



Department
for Work &
Pensions

THE RT HON. SIR STEPHEN TIMMS MP

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Dear Debbie,

Thank you for your letter of 17 September and for the Committee's continued engagement with the Timms Review. We welcome the thoughtful and constructive challenge that the Committee has provided throughout this process. Your letter has been shared with the wider steering group so that the ideas presented can be considered in the refinement of the final recommendations.

Many of the issues you raise are among the most important questions currently being considered by the Review. The Review's steering group is still in the process of testing and refining its emerging recommendations with disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, Disabled People's Organisations and other stakeholders. I would be glad to meet with you and your Committee to provide an update on this process, ahead of the Review's final report later in the autumn.

On the co-production used in the Review

The Review has been guided by the principles of co-production throughout its work, and the approach to this has been set and guided by the steering group. Almost all the steering group have lived experience of disability or long-term health conditions. They have set the Review's priorities, engagement activity and developed the emerging recommendations, which were published on 9 September.

This is the first time the UK Government has committed to co-production at this scale, putting disabled people at the heart of policymaking.

On the model of co-production used

Co-production is a way of working where people with lived experience, practitioners, and policymakers share power, purpose and responsibility to shape decisions that affect their lives.

It is not a single method, but a set of values, behaviours, and commitments that guide how we work. It recognises the importance of lived experience in designing, testing and improving policies. To reflect this ethos, each member of the steering group has equal power in the decision-making process for this Review. The steering group set and agreed

its model to take forward the Review, within the scope of the Terms of Reference, and the approach to co-production was set out in the Interim Report.

On deliberative approaches, decision-making and how workshop feedback influences recommendations

The emerging recommendations were developed by the steering group, with all wording agreed by a vote of members. The steering group formed its recommendations in response to the concerns about PIP outlined in the Interim Report and the range of evidence it has heard over the course of the Review, with the Review also benefitting from the range of perspectives and experience brought by steering group members to the discussions.

For key decisions throughout the Review, the steering group has voted on the basis of one member, one vote, including on the emerging recommendations.

The steering group has gathered feedback from disabled people and people with long term health conditions, as well as organisations with expertise in disability, health and welfare policy, through shaping recommendations workshops and roundtables, respectively. These are designed to test, challenge and refine the emerging recommendations as part of the Review's wider evidence-gathering and engagement programme.

The final report will explain how evidence gathered throughout this phase informed the Review's conclusions and the final recommendations.

On engagement with DPOs and diversity of participation

The Review has frequently engaged with DPOs throughout its work, including through the Call for Evidence and its Evidence from Experts sessions. DPOs have also run their own Workshop in a Box sessions and co-hosted shaping recommendation workshops. In addition, several members of the steering group are, or previously have been members of DPOs.

The Review has sought to engage people with, and organisations representing, a broad range of disabilities and long-term health conditions, as well as a diverse range of demographic characteristics.

The Workshop in a Box programme was designed specifically to enable organisations of different sizes and types to participate, particularly those working with people who may be less likely to engage through more traditional evidence-gathering processes. This offered an opportunity for DPOs, including those small and medium sized, to be able to feed into the review.

Participants in shaping recommendations workshops were recruited at random through a Call for Participation and the steering group reviewed and ensured the sample balanced a range of experiences, backgrounds, health conditions and locations at individual workshops. Where a particular characteristic was under-represented, applicants with that characteristic were identified from the wider applicant pool and selected at random to fill any gaps.

On detailed questions relating to the emerging recommendations

The emerging recommendations published on 9 September are not the final recommendations of the Review. They are emerging initial ideas. They reflect the evidence gathered by the steering group so far and are intended to explore how PIP could provide a fairer, more consistent and supportive experience.

The steering group has heard feedback through Shaping Recommendations Workshops and Roundtables which will directly inform how the recommendations are refined before the final report is presented to the Secretary of State. No final decisions have been taken on future entitlement arrangements, including for people who currently receive support through the Substantial Risk provisions.

However, the Review is clear that PIP should remain a flexible, non-means tested benefit that provides a cash contribution towards the extra costs faced by D/deaf and disabled people and people with long term health conditions.

On previous recommendations

The steering group's work, and therefore the themes of the Interim Report, were informed by a wide range of evidence and engagement activities.

As this is the first ever full review of PIP, a wide range of new and existing evidence is being considered by the steering group to inform the recommendations. The group has adopted a mix of approaches combining lived experience, expert insight, existing research, new quantitative data and workshops across the UK to gather evidence and strengthen the Review's understanding of the challenges of PIP.

This letter has been copied to the Timms Review co-chairs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Timms', with a horizontal line above the name.

Rt Hon. Sir Stephen Timms MP

Minister for Social Security and Disability