EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Switching Focus

Whose responsibility to improve disabled people's employment and pay?

Liz Sayce

Contents

This report presents a set of proposals that together could make most difference to disabled people's employment and pay and on which people could unite. It builds on earlier analysis from organisations including (amongst others) Disability Rights UK, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the All-Party Parliamentary Disability Group.

The full report contains information on this project, the analysis that underpins the proposals and a discussion of how to build different types of alliances to achieve the goals set forth.

Liz Sayce
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All quotes are from interviews or round-table participants for this project unless otherwise specified.

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Switching Focus

Whose responsibility to improve disabled people's employment and pay?

More disabled people could be working in this country, with decent pay and progression. The four-point plan described in this report is designed to kickstart action to make it happen. Some employers already employ disabled people at all levels. Government could expect and support others to do the same.

Having an inclusive approach can help businesses improve decision-making and innovation, recruit and retain customers and employees, improve employee engagement and productivity and build an ethical reputation[1][2]. Different sectors and regions have different drivers for action toward this goal. For instance:

"*There's an opportunity in the NHS because the health sector needs new labour pools – and badly needs to retain people, including people who are ageing and acquire impairments.*"[3]

Paul Deemer, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, NHS Employers

Employment and disabled people: a contested topic

Disabled people's policy agendas have changed since the financial crash of 2008. The agenda has shifted from largely positively framed campaigns, i.e., calling for "what we want" (full and equal participation, rights to independent living, accessibility, equality in education and employment) to a larger focus on "what we don't want" (tightened eligibility for social care and social security, as well as benefit sanctions).

There was a broad consensus before 2008 regarding the aim of employment equality. However, this consensus has since fractured. Some have argued for a "right not to work"[4] and have given primary importance to financial security as a response to tightened benefit eligibility and conditionality. Others have argued that disabled people had been "designed out" of employment and should not be expected to move into low-paid, insecure and unsuitable work[5]. The "right to work", for some, came to be seen as a requirement to work. For them, this was to be resisted.

Some Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) continued to push for the right to inclusive work and were met with the charge that they were colluding with Government's aim to reduce the benefits bill. Meanwhile, newer social security campaigners framed messages in terms of being too sick to work. They were in turn challenged for playing into low expectations, throwing the baby of equality out with the bathwater of restricted benefits and re-introducing the "victim" narrative[6]. In part, this debate was fuelled by differences of impairment experience: someone with a stable spinal injury who can work as long as physical adjustments are in place is in a very different position compared with someone with an energy-limiting condition who can work only sporadically and unpredictably.

In this project, disabled people with different perspectives and impairment experiences, explored – with employers, disability charities and academics – an agenda to move beyond this fractured debate. This was achieved by replacing the goal of "more disabled people in jobs" (any jobs) with the goal of genuine opportunities to reduce the disability employment and pay gaps. The participants wanted more flexible, inclusive work that people can manage alongside their health condition or impairment.

> "We need to get rid of this idea that we should be grateful for being offered a job at all."
> Round-table participant, LSE 2018

One objection to focusing on employment has been a perception that the responsibility for making it happen falls unfairly on the disabled individual and not the employer or the state. This project set out to recalibrate responsibilities.

Employment and disabled people: whose responsibility

"Achieving our ambition of seeing at least one million more disabled people in work requires all of us to work together. The Government of course have a role to play, but so too do employers, the health service, local authorities, charities and the voluntary sector.... All have vital roles to play."[7]

Sarah Newton, Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work

Disabled people and academics have argued that, in practice, there is a deeply skewed allocation of responsibility, with much higher demands on disabled individuals than on employers and other organisations.

Disabled people are over 60 times more likely than employers to face sanctions for non-compliance with requirements. In 2015-16, disabled people were sanctioned 69,570 times for missing appointments or infringing work-related conditions of benefit payment, with resulting reductions in benefit[8]. Employers in the same year were in effect "sanctioned" only around 1,100 times when disability discrimination cases were either settled or won by a disabled person at Employment Tribunal [9] [10].

Sanctions of disabled people 2015-16

69,570

1,100

Cases settled or won by disabled people at Employment Tribunal 2015-16

Work-related requirements of disabled people, backed by sanctions, have been widely described as unfair because disabled people are sanctioned more than non-disabled people, resulting in financial hardship. They are also described as unfair because people may be set up to fail if there are no suitable jobs available.

