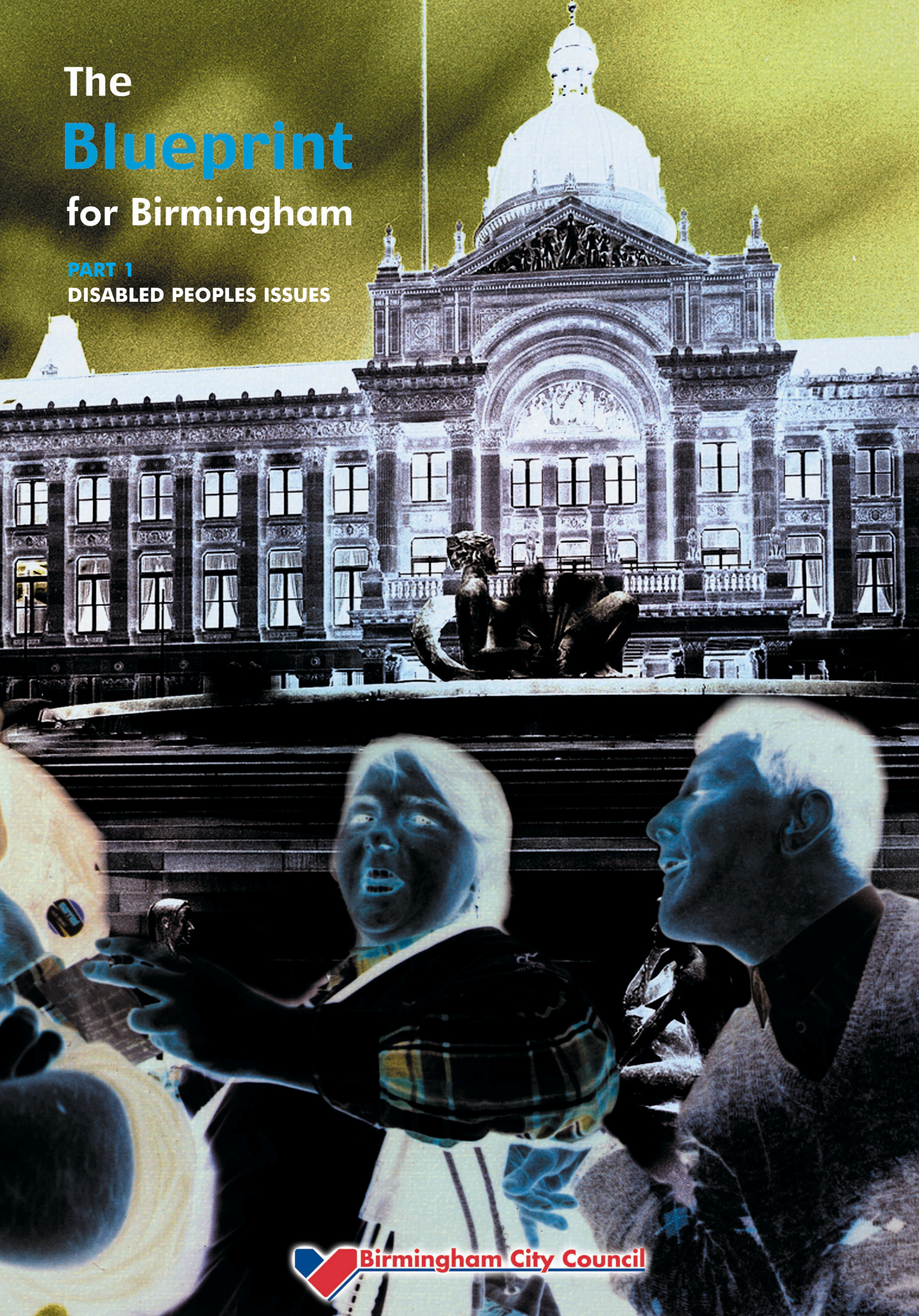


# The Blueprint for Birmingham

**PART 1**

**DISABLED PEOPLES ISSUES**



Cllr Muhammad Afzal

## Foreword

Firstly I would like to thank the thousands of disabled people who have contributed to this important document. In particular I would like to thank the Coalition of Disabled People Birmingham and the Equalities Division for their hard work in collating all the issues raised.

The Blueprint for action attempts to put all the issues raised by the disabled community of Birmingham over the past two years into one document. The Council is committed to responding to these issues over the next three months. We will then publish our point-by-point response. This will be the second stage in the Blueprint.

Not all the issues will be resolved overnight but those that are not will form the agenda for discussion, consultation and partnership between Council and community. This will be the third stage in the Blueprint.

We are also fully aware that there may well be issues that we have not captured. To address this we will be publishing this Blueprint on an annual basis to capture those issues we have missed, those that are emerging and to give an update on how we are tackling some of the more long-term issues. If you feel that an important issue has not been raised please send it to the Equalities Division and it will be included in next year's Blueprint.

I hope that you agree that this Blueprint shows that the Council is actively listening to disabled people and is willing to work in partnership to resolve these issues so that disabled people have the same rights as everyone else.

Councillor Muhammad Afzal  
CABINET MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES & HUMAN RESOURCES

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Robert Punton. - Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to write the foreword for the Coalition. I am sure all disabled people in Birmingham are delighted at this opportunity to highlight and share our concerns and needs with the City Council and its officers.

The disabled community would like to thank the Council for recognising that the views and concerns of disabled citizens in Birmingham have been 'missed' in the past and that something needed to be done to re-address the situation. This "Blueprint for Birmingham" goes a long way to doing this.

As you will see a lot of areas are addressed in this document - 'Housing', 'Personal Assistance', 'Education', 'Employment', 'Health', 'Social Services' to name just a few. I am sure there are areas in here that you feel need highlighting more.

Do not worry. This is an on-going project between the disabled people of Birmingham and Birmingham City Council to ensure our requirements and ideas are addressed at the best and most appropriate place.

May I take this opportunity to acknowledge some people and Council departments. Without their hard work and commitment this paper would not have been able to be produced. The Equalities Division of Birmingham City Council have been tireless in their work and support. The lead Member, Councillor Afzal, has pushed this and is championing the response at the highest level. An acknowledgement must also go to Sir Albert Bore, not just for this project but his on-going and strong commitment to the rights of 'disabled people' in Birmingham.

May I extend this thank you to all Cabinet and Council officers, in particular to Bruce Gill, Acting Head of Equalities Division.

Alan Holdsworth and the disability team in the Equalities Division, (Stuart Malpass and Jon Coleman), need special thanks for their work, support and commitment.

The staff and management committee at the 'Coalition' have worked very hard to ensure that all the issues we gathered were included and reflected what people were saying so I would like to thank them for that.

Finally, may I give a big thank you to all you people out there (members and future members) for your commitment to ensuring the views of disabled people are brought into the open.

This is the beginning so to make sure your voice and concerns are heard please join the 'Coalition of Disabled People – Birmingham'.

