact'

December 2017

## Background

This report gives feedback and results about the Lewisham People's Parliament on 'Impact' on December 8<sup>th</sup> 2017.

It gives information on what was talked about at the meeting and how people evaluated the work of the parliament over the last year.

The parliament was held at the St. Laurence Centre in Catford.

The parliament was opened by Chairperson Aisha, one of the People's Parliament reps.



People arrive to take their seats at the parliament.

Aisha told everyone some of the things that the people's parliament has done in the last year.

Aisha said it all began in October 2016 when **6** parliament reps were elected at a special elections parliament meeting. Since then the parliament reps have done **360** hours of paid work.

After the election there have been another **4** people's parliament meetings.

The average number of people with learning disability coming to the people's parliaments is **57**.

Aisha said that parliament reps have had **21** different meetings with the mayor, bosses, MPs, councillors and managers. The reps have said what people with learning disability want.

People's Parliament reps influenced **15** decisions or helped organisations do things in a different way.

People have volunteered **35** hours to support the people's parliament meetings.

There have been **7** big group meetings to listen to what people with learning disability have to say about different subjects.

The Lewisham People's Parliament has worked with lots of different groups to fight for equal rights for people with learning disabilities.

Aisha told everyone that the People's parliament has joined a group called Learning Disability England. This means we can help to fight for the rights of disabled people all over the country.

### **What influence has the people's parliament had?**

These are the things that the people's parliament has helped to influence.

People's parliament on friendships and loneliness.

- The manager of the Lewisham learning disability social work team said she would write to all her staff reminding them of the importance of friendships in people's lives when they are carrying out assessments.
- Support provider Lewisham Nexus included in their 3 year business plan a commitment to ensure the people they support have access to and are supported to maintain friendships and relationships.
- Trustees at Lewisham Speaking Up agreed to apply for funding to run a friendship group for people with learning disability who are isolated.
- The people's parliament submitted written evidence to the council's Healthier Communities Select Committee on the importance of friendships and isolation in terms of social prescribing for people with learning disability.

## People's Parliament on employment

- People requested to have supporters at job centre appointments. Job centre managers agreed to implement a 'plus 1' system where DWP staff would note that a person required a supporter.
- People asked for more easy read information. Job centre managers introduced easy read appointment letters at a local level and also passed the request on to senior DWP managers.
- People asked for the job centre to be friendlier. Job centre managers changed the way security guards are deployed so they are no longer the first point of contact.
- The people's parliament arranged a meeting between service provider PLUS and job centre staff to discuss a possible application to the DWP flexible support fund to run a new project around employment of people with learning disability.
- Support provider Lewisham Nexus included in their 3 year business plan the aim to create work opportunities for people with learning disabilities living in Lewisham.

## People's parliament on health

- Parliament reps attended a meeting with the Nursing and Midwifery council and National Mencap and passed on the recommendations in the health parliament report.
- Parliament reps met with the manager of the community learning disability health team in Lewisham. Based on feedback from the health parliament, reps made some suggested changes to the Trust's learning disability strategy. The manager agreed with the reps suggestions and said he would recommend that the changes be made.
- Parliament reps attended a learning disability champion's day at Lewisham University Hospital and gave five recommendations about what the hospital could do differently to support people with learning disability in relation to healthcare.
- The people's parliament report on health was sent to the health policy officer at National Mencap to be shared with health decision makers and Mencap local groups.

## People's parliament on housing and support

- Feedback from the parliament on charging for adult social care was submitted as written evidence to the council's Healthier Communities Select Committee.
- The people's parliament also completed an online consultation around charging for adult social care in Lewisham based on feedback from the housing and support parliament.
- Parliament reps met with Ellie Reeves MP to discuss issues from the housing parliament and to raise other longstanding issues from previous people's parliaments. Ellie agreed to write to the Minister for Work and Pensions to ask for more easy-read materials.
- Parliament reps met with Heidi Alexander MP to discuss issues from the housing parliament and to raise other longstanding issues from previous people's parliaments. Heidi agreed to chase up the Department of Health on how they can involve people with learning disability in their work. She also agreed to write to the DWP asking them to adopt easy-read materials for people with learning disability.

## The 'bosses' panel'

To help us look at what impact the parliament has had we asked several local managers and workers to join us for a panel discussion. We arranged for representatives from:

- Lewisham Council adult care commissioners
- Lewisham hospital learning disability nurse
- Lewisham job centre disability employment adviser
- Managers of care providers working in Lewisham

Some panel members arrived late due to confusion about the timing of the session. We were able to go ahead with a panel of three managers

- Joint Commissioner, Complex Care & Learning Disability, Joint Commissioning Team NHS Lewisham CCG & London Borough of Lewisham.
- Disability employment adviser, Catford Job Centre.
- Service coordinator, Three Cs support.

Parliament reps took turns to give a summary of each of the four parliaments. The bosses' panel were then asked questions about what has changed. Here are some of their comments:

- 'Obviously **Lewisham Speaking Up** and The Albany are good resources to call on in terms of helping people know what's out there, but I think we as a council also have a responsibility to make sure that you can easily access information about what's available in Lewisham.' – Joint Commissioner, NHS Lewisham CCG & London Borough of Lewisham.
- 'Since the **people's parliament** I have had a very interesting conversation with what is called the strategy department (at DWP)... I just happened to mention easy read as one of the issues that was raised... maybe we could start with appointment letters. I'm standing here to say to you this is still a long process but it all started from the **parliament**, which is a good thing'. Disability employment adviser, Catford Job Centre
- 'My suggestion would be to continue to do what you are already doing in terms of the **people's parliament**... you have to be able to tell us what you need for us to be able to put it in place'. Disability employment adviser, Catford Job Centre

### How many people came to the Impact parliament?

Learning disabled people were asked to sign in and register for the parliament as they arrived. People's age group and gender were collected at this point.

