



## Open letter: We want an independent PIP review

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To:

The Welsh Government,  
The Scottish Government,  
The Northern Ireland Executive,  
The UK Government,

1st September 2025

After a major, if partial, defeat in parliament over disability cuts, the disability minister Stephen Timms promised MPs that the PIP benefit review would be co-produced by disabled people and their organisations.

There is widespread skepticism if this will genuinely be the case.<sup>1 2</sup> Promises to “engage widely over the summer” have not been met, and there has been no transparency over Timms’ plans for “ten people” to have “a lot of sway”. His comments<sup>3</sup> reveal that he does not understand what co-production means. Timms has also repeatedly declined to acknowledge the many serious failures of the *Pathways to Work* green paper consultation process, particularly felt in Wales.<sup>4</sup>

We counterpose this to the Disability Rights Taskforce, initiated in partnership with the Welsh Government, which brought together 350 stakeholders and 200 policy experts, as a model of what co-production can look like. However, many Taskforce participants were frustrated that much of their work was ultimately missing from the Welsh Government draft plan.<sup>5</sup> This is a lesson that even co-produced policy will fall flat without accountability. Disabled people’s organisations must be given the necessary resources and powers to carry out the implementation and monitoring of decisions.

[Some of us] cautiously welcome[d] the announcement of the Government's new Independent Disability Advisory Panel.<sup>6</sup> This panel is

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<sup>1</sup> Ella Smith, *Welfare Reform: When Promises Clash with Practice: What Stephen Timms Didn't Say About Co-Production*, ME Association, 5 August 2025. <https://meassociation.org.uk/2025/08/welfare-reform-when-promises-clash-with-practice-what-stephen-timms-didnt-say-about-co-production/>

<sup>2</sup> *No genuine co-production for Timms review*, Benefits and Work, 4 August 2025. <https://www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/news/no-genuine-co-production-for-timms-review>

<sup>3</sup> Emma Tracey, *Access All: Disability News and Mental Health*, BBC, 1 August 2025. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0ltkvh7> and archived at <https://archive.ph/3pvWp>

<sup>4</sup> Disabled People Against Cuts Cymru (DPAC Cymru) and 200+ co-signatories, *Open letter: #NoVoteWithoutWales - stop disability cuts*, 2 June 2025. [Bit.Ly/No-Vote-Without-Wales](https://bit.ly/No-Vote-Without-Wales)

<sup>5</sup> John Pring, *Welsh government's disability rights plan 'is a smokescreen' to hide lack of teeth and targets*, Disability News Service, 22 May 2025. <https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/welsh-governments-disability-rights-plan-is-a-smokescreen-to-hide-lack-of-teeth-and-targets/>

<sup>6</sup> *Disability rights expert Zara Todd appointed to lead new panel shaping Government's health and disability policy*, Department for Work and Pensions, 21

separate to, but will feed into, the Timms review of PIP. However, trust remains very low,<sup>7</sup> and the terms - of “up to 10” people - have already been set for us. [See update, below]

**We the undersigned demand that:**

- The new Independent Disability Advisory Panel must be genuinely independent, representative, transparent, and have real powers of oversight.
- The UK government must acknowledge its failures in delivering the *Pathways to Work* consultation and legislative process, as a precondition to rebuilding trust and ensuring those mistakes are not repeated.
- The PIP review must be independently led by disabled people and our organisations, inviting the views of carers, volunteers, and workers in health, social care, housing, transport, and welfare.
- Any review of welfare reform must also, in a process led by disabled people, involve trade unions as democratic organisations representing 1.4 million disabled workers as well as representing the workers responsible for the day-to-day delivery of services that disabled people rely on.
- The scope of the PIP review must be widened to all aspects of welfare and employment for disabled people, guided by the principle: *from each according to their ability, to each according to their need.*

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August 2025.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/disability-rights-expert-zara-todd-appointed-to-lead-new-panel-shaping-governments-health-and-disability-policy>

<sup>7</sup> *Welfare reform round-up: new independent disability panel, applications opening soon*, ME Association, 22 August 2025

<https://meassociation.org.uk/2025/08/welfare-reform-round-up-new-independent-disability-panel-applications-opening-soon/>

- Dedicated funding must be provided to Disabled Peoples Organisations to support outreach, accessible engagement, and the collection of views from disabled people, including those without internet access or digital skills.
- The devolved governments of Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, and councils, should recognise and support this independent review even if the UK government refuses to.
- The UK government must immediately halt all cuts to disability and incapacity benefits for the duration of the review, and urgently fix Access to Work.
- Parliament must be given time to properly scrutinise any new legislation.
- The UC bill should be repealed. It is flawed, and was rushed through in an abnormal and undemocratic way.

