

# Co-Production Partnership



Sharing the power

## Taking Co-Production Forward Event

# Report

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

at Margaret McMillan Tower, Bradford



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### Alternative formats

This report is available in easy read, large print and audio (spoken word). If you require it in an alternative format please get in touch. Email [willq@equalitytogether.org.uk](mailto:willq@equalitytogether.org.uk) or call/ text 07432 264 881.

### Contact the Co-Production Partnership

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Discussing ideas around the table

## Background

The Co-Production Partnership has been bringing together disabled people with people from Bradford Metropolitan District Council for two years. The aim of the Partnership is to ensure that disabled people are truly involved as the services they use change.

The Co-Production Partnership is jointly managed by Equality Together and BTM. It is funded by the Adult Services Commissioning Team at Bradford Metropolitan District Council. The focus of the work is on adult social care services. Social care services are things such as home care support or day services. Some are paid for by the council, whilst others are paid for by individuals. However, social care services are part of the wider community, and link to issues such as transport, employment and housing.

## What is co-production?

Co-production is a way of working where people who use services are genuinely equal partners with people who manage and work in them. This is why, in consultation with disabled people, we chose our logo strapline: “sharing the power”.

Our primary focus is to ensure that the voice of disabled people is heard and acted upon and that our communities are an equal and valued partner working with Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC). As well as having a voice in developing services that work for everyone, the Partnership will also provide quality assurance and challenge.

For co-production to work, there needs to be: -

- Honesty – (what is realistic – what is possible)
- Two-way communication
- The building and using of the skills and knowledge that disabled people have
- Recognition of the expertise of people with lived experience of using services
- Shared decision making
- The use of language everyone understands in a persons first format of choice

To meet the needs and expectations of disabled people, co-production can work at different levels:

- It can look at how an individual accesses and uses services
- A positive approach to how disabled people can shape and improve a service overall
- The acknowledgement that for co-production to work it takes time and commitment from everyone involved
- That learning as the partnership moves forward is captured and actioned
- That different ways of capturing voice and opinion are developed

## **Taking Co-Production Forward event 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Following on from our previous co-production events held in 2022, it was decided to have another event to bring together disabled people, their carers, people who work in services and people who commission services.

There were three aims of the event. These were:

- To allow disabled people to say what is important within the Bradford Council social care commissioning priorities. Commissioning priorities are the things that the council want to spend its money on.
- To allow disabled people to say what the Co-Production Partnership should be doing for the next year.
- To bring together people from different backgrounds and organisations to allow people to talk together and listen to each other as equals.

The event brought together 90 people. These included disabled people and carers, people who work in services used by disabled people, as well as colleagues from Bradford Council and the NHS.



Overview of the event

The event did have some issues with the catering, which meant that it did not run as smoothly as we would have hoped, particularly during the breaks. But we still managed to ensure everyone was fed. We would like to give a special thanks to Emily from Bradford Council for sorting out food for 90 people in two hours.

## What has the Co-Production Partnership done so far?

The day started with Wil Quick, Co-Production Co-Ordinator, outlining the work of the Partnership over the last two years.

He started by outlining how its first year saw the Partnership establish a solid base to build from. This included holding district wide events to agree how the Partnership would do its work and what the most important issues are for disabled people.

During 2023, the Partnership set up four working groups. These were:

- Access to Services
- Accessible Information
- Day Services
- Independence and choice

The four topics had been chosen by disabled people as the most important areas to concentrate on.



Wil Quick,  
Co-Production  
Partnership  
Co-Ordinator

Each working group brought together disabled people and colleagues from the commissioning team in Bradford Council and other relevant organisations.

The **access to services** group has been looking at how mainstream services, (services which are available for anyone in the community) can be accessed by people with neurodiverse conditions, such as autism, ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome or dyslexia. This has involved talking to people with neurodiverse conditions about their experiences. All the information will be written up and shared with relevant service providers.

Wil also outlined the work done with Bradford Teaching Hospitals (BRI and St Luke's Hospitals) in improving access for disabled people. This brought together people with learning disabilities, mobility issues, visual impairments and hearing loss with hospital managers. Some of the changes already made include ensuring that the automatic voices in the lift are at a suitable volume, and making improvements to the level access. This is ongoing work, but will take time to finish.