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Blueprint for Birmingham phase one. We have processed and composited over 4000 statements made by disabled people over the last 2 years. Have we got all the issues? Probably not, but at least the Blueprint will act as a prompt to people to get them included.

**We have tried as best as we can to leave the issues as they were written or spoken so that the reader will feel the authentic voice of disabled people. Hence the grammar and style of the issues will be as diverse as our community.**

Reading the whole document it becomes clear that many issues are requests for information on what the Council is doing. The response to the Blueprint will therefore become a useful resource for disabled people and Council officers alike in directing people to the services that are already in place.

Other issues are long-term and long-standing issues that will only be resolved through creative partnerships between the Council and the community. Finally, there are issues that provide an opportunity to develop new and exciting services and point the way forward. Some issues end in a question; some do not. Those that do not end in a question still require a response from the Council.

Overall we hope that you see this Blueprint as a real opportunity for the Council and the community to work more closely together to improve the quality of life for disabled people in Birmingham. The response to this first Blueprint will be published in August 2002.

## INFORMATION

Information is the first thing disabled people need if they are to access the services they need to fully participate in community life.

Without accessible information disabled people will miss out on the services the Council has to offer. This is particularly true for black and minority ethnic disabled people who cannot access information in their first language.

This section also raises issues on what information the Council needs to collect in order to design and monitor the services it provides for disabled people.

Finally, it was clear from this work that there is a real shortage of places run by disabled people who provide "joined up information" on all aspects. Disabled people should not have to make 60 telephone calls to put what they need together.

1.  
Brasshouse Language Centre - Token access. Poor audit done by City Council. Negative attitudes fixed on tablets of stone. Needs external access audit and recommendations for funding
2.  
Access to information was a key issue. This includes information about benefit entitlement and where to get help with making applications, and practical information about personal assistants, equipment and home adaptations. Disabled people need access to health information. Where are the one-stop shops for this information?  
Should the Council develop them?
3.  
Dissemination of up to date accessible information. Why are we last to know?
4.  
There is no clear information on what support Social Services can provide to disabled people, who is eligible for help, and how long you have to wait before you get help.
5.  
We need a place where we can find out about our rights.

## INFORMATION

6.  
Newsletters are very important. What newsletters do the Council support?
7.  
The Council needs to review systems of collating and disseminating information about policies and practice to the general public.
8.  
Disabled people who want to help out in the community need to find out information on what community groups do. How do people get accessible information about this?
9.  
Black and ethnic minority disabled people feel that there needs to be greater awareness within all sections of society about race and disability. There was a need for better access to information that would encourage greater community cohesion.
10.  
It would seem likely that the first step in developing services with and for black and ethnic minority disabled people must be to increase the level of their participation. To do this, better information amongst service providers about the numbers and location of Black and ethnic minority disabled people is essential.
11.  
What does the Council do to promote positive images of disabled people that are inclusive of Black and ethnic minority disabled people?
12.  
How does the Council support and celebrate the whole disabled community in Birmingham?
13.  
Several respondents noted that it is impossible to get accurate statistics about the numbers of Black and ethnic minority disabled people, and that this made it difficult to justify developing services. Who is doing this?
14.  
The Council lacks flexibility in the times and locations of service provision, which makes it difficult for Black and ethnic minority disabled people to participate.

## **INFORMATION**

15.

What organisations provide services specifically for Black and Ethnic Minority disabled people in Birmingham? Where is that information?

16.

Information available in all formats. What is the Council doing to provide this?

17.

Lack of accessible information for people with learning difficulties - easy words and pictures, tape, TV & video. What steps are the Council taking?

18.

Disabled people may not be able to use services because the Council do not communicate by using Braille, text telephones or other alternative methods.

19.

What is the Council's policy on providing language support to disabled people?

20.

All large print books. What are libraries doing about this?

21.

Have information in accessible areas that people can go to.

22.

Make a website accessible for everyone. Have access issues been taken on board in web design in the Council?

23.

When disabled people phone the Council the Council workers aren't very understanding. What policies does the Council have to address this?

24.

I think that all barriers to disabled people should have a sign on them saying no disabled people allowed. That would shame them into doing something.

25.

Why is there a shortage of information centres run by disabled people?

## **INFORMATION**

26.

I want social workers to contact me on a regular basis. I need contact to know/be aware of rights. What is happening to improve this?

27.

How does the Council ensure the appropriate and effective communication of disabled people's needs e.g. medical, religious, cultural etc?

28.

Training & Information should be presented in a simpler format, and more accessible. What is the Council doing about this?

29.

On a wider level, information was seen as crucial to the process of political empowerment. For example, as a tool to fight discrimination at personal level individuals need to be empowered through information to understand their rights.

30.

Can the Council encourage firms to make sale offers in large print?

31.

Can the Council encourage banks to provide statements in Braille?

32.

Can the Council encourage restaurants to provide menus in Braille and large print?

33.

Can the Council provide more information in Braille?

34.

Can the Council put warning notes on strobe lights?

## **Johnny's Story**

I remember the awful food and other “patients” beating each other up whilst the staff looked on. I remember them deliberately putting people together who physically tore each other apart. I remember the shrinks altering my notes of the patients meeting. I remember the chilling awareness that I could be here for the rest of my life if the shrink said so. Most of all I remember a disabled friend coming every day to visit me and challenging the staff and supporting me. That’s how I got out. Most of the other inmates in the psychiatric ward didn’t get many visitors. Institutions are not solutions.

## **ADVOCACY, PEER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Advocacy is about disabled people having someone who will assist him or her in getting the things they need or developing the skills to be able to advocate for themselves. The major issue arising from this piece of work is that there is very little advocacy going on in Birmingham at all and that it is very misunderstood and undervalued by the Council. Disabled people feel that they could assist other disabled people if they were given support to do so. Disabled people also said that it was important that the advocates were independent of the service provision.

There is also a lack of opportunity for disabled people to come together to support each other and learn from each other’s experience and knowledge. It was also generally felt that, whilst meeting with officers was necessary and important it was equally important that the Council creates opportunities for disabled people to come together on their own.

The development of the disabled community in Birmingham was also seen as central to getting the services that disabled people want. Following are several ideas for new initiatives that would assist this.

## **ADVOCACY, PEER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

35.

There is a lack in this city of independent advocates who could help disabled people achieve their independence and rights. Does the Council believe that independent advocates have a crucial role and when are you going to support the development of this service?

36.

I believe that Social Services should have a budget to train disabled people in the community to work with, train and support disabled people who are vulnerable and want proper care in the institutions.

37.

We need disabled advocates that are bilingual to support Asian communities.

38.

We need to fund disabled people as advocates to support other disabled people.

39.

Disabled people living on the outside need to go into institutions and talk to and support those disabled people who are isolated and give them information. What does the Council do to support this?

40.

Should not be pushed into things. What independent advocacy services do the Council support?

41.

What steps is the Council taking in providing an advocacy service for the black and ethnic minority disabled people?

42.

