

8. Democratic Participation

BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Edinburgh, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies.

People should be involved in and able to influence decisions that affect them, so that public services can be effective in improving their lives.

Action areas

- **Ensuring people can vote.** Improve the information and support that BSL users might need to vote, from the point of registering to vote, receiving and completing a postal vote, right through to attending a polling station.
- **Support BSL users as candidates, agents and other stakeholders** and ensure that nomination packs signpost candidates towards the financial support available via Inclusion Scotland's Access to Elected Office Fund.
- **If elected, support BSL users** through our normal HR support processes and through the Access to Work initiative from the DWP.
- Ensure that **all staff involved in elections** are trained and familiar with the support measures available and can advise or signpost the voter, supporting organisation, or carer, as appropriate to need.
- Explore **opportunities for politicians** to speak to members of the BSL community e.g. through "open table" meetings hosted by the Council Leader.