**Chair’s Note**

Meeting: Hiring and Skills Working Group

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| **Date** | **Tuesday 23 April 2024** |
| **Time** | **14.00 - 16.00** |
| **Place** | **Waltham Forest College**  **MS Teams link:**  [Click here to join the meeting](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NDg3ZGQxYzMtMTU4YS00MDFiLTkwOTMtY2FlOGFhMDFkZjgw%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2230653dea-fb01-4b4c-8ddf-c183f89febfb%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%227f996cd2-092e-4cfb-99b6-655810cd3986%22%7d) |

**Co-Chairs:**

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| Karima Khandker, Head of Resourcing, Skills, Emerging Talent & EDI, **Thames**  **Water (In the Chair)**  Janet Gardner, Principal and CEO, **Waltham Forest College** | | |
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**Confirmed Attendees:**

Alison May, Assistant Director for Skills and Employment, **London Borough of Lambeth**

Gemma Cook, HR Business Partner, **London City Airport**

Sophie Cloutterbuck**, London Higher Civic Network**

Claire Churchill**, NHS**

Tahera Jama**, Senior Manager (Recruitment), University of London (Online)**

David Steeds**, Group Partnership Manager for London and Essex, Department for Work and Pensions (Jobcentre plus) (Online)**

Claire Southwood**, Project Manager, NHS**

Daniela Kirchner**, Waltham Forest college**

Claire Cookson**, Project Search (online)**

Mary Vine-Morris, Area Director (London), **Association of Colleges (AoC)**

Janet Wingate-Whyte**, DFN Project Search**

Jack Rayner**, Generate (online)**

Nadeem Khalifa**, Waltham Forest College**

Bonita Lammim**, Waltham Forest College**

**GLA officers confirmed:**

Michael Heanue**, Principal Policy Officer – Skills & Employment, GLA**

Shehreen Najam, Senior Policy Officer – **Skills & Employment, GLA (Online)**

Rachel Williamson on behalf of Souraya Ali**, Programme Director Economic Fairness, Economic Fairness Unit GLA**

**Apologies sent by:**

Mark Hilton**,** Policy Delivery Director, Membership, **BusinessLDN**

Rebecca Baker**, Film London**

Janet Gardner, Principal and CEO, **Waltham Forest College**

Jennie Stone**, NHS**

Darren de Souza**, Policy & Projects Officer, London Higher**

Divya Patel**, Outreach Recruitment Manager, London Fire Brigade**

Hannah Candassamy**, Senior Project Officer, Economics & Fairness, GLA**

**Attendees yet to confirm and tentative:**

Claire Rae**,** Deputy Director of HR**, University of London**

James Watkins, Head of Policy and Public Impact, **London Chamber**

Claire Churchill**, NHS**

Rosemary Oduntan Oke**, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham**

Jackie Chapman**, Managing Director, Capital City College Group**

James Lloyd**, Skills and Employment Strategy Manager, TfL**

Nina Hemmings**, Workforce Transformation Lead (anchor programme) – London, Health Education England**

Evelyn Odeyemi, Project Manager, **NHS North East London**

John Soper**, Head of EDI, Middlesex University**

Helen Connor**, Senior Communication and Events Officer LAIN, GLA**

1. **Introduction and Welcomes**

(14:00 – 14:15)

**Karima** to welcome members:

* Please welcome attendees to the meeting
* Housekeeping – please request the online attendees to keep their mic mute and check whether they can hear everyone in the room
* Please extend an apology to the group on behalf of Janet who is not able to attend the meeting due to a family emergency
* Please ask any delegates who are here for the first time on behalf of other members to introduce themselves
* Please thank Janet Gardner for hosting us at the Waltham Forest College
* **Recap of 2023 H&S working group meetings:** We covered a broad range of topics in 2023. This included disability- focusing on publishing disability pay gaps and achieving disability confident status. And also race and ethnicity, retention and progression. We had an opportunity in January 2024 to look at our learning from these sessions in some depth and hear again about transferring the apprenticeship levy and supporting prison leavers in the workplace. **Recap of our last session, held at the LAIN conference in February 2024**: At the conference we explored taking a deeper look at disability and inclusion of disabled people in the workforce. Dianne Lightfoot joined us from the Business Disability Forum. She covered a range of good practices including;
  1. **The importance of culture in your workforce**. Senior managers are important, they need to help create a psychological safe workplace where reasonable adjustments and disability can be part of a daily conversation
  2. **She shared nuanced views on workforce data**. The whole identify around disability is very personal and complex. It is important to ask questions in the right way and to make sure you are clear on why you are collecting data- what outcome will it help you achieve?
  3. **Keep a focus on the barriers around disability and what you need to do to remove them,** most adjustments are not costly to put in place.
* In our discussion we highlighted three areas we wanted to work on together
  1. Better understanding disability in our workforces
  2. Focus on culture, including amongst leaders and hiring managers
  3. Future recruitment from underrepresented groups, including neurodivergent people and the use of supported internships