What is the Council doing to enable younger disabled people to have contact with adult disabled people during their time in school?

43.

Have someone at the college - independent - to fight your corner and to listen to your problems.

## **ADVOCACY, PEER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

44.

It would help some people if there was an interim period where people could try to live independently. Leaving home is scary if you have never done it. What schemes has the Council developed?

45.

Peer tutors should be a more common feature in Education.

46.

The Council should fund predominantly disabled led groups if it respects disabled people. What funding does the Council give to disabled led groups as opposed to groups run by non-disabled people?

47.

Does the Council understand that peer support is one of the most liberating activities for disabled people? Often it is that conversation or action by another disabled person that changes your life. Why aren't the Council assisting disabled people to come together more?

48.

Organisations dealing with black and ethnic minority disabled people need adequate funding to be able to provide the right kind of support like respite care that is culturally sensitive to the individual need of the person.

49.

Participants felt that there was a need for more accessible community/family/drop in centres, involving and managed by local people (including black and ethnic minority disabled people) as opposed to white professionals. How is the Council developing community based culturally sensitive services?

50.

Chance for young disabled people meet and have fun, i.e. Sex, Drugs Rock And Roll. What does the Council do to provide opportunities for young disabled people to meet?

51.

How can the Council support young people to develop DYNAMIC (young disabled people's groups) across the country?

## **ADVOCACY, PEER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

52.

The Council needs to identify strategies to actively support a Black and Ethnic Minority Disabled Peoples Group in Birmingham.

53.

The Council needs to organise and support the organisation of more events for disabled people so that they can meet and support each other.

54.

How can the Council help disabled young people to have a much stronger, wider network of younger disabled people so that we can all communicate?

55.

Being the lone 'token disabled person' in school so there was no peer support.

56.

What is the Council doing to assist young disabled people to make and sustain friendships?

57.

We need support groups for disabled mothers but also services that allow us to meet.

58.

There is very little support for disabled people who are mothers. I want somewhere I can pop in and share my experiences with others. There are networks in place for mothers but none for disabled mothers and disabled parents.

59.

Make new friends. What does the Council do to support Peer Support particularly for people in institutions?

60.

What is being done to promote independence to other black disabled people?

61.

We need bilingual staff and more information in Asian languages. People don't know what's available.

## **ADVOCACY, PEER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

62.

In the Asian community disabled people don't challenge the wider community. This leads to disabled people and their families being discriminated against. What can the Council do to help resolve this?

63.

Is the Council promoting political awareness - enabling black and ethnic minority disabled people to get involved and learn from people with experience?

64.

How does the Council facilitate meetings between Black and Ethnic Minority disabled people and MP's/councillors?

65.

Parents sided with the special college but Marianne had to fight for her rights to make her own choices. How does the Council support disabled young people against their parents?

66.

I was not allowed to attend a meeting where they were discussing my future. What can the Council do to outlaw this practice?

67.

R. distrusts social workers. He feels they are listening to his carers and their wants, not his. He believes that the people supporting him are not listening to him. When he says 'yes' he means 'yes'. When he says 'no' he means 'no'!

68.

My issue is that you should have rights to be independent and decide what you do in daily life. I wanted everybody to listen to my feelings and not treat me as a prisoner.

69.

Mainstream school felt that the costs to educate student were too great - and made it clear that the disabled student should be re-located to a special school - Jade had to fight hard for her rights at school. How could the Council support Jade?

## **ADVOCACY, PEER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

70.

Officers make you feel stupid and give you low self esteem when you are trying to live independently and get what you want. You have to prove everything and be very strong. What's the Council doing for those of us who are not so strong? Do they get nothing?

71.

I want someone to take me out because I can't go out on my own. What schemes have the Council helped to develop?

72.

There needs to be more skills training and assertiveness training that encourages confidence building. What is available for disabled people?

73.

There was quite a lot of discussion about support, at two levels; initial support when somebody becomes disabled and ongoing support. What services are provided? What need to be developed?

74.

Parents should give you your own space to make decisions for yourself. How can the Council support this?

75.

We need to stop people making decisions for us. What procedures can the Council put in place?

76.

The only people who know the difficulties we face are other disabled people. How does the Council utilise the skills, experience and knowledge of disabled people?

77.

How are disabled people helped to put their views to the Disability Rights Commission?

78.

How does the Council provide confidence building for people with disabilities? (e.g. (dance and drama group)

## **ADVOCACY, PEER SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

79.

Does the Council support mixing able and disabled groups?

80.

Support groups for people with the same kind of disability were considered to be important so as not to be isolated. Also, participants felt that there needed to be places that a person could go to socialise.

81.

How can the Council support disabled people dealing with people who are acting in a discriminatory way?

82.

To say what we are going to do - Not ask if we can do.

83.

Young People get discriminated against and bullied. What can the Council do?

84.

What can you do about bullying between deaf children and hearing children?

85.

How does the Council address problems of social and cultural isolation of disabled people?

86.

Social workers are making most of the decisions. What is the Council doing to give us more say over our lives?

87.

Not well? Need support? How do people who have intermittent illness receive support? What policies do the Council have?

88.

Peer support from other young disabled people - Positive Role Models - Teachers who are disabled. What strategies is the Council taking on this issue?

## HOUSING

Overall the situation is that the city clearly needs to increase the stock of accessible, affordable homes. The lack of appropriate housing means that disabled people, and particularly older disabled people who acquire their impairments late in life, face forced institutionalisation.

Other major concerns were centred on waiting for adaptations to existing housing and not being able to get the adaptations disabled people wanted.

89.

How can you assure me that I won't be ghettoised and be separated from my community when there is redevelopment?

90.

What controls do the Council have over social landlords to ensure that they provide accessible affordable accommodation in the community for disabled people?

91.

How can I be assured that everything to do with housing policy will be explained to me so I won't have any surprises coming?

92.

Do disabled people have the right to buy their accessible council house?

93.

When will the Council be able to build more accessible housing across the city?

94.

I want to be able to choose where I live not be dictated to because there isn't enough accessible housing.

95.

I am living in residential care and I am fed up waiting to move into regular housing.

96.

My house is up to be demolished and I don't think the Council understands the hassle I will have trying to re-accommodate as a disabled person. What are you going to do about it?

## HOUSING

97.

It took me 20 months to get housed. When is this situation going to change for disabled people? How are you going to change it and why don't you get disabled people involved?

98.

I was told that I filled in the wrong form for a disabled facilities grant but no one told me for 2 years. After 3 years the Council admitted I had filled in the right form. If I had given up I wouldn't have got my house adapted to suit my needs.

99.

Some people from ethnic minorities prefer to live in extended families and their housing needs are not met. They have no space in their own homes and they don't get the adaptations or extensions they need.

100.

Why can't people get their homes adapted without all the aggro?

101.

Why can't my adaptations be what I ask for rather than what the professionals allow me?

102.

My landlord won't let me have the adaptations I need in order to have the same comforts that the other tenants take for granted. How can you help me?