Ages	Numbers at parliament
Age 18 -24	6
Age 25 - 64	43
Age 65+	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>
Gender	Numbers at parliament
Female	18
Male	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>

Numbers were the same as at the last parliament with a similar breakdown of ages and gender. Overall numbers are below the target agreed with our funder and we will continue thinking of ways to increase attendance at future parliaments.

## What did people gain from the parliament?

An easy read questionnaire was made for this parliament and people were helped to fill it in as they arrived. Four workers were given the job of making sure questionnaires were filled in. **16** questionnaires were completed (**33%**). It is clear that those who did fill in a questionnaire felt that the people's parliament has a positive impact on their confidence, ability to speak up and a sense of feeling listened to.






Rating	1 star (lowest)	2 stars	3 stars	4 stars	5 stars (highest)
The people's parliament helps me to speak up			2 people	2 people	12 people
The people's parliament helps me to feel more confident		1 person	4 people	2 people	9 people
The people's parliament helps me to feel I am listened to	1 person	1 person	1 person	3 people	10 people

## What did people think about the parliament?

In the workshops learning disabled people were asked to say what they thought of the parliament using smiley face stickers. People were asked to choose a sticker and place it on a flip chart.

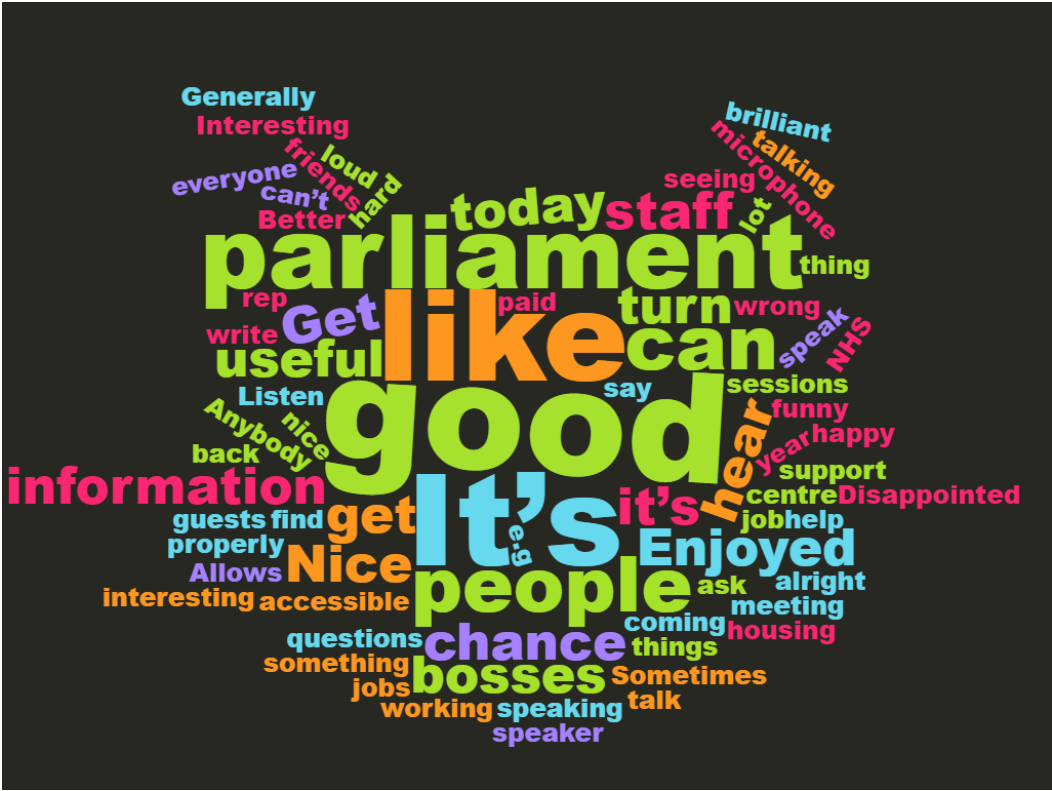
**39** stickers were put on the flip chart. This means that **80%** of people with a learning disability put up a sticker.

**33** people said the parliament was good (**85%**) and **5** people said the parliament was bad (**13%**). 1 person drew their own sticker to say they felt neutral about the parliament (**3%**).

Stickers		Number of stickers
Yellow smiley face (good)	 =	33
Red sad face (bad)	 =	5
Blue face (neutral)	 =	1
Total of all stickers	 +  =	39

**What did people say about the parliament?**

In the evaluation workshops learning disabled people were asked “what do you have to say about the people’s parliament?” People’s comments were written onto a flip chart. 35 people (71%) said something. This word cloud summarises what was said:





The first year of the comic relief funded Lewisham People's Parliament has been a successful one. We have provided six paid jobs for people with learning disability and have provided a forum where people with a learning disability can have their say on important topics and have an influence on decision makers.

We look forward to another successful year for the Lewisham people's parliament in 2018 with continued support from Comic Relief and our other partners.



If you would like to discuss this report or have any questions please contact:  
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Marsh (Martin) Stitchman, December 2017.

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