

**Equality 2025 – the United Kingdom Advisory Network  
on Disability**

**Minutes from meeting on 24/25 July**

**EQ2025/08/02**

**Equality 24th & 25th July 2007**

**Hilton Hotel**

**Cardiff**

**Approach to minutes:** the minutes do not attempt to capture every point made, but they provide a summary of what the discussion covered and they provide a record of required action points.

Terminology in this paper

ODI = Office of Disability Issues

DWP = Department for Work and Pensions

Members = Members of Equality 2025

**Attendees:** Simone Aspis, Prabhat Barot, Michelle Daley, Nick Danagher, Clenton Farquharson, Tara Flood (Day Two only), Shelley Franklin, Miro Griffiths, Kirsten Hearn, Rowen Jade, Pauline Latchem, Eleanor Thoe Lisney, Gary McGladdery, Sarah Newman, Andy Rickell, Richard Rieser, Steve Scott, Katherine Thomas, Alex Thorburn, Zara Todd, Fiona Wallace.

**Secretariat:** Wilma Jackson, Carol Foster-Middleton, Audrey Daft, Chris Manasseh.

**ODI Officials:** Sally Witcher, Celia Reed, Tom Berry, Jackie Tainsh, Andrew Timeyin.

**Apologies for Day 1:** Saghir Alam, Tara Flood, Dave McCormack.

**Apologies for Day 2:** Saghir Alam, Dave McCormack.