103.

Shouldn't we all be able to purchase "homes for life?"

104.

I am sick of being treated differently by housing providers because of my disability.

105.

A male Housing Officer does not have the right to walk into your bedroom at 8 in the morning, whether you are dressed or undressed, and harass you. This is a female issue not to be harassed.

106.

We need Independent Housing Advocates. What agencies provide these?

## **HOUSING**

107.

How can the Council ensure that disabled people have the same housing rights as everyone else? I want protection from bullying in my flat and my neighbourhood.

108.

What will you do to make it easier to find affordable accessible housing where I want to live?

109.

Why hasn't the Council got enough affordable, accessible homes?

110.

How can the Council ensure we will dramatically increase the stock of affordable accessible homes?

111.

What policies is the Council adopting to encourage people living independently in smaller houses or flats, not big institutions?

112.

What are you going to do to make it possible for disabled people to purchase their purpose built building?

## **AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS**

Aids and Adaptations mean that disabled people can live more independently in the community and can cut down the amount of personal assistance they require, thus saving the Council money.

The main issue at present is the excessive amount of time it takes to get these aids and adaptations in place.

Another key issue is the fact that this service is often means tested which acts as a major barrier to disabled people seeking to work and pay taxes. The assessment process is still based on medical information rather than a holistic approach. Often this results in disabled people being assessed and then told that they can't have what they need.

113.

Provision of Aids and Adaptations is too slow; the service is difficult to access (because you have to be able to complete a long form) and not always responsive to cultural needs.

114.

The Council always promise to make alterations in the house to suit the requirements of the patient but take a lot of time - help is not given when needed but delayed.

115.

Waiting list for adaptations and equipment is too long. Families/parents shouldn't have to fight to get what is needed.

116.

My wife has waited 18 months for a shower to be fitted. We have to use a garden hose at present.

117.

Occupational therapy. Their criteria are not person-centred but money driven.

118.

People with learning difficulties don't get what they need because Social Services have no understanding of what is required for people with behavioural problems or learning difficulties in order to live independently.

## **AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS**

119.

Occupational Therapist - Stated that installation of shower for my wife would take 12 months.

120.

Special Housing: - Being told you can have equipment and then, after being assessed, they then tell you there is not the money to provide it for you.

121.

I have no access to my medication bottles in the institution.

122.

College has supplied me with a laptop but they will not let me take it home.

123.

Minicoms at every Council office for contacts.

124.

It should be easier to get a stair lift.

125.

No bathing aids in disabled toilets. What is the Council doing about this?

126.

Not hearing properly due to lack of planning in meeting places. How is the Council bringing these issues into planning?

127.

We need suitable lighting for all situations. What does the Council do about this?

128.

We need access to the technology that is required by the individual, e.g. computers. What does the Council do to provide this?

129.

More hoists in public toilets. Personal assistance bank in the City Centre so we can use it without assistants.

## **AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS**

130.

Speech programmes on computers, less waste. How is the Council assisting in this?

131.

How is the Council providing access to British Sign Language training?

132.

Sockets in accessible public places so that we can plug in our chairs while we are out.

133.

More money to train assistants and get better equipment.

134.

You can only go to the Independent Living Centre run by OT's if you have an appointment and you can only go into the room that has the specific bit that you want to see. I want an Independent Living Centre run by us in a safe, friendly and welcoming environment.

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE**

"Well the evenings are the worst times. Some come at 5 o'clock to put you to bed. I won't have that. I won't have that. I mean sitting in my dressing gown! I don't go to bed at five, but it's not very pleasant sitting around in your dressing gown and night gown all that time."

## **JENNY'S STORY**

The major reason for my decision to leave residential care occurred on an afternoon, when I was in my bedroom. Bear in mind that these rooms were of a large proportion. I was working on the computer on one side of my room and during this exercise I slid out of my wheelchair. Unfortunately, the beeper, which called the care staff, was in the other side of the room.

I was therefore stuck, face down on the carpet floor of the bedroom. After about three hours (it seemed much longer) of trying to crawl across the floor, I only managed about 3 inches, when one of the care staff came and found me. Through this experience I gained carpet burns on my face, elbows, knees and groin. Needless to say I was unable to go to the toilet during this time and I was lying in my own piss when rescued.

As I'm sure you can imagine I had plenty of time to contemplate my situation whilst lying in that position. I decided there and then that I wasn't going to allow this type of event to reoccur and decided it was time to move out into the community and take my chances in the big wide world of Birmingham

For some disabled people personal assistance is essential to their participation and equality. Disabled people have said that they need a range of flexible services, which they feel in control of. The development of good personal assistance schemes would mean that disabled people would have choice and control over who assists them, how that assistance is delivered, when that assistance is delivered and where that assistance is delivered.

Another main concern is that getting this service is really difficult and under resourced. It is also means tested which again acts as a barrier to disabled people seeking employment.

Finally, the way in which this service is currently provided is not always conducive to disabled people gaining their independence, autonomy and control over their lives.

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE**

135.

We want to choose our own personal assistants in every setting.

136.

There needs to be more availability of 'Direct Payments' so that disabled people have more control over the support they need.

137.

I work for Social Services and I can tell you that they don't think people with learning difficulties have a life after 4pm or on Saturdays and Sundays.... What support does the Council provide at these times?

138.

Access to a support worker when I want and not be restricted by overworked, over stretched support systems.

139.

I need a P.A. to help me operate a computer because my hands can't work one. What does the Council provide?

140.

P.A.'s need training on disability issues and how to assist us. Where is that training currently being provided?

141.

We need to pay P.A.'s a decent wage. They leave otherwise and it costs more money to keep advertising and appointing them.

142.

My wife suffers from multiple diseases. My GP recommended a physiotherapist visiting my home. She came only 4 -6 times so my wife's difficulties were not solved.

143.

Every year for the last 10 years I have had to go through numerous assessments to enable me to employ carers. I have gone through two assessments a year with a different Social worker. It's like starting from the beginning each time. Given the crisis in Social Services is it really necessary?

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE**

144.

Four days after my mum died the Social Services called saying we need to come and assess you. I said I have just lost my mum and I don't need this.

145.

I'm getting older and have acquired impairments myself. I am finding it difficult to support my wife. I am getting no help from Social Services.

146.

It should not just be about money. If I need personal assistance I should have it.

147.

Hard to contact Social Services Department- when you do they do not solve problem. What information and referral systems do they have in place to ensure that if people aren't helped they know about it?

148.

Waited 15 months to get a scribe. How can this time be shortened?

149.

Language support - particularly for people in distress. What's available?

150.

Lack of care provision when going out. How can this be addressed?

151.

I enjoy meeting people. I need more support in doing this. What can the Council do to support me getting support?

152.

Other students thought I was cheating because I had a scribe. How could you do awareness on different accommodations in school?

153.

They don't let me make the final decision - they know best!  
Who in the Council could support a person with this problem?

154.

