

## Disability Speed Lobby

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A 'speed lobby' event put on by Bray Area Partnership's Disability Network on 3rd May gave local people with disabilities the chance to meet Local Election candidates for Bray and Greystones, talk to them about the issues that affect their lives, and find out what candidates would do about them if they were elected.

The event was put on in conjunction with the Disability Federation of Ireland's #DisabilityVotesCount campaign, with Sunbeam House Services kindly providing the space in their Taylor Centre.

Using an innovative rotating 'speed lobby' format, candidates spent 15 minutes at each table answering questions tabled by people with disabilities involved in local disability groups and services. They also got the chance to sign a pledge to support the DFI's Local Election Manifesto #DisabilityVotesCount.

Issues for people with disabilities raised on the day included lack of employment and training opportunities; the need for more housing and independent living facilities, better public transport, more disabled car parking spaces and pedestrian crossings, and free mental health education and counselling. Candidates were also asked would they carry out access audits in towns to highlight the difficulties people with disabilities face in getting around.

There will be a follow-up meeting in the autumn with elected councillors to check on any progress they have made in addressing these issues.

The DFI's #DisabilityVotesCount campaign asks local election candidates to make sure all local public services are open and accessible for people who have a disability, that people with disabilities participate on local decision-making structures, and that every local authority publishes an implementation plan for the UN CRPD by 2020.