



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Minister for Disabled People,
Health and Work
4th Floor
Caxton House
Tothill Street
LONDON
SW1H 9DA

www.dwp.gov.uk

5 January 2021

Dr Stephen Brien,
Chair of the Social Security Advisory Committee,
7th Floor Caxton House
Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA

Dear Stephen,

**SSAC REPORT 'HOW DWP INVOLVES DISABLED PEOPLE WHEN
DEVELOPING OR EVALUATING PROGRAMMES THAT AFFECT THEM'**

I am passionate about putting the voices of disabled people at the centre of health and disability policy development. We are grateful to the committee and to the people who provided feedback and I am pleased that our sustained efforts to involve disabled people have been recognised.

Over the past 18 months I have personally led significant engagement with both national and local charities for disabled people and disabled people's organisations, as well as from disabled people themselves. The purpose of these events, many of them now virtual using video technology, is to hear about people's needs and identify what needs to improve. They have provided a vivid account of the lived experiences of disabled people and this insight is informing the content of the forthcoming Health and Disability Green Paper.

It is only by listening to feedback that we can learn and focus our efforts into improving the areas that are most important to the people who are most affected by the work we do.

I also meet with the Department's Ministerial Taskforce on Alternative Formats so we can better understand some of the barriers customers experience when accessing services.

To support the government's National Disability Strategy, we have set up a Regional Stakeholder Network, which is the first network of this type. It allows the voice of disabled people to be heard more clearly and includes many disability organisations and individual disabled people. I am also continuing to regularly meet with the Disability Charities Consortium to discuss a range of disability related issues. This

stakeholder engagement has been vital during the response to Covid-19. Finally, I meet with my cross-government colleagues, who are Ministerial Disability Champions.

I will provide the Committee with a formal response outlining the actions we are taking in response to the recommendations.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Justin." with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Justin Tomlinson MP
Minister for Disabled People, Health & Work