Being told what support and equipment I need, NOT ASKED!

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE**

155.

What can the Council do to encourage better trained guides in shops?

156.

Better street cleaning more bins so I don't fall over with my stick.

157.

The Council does not help disabled people who need assistance with their weekly household refuse collection.

## **The right to go from A. to B.**

### **TRANSPORT**

Accessible, affordable transport is essential for disabled people to access community life, education and employment. The current situation is that we are not as a city at the point where all disabled people can access transport. Generally the Ring and Ride scheme could never address all disabled people's transport needs. There are also lots of concerns that taxis are unwelcoming and an expensive substitute.

158.

What is the plan to make all public transport accessible?

159.

Transport provision should be more flexible and responsive to the needs of individual disabled people.

160.

Public Transport - Finding out what services are available. Disabled people need to know that the bus that is coming is accessible.

161.

Lack of transport and issues of safety for disabled people in general, especially on the buses.

162.

Hackney Carriage drivers and Private Hire drivers are not trained in disability awareness.

163.

Birmingham City Council should help disabled people with taxi fees.

164.

Taxis are not accessible to disabled people, particularly wheelchair users. What's being done?

165.

Disabled people do not know if any Private Hire companies provide vehicles with wheelchair access.

## **TRANSPORT**

166.

What assistance is at railways for people with specific needs?

167.

Disabled People should have more access to Ring and Ride.

168.

It's not that the Council don't do things. It's that they don't do things equally e.g. Ring and Ride is a virtually unusable service because you have to wait so long. Non-disabled people would not put up with this. They expect us to.

169.

Transport for people who, for various reasons, cannot use buses, trains etc and are unable to pay for taxis etc. Ring and Ride is a good provider but they cannot always go where you want to on short journeys e.g. DSS Office. I have no way other than Ring and Ride for getting there.

170.

What steps are being taken to extend and publicise the 'Ring and Ride' service and reviewing the access of black and ethnic minority disabled people to subsidised transport?

171.

Kneeling buses for wheelchair users. How many? How many planned?

172.

Big numbers and destinations on buses so people can see them clearly. What are the plans?

173.

Using public transport is difficult for people who through their impairments, tire easily. What can operators and the Council do to assist?

174.

No AA/ RAC recovery service for disabled people.

175.

Free parking for wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people throughout Birmingham.

## **TRANSPORT**

176.

Traffic wardens who don't read the disabled badge, and even when they are in view. What rights do disabled people have?

177.

People with a disability unable to park outside their homes. What policies do the Council have?

178.

Clamp/ fine illegal use of disabled parking spaces. Use money for better services.

179.

Bright yellow lines to mark pavements and edges for visually impaired people.

180.

I need accessible transport to go to youth clubs or to go to youth forums. What independent provision is there for young disabled people to travel without their parents?

The environment needs to change not the people with disabilities.

## **ACCESS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE**

Being able to access the city's resources is essential if disabled people are to find equality in their lives. The main concerns in this section centre around what the Council is doing internally to improve access and how can the Council persuade and influence the public, private sector and voluntary sector to make the environment accessible.

Access to leisure facilities was a main area of concern in particular, but not exclusively, for young disabled people.

181.

What steps is the Council taking to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act as regards accessible buildings?

182.

When will all Council buildings be accessible?

183.

Does the Council deny planning permission to businesses that are not accessible?

184.

Can the Council guarantee that all the new development in the City will be fully accessible?

185.

The new markets development must be fully accessible to disabled people.

186.

How many of the Council buildings have accessible toilets?

187.

Is the Council ensuring that there are mirrors in disabled toilets?

188.

We need condom machines at accessible heights.

189.

What is the Council's policy on ensuring that all doorways in its buildings are wide enough for disabled people?

## **ACCESS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE**

190.

What is the Council doing to address the access needs of older disabled people?

191.

What can the Council do to make the "Voice" more accessible?

192.

What does the Council do to be more sensitive to people with sight impairments?

193.

The majority of black and ethnic minority organisations are not in physically accessible buildings what can the Council do to address this?

194.

What steps is the Council taking to ensure that signs are larger and easy to read for disabled people?

195.

Are you making sure that there are lights on steps so we don't fall down them?

196.

There should be more lifts in public buildings. How many lifts does the Council need to fit and when will it be done?

197.

What steps are being taken to ensure that aisles in public meetings are wide enough for disabled people to participate?

198.

What steps are being taken to ensure that there are accessible, affordable venues in the city centre for disabled people to meet?

199.

What steps is the Council taking to improve street lighting so we feel safe?

200.

Broken glass on pavement. What does the Council do to ensure that our pavements are safe for disabled people?

## **ACCESS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE**

201.

What is the Council doing to ensure that their staff is trained in Deaf Awareness?

202.

Public offices and various locations operated by the Council are not fully accessible to disabled people.

203.

What steps are being taken to ensure that audiovisual and Braille signs at the right height are in place in your public buildings?

204.

What is being done to ensure that there are an adequate number of dropped kerbs in the city? When will this be achieved?

205.

All signs should be in Braille. What is the Council's policy?

206.

Cobbles are a real problem for some disabled people. The Council needs to remove cobbles or offer alternative paths.

207.

What are you doing to ensure that there are accessible conference facilities in Birmingham?

208.

How can the Council encourage all shops to have accessible changing facilities?

209.

What steps are being taken to ensure that there is appropriate spacing for wheelchair users in cinemas, concert halls etc?

210.

What steps can the Council take to persuade shops and restaurants etc. to have tables and fittings at varying heights for disabled people?

211.

What can the Council do to encourage escalators or chair lifts in cinemas?

## **ACCESS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE**

212.

What can the Council do to ensure that there is more assistance in shops?

213.

We need large print timetables at train stations. Are you doing this?

214.

What steps or guidance does the Council give to ensure that essential electrical sockets can be reached in its housing stock and in hotels?

215.

More leisure facilities for disabled people. What's the Council doing about it?

216.

What is the Council doing to improve leisure facilities access?

217.

Disabled young people want a central accessible venue to meet in. What can the Council do?

218.

How is the Council increasing disabled people's enjoyment of participating in arts, local culture and heritage?

219.

How is the Council providing more opportunities to access community facilities and play a full part in the life of the community?

220.

How are the Council providing accessible sporting and leisure facilities and opportunities?

221.

Larger accessible toilets - not all wheelchairs are a standard size.

222.

What can the Council do to advise food places to make enough room for disabled people?

## **ACCESS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE**

223.

I get rejected when with my guide dog - restaurants, taxis, shops. What steps can the Council take to tackle this discrimination?

224.

More awareness of disability requirements in social establishments by owners and staff. What is the Council doing to raise that awareness?

225.

Less flashing lights in pubs and clubs. What guidance can the Council give?

226.

Door people need training. How can the Council help?

227.

How can the Council assist in the development of quiet spaces in pubs and clubs?

228.

What can we do to get pubs and clubs to lower the bars and reception areas?

229.