**[Update 4th September] Statement from DPAC Cymru regarding the “Independent Disability Advisory Panel”:** “The recently published terms for the so-called Independent Disability Advisory Panel, including the requirement to sign a non-disclosure agreement, are completely unacceptable. We are going to go back to a full consultation with all of our members and allies and take time for discussion to correct the weakness in our compromise wording of ‘cautiously welcome’ and come back united, realigned on the strongest possible response. We hope you will continue to support the demand for an independent PIP review, led by disabled people, and support this letter with your signature.”

**Signed:**

>> [Add your signature here](#)

Disabled People Against Cuts Cymru ([DPAC Cymru](#)).

Swansea Disabled People Against Cuts.

Cardiff & Valleys Disabled People Against Cuts.

North Wales Disabled People Against Cuts.

Ella Smith, [ME Association](#) Welfare Rights Lead.

Cari Jones, Swansea Disability Forum.

Lee Ellery, Welsh independent disability activist & press team lead coordinator for DPAC Cymru.

Ben Golightly, DPAC Cymru co-coordinator.

Mahaboob Basha, Voice of BAME in South Wales.

Karen Acton, DPAC Cymru carers' network co-coordinator.

AJ Le Brun - Branch Secretary of RCT TUC, national representative of Unite Community UK.

Gareth Bromhall - Secretary Swansea Trades Council, DPAC Cymru Trade Union lead, GMB Rep.

Karen Anne Marie and Ladies Peer Support Group Doncaster.

Mike O'Brien, carer's organisation.

Bee, DPAC Swansea.

Jenna, founder of [Universities Against Disability Cuts UK](#).

DPAC Norfolk.

[Reclaiming Our Futures Alliance](#) Steering Group.

Holly Donovan - Unite Community National Forum Delegate.

[VOICES ADFOCAD.](#)

[Trans Aid Cymru.](#)

[E.L.D.E.R.S. \(Elders leading through democracy, equity, responsibility and solidarity\).](#)

Stand up for your rights.

Dermot Devlin, [DPAC Northern Ireland.](#)

Lesley Anne Jones (Crips Against Cuts Liverpool & Merseyside).

Matthew Shephard, vice Chair, Swansea Council UNISON (pc).

Bowie Taylor, Northants Crips Against Cuts.

Sharam Parvin - Disability Carer - Unite Member (London).

Catherine E - Disabled person/activist London UK.

John McArdle, Co-Founder for Black Triangle Campaign.

[Black Triangle Campaign.](#)

DPAC Cambridgeshire and Essex.

Anthony Roper

Christopher Hall

Huw Lewis

Jamie Morse

Debra Gough

Mark Evans

Nathan Lee Davies

Lynda McEwan

Anonymous, Unite the union member.

Arti Dillon  
Dee Montague-Coast  
Heledd Muir-McCann  
Erica Thomas  
Joe Fathallah  
Amie Curry  
Adrian Bailey  
Jonathan Golding  
Dawn Passmore  
Matthew Farrand  
Tom g warrington, Cheshire.  
Kirsten Sedgwick  
Damian Bridgeman  
Anonymous, Senghenydd  
Liz H, Disabled person, Brighton.  
Anonymous disabled person, England.  
Unite union member.  
Sam  
Anonymous  
Charlie Tun Lat  
Helen Annand  
Pat McCarthy  
Elen  
Phil Coleman  
Hannah Woodcock  
Kathleen Hatley, disabled person.  
Riley Parvin  
Russel Blackbourn  
Sally Morawetz  
Patrick Driscall  
Lynne Kendall  
Dawn jones  
Jon Barber  
E D Jones  
Emma Carvell  
Rona Topaz  
Justin parker