A decade of disability "welfare reform" policies to incentivise individual behaviour, coupled with support programmes targeting the individual, has seen little change in the disability employment gap (running at 30 per cent in 2018[11]), and the pay gap between disabled and non-disabled people, running at 15 per cent[12], has slightly worsened. Every year, 340,000 people leave work due to an impairment or health condition[13]. Many would prefer to stay, if work was inclusive. A different approach is needed.

The concept of citizenship offers a framework to recalibrate responsibilities.
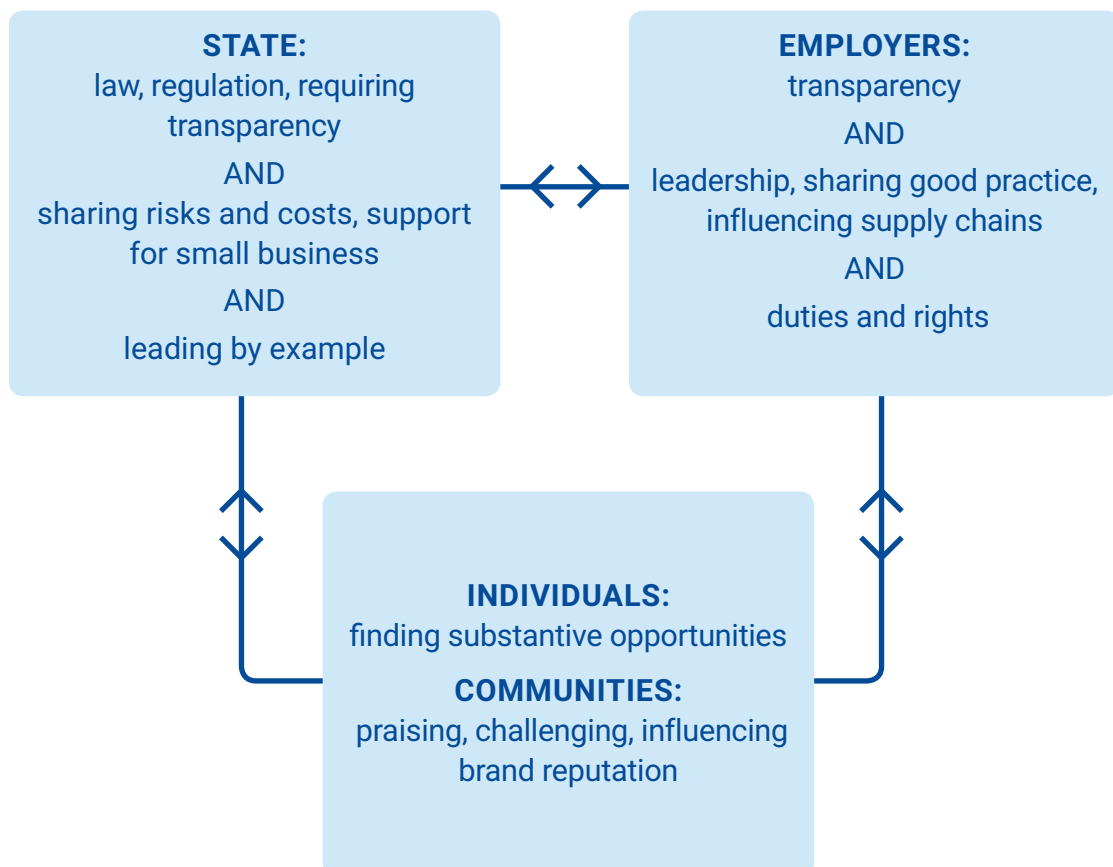
After World War 2, a consensus emerged on the respective responsibilities of the state, businesses and citizens. This consensus gave full citizens the right to participate "according to the standards prevailing in the society"[14]. However, with

no adjustments or support to participate, disabled people were expected to settle for a safety net of benefits and care; they were not to be "full citizens". Record numbers of disabled people lived in institutions (150,000 in psychiatric institutions alone in the 1950s).

In the 1970s, the post-war consensus on citizenship was "torn up": the commitment to universal rights to income and housing diminished, and some groups were increasingly socially excluded[15].