Not being able to go to theatre etc without a carer. What policies can be adopted?

230.

Private clubs and their discrimination are not allowing disabled people to join. How can the Council assist in tackling this?

231.

What are you doing to ensure that disabled people who use wheelchairs can access cash machines?

232.

Payphones are too high. What is being done?

233.

Many supermarket shelves are too high. What can the Council do?

234.

Make more social events for disabled people. What can the Council do to promote this?

## **ACCESS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE**

235.

Helping people to have fun. What does the Council do?

236.

Public toilets must be fully accessible for disabled people so that they can retain their mobility and independence.

237.

What is the Council doing to provide more disabled toilets in the city? How is it encouraging shops, restaurants offices and other facilities in the city to provide accessible toilets?

238.

All toilets, including disabled, should be kept in good condition. What is the Council doing about this?

239.

Disabled toilets should not be locked even with a Radar key. What is your position?

## EDUCATION

There was overwhelming support for properly funded inclusive education. Many who responded felt that disabled people in mainstream education were not getting the support they needed. They were very concerned that teachers were not receiving the training they needed to bring about inclusion.

Bullying and name calling was also a big issue for many disabled people. Young disabled people felt that they were not given much choice by the Council, teachers and parents.

240.

Segregation is still a prominent model of education within the city.

241.

Educate and inform the appropriate people. How is training targeted?

242.

Need far more resources for inclusive education. How do we get them?

243.

Teachers should be more reasonable. How can the Council bridge this gap between teachers and students?

244.

Prior knowledge of access. What information do educational establishments have on how accessible they are? Can't the Council require them to have this information?

245.

Local access for all students. All disabled people should be able to attend a school in their neighbourhood so they can grow up with their friends. What more needs to be done to ensure this?

246.

Lack of information about colleges. How can disabled people access the information they need?

247.

For colleges and universities not to be money orientated around disability issues.

## **EDUCATION**

248.

The special school I go to won't let me take my voice activated computer home with me. This prevents me from doing the homework that the school sets me. I have been phoning the Council for 2 years now and got nowhere.

249.

How is the Council attracting greater financial support for all schools and colleges?

250.

I want equal access to a college education. How is the Council promoting this?

251.

We need disability equality training in schools, what's the position?

252.

Accessible information about everything and in all lessons. - Large Print - Braille - Tape - Pictorial – BSL (British Sign Language) - Computer disk.  
How does the Council assist in providing this?

253.

Extortionate college fees. What help is available to disabled people?

254.

Existing support systems, e.g. the statement system needs to be improved. What is the Council's view?

255.

What is the Authority doing to promote Disabled self-help support groups in schools?

256.

Is the unfair way the Local Education Authority can dictate to me where I must be educated. I'm being forced into special school because I'm told by the same LEA that no mainstream school has to accept me.

257.

How does the Council invest in people, equipment and training for disabled people on disability issues?

## EDUCATION

258.

Could not go to the school of my choice because it was not accessible. What's the plan to make all schools accessible?

259.

Given no choices about my schooling. How is the Council going to extend disabled people's choices?

260.

When I was at mainstream school I was bullied. Then I went to a special school. The teachers had a meeting about me leaving. When I finished school I applied for a creative arts course. My headmaster blocked my application how could the Council help me?

261.

I feel unjustified that I have to go to a college that doesn't support me - I feel I should have the right to decide where I go for my education.

262.

Full support with young people in control - this includes breaks and homework.

263.

Social Services would not let me go to the college of my choice.

264.

Let students do their own thing - independently, not be controlled and told what to do, especially about personal things.

265.

Awareness of disabled they needs how some people need to wear trainers.

266.

People laughing at you and making fun of you. How is this dealt with?

267.

Ignorance of people when people say hurtful things and use ugly terms about other people.

## **EDUCATION**

268.

Fellow pupils not understanding about my problems and the help I needed. What can be done to address this?

269.

Bullying at school should stop. What's the Authority going to do about it?

270.

I have Cerebral Palsy and even the teachers made fun of me at Primary school. What is being done?

271.

What action are schools taking if people are called names?

272.

Tutors not helping you to deal with problems, or developing your skills and knowledge. We all have a learning disability.

273.

I was excluded from games both national and international - this made me feel isolated. When I went to school I was always put at the back of the classroom. How are disabled people made to feel included?

274.

The teachers and parents didn't believe I would do exams. What could a person in this situation do?

275.

Time to complete the course - I can't do it in two years!!  
What flexibility is there in the system?

276.

I get refused courses because it will take me too long.  
What flexibility is there in the system?

277.

Teachers should be given an introduction to their individual students first. How do teachers learn how to teach disabled pupils?

## EDUCATION

278.

Being allowed to do what other students do, re: trips and experiments. How can teaching practice overcome this?

279.

Not getting enough support in mainstream secondary school. How can disabled people get this support?

280.

Other students should be made aware of any hidden disabilities. (Plus teachers.)

281.

The care side at boarding college was appalling; I was lucky to get to lectures on time.

282.

What is being done to tell people about disability from a young age?

283.

Why can't we teach sign language in all schools?

284.

Being in a mainstream school was never accessible. How can this be improved?

285.

Being in a special school we never got a proper education. How can disabled people in special schools receive a good education?

286.

At ten they put me in a mainstream school and they put me in year 2.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

It was clear from this piece of work that disabled people do want to work but were prevented by the barriers they encountered. Disabled people need employers to develop flexible ways of working and support their disabled employees. Disabled people were also calling for more access to further education and training to gain the qualifications, skills and knowledge so far denied them by the education system.

287.

What steps is the Council taking to ensure that the staff reflects the local population including disabled people?

288.

What is the Council doing to value diversity in the workforce?

289.

What is the Council doing to invest in people/staff?

290.

Lack of flexibility in work experience. Is the Council developing flexible working practices?

291.

There should be more disabled teachers so that they are more aware of student's problems and accessing.

292.

Equal Opportunities Policy - we need positive action to greatly increase the number of disabled people working for the Council.

293.

No choice of work experience. What choices do the Council offer?

294

Should be no work experience barriers.

295.

How does the Council try to understand the needs of all employed staff, including disabled people?

## **EMPLOYMENT**

296.

How does the Council support disabled people in finding voluntary work?

297.

Access to night classes for further education. What does the Council do about this?

298.

Does the Council employ full time support workers to help find employment for black and ethnic minority disabled people, especially for those who have suffered mental health difficulties, including a job shop?

299.

Ensuring that staff reflects population - when setting up new services the staffing should include black and ethnic minority disabled people, user involvement is a must from the beginning.

300.

For young disabled people, training and employment was also a big issue. Increased access to training and more flexibility amongst employers with regards to working hours was needed if they were to be enabled to reach their potential.

301.

There is a need for employment for black and ethnic minority disabled people as it plays an important role in building self-confidence and self-esteem and developing social networks.

302.

When business comes to Birmingham, why isn't the Coalition of Disabled People involved from the start?