Jane Mccoll  
Anonymous single dad disabled person.  
Carmen Vazquez  
Viv Thomas  
Stewart Hendry.  
William Hood  
Callum Warren  
S. Carter (Wheelchair user and complex PTSDs)  
Sarah Tranter  
Stephanie David  
A. Hill  
A Concerned Carer  
Colin White  
Julie James  
Paula Burke  
Anonymous, Surrey, disabled person  
Claire Shaw  
Gloria Preston  
Georgina Gregory -Thornham  
Annie Ward  
Damien Ward  
Dylan  
Janet McGregor  
Adrian Nugent  
Monika Ogasa  
Anonymous, Doncaster  
Clare from Derbyshire  
Maria McCaul  
Sue Peters  
Anonymous disabled person  
Dr Davina Darmanin  
Alice Tibbs  
Gemma Teale  
Anton Klaassen  
Sarifa Patel  
Donna  
David

Kai Woods  
Keira Evans  
Stacey Blackwood  
Jean Graves  
Ian Kennard  
Josephine McCourt  
Carmen Vazquez  
Dr. Felicity McGeown  
Patrick Hogan  
Lesley Illingworth  
ERIC WILSON  
Sharon Paterson-Jones  
Robin Tooley  
Diane Campbell  
Hannah Frost - Disabled Person  
Kayleigh Northall.  
Dave Murphy  
Rhian Gorecki  
Josephine O'Driscoll  
Kurona Dargarth  
Emmerson Walgrove  
Emily Fawcus  
Karen Hill  
Sharon Kilty  
Beth Harding  
An anonymous disabled person  
Sam  
Anonymous, Bridlington  
Millie  
Jay Coe  
Kat Watkins  
Luke Bannon  
Nat - A disabled person  
Rachel Townsend  
Michele Greb - disabled person  
Ash Flack  
Kaleigh Leiva, Swansea

James Trown  
Nicole Oczujda  
Anonymous, Surrey  
Liam McClelland  
Rachel Louise Lewis  
Paul Coleyshaw  
Nathan Newton  
Rhin Ladeinde - disabled person  
Jess Hannar  
Robyn Norfolk  
Mo Stewart  
Scott smith  
Mrs Ann Townson  
Anonymous, Caerphilly  
WR Driffield  
Jo Bodsworth, Leicestershire - Disabled author.  
A C K Thamesmead  
Sima Hunter  
Penelope Friday, disabled writer  
Wheelie MS Advocate  
Anonymous disabled person  
Flowers Rose  
Anonymous disabled person  
Anonymous disabled person, Manchester  
Anonymous, Swansea  
Louise Pullen  
Jo Owen, disabled and ill person in Kent  
Carla Ingham  
Hannah Bailey  
Concerned  
Kirsty (disabled person)  
Anon  
Leanne Degregorio  
Laura - disabled person  
Anonymous disabled Public Sector worker  
Anonymous  
Cheryl G.

Lorraine Laidler  
Anonymous Disabled Person London  
Nicki Myers  
Brídín Kelly  
Emma Metcalfe, parent carer.  
Anonymous disabled plural system (DID).  
Michelle Connolly  
AC Baker  
Annabelle Byrne  
Anonymous Disabled Person.  
Rachel Evans, disabled school teacher.  
Liza Liebling

>> [Add your signature here](#)

*Signatures collected 1st to 30th September.*

*Signatures are updated every few days.*

**Some comments we have received, after adding an additional space for comments on the signature form:**

“Solidarity”

“I found the language used around disabled people and benefit claimants earlier this year from ministers abhorrent.”

“Spousal immigrants not on ILR cannot claim PIP for conditions or diseases developing after immigration to Britain. They pay double for NHS if employed: payroll deduction and immigration fee. Very wrong.”

“I emailed Sir Stephen Timms in April to ask to be involved in his review. He responded saying he had passed my details to DWP. Nothing has transpired. I have valuable experience of several disabilities and would have liked to contribute.”

(Stephen Timms doesn't reply properly to anyone in Wales, either!)

“Undod” from [Black Triangle Campaign](#) in Scotland.

(Undod means 'unity' or 'solidarity' in Welsh.)

“It would also be useful to mention the efforts that Scottish Social Benefits made to make applications for Adult Disability Benefit more accessible and fair.”

>> [Add your signature here](#)