**Key focus of the meeting**

* In the previous meetings the members expressed a keen interest to learn more about supported internship schemes. At this meeting we will discuss current best practices, challenges and what kind of support our members would like around supported internships.
* Some of us will already have supported internship schemes in place and others are still considering them for our organisation. It would be good to think about how we can support one another take the next step- and for the leading organisations to think about how we can support more London organisations to consider supported internships.

**2. Supported Internships (Best practices & challenges)**

(14:15 – 15:15)

* Please invite **Claire Cookson from Project Search** to share her reflections with the group
* Claire is the CEO of DFN Project SEARCH. Project SEARCH have 69 programmes and has supported over 1000 interns into work. Over 60 per cent of its graduates obtain fulltime paid employment.
* Project SEARCH have an ambition to get 20,000 young adults with learning difficulties and autism info full-time paid jobs over the next decade.
* When Claire has finished speaking please introduce learners from Waltham Forest College who will share their experience of Supported Internships.
* We have shared these questions with them in advance;
  1. What job do you do? What are some of the tasks you do?
  2. What do you like about your Supported Internship?
  3. Is there anything difficult about your Supported Internship?
  4. What would you like to do when your Supported Internship finishes?’
* Please open the discussion to members of the group. You may wish to use the following questions:
  1. What is the biggest hurdle for you in setting up a Supported Internship scheme?
  2. If you already have a Supported Internship scheme up and running-
* Do you have any questions on getting the most out of your scheme?
* Do you have any lessons learnt or tips for organisations looking to set up a scheme?
  1. For everyone, what can we achieve as a group that pushes forward Supported Internships, and how can we get more London employers to think about whether they could host a Supported Internship?
     1. minute Break

**3. LAIN programme updates**

(15:25 – 15:45)

* Please invite Rachel to give updates (she will have some slides to share).
* The updates are as follows (Rachel to provide details in this section):

**Data collection**

* We have asked members of the group whether they can contribute to the end of year data collection. The LAIN steering committee would like to collect data twice a year, at mid year and end of year. This helps us understand the collective impact across our organisations. This helped us with the impact report we launched at the conference and helps others understand what we are aiming to do.
* The team are on hand to help. Ultimately this is voluntary, but if you can support that would be great.
* We expect to use this data at an autumn event for your CEOs and the Mayor.

**Other groups**

* You might be aware that the Place Based Working Group has re-grouped and is pushing forward two ideas with the chairing of Caroline Wilson at LB Islington and Kate Gibbs at LB Camden. One is looking at matching community groups or small businesses with under-used space owned by TfL. The other group is looking at pathways from employment support schemes into NHS jobs. They are asking NHS partners to open up their recruitment processes and make roles more accessible. Both ideas might be of interest to local authorities and FE members.

**Action planning for the next year**

* We’d like to share the working group’s plans with the Steering Committee in June. At the conference you identified the theme of disability and some things you’d like to work on;
  + Better understanding disability in our workforces
  + Focus on culture, including amongst leaders and hiring managers
  + Future recruitment from underrepresented groups, including neurodivergent people and the use of supported internships
* We can explore these themes at our quarterly meetings. This year we are also keen to facilitate;
  + A story-telling video about how we are learning from one another, using students and a professional production company
  + Explore doing some ‘show and tell’ events. Do you have any good practices that you would like to share with other anchors?
  + Explore more collaboration between members- for example would you like to do some learning together?, do you think a partnering with another member as a mentor might help you progress a particular challenge? Or would you like to produce a guide that you could share with other anchor organisations?
* Do you have particular things you would like to prioritise? The LAIN are on hand to help convene meetings, bring in experts, facilitate partnering or learning opportunities.

**4. Wrap up and next steps (Karima)**

(15:45 – 16:00)

* Open discussion to check with members if they have specific preferences on what key areas of focus they would like to bring into their next group session?.
* Wrap up and agree any actions coming out of the discussion
* AOB- would be nice if other members would like to share any upcoming events, projects or opportunities.

**Further notes**

Here are some ideas for future inputs.

The GLA are members of [Business Disability Forum](https://intranet.london.gov.uk/chief-officer/aboutHRPeople/disability-resource-hub/business-disability-forum) and their CEO Diane Lightfoot has spoken to the Hiring and Skills working group twice. We may like to ask Diane to come back to share the disability data report she mentioned to us in February. Diane would be well placed to speak on reasonable adjustments and did this session for the GLA a few months ago.