Wil then talked about the work of the **accessible information** group. This has worked on two projects. One was looking at how the Bradford Council could make its Connect to Support website more accessible for people with disabilities. This included being able to change the size and colour of the words and background. We also looked at how the site could be made easier to find the information which people need.



Bradford People  
First

This group also brought together disabled people with commissioners from Bradford Council. This was to look at which organisation should produce information in accessible formats for the councils social care services.

The **day services** working group focused on the changes in learning disability day services. Most learning disability day services are currently run by an organisation called New Choices. The council had planned to move these services to a number of new organisations.

It was really important that people who attended these services had a say in what is important when the services change. Members at People First Keighley and Craven helped develop the questions to ask people who use these services. They also helped think about what was the best way of finding out people's views.

This led to a series of 10 of engagement events with people who attend the New Choices services and their family members. The most important things for the new service provider to get right when they take over is having good staff, having a wide range of activities to do and being supported to develop new skills.

The fourth workgroup was based around **independence and choice**. This work involved finding people who had experience of using home care support services, either for themselves or for a family member, who made up a panel to assess one of the questions being asked of potential home care providers.

Part of the work of the Partnership is working with decision makers to make sure that disabled people are properly included throughout the decision making process. This has involved learning and working with teams to help them adapt how they work.

Wil thanked all the people who have been involved in the working groups.



Sharing views

One part of the work which has struggled is the setting up of the Partnership Board. The Partnership Board would oversee the work of the Co-Production Partnership. Wil explained that this was for a number of reasons. These included that the workgroups took up a lot of time to organise, but also many people who have been active were putting their energy into other activities.

Wil finished off by telling people about how Bradford Council had asked the Co-Production Partnership to find a disabled person who could join the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (usually called HOSC for short). Two people have applied for this role, and the voluntary and community organisations who support disabled people will vote for the person they think is best to do this role.

## **Adult Social Care commissioning intentions 2024/25**

Holly Watson works as the Senior Commissioning Manager for Adult Social Care at Bradford Council. She told people about how Bradford Council decides what social care services are needed.

Holly spoke about what area the council will be looking at over the next year. These are:

- Mental Health Supported Living
- Advocacy
- Homeless services
- Local Community Support Grants (small amounts of money to support local community led groups)
- Extra Care Services (support to allow people with complex needs to remain independent)
- Small Supports (personalised care for adults with learning disabilities)

She was very straight forward about the financial difficulty the council was facing. This means that adult social care services are needing to save around £5 million each year. And the council is needing to save £40 million a year across all services. This means that it is important that the council spends its money on where it is going to make the most difference to the people who need it most. She did recognise that some services will have to change how they work or even close. However, she also said that the council recognised that services which stop people's lives from getting worse was really important.

After we heard from Holly, each table talked about what the important things were in what she said. Each table had lots of things to say. Some tables focused on one or two issues in detail. Other groups looked at many of the issues in less detail.



Holly Watson  
from Bradford  
Council

One of the key points to come from the discussion strongly was that services need to be person centred and accessible.

There was much discussion around **advocacy**. This looked at both professional and self-advocacy. The key issues within this were

- 1) Advocacy services need to be easy to access, with clear routes in
- 2) There need to be access to a range of communication methods, including BSL
- 3) Increased capacity as waits to see an advocate can be too long
- 4) There was support for people with lived experience being advocates

These points have been sent to the council officer who is overseeing the re-commissioning of advocacy. The Co-Production Partnership has asked that people who have experience of using advocacy are meaningfully engaged with the re-commissioning process.

Another topic was around **social inclusion for older people**. It was felt that this needed to be widened to be social inclusion for disabled people. People talked about community based schemes. Within social support people need to have choices. It was reported that these services often feels very art and craft orientated. This is great for some people but not everyone. There was a particular need to address the issue of social isolation of people who are D/deaf.



