

# Lancashire Learning Disability Peer Advocacy Network Newsletter

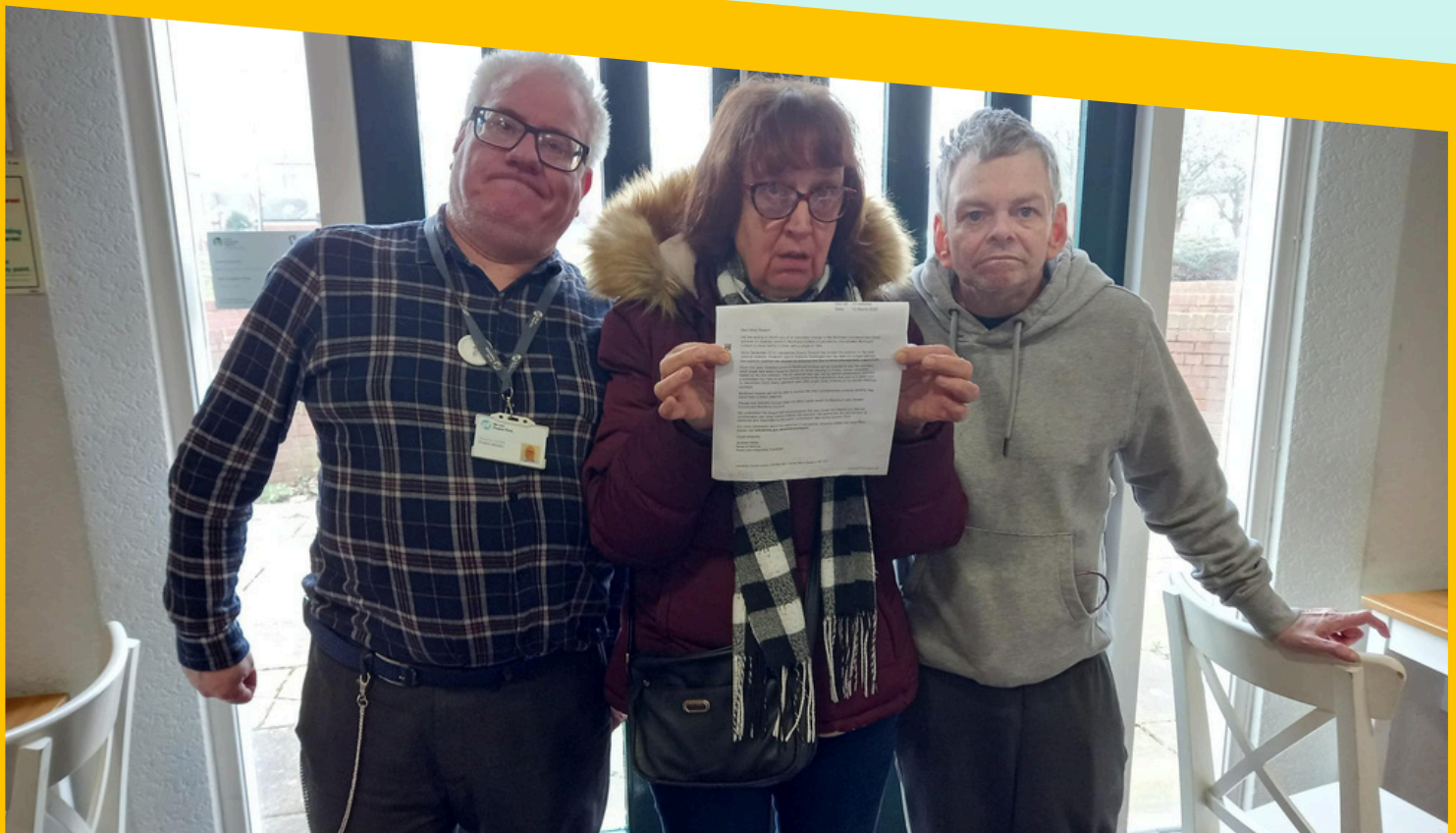
## NOT FAIR!

Changes to the Lancashire County Council Disabled Person's NoW card have caused upset to members of the Peer Advocacy Network. Price increases for people travelling before 9.30 on weekdays will go ahead from 1st April 2025.



Are you worried about the effect that the price increases will have on you? Get in touch with the team!

[speakup@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk](mailto:speakup@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk)





# The Team

Supported by



**Editor-in-Chief**

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**Deputy Editor**

Linda

**Proofreader**

Tim

**Community Networker**

Russell

**Communication Project Worker**

Stephen



The newsletter subgroup would like to welcome Tim to the team.

Tim is the new proofreader and is applying to be an official People First volunteer.



