**Press release: Wed 28 July 2021**

**Government Fails Disabled People Again: About us but not with us - Disabled People reject new ‘tick box’ national disability strategy.**

Disabled people and our organisations[[1]](#endnote-1) across the country have expressed outrage at the Government’s decision to go ahead with the launch of a national disability strategy[[2]](#endnote-2) that is not a strategy, does not address key problems, does not reflect the issues and priorities of Disabled people and was not developed with Disabled people organisations[[3]](#endnote-3).

We have been waiting for 10 long years for a strategy that will tackle the growing poverty, exclusion and discrimination we face and set out a transformative plan for social justice, equality and inclusion. This so-called strategy does neither of these things.

The lack of meaningful engagement with Disabled people and our organisations in the development of this so-called strategy has been so bad that a group of Disabled campaigners are taking the Government to court on the grounds that consultation was so poor as to be unlawful[[4]](#endnote-4)

A spokesperson for the DPO forum says said:

“Disabled people have been ignored yet again by this government. We know Disabled people have been disproportionately harmed by austerity, cuts to public services, cuts to benefits, a broken social care system and the Government’s on-going failure to protect and support Disabled people through this pandemic[[5]](#endnote-5) . Working with Disabled people and our organisations to develop a disability strategy able to tackle these deep inequalities was an opportunity this Government has chosen to ignore. Instead, its pressed ahead with a tick box exercise producing a non-strategy not fit for purpose and that has limited credibility with Disabled people”.

Unlike the big disability charities that claim to speak for Disabled people but do not represent us, Disabled peoples’ organisations are united in our opposition to this so-called strategy and once again call on the Government to start working with Disabled people, not against us.

Disabled people make up 20% of our population with many more people becoming disabled as a result of long covid. A key part of this governments ‘levelling up’ and ‘building back better’ agenda must be a disability strategy that embeds the Convention on the rights of Disabled people (UN CRPD)[[6]](#endnote-6) into domestic law and addresses the complex and deepening inequalities we experience. We call on the Government to put this tokenistic non-strategy aside with its raft of re-hashed policies, random actions and vague promises for future consultations, and start really working with us so we can get our equality and inclusion back on track.

Contacts available for media interviews:

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1. Names of DPO Forum England members: Alliance for Inclusive Education, Chronic Illness Inclusion, West of England Centre for Independent Living, Disability Sheffield, Bristol Reclaiming Independent Living, Reclaiming Our Futures Alliance (ROFA), Equal Lives, Disability Rights UK, Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People, Disability Positive, Equality Together, Choices and Rights (Hull& East Riding), Breakthrough, Spectrum CIL, National Survivors Users Network, Sisters of Frida, Disabled People Against Cuts, Liberation, Inclusion London, People First, Shaping Our Lives, Disability Stockport [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Details of NDS strategy launch here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-disability-strategy> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Disabled peoples organisations are organisations that are run and controlled by Disabled people. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.bindmans.com/news/consultation-on-the-national-strategy-for-disabled-people-legal-proceedings-issued> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. (C. Putz and D. Ainslie, 2020), ‘Coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths by disability status, England and Wales: 2 March to 14 July 2020’. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/search?q=Coronavirus+(COVID-19)+related+deaths+by+disability+status%2C+England+and+Wales+-+Office+for+National+Statistics+(ons.gov.uk)&cvid=462fd9a4a5684bcb82015f5668080029&aqs=edge..69i57.1088j0j1&pglt=43&FORM=ANNAB1&PC=DCTS> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. UNCRPD <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. www.inclusionlondon.org.uk [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. chronicillnessinclusion.org.uk [↑](#endnote-ref-8)