## CONSULTATION

The emergence of the Coalition of Disabled People Birmingham that already has over 500 members is a significant development for the city. The Council at last has an organisation that it can not only effectively consult with, but also enter into partnerships with, to resolve many of the issues in this Blueprint.

We need to recognise that we need to move from consultation to real partnerships with the disabled community. In doing so the city must recognise that we need to pay disabled people for their time, their knowledge, skills and expertise. They, disabled people, are the experts on disability issues.

This Blueprint is basically the agenda for the Council and the community to get round the table on. In particular, disabled people were very angry about the lack of proper consultation with the Social Services department. They were also concerned that black and minority ethnic disabled people were under represented.

303.

Will the Council ensure that the Coalition of Disabled People in Birmingham is consulted on all issues relating to disabled people?

304.

Will the Council recognise the Coalition as the main consulting body as it is now the largest organisation of disabled people and is democratic and accountable to its members?

305.

Will the Council work with the Coalition in partnership to improve things for disabled people and in doing so ensure that the Coalition is funded beyond its three year grant for services and consultation to Council departments?

306.

They should tell us before arranging things. How can the Council get better at this?

307.

What firm policies does the Council have to ensure that all its activities are accessible to all?

308. What steps has the Council taken to implement the recommendations of the "House of Cards" report?

## CONSULTATION

309.

Does the Council recognise and pay for expertise when consulting on black and ethnic minority disability issues?

310.

How does the local authority take disabled people's issues to the national government? How can it involve disabled people in this?

311.

How can the Council ensure that consultation is embedded in every City Council policy, and carried out in practice?

312.

Disabled people's views are not taken seriously. Not enough feed back after consultation. How can this be improved?

313.

We believe in the Search Team that there is a commitment to service users.....  
It's just that we are bottom of the list all the time.

314.

Search Team example 1.

One of the problems we have found recently is that different sections of Social Services do their own thing. As a result of this and lack of consultation with it's own User Involvement Unit the recent consultation on Social Services restructuring was sent to Bill Lyons Chair of the Search Team. Bill resigned 3 years ago and organisations like the Coalition missed out all together. We believe that if the department is to have a User Involvement Unit it should at least have a lead role in consultation planning along with the Search Team and other organisations.

315.

Social Services cuts - No consultation first

316.

Social Services cuts - Dishonesty about all aspects of the cuts.

317.

Social Services should listen to the views of disabled people - we are the 'experts' - we know best what we need and what works and what doesn't work.

## CONSULTATION

318.

Social Services cuts -the consultation was tokenistic and only happened when challenged.

319.

How can the Council develop greater involvement between users and service providers?

320.

How can the Council ensure User Involvement at all levels?

321.

Search Team example 2

Following a conference in January 2001 organised by the Search Team a physical disability reference group was formed and a commitment to set one up for older people. The concern we have is that the officers who come to these meetings can only give you information and not answers. What can Social Services do to ensure that disabled people are actively involved and consulted at the highest and most strategic level in Social Services?

322.

Where was our involvement in the restructuring of Social Services? If they listened to us they wouldn't be in the mess they're in!

323.

How are voluntary organisations identifying or using strategies to increase participation of black and ethnic minority disabled people?

324.

There needs to be more consultation with disabled people about taxis and private hire issues.

325.

The white disability movement did not generally meet the needs of black and ethnic minority disabled people. How can the Council address this issue?

326.

What strategies does the Council need to adopt to support black and ethnic minority disabled people in Birmingham?

## CONSULTATION

327.

Will the Council appoint a black worker (preferably disabled) with specific responsibility for supporting black and ethnic minority disabled people, preferably attached to an active organisation, with a focus on employment, training, independent living and raising political awareness?

328.

Will the Council expand and formalise a steering group of black and ethnic minority disabled people to oversee the development of work with and for Black and Ethnic Minority disabled people?

329.

How can the Council assist disabled people to become proactive in the community?

330.

Need for a 'Centre for Independent Living', run by disabled people, for disabled people. What is the progress on this?

331.

We need community-based services based on what we know we need not on what professionals think we need. How is the Council developing this?

332.

How does the Council propose to use and acknowledge our skills and knowledge?

333.

How are you consulting people with disabilities about your inclusion strategy?

334.

Children with and without disabilities have not been consulted enough about issues to do with their needs. How is the Council consulting?

335.

More information should be given to enable action to be taken. How can the Council improve this?

336.

More public information on disability. How does the Council support it?

## CONSULTATION

337.

Is the Council developing a consortium of organisations working with Black disabled people/groups?

338.

Does the Council support the Social Model of Disability?

339.

How does the Council establish systems for the gathering, collating and maintaining information about the numbers and location of black disabled people in Birmingham, to enable targeting of services and information?

340.

Participants felt that the Black and Ethnic Minority organisations do not always meet the needs of black and ethnic minority disabled people because they do not understand disability issues. What can the Council do to remedy this?

341.

black and ethnic minority disabled people are not always made to feel welcome and experience discrimination within some disability organisations. How can we change this to make our organisations represent the total community?

342.

Further research into the needs of black and ethnic minority disabled people in Birmingham to ensure appropriate services are developed.

343.

The white disability movement has not been able to meet the needs of black and ethnic minority disabled people. How can we remedy this as a Council and community?

344.

How does the Council ensure that there is an ongoing review of services and needs to actively meet the changing experiences and needs of black and ethnic minority disabled people?

345.

Impairments that affect predominantly black and ethnic minority disabled people are not always seen or classed as an impairment by some mainstream disability organisations.

## **CONSULTATION**

346.

How does the Council support young disabled people with an age group of 13 - 21 years?

347.

There should be a conference held for children with disabilities this year.

348.

Young disabled people want to organise a big conference, inviting more young disabled people.

349.

What is the Council doing to assist in the establishment of a national network of young disabled people?

350.

Young disabled people having a say and controlling our own lives. What does the Council do to promote this?

351.

Lessons need to be learnt from children who are excluded. How are you listening to these voices?

## **BENEFITS**

The main areas of concern here were that benefits were still means tested and that some disabled people with specific impairments were falling through the net.

352.

When is the Council going to stop charging disabled people for care services?

353.

When is the Council going to stop means testing for the disabled facilities grant?

354.

The benefit system is not flexible with regards to impairments that are "cyclic" i.e. have good and bad periods (e.g. mental health problems, sickle cell, epilepsy).

355.

Simplify the system of benefits and paperwork. Could the Council simplify the assessment process?

356.

How can disability led organisations be involved in the assessment process?

357.

Disabled cash lunch as opposed to meals on wheels?

358.

Help for those in the "Catch 22" trap. How can the Council support disabled people on benefits who want to work?

359.

There is a lack of information about what's available and what you are entitled to.

360.

People becoming disabled after the age of 60 should be allowed to claim disability allowance.

361.