[Inclusion London](https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/) are members of the GLA’s disabled stakeholder forum. They co-designed the GLAs internal training on disability inclusion. We have contacts here.

The GLA disability network really enjoyed a recent talk from from [Leo Capella](https://www.linkedin.com/in/leo-capella-484b8937?originalSubdomain=uk) from the National Autistic Society, who spoke about NeuroDiversity and employer support, and Hester/Kelly Granger from [Perfectly Autistic](https://www.perfectlyautistic.co.uk/), who shared their experiences in the workplace. On the ND front we also have the work of [Neurodiversity In Business](https://neurodiversityinbusiness.org/) who would welcome the opportunity to  their work and survey results.

[Reena Anand](https://www.reenaanand.com/) provides fascinating talks on the role of employers supporting parents with disabled children, and the impact of race (a contact through the Anchors suppliers event we held in fact).

A workshop idea, that could quickly be put together, could focus on the benefits of facilitating staff networks for those with disabilities. Radius networks or [Purple Space](https://www.purplespace.org/), would be well placed to facilitate. We could also include an employer perspective, for example this is from the [GLA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFPR8U29Qvs&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fintranet.london.gov.uk%2F&source_ve_path=OTY3MTQ&feature=emb_imp_woyt).

How we can support collaboration

The GLA has a modest budget and could support collaborative efforts, ideally with staff or in-kind support from other anchors. Some ideas we might want to explore include

-coaching or mentoring support to understand their own organisation’s strengths and areas for improvement

-exploring the benefits of joining one of the many disability member networks together

-developing a guide or tool for other organisations trying to progress the same outcomes as us

A long list of disabled people and resources who could help us (with thanks to the GLA staff network)

# Disability Equality Training

* [Rosemary Frazer](mailto:rosemaryspindrift@yahoo.co.uk) – Disability equality trainer
* [Tanvi Vyas](mailto:tanvi.vyas@hotmail.co.uk) – Disability equality trainer and consultant specialising in transport
* [Sarah Rennie](mailto:Sarah@SPRennie.co.uk) – Disability equality trainer and consultant specialising in transport
* [Reena Anand](https://www.reenaanand.com/) – Intersectional lens disability trainer and consultant. Specialising in autism + impact on Black, Brown and ethnically diverse communities

## Visual Impairment Awareness Training

* [Yusuf Osman](mailto:yusuf@yusufosman.org.uk) – Visual impairment awareness trainer and consultant
* [Terry James](mailto:tel.james@tiscali.co.uk) – Visual impairment awareness trainer

# Digital Inclusion & Online Audits

* [Triple Tap Tech](https://tripletaptech.org/) - Assistive technology experts
* [Amina Aweis](mailto:AminaAweis1150@gmail.com) – Accessible technology expert and speaker
* [Accessible Influence](https://accessibleinfluence.com/) - Accessible technology and online learning experts
* [Angharad Paget-Jones](https://www.linkedin.com/in/angharad-megan-paget-jones-82819189/) – Visual access and digital marketing specialist
* [Holly Tuke](https://t.co/OasRSXXxTr?amp=1) - Assistive technology expert
* [Ability Net](https://abilitynet.org.uk/?gclid=CjwKCAjwkaSaBhA4EiwALBgQaAJk0-3yyB9Je5zzuQEswUHtKIOYVeedPxw69-3WQnvSngQNs1dvqRoCvc4QAvD_BwE) - Assistive technology support and accessibility audits

# Disabled People’s Organisations, Advocacy Groups & Accessibility Organisations

* [Transport for All](https://www.transportforall.org.uk/) – Support, campaigning and consultancy for accessible transport.
* [Proudlock Associates](https://proudlockassociates.com/) – Accessibility audits for the built environment & consultancy services on accessible design
* [Chronically Brown](https://chronicallybrown.com/) – Support and advocacy for South Asians with invisible and visible disability
* [Tourettes Hero](https://www.touretteshero.com/) – Advocacy collective for disabled people
* [WheelieQueer](https://www.wheeliequeer.net/) – Advocacy and support for disabled people, with a particular focus on Welfare / Benefits.
* [People First Self Advocacy](https://peoplefirstltd.com/) - Advocacy and information by individuals with learning disabilities.
* [Inclusion London](https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/) – Deaf and Disabled people’s advocacy organisation
* [VocalEyes](https://vocaleyes.co.uk/) – Supporting blind and visually impaired people to enjoy the arts
* [Disability Collaborative Network](https://www.musedcn.org.uk/) – supporting inclusive heritage practice
* [Reasonable Access](https://www.reasonableaccess.org.uk/) – Peer support for disability access rights.
* [Epiphanies of Equity](https://www.christianaobeysumner.com/) - Equality and diversity, with a focus on disability, race and LGBTQ+ (US, remote training provided)
* [Neurodiverse Review](https://neurodiversereview.co.uk/) – Arts reviews from neurodiverse perspectives