Sharing ideas

People recognised that **voluntary and community organisations**, particularly user led/ DPOs (Disabled Persons Organisations, those led and controlled by disabled people) need support and were often able to provide services in a more flexible way than larger and statutory organisations. However, many are struggling as they have not had any increase in funding for a number of years, whilst costs have increased. People also said that if services are going to be changed or have funding stopped, then they should be told at least 3 months before this happens.

There were a number of general points. Some of the main ones that need to be considered are:

Not everyone has access to the internet nor wants to be online for getting information about services, going through referral processes etc

There is a need for early support and intervention, particularly if people are developing a disability or life limiting health condition. This can save money in the long run as people's conditions will be less severe or will make it easier for people to manage their conditions, so they will need less support.

Many people spoke of how the levels of need for getting services is too high. This means many people who need support don't get any, or may rely on services which are not set up to provide specialist support.

## **“We are more than disabled people”**

The afternoon session was called ‘We are more than disabled people.’ Wil explained that when he was talking to disabled people, often the conversation is about how they interact with different care services. However, as disabled people, we should be able to be part of and make a contribution to our community.

The discussion was wide ranging, and a more detailed analysis will be shared with relevant teams across the council and other partners. These will be put on the Co-Production Partnership webpage, and feature in the regular updates.

Some of the highlights include:

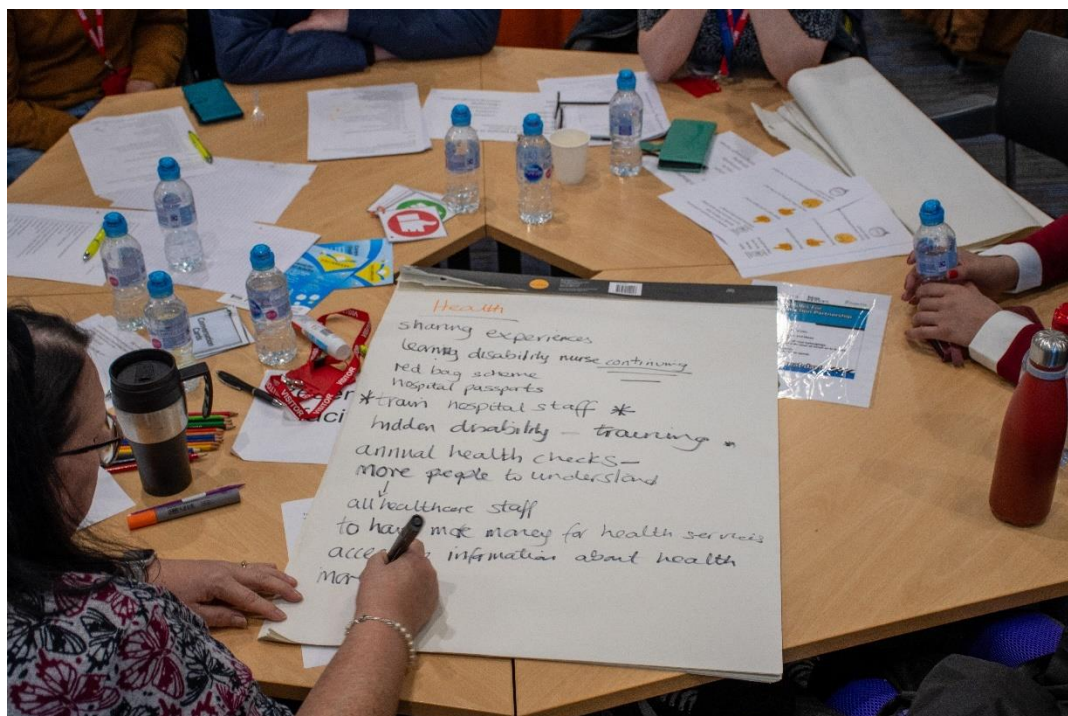
**Arts and culture:** Events which are part of Bradford 2025: City of Culture needs to be accessible to all. This includes making events accessible to disabled people. It also means having events throughout the district.

**Housing:** There is not enough affordable or accessible housing. If you need accessible housing the wait can be really long.

**Health:** Health staff need to be more aware of the needs of disabled people. They need to adapt their communication methods and services to suit this. For example, people may need longer for their appointments.