Less consultation more action in direct payments

## **CULTURALLY SENSITIVE SERVICES**

The lack of involvement of black and minority ethnic disabled people in the consultative process is a major factor in the lack of service provision that is culturally sensitive. The under representation of black and ethnic minority workers in key service delivery areas also contributes to black and minority ethnic disabled people having little choice or control over how those services are delivered. Another theme that emerged was that services should be community based, not centrally delivered.

362.

What does the Council do to provide culturally sensitive services?

363.

Culturally accessible provision e.g. appropriate food.

364.

Pro-active work with other organisations to increase their physical, cultural and emotional accessibility to black and ethnic minority disabled people, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that all service providers are complying with British and European law. Is this going on at all?

365.

What steps does the Council take to ensure that services to disabled people are provided from an appropriate range of ethnic backgrounds?

366.

We need to establish a political body that is able to feed in to the government - for example about changes needed to make the Disability Discrimination Act more culturally sensitive. Can the Council assist in this?

## HEALTH

Although the focus of the Blueprint was not on the Health Service, disabled people expressed concern over what will happen when the new Primary Health Care Trusts take over.

They were also concerned about their lack of involvement in this process of change and how both the Council and the new Primary Health Care Trusts could work with disabled people to improve coordination and cooperation.

367.

Why aren't disabled people being consulted about the new plans for the Health Service?

368.

Social Services and Health don't work together but it's us disabled people who pay!

369.

Dyslexia was diagnosed at 24. What steps are being taken to get earlier diagnosis?

370.

How do the Council improve access to and the quality of health facilities and reduce factors that contribute to ill health?

## **SEAMLESS SERVICES**

Through out this process of collecting the information for this Blueprint, the creation of the Independent Living Centre, run by disabled people, was the issue that most people wanted to see addressed. Over 2000 disabled people have said yes to the centre currently being proposed.

Many disabled people are reliant on services working together to ensure their basic human rights. When this breaks down disabled people suffer. The lack of any one service can plunge disabled people into crisis and dependency and result in resources being wasted in other service areas. The bed-blocking issue is but one case in point.

371.

We need an Independent Living Centre that can bring together all the services that we need to live independently. We need to break down the bureaucracy. The money we could save doing this would provide better services.

372.

Does the Council have a seamless service where departments are encouraged and empowered to work together and make links so that if you visit one you can access other services through that one organisation, like a one-stop shop?

373.

There are many issues when we have to wait and wait to have facilities provided by different departments. What steps is the Council taking to address this?

374.

How does the Council improve facilities for those in social care, disabled people, children and young people?

## **LANGUAGE**

Disabled people were aware of how the inappropriate use of language can damage their life chances. They were fed up of having to medicalise their needs in order to get resources.

## **LANGUAGE**

375.

People should not be labelled. How is the Council going to dismantle the labelling process?

376.

The way that 'disability' is defined, within both black and white communities, was an important issue. Participants felt that too much significance was given to definitions or labels of disability imposed by non-disabled people (e.g. health service work).

377.

How does the Council ensure that its publications use the right terminology so that it doesn't offend disabled people?

## LEGISLATION

There was surprisingly little response in this area compared to others. Perhaps the most telling issue was that disabled people did not know what rights they had and how to go about enforcing them. There was also a plea for the Council to help disabled people take their issues to a wider audience such as the national government or the Disability Rights Commission.

378.

How will the Council enforce the laws on disability?

379.

The Disability Discrimination Act does not adequately recognise the issues of diversity amongst disabled people and the benefits system was not sensitive to some 'cyclic' conditions, which may cause unnecessary stress.

380.

The Disability Discrimination Act is not perceived to be working for black and ethnic minority disabled people because it does not appear to adequately encompass diversity issues.

381.

How can the Council improve disability legislation?

382.

How and where do disabled people gain knowledge of "legislation" and specialist support?

## RESOURCES

The fundamental issue if the Council is going to improve the services essential to disabled people is how to redirect money from one pot to another. Disabled people are concerned that the Council finds this difficult to do and that instead of creating the services we need, the Council will pour resources into services that are no longer appropriate.

383.

More Independent Living resources. Why is more spent on keeping us in than keeping us out?

384.

Is there support for and a commitment to long term funding for other organisations wanting to develop work with/for black and ethnic minority disabled people?

385.

It costs more to assess some of us than what we are being assessed for. Can't the Council save money and make it simpler?

386.

Can the Council devise systems where money spent on keeping people dependent can be transferred to promoting independence?

387.

Do not make money an issue. People should have the right to live in the community no matter what it costs.

388.

Concerns about the losing the benefits of existing services (i.e. Day Centres) if support for disabled people is provided in a different way in future.

389.

The Council should support organisations of disabled people first, not organisations for disabled people over which we have little control?

390.

How does the Council identify the existing provision of support and services available to black and ethnic minority disabled people in Birmingham?

## **RESOURCES**

391.

To identify the needs of black and ethnic minority disabled people in Birmingham in relation to services and support.

## **SAFETY**

Although a small section in this Blueprint, the issues identified here concern many disabled people and are composites. In particular, disabled people are very concerned about abuse in residential care and feel disconnected from those disabled people living in these situations.

Many disabled people also felt unsafe in the communities they lived in.

392.

We need safe houses for disabled people escaping abuse in institutions. What is the Council doing to record and monitor abuse and provide safe houses?

393.

We need a 24hour help line for disabled people who are being abused.

394.

Vandals break in. What policies does the Council have or need to create so disabled people feel safe in the community?

## **TRAINING**

It was widely felt that there needed to be more training of Council staff by Disabled people on The Social Model of Disability and in "Customer Care" issues. Also that disabled people need training on the Social Model.

395.

There needs to be more training in the Council to raise officers awareness of issues and definitions of 'disability'

396.

What work is being done in the black and ethnic minority communities to raise the awareness of race and disability issues?

397.

More disability awareness conferences to enabled more barriers to be lifted. What are the Council's plans?

398.

I had a new Social Worker who knew nothing about me, including my needs. Social workers should be trained by disabled people on the Social Model.

## **PLACE**

399.

I want somewhere to go run by disabled people; where I belong; where our culture is expressed; where I can feel pride. Where is it?

## **ATTITUDES**

400.

Finally, many disabled people taking part in this Blueprint expressed concerns about oppressive attitudes of Council staff and the wider community. These included stereotyping disabled people, rudeness, being patronised, experiencing prejudice, being bossed around by social workers and people making assumptions about you.

Moreover, disabled people felt ignored or treated as the problem or as an embarrassment. Disabled people felt that people often didn't treat them with respect and that officers often invaded their privacy, particularly in residential situations.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This is a partnership project between the Coalition of Disabled People in Birmingham and the Equalities Division of the City Council.

We would like to thank first and foremost the thousands of disabled people who put forward their issues that make up this Blueprint.

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[Editorial Note: This document has been produced for in word for transmission into alternative accessible formats and via electronic communications e.g. e-mail and web page siting. Attention has been taken to preserve all aspects (e.g. grammar, punctuation, and capitalisation of the original print document). Any comments on this should be forwarded to those indicated above]