# Disabled Content Creators

* [Lucy Edwards](https://linktr.ee/lucyedwards) – Blind content creator focusing on lifestyle and fashion
* Jennie Berry / [Wheelie Good Life](https://wheeliegoodlife.com/) – Disabled content creator
* [Diary of a Disabled Person](https://diaryofadisabledperson.blog/) – Disabled blogger and advocate
* [Shelby](https://linktr.ee/Shelbykinsxo) – Disabled content creator and model
* [Lucy Dawson](https://luuudaw.co.uk/) – Disabled content creator and model
* [Life of Pippa](https://www.instagram.com/lifeofpippa/) – Disabled content creator, writer and theatre goer
* [Roxy Murray](https://linktr.ee/Multiplesclerosisfashionista) – Disabled content creator, model and fashionista
* [Nina Tame](https://linktr.ee/nina_tame) – Disabled content creator

# Disabled Advocates & Consultants

* [Sarah O’Brien](https://t.co/IhQcuI1t1j?amp=1) - Autism and co-production
* [Shani Danda](https://www.shanidhanda.com/) – Business and inclusion specialist
* [Shona Louise](http://www.shonalouise.com/) – Specialises in theatre and performance accessibility
* [Natasha Trotman](https://natashamtrotman.com/about-1) - Disability consultant, equalities designer and creative disruptor
* [Charli Clement](https://www.charliclement.com/) – Disability activist, speaker, writer and content creator specialising in neurodivergent and chronic illness advocacy.
* [Eleanor Lisney](https://ethoelisney.uk/) – Disability activist, access expert and creative facilitator
* [Jurgen Donaldson](mailto:Jurgendonaldson@me.com) - Disability HR & employment specialist
* [Dr Hannah Barham-Brown](https://t.co/mfh0XBYB2S?amp=1) - Disability leadership, speaker and consultant
* [Kate Stanforth](https://www.katestanforth.com/) - Disability consultant for the arts
* Abdi Gas at [Deaf Unity](https://deafunity.org/learn-british-sign-language-bsl/introduction-to-british-sign-language/) - British Sign Language lessons and advocacy
* [Carrie-Ann Lightley](https://www.carrieannlightley.com/) - Disability consultant for travel and accessible venues
* [Dr Amit Patel](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-amit-patel-141093133/) – Disability consultant and speaker
* [Ginny Butcher](https://www.ginnybutcher.uk/) - Disabled speaker
* [Gem Turner](https://gemturner.com/) - Disability consultant & blogger
* [Rachel Rose](https://rachaelrose.hedonish.com/) - Disability sex and relationships consultant
* [Alan Benson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/alanrbenson/) - Disability consultant, specialising in accessible transport
* [Kieran Rose](https://theautisticadvocate.com/book-kieran/) - Autism and Neurodiversity
* [Beth Kume-Holland](https://www.bethkh.com/) – Disability advocacy, training and public speaking
* [Ciara McCarthy](https://linktr.ee/deafciara) – Deaf and disabled advocate, specialising in education
* [Alex Razman](https://thevicritic.com/book-me/) - Consultant and speaker (visual impairment)
* [Dr Anica Zeyen](https://drdiary.blog/) - Disability researcher, specialist in accessible research
* [Alicia Jarvis](https://www.alicia.design/) - Accessibility and digital inclusion consultant
* [Mia Schartau](mailto:Mia.e.schartau@gmail.com) – Training focused on trauma and neurodiversity informed healthcare, accessibility, inclusive hiring and education
* [Reena Anand](https://www.reenaanand.com/) – Intersectional lens disability trainer and consultant. Specialising in autism + impact on Black, Brown and ethnically diverse communities

# Journalists

* [Rachel Charlton Dailey](https://rachelcharltondailey.com/) – Disabled journalist and founder of [The Unwritten](https://www.theunwritten.co.uk/about-us/)
* [Melissa Parker](https://twitter.com/MelissaKParker1) – Disabled journalist
* [Lucy Webster](https://linktr.ee/lucywebsterjournalist) – Disabled journalist
* [Hollie-Anne Brooks](https://www.linkedin.com/in/hobrooks/) - Disabled journalist, content creator and speaker
* [Liam O’Dell](https://liamodell.com/) – Disabled journalist and Deaf advocate