However, turning the clock back to the post-war "deal" on citizenship would not meet 21st Century disabled people's expectations. A fair set of responsibilities for the future would position disabled people not as vulnerable recipients of welfare with no other options, but as agents who require a wide range of supports in order to participate and realise their capabilities. This requires the state and businesses to take more responsibility and offer genuine, substantive opportunities in line with the social model of disability.

A new balance of responsibilities

STATE:
law, regulation, requiring transparency
AND
sharing risks and costs, support for small business
AND
leading by example

EMPLOYERS:
transparency
AND
leadership, sharing good practice, influencing supply chains
AND
duties and rights

INDIVIDUALS:
finding substantive opportunities
COMMUNITIES:
praising, challenging, influencing brand reputation

The changing world of work

With 40 per cent of the working age population predicted to have a long-term health condition by 2030[16], business success will increasingly depend on making sure that "good work" truly means inclusive work. It makes no sense to maximise productivity by ensuring "good work" for only 60 per cent of colleagues.

Work over recent years has become more intense, with more multi-tasking expected, less autonomy and continuing occupational segregation, as well as some increase in flexible working. Jobs will continue to change as artificial intelligence and automation develop and grow. Concerted action is needed to put disability at the heart of the debate. Policy on "good work" will be needed to ensure that employees' voices, engagement and inclusion are hard-wired into the future of work, to the benefit of workers in general and disabled workers in particular.

Disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to work part-time, to be self-employed, to work in the (declining) public sector[17] and to be affected by segregation between cities and the towns around them:

> "There are challenges in terms of a Manchester city-centric economy. Outlying towns – Rochdale, Oldham – are suffering and people are either commuting in to Manchester to work or relocating to Manchester. But accessible transport and accessible affordable housing pose particular challenges for disabled people to do this."
> DPO

Some disabled people seek zero hours or "app"-based roles; however, "bogus" self- employment can particularly impact disabled people. James Bloodworth's undercover report from the gig economy recounts how supposedly self-employed people were penalised under "a points-based disciplinary system whereby workers accrued points for things like days off with illness, not hitting pick rates or being late": the person was allowed six points before they were "released" (sacked)[18]. Other companies imposed penalties for spending too long in the toilet; additionally, short break times made it difficult for people with diabetes to eat as they needed to[19].

A new commitment to two-way flexibility must build in the specific flexibilities that disabled people need.

What could work?

Policy makers attempting to influence employers have primarily acted through encouragement and by proposing voluntary standards, with relatively light touch, individualised regulation and enforcement. However, there is no evidence that voluntary approaches work[20]. History in the UK suggests that great employment practice exists but has not been spread at any scale.

> "I thought after B&Q showed that employment of disabled
> and older people worked in terms of both the bottom line and
> Corporate Social Responsibility it would really catch on.
> Why didn't it catch on with other corporates?"
> Parliamentarian

One problem with the "encouragement" approach is that it assumes that if employers' attitudes are changed, then behaviour will follow.

Contact theory suggests the opposite. It is the real-life contact between disabled and non-disabled people (and between people of different ethnicities and different faiths), on at least equal terms, that changes attitudes[21]: in other words, the first requirement is to ensure contact through inclusion.

> "Targeting employers' attitudes is a dead end.
> What is important is behaviour."
> Business leader

The easiest way to scale contact on equal terms is through ordinary, ongoing inclusion in schools, communities and of course workplaces. What better way to reduce bias than for more and more non-disabled people to have openly disabled bosses and colleagues, thereby making it more likely that the organisation will employ further disabled people in the future who in turn will influence attitudes and make inclusion more likely?

This means that the first goal is to influence employers to employ more disabled people at different levels.

In part, this can be achieved through better practical support, particularly for small employers.

> "Small businesses have a pretty poor experience of accessing
> advice and support on diversity issues."
> Business organisation

However, there is also evidence of – often unintended or unconscious – discrimination by employers, including a disability employment "penalty", after accounting for qualifications, of 23 per cent[22]. Even disabled people with degrees earn on average £2.50 per hour less than non-disabled graduates[23].

To address discrimination requires the use of power, both the "extrinsic" power of law, regulation or campaigns and the "intrinsic" power of leadership to change culture and practice across an organisation:

"We've set a clear vision, trialled strength-based inclusive recruitment, upskilled our people in understanding neuro-diversity, taken positive action to develop disabled colleagues – and we're beginning to see results in our figures. This stuff isn't easy – you can't just compel people to do it. To really make change happen, and stick, you have to have a leadership team that wants to do this"

Public sector employer

Power by social movements can influence government or can influence businesses directly.

