

# What Learning Disability Partnership Board Meetings Should Look Like

Reach Report - March 2015



## Background



At the Reach Parliament on Monday 23rd February 2015 Reach members looked at Stoke-on-Trent City Council's report 'What Partnership Board Meetings Should Look Like.'



Reach members discussed the report's 4 options of what meetings could look like over the next year.



After discussing the choices members spoke about which options they thought would work best and why.

# What Members Discussed



Reach members shared their personal experiences of the Partnership Board before discussing the different options.



The 4 options were:

- nothing would change
- interactive, web based communications
- linking in with other networks and forums
- 2 business meetings a year and some planned events.



Members talked about what they thought would and wouldn't work as well as choosing their preferred option.

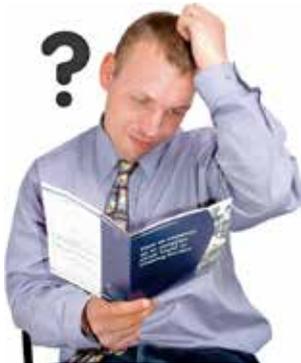
## Option 1 - Nothing would change



Most people felt this option was OK but did feel lots of things about the meeting need to change.



- “Keeping things as they are is OK but if you stick to the workshops then more people need to go to the meetings.”
- “It doesn’t work unless lots of people go to the meetings.”
- “So far I don’t think the meetings have worked.”
- “It depends on who sets the questions, I don’t always think they are accessible.”
- “Need to make sure the balance is right, if Reach have more people to support then everyone will need to support, we need to make sure Patsy can still have her say as the coordinator of the project.”



## Option 2 - Interactive, web based communications

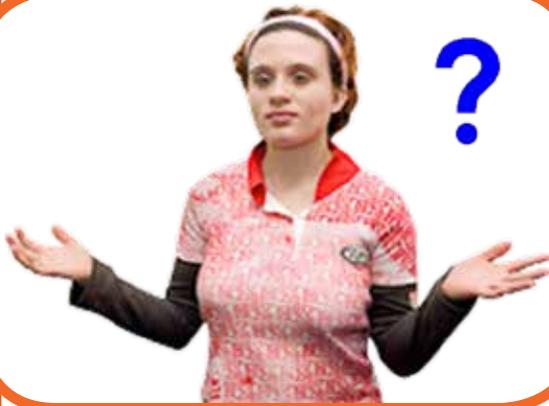


Nobody at the Parliament meeting thought this option was a good idea.



- “What if people don’t have computers or social media?”
- “No to this one, it’s important to be able to go to meetings and get your opinions across.”
- “It’s important to speak to people and form a relationship with them.”
- “That wouldn’t be a Learning Disability Partnership Board, it would just be them (Health and Social Care services).”
- “The meetings are supposed to be there for people with disabilities and carers to get to speak to important people, how would that work with this option?”
- “Not for me, I want meetings with real people, that works.”

## Option 3 - Link in with other networks and forums



People at the meeting did not know if this would work, saying they did not know enough information about this option to make a real choice.



- “Smaller groups could be better but I’m not sure about this choice.”
- “We don’t know enough about the other meetings.”
- “No, if the meetings don’t happen we’ll have no Partnership Board and nowhere to speak up.”
- “Not a good option - Who are the groups? When (times and dates) are the meetings held? Where are the meetings held?”
- “Other meetings could work providing it would not just shelve the meetings.”
- “Are there evening meetings?”
- “What about support for the meetings?”

## Option 4 - Two business meeting and other planned events



This was the most popular choice at the meeting, Reach members said they feel it is important to have face to face meetings and also to have a co-chair who has a disability.



- “The meetings are good, we get to speak to people we wouldn't have a chance to speak to, if we didn't have the meetings where else could we do this?”
- “I like this option but it does mean we would lose the workshops, I think they work better than just sitting around a table”
- “How long would the two meetings be? Would you need full day meetings?”
- “Only having two meetings would be better, give people more time to work on other things and we might get more people at the meetings”
- “How many ‘planned events’?”

## Other comments about the meetings



"The meetings need to be looked at as more important, people don't seem to think they are important anymore."



"It would be a massive shame if we lost our only chance to sit face to face with people and give them a grilling."



"Something needs to change as the meetings have not really been working recently."



"There are never any actions or feedback from the meetings - just lots of talk."



"Most of the problems with Partnership Boards are not new ones. It's always been like this."

## Other comments about the meetings



“No views or feedback comes back to us, what happens after things have been decided? We don’t find out at all.”



“Feedback is really important: it doesn’t come back to us so where does it go?”



People at the meeting also discussed the Staffordshire Partnership Board meetings.

“Could our meetings be more like theirs?”

“I don’t think theirs are as good, people don’t get to take part in the business meetings. How can it be a Partnership Board if no one with a disability gets to go to the business meetings?”

# Contacts



To find out more about the work Reach are doing to support people with learning disabilities to speak up, please get in touch.



To contact Reach, please telephone 01782 747872 or email [reach@asist.co.uk](mailto:reach@asist.co.uk)



Reach is part of Asist, Advocacy Services in Staffordshire.



Thanks to Photosymbols for the images used in this report.