**Work:** Disabled people often find it hard to get experience in entry level jobs, so are excluded from work for their whole lives. Large organisations such as the council and NHS should run work experience placements for disabled people.

**Having enough money:** This is an issue for many people. There should be more access to benefits and debt advice. Some people thought that courses in budgeting and managing money could be useful.



Making notes of what people said

Transport: Information about changes in public transport needs to be communicated appropriately to disabled people.

Community: Community groups need to be more accessible, For example, groups meeting in buildings which don't have level access.

Belonging: There needs to be more spaces where people can be comfortable being themselves.

## Priorities for the Co-Production Partnership

The final session of the day was looking at what the priorities should be for the Co-Production Partnership. The Partnership wants to work on a small number of areas well. We asked people at what the most important areas are so we can work on what are people's priorities.

The most common comments which were recorded were around increasing participation and involvement in co-production. This could take many forms, including offering training for disabled people and people who work in services to allow people to work positively together. It was also suggested that people with a range of disabilities are given visible roles within the Partnership. Another suggestion was that the Partnership and Partnership Co-Ordinator should visit a wide range of groups across

the district to talk to and listen to what people who attend groups but don't go to events and meetings to have to say.

Of the commissioning intentions which Holly had spoken about, the most commonly mentioned area was advocacy. A summary of the discussion has been sent to the council's commissioning manager overseeing the advocacy work. This has included an offer to link disabled people into the commissioning working group.

The other issues which were most commonly mentioned were transport and accessible information.

Although transport sits outside the remit of social care, it clearly links to disabled people being able to access services and have a good quality of life. Some of the issues raised included the need for better communication around changes to services, in ways that are genuinely accessible to disabled people. It was also noted that many buses were not very accessible for disabled people. All the issues raised around transport will be passed onto the relevant organisation, including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority which has overall responsibility for overseeing bus services in the district.

## **What next**

This report, which is available in easy read, large print and an audio (spoken word) version, has been sent to everyone who registered to attend the event. It has also been sent to the Adult Social Care Commissioning Team and all the organisations which support disabled people across the Bradford District.

The detailed information on specific topics will be sent to relevant organisations or teams, asking for a response. We aim to do this by the end of April.

We will work with disabled people and people who work in services to develop training to allow people to work together more effectively.

We will set up working groups to bring together disabled people and colleagues from the council and other partner organisations to work on the issues which disabled people have identified as important.



Overview of the event

We will support the disabled person who is elected to be the representative on Bradford Council's Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

We will continue to produce regular updates on our work to send to individuals and organisations.

## Get involved

There are many opportunities for disabled people to be a part of the Co-Production Partnership in Bradford District.

### Attending events

- A series of formal and informal workshops and events across the district over the next year

### Help organise and run events

Our events need people to help run them successfully, there are many ways people can support and be involved:

- This includes deciding what will happen at the event and help with publicising them

- During the event we need help with roles such as welcoming people when they arrive, running a discussion group and taking photos
- We can support you to build your skills and confidence to do this

### **Joining one of the working groups**

Over the coming months we will be setting up some working groups, these groups will look at how the CPP achieves its goals.



Feeding back from the discussion

### **Talk to decision makers**

The people who make decisions in Bradford & District want to hear directly from disabled people. You can meet with them by attending some of the Partnership's events.

We also need disabled people to attend meetings and events with decision makers on behalf of the Partnership.

### **Keep on talking to us**

We are always wanting to hear what disabled people have to say. You can stay in touch by email, phone, text or by writing.

**Email:** [Co-production@equalitytogether.org.uk](mailto:Co-production@equalitytogether.org.uk)

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DRAFT 16-4-2024

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**Website:** <https://equalitytogether.org.uk/interestsand-involvement/>

## **Thanks**

The Co-Production Partnership would like to thank everyone who made this event possible.

All the facilitators who kept the discussion on track and made notes.

The team which did the meet and greet and ran the door.

Holly Watson for her presentation.

Ruksarna Sadiq and Emily Rhodes from the Co-Production Team at Bradford Council with general support.

David Hargraves and BTM for the event photopgraphy.

Special mention to Emily Rhodes for sorting out lunch for 90 people in record time.

And most of all everyone who attended, sharing their views and contributions.