In 2018, BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner complained publicly about having to wait on a plane as staff had not brought his wheelchair. The issue spread rapidly through social media. The CEO of Heathrow and other airports publicly committed to improvements, and Frank Gardner then praised the progress made. Similar methods could be used to praise and challenge companies regarding their disability employment and pay gaps.

Criteria for effective policies

"I'm fed up with waiting for the change to happen. We need to identify a few things we should do that would make a difference – otherwise we will have a list of things we have had for ages."
Round-table participant, LSE 2018

1   **Valued, substantive opportunities**, seen as such by diverse disabled people and their organisations, with disabled people's voices central to the development of policy and practice.

2   **Potential to re-balance citizenship responsibilities**, in line with a refreshed conception of respective citizenship responsibilities of the state, employers and individuals, to achieve greater effectiveness and social justice by enabling disabled people to be full participants in society.

3   **Uses power to address discrimination and exclusion**, following the evidence that power is needed to replace a vicious circle of exclusion with a virtuous circle, in which contact on at least equal terms between disabled and non-disabled people changes attitudes and generates opportunities.

4   **Mobilises both extrinsic and intrinsic power for change**, filling the need to strengthen law, access to justice and the influence of social movements. This criterion also draws upon evidence from employers that internal leadership is critical and needs to be positively mobilised. This goes beyond using "carrots and sticks" with employers, which risks infantilising, to motivating and mobilising internal power.

5   **Feasible to implement in the UK context of a liberal market economy with a changing nature of work**. Accounting for impacts on disabled people of trends (such as increasing self-employed, part-time and insecure work) and experiences (such as intensification and changes in autonomy). Also identifying discrete opportunities, such as reciprocal rights to flexibility.

6   **Opportunities for scale of impact** so that energies are channelled into those levers likely to make the most significant difference.

The proposals

The four proposals listed below meet all the criteria. Together, they re-align the citizenship responsibilities between Government, businesses and disabled people. They enhance the accountability and responsibility of employers, as well as the support to employers.

They are designed as a set, to work in combination. For instance, strengthening the right to keep your job if you have time off with a health condition could inadvertently discourage employers from hiring people with known health conditions. So, this is balanced by measures to offset costs and provide practical help to employers at the hiring stage.

Some proposals could be implemented in the short term and make a significant difference, such as extending transparent reporting from the gender pay gap to disability employment and pay, new strategic enforcement of existing law and adjustments to Access to Work and Statutory Sick Pay. Others may need more time. Strengthening legislation requires parliamentary time, and the wide-scale adoption of "good work" requires shifts in how the UK economy operates. UK employers tend to invest less in skills than many of their European counterparts, and many people experience precarious work and income. Disability needs to be central to new thinking on these challenges.

1 Transparency

Proposal 1.1

Government should expect larger employers (over 250 staff) to collect intelligent data to enable them to understand their employment and pay of disabled people, with substantial advice and guidance and a period of voluntary testing to get the details right. Data would include employment, pay, the employment "journey" (hiring, retention, progression) and employee experience[24], broken down by broad impairment group[25]. They would publish core data with a narrative on proposed actions as a component of a single workforce dashboard as part of their commitment to transparency, accountability and good corporate governance. This would be promoted and enforced by the equality commissions working closely with businesses, Government, the Financial Reporting Council and sector-specific regulators.

> "The reputational leverage of gender pay gap reporting has been significant for big employers."
> Employer, round-table participant, LSE 2018

> "I very much agree with transparency, because trust is a big issue. I think Government needs to be a bit stricter with us – why are there requirements to report on gender as employers but not on disability?"[26]
> Paul Polman, Chief Executive, Unilever

Five years ago, few employers considered using or publishing data on disability; however, a shift appears to be happening. In 2018, the Confederation of British Industry welcomed proposals to collect data on ethnicity and disability pay gaps[27]. Many large employers collect information from their workforce so that they can plan for labour shortages and fill skills gaps, as well as improve staff morale and productivity. Being inclusive means that they can access the best talent.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission asked a sample of employers across sectors about what would encourage them to report on the disability pay gap. Of those (55 per cent) that collected information on pay and progression, but not analysed by disability, 77 per cent said they could be encouraged to do so, 64 per cent said they would if mandatory regulations were in place, 36 per cent if guidance were available, 35 per cent with financial support and 24 per cent if other businesses in their sector collected or analysed the data[28].