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## 1

# NoW Card Campaign

Members from the Peer Advocacy groups within Lancashire are angry about the bus fare prices rises for disabled people using their NoW card before 9.30 am on weekdays.



“Who has decided this?”

Lancashire County Council held an online consultation back in November.

A consultation is where people get invited to say what they think.

Most people who filled in the consultation form disagreed with putting the price up from £1 to £3 for travelling before 9.30am.

The council say only 276 people with a disabled person's NoW card filled in the form so the results are not accurate.

Members of the group think this is because most people did not know about it.

Mark, one of the members from Shaping the Future in North Lancashire said, “Either have the consultation and go with the majority or don't bother!”





“What do people think?”

“Utterly disgraceful”

“Not enough people have had a chance to have their say.”

“They should have held a meeting in the Town Hall to discuss it with us.”

“We feel pushed to the side”

“It’s not fair because people have appointments or meetings or work before 9.30 and if it is £3 each time, it all adds up.”

“People think that we are not important and don’t have things we need to do independently.”



Natalie, who talked to the BBC about the issue in November said, “I feel I’ve wasted my time speaking up. The council have not listened.”

**Shaping the Future is the peer advocacy group in Lancaster. They have been sharing their experiences of health issues.**



The women in the group talked openly about their experiences of menopause with Sue from Healthwatch Lancashire. The group think it is important that men understand about the menopause too.



“People with a learning disability can go through menopause younger than other women. But GPs brush you off saying that you are too young for the menopause. You have to be determined to get them to listen.”



“We need a clearer understanding of the menopause. I want to learn. What can we expect?”

East Lancashire Voices have chosen 'Safety in the Community' as a topic that they want to focus on. This is what they think...



"I feel unsafe in Accrington - you don't see police on the streets during the day. Some people can be intimidating."

Tim



"Having good links with community support officers and having a safe space to go to is important."

Phil



East Lancashire Voices are working with Mencap to plan what they can do to help people with a learning disability feel safe in their community.

They want to create a resource pack for keeping safe. It will include:

**TOP  
TIPS**



- Top 10 safe places
- Top 10 safety tips



**Co-production** means working together. It can help to make sure the views of people with a learning disability are heard.



People with learning disabilities are more likely than other people to be prescribed mental health medications. Sometimes medications can be good for people, but sometimes they are not.



Mark from the peer advocacy group in Preston has been working with researchers from Manchester Metropolitan University.



This work will help people become more involved in decisions about their mental health medication.



The Peer Advocacy Network told us that phoning adult social care at Lancashire County Council can be difficult.

You have to remember numbers and options which is stressful.



East Lancashire Voices met some of the staff at the Lancashire County Council call centre to help them make the phone line better for people with a learning disability.

Some of the changes will be:



- Less numbers and options
- Getting to speak to a person faster
- Having learning disability awareness training for call centre staff.

# What do members think of the Peer Advocacy Network?



All groups in the Peer Advocacy Network got the chance to give feedback on their groups and how James, Maria and Dawn from People First support them.

Here are some of the things that they said when asked to describe what they like about the groups:



- warm and welcoming



- understanding and caring



- unlimited tea and coffee

- work together as a big team



- get fired up and speak up about things people want to change





Lots of the Peer Advocacy Network went to the Blackpool Learning Disability Conference in February.

**NHS**



They talked about the 10 year plan for how to make the NHS better.

People told each other what they thought was good about the NHS and what wasn't.

Lots of people thought it was important to have less waiting times, and to have better screening for cancer.

They did not think that it was good that some people had operations cancelled.



Everyone enjoyed seeing friends from all over the North West and enjoyed the celebrations in the evening.



In the summer months will be holding Open Forum Events where people with a learning disability from anywhere in Lancashire can find out about the work we are doing.



East Lancashire Voices in Accrington will be talking about safety in the community.

Shaping the Future in Lancaster will be talking about women's health and men's health.



Face 2 Face in Preston will be talking about the proposed changes to benefits for disabled people.

Get in touch if you want to find out more about these events.  
**[speakup@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk](mailto:speakup@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk)**





**People First**

# **Lancashire Learning Disability Peer Advocacy Network Speak Up, Make Friends**

## **Our Groups**

**North Lancashire  
Friends Meeting House  
Meeting House Lane  
Lancaster  
LA1 1TX**

**Central Lancashire  
Plungington  
Community Centre  
Preston  
PR1 7NB**

**East Lancashire  
Accrington Library  
Accrington  
BB5 1NQ**

**We also have an online group on Zoom!**

**West Lancashire  
St Anne's Library  
Lytham St Anne's  
FY8 1NR**

**Get in touch today  
Call: 07517 909029  
Email: [speakup@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk](mailto:speakup@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk)**