1. The application process is not accessible for Deaf people due to the reliance on either telephone or emails – neither of which are in the first language needs of this community. This is perceived as discrimination from the outset.

2. ATW systems are very dated and rely on paper copies and posting documents – this does not reflect the modern world or does it provide an efficient and timely service.

3. The applications process keeps changing without any communication to us as employers or to our staff.

4. The inability to do telephone interviews for initial applications means that short notice employment opportunities cannot be processed.

5. The process of having an application transferred to an Advisor takes up to one month – this does not help with employing deaf people and means more delays purely because they have additional support needs at work, putting them at even more of a disadvantage.

6. When Advisors are eventually allocated – there is no consistent person and Advisor keeps changing meaning lots of repetition, delays and lack of consistency.

7. Advisors and Contact Centers show a chronic lack of awareness of Deaf people and BSL Interpreters, they are patronising and ask offensive and insensitive questions.

8. Deaf people in full time employment are no longer ‘assessed’ due to the ill thought “30 hour rule”. There is no scope for discussion or a ‘needs based’ assessment that holistically looks at the Deaf person and their language needs, plus the working conditions of the BSL Interpreters.

9. Deaf people used to be offered an interim budget whilst the application was being processed – this has ceased (again without communication in advance) and as result people are left without any support. Presently have 2 gull time staff that have not had support for almost 2 months now.

10. The overall process is more focused on saving money then supporting Deaf people into employment successfully.

11. When decisions are needed to be referred to Managers/Seniors for approval – the delays are appalling. Once instance saw us waiting over a month to get a reply, resulting in going to the Head of AtW directly. However, another week has passed without any decision or communication with us.

12. The salary range of the salaried interpreter post is inadequate and does not reflect the profession at all, nor the huge investment in becoming qualified to degree level. They are not Support Workers.

13. Salaried posts/budgets offered without any consideration for time to recruit (no temporary budgets) successfully.

14. There is a lack of BSL interpreters in the UK and it is chronic, if we followed the present policy then all of these would be working in Employment – what about other domains like Police, Legal, Health, Mental Health and public services? Even more evidence of zero insight into the profession.

15. Our staff do not want the same interpreter all the time – this isn’t professionally healthy for the interpreter and it creates lots of potential professional boundary issues.
16. There are no clear terms and conditions of the employment – this has been queried. AtW Managers have failed to respond to one person for a period of 5 months and not given any reason for this, just left them to it without caring or explaining how this system would work.

17. Staff have been offered CSW type support – this is in breach of the AtW guidance for qualified interpreters only. CSWs are not appropriate for our work and the BSL needs of our staff.

18. The staff turnover is appalling at AtW and there is not any consistency.

19. AtW seem more interested in disengaging themselves from Deaf people – changing their structures to more of a ‘call centre’ service that is incapable of dealing with any enquires in a timely fashion.

20. AtW are refusing to provide co-workers for our Deaf staff – this puts interpreters at great risk of physical damage, developing ESI, burnout and means that we have missed many opportunities for our projects and business is being lost by the day. AtW staff are totally apathetic to this.

21. AtW fail to understand our company models and how they are funded, thus meaning that non-profit community cohesion projects are at risk of failing – thus resulting in jobs being lost.

22. Formal complaints seem to make no difference, Managers and Seniors Managers are rude, arrogant and cannot deal with matters in a timely or empathetic manner. They are merely ‘policy pushers’ that don’t care about people – which goes against the grain of what AtW is all about.

23. We have raised formal concerns to the Head of AtW – all to no avail either. No one seems interested in customers from the top down. The only motivation is saving money and providing a tokenistic service that makes the government look good from a disability perspective.

24. Our treatment and standards of service, as a company has been even worse since we made a formal complaint to AtW. We are left to deal with people that we made a formal complaint about – with no accountability for them, no apology or explanation and investigation into our issues and concerns.

25. We have a team of salaried in-house interpreters (for external clients) that occasionally may cover our staff. All have been subject to ‘contact pay’ for these assignments – that doesn’t even cover our overheads. There was zero negotiation from AtW about this. So, paying below official employment contract rates without any of the contractual benefits. We question the legality of this from an Employment Law perspective.

26. We have been making proposals to AtW since 2012, in regard to the structure of our interpreting needs, and none of the Managers or Senior Managers are ever interested in discussing this. All of which could have saved money and been truly customer and interpreter focused. So much for working together.

27. 20% of our staff time is spent purely on dealing with AtW – this is not what they are employed to do. The bureaucracy is beyond all belief and the flippant attitude of AtW is making dealing with them and employing deaf people very unappealing.

20 June 2014