The proposal here is a combination of their top two responses: guidance and mandatory regulation. Support and advice for employers would cover how to build cultures in which colleagues are confident to be open about their experience of disability, as well as how to frame questions, how to break down data by impairment group and how to use data to plan future action.

"Why do people with learning disabilities get voluntary work or a few days' work a year as "experts" but never get proper paid jobs?"
Round-table participant, LSE 2018

The data set would be aligned with requirements on gender, with the ultimate aim of a single, simple workforce dashboard covering issues such as structure of the workforce, the living wage and protected characteristics.

Transparency would be used to drive improvement primarily by the Board, as well as through accountability to shareholders, competition between employers and opportunities for disabled people to praise and challenge particular employers.

"Companies care more about their brand reputation than about their legal budgets."
Business leader

Proposal 1.2

Large private and voluntary sector organisations and whole sectors should consider setting and tracking targets based on their data and business needs.

In the public sector, Ministers should consult with leaders of particular sectors and set flexible, achievable targets, tracked by the relevant regulator or industry body working with the equalities commissions.

Targets can work and are already set in some sectors:

- The US Federal Government set a target to increase disabled people's employment by 100,000 from 2011 to 2015. They achieved a 109,000 increase through senior leadership, accountability and outreach support to every department[29].

- In the broadcasting sector, the Doubling Disability initiative, led by major broadcasters, has set a target to double the proportion of disabled people in the industry's workforce by 2020 across commissioning, production and programme support. The initiative works with and through independent companies in their supply chains[30].

Public sector targets would demonstrate government and public sector leadership and help fulfil requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Private or voluntary sector organisations delivering contracts for Government or the public sector would be expected to work toward the same targets.

2 Risk sharing

Government should enable large numbers of disabled people to work who need more than an adjustment that is considered "reasonable" by sharing the cost and risk with employers. This includes people with fluctuating stamina-related or mental health conditions, some of whom have a fluctuating work capacity and are viewed as a risk by employers, but who want to work when they can.

The revolutionary increase in the numbers of women working in the 20th Century occurred partly through state investment in maternity pay. Investment in sharing risk could have equally far-reaching effects for disabled people's employment.

Proposal 2.1

Government to pay Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if small employers take on someone who is on Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or its equivalent in Universal Credit[31].

The UK is unusual in expecting the employer to bear the full cost of SSP. This is estimated to cost employers around £1.5 billion per year[32]. Contrast this with maternity pay, where an employer can usually reclaim 92 per cent of statutory maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental pay[33]. State payment of SSP in the specific case of recruiting people from the ESA would help remove a major disincentive to taking on people with known pre-existing health conditions or impairments.

Proposal 2.2

Government should:
- Introduce an access to work "pot" that can be accessed by people requiring periodic time off for temporary cover to help remove the disincentive for employers to recruit or retain them[34].
- Give disabled people an indicative award that they can cite when job seeking to build confidence for both the employer and job seeker.
- Set targets for Access to Work in line with government plans for a million more disabled people to be working by 2027.

> "Each person with a fluctuating condition could have "in the bank" so to speak an agreed sum that can be mobilised quickly if they become unwell and unable to work for a period – so the employer does not lose out. It's a logical extension of Access to Work because it mitigates cost for the employer and it also has potential multiple benefits, because it would remove anxiety for the individual."
> DPO

Access to Work is a successful approach that both enables disabled people to secure or retain work and reduces cost and risk for employers[35]. Investment coupled with reform could expand the numbers helped beyond the current base of around 34,000 people per year[36].

Proposal 2.3

Government should introduce a fund linked to Access to Work[37] to help small employers make on-line, customer service, physical infrastructure and internal processes fully inclusive. This would help attract new customers and employees and build brand reputation with all stakeholders.

Small businesses can tap into the talent pool of disabled people if they have the right support. Government should make it easier for them – beyond sharing costs – by offering a fund as an incentive to make the business fully inclusive.

Proposal 2.4

A portal should be developed that brings together searchable, large amounts of good practice information on disability and employment, as exists in Australia and the USA, that is backed by individual, tailored email and phone advice for employers when needed. In addition, disability should be placed at the heart of more generic sources of advice and information on "good work" and flexibility.

Busy small employers need tailored, timely, practical advice that goes beyond generic information. Current sources of advice are fragmented.

The portal could be developed through a partnership of private, voluntary and Government sectors. Content ideas are included in the full report.

The material should include guidance on creating "good work": for instance, how to maximise autonomy to support creative workplace adjustments and improve retention, as well as how to structure jobs to enable everyone, including disabled people, to thrive by allocating roles in which people can excel. This material should be shared through wider platforms on "good work"[38] to place disability at the heart of everyone's understanding of flexible and good future work.

> "Don't just dust off an old job description and go to advert. If employers don't really think about person specifications, they end up with the same as always."
> Round-table participant, LSE 2018

Proposal 2.5

Commissioners of employment support should:

- Consider investing in developing agencies that broker contracts for people able to work intermittently or for a few hours per week to enable more people to work when they can.

- Require all employment support providers to support employers, not just job seekers, in line with evidence of effectiveness[39]; additionally, recognise the holistic support than DPOs can offer, removing barriers across people's lives and enabling people to participate.

3 Rights, regulation and enforcement

Proposal 3.1

In the short term, the equality commissions could explore further strategic, smart regulation to support improved substantive employment opportunities for disabled people, particularly in changing areas of the economy, for instance:

- outsourced and online recruitment
- intensification and interchangeability of work
- zero hours work, "bogus" self-employment and flexibility for the disabled worker

This could be pursued through formal inquiries, a test case strategy or good practice partnership initiatives. Shared responsibilities with sector-specific regulators will be important to spread the impact. As recommended above, transparent reporting by large organisations on their employment of disabled people would help identify sectors or issues requiring new strategic action.

Proposal 3.2

In the longer term, the legal framework should be improved, in particular to:

- Strengthen strategic legal powers (rather than just offering redress to individuals). This is to include a change to the Public Sector Equality Duty to require "taking all proportionate steps" on identified priorities, rather than just identifying them[40]. It would also include an anticipatory duty on employers (matched by practical support, see above), as well as the re-instatement of the power of Tribunal judges to order an employer to make wider changes where an individual case reveals systemic discrimination.
- Better protect people working in the growing sector of zero hours contracts and temporary roles to achieve two-way flexibility that works for disabled people and tackles bogus self-employment[41].
- Better protect people from losing their job if they become disabled during working life through a "right to return", with the employer obliged to keep the job open for a year from the start of the sickness-related absence.

Proposal 3.3

The equality commissions, Disabled People's Organisations, NGOs and partners should actively promote rights to everyone living with health conditions or impairments and should enable them to share experience of how to assert them.

Platforms such as Disability Rights UK's Right to Participate[42] can help people share knowledge and experience for how to secure rights, backed by legal advice where needed.

4 Leadership

Proposal 4.1

Employers should support the voices and participation of disabled colleagues by investing in the time and development required by Disability Employee Networks and Trade Union representatives. Employers, and also businesses contracting "app" workers should engage with workers and trade unions to develop practices that reduce disability employment and pay gaps and create inclusive work.

The leadership of disabled people is central to improving inclusive employment opportunities, as well as to morale and engagement, which are linked to productivity. Trade unions are vital to influencing atypical forms of work, for instance in challenging "bogus" self-employment and securing rights to workplace adjustments and sick pay.

Proposal 4.2

Local and combined authorities, working with local employment partnerships and employer bodies, should bring together employers, educationalists, health and care services, DPOs and others to embed the employment and careers of disabled people into plans for inclusive growth as well as plans to meet labour or skills shortages.

Health, social care, education and the voluntary sector would participate as employers – and as supporters of disabled people's lives, able to help all local employers tap into the talent pool of disabled people. Inclusive growth could include positive action to support businesses led by disabled people.

Proposal 4.3

Investment by Government in business development for sectors facing skills or labour shortages should be contingent on their recruiting and developing significant proportions of disabled people, as demonstrated through transparent reporting[43] (see above).

Skills academies and growth sectors present major opportunities for disabled people's careers. For instance, the Cisco Networking Academy has trained 7.8 million students in 170 countries in the last 20 years, of whom 92 per cent secured work[44]. Collaboration with those sectors could enable large numbers of disabled people to benefit.

Proposal 4.4

Government should bend the £240 billion it spends annually, in order to advance disabled people's employment opportunities, by including social impact measures in tender scores. Large private and voluntary sector organisations can also use procurement as leverage. Grant funders should require all applicants to meet diversity standards and disability organisations to employ disabled people at all levels.

Bending funding to prompt action is becoming a more widely accepted practice. The Department for International Development committed to putting disability inclusion "at the heart of our work"[45]. The World Bank has created a charter for disability-inclusive development[46]. This proposal extends this approach.

Proposal 4.5

Government should align policy and outcomes across Government Departments to incentivise employment opportunities and lead by example in employing disabled people at all levels. In the longer term, Government should produce a genuinely cross-government disability employment strategy as part of a strategy on rights to full participation in society under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). In the short term, government could seize any opportunity to align new policy or outcome frameworks to this end.

The UNCRPD recognises that disabled people's full participation is achieved through aligned policies and outcomes on inclusive education, skills, transport, social care, accessible housing and more.

The way business success is measured needs to be much more closely aligned to social impacts.

> "Long-term we need to change what's measured –
> not just the short-term bottom line."
> Round-table participant, LSE 2018

An immediate example of alignment is that Government could change measurements of the performance of Job Centre Plus from how many claimants move off benefits (and into work) to how many disabled (and other) claimants move into sustainable work and secure improved pay over time. This would be in line with Universal Credit ambitions and in the interests of disabled people progressing out of low pay.

Alliances for action

Employment may have been a contested topic, but "switching focus" creates a platform to form alliances. Switching focus has a positively framed aim, proposes a fair allocation of responsibilities and can be backed by specific proposals and stories to show that change is possible.

> "DPOs could comment at every opportunity, using the same messages every time – so with each comment they are putting a brick in a bigger wall."
> DPO

Progress made in gender equality demonstrates that wider cultural forces are significant in spurring action: the Me Too campaign morphed into the Pay Me Too campaign, generating wide-scale attention to the gender pay gap. Disabled people could lead campaigns for a changed world of work and could tap into wider concerns about insecure work, assorted corporate scandals and ever-rising executive pay. Well-known disabled champions and like-minded companies could promote the message that change can happen.

> "Insecure work, while previously enjoying the odd moment in the media spotlight, is now at the forefront of the political agenda. A Conservative government is committing to extra regulation, not less. The media is talking about dignity and meaning in the workplace, not just pay packets and dole queues."[47]

In this project, differences of view emerged, based partly on different impairment experiences. Hale is developing new opportunities to connect the thinking of people with chronic illness with the thinking of the disabled people's movement[48]. Two further things that could help are:

- More opportunities for people to come together across differences through participative conferences and workshops, which require modest investment in the DPOs best placed to lead them.

- A new language of identification. Many people do not identify as "disabled people" because they have chosen another identity, like "mental health service user" or being "Deaf". An umbrella term similar to LGBTQ+ could help, in which "disabled person" was the central but not the only term of identification.

Differences between DPOs and charities were also evident. These differences stemmed from disagreements on outsider and insider tactics and tensions about power and resources.

> "Outsiders often think the insiders are sell-outs who muddy the waters through compromise or hijack their issues, while insiders often view outsiders as politically naïve purists, but recognise that the threat they pose often drives decision makers into their arms"[49].

However, unity on specifics, without suppressing difference, can increase impact, with disabled people in the lead. Large charities may also be able to share resources and evidence with DPOs.

> "Employers are exhausted by the enthusiasm of the sector, which isn't joined up."
>
> Charity director

Alliances with others who have complementary agendas, such as anti-poverty organisations and those concerned with flexible working, can be powerful. So can "unexpected alliances" with those with power to make things happen, from business organisations to sector regulators.

> "Flexibility and inclusivity benefits everyone! It's not just for parents. This article talks about bringing more disabled people into work. Thanks @lizsayce "
>
> WorkYour Way, via Twitter

Choosing alliances depends on the precise objective and the stage of the influencing strategy.

Large changes in social history, such as overcoming apartheid or securing equal marriage, initially seemed impossible. Creating unity around positive goals helps instil a belief that change is possible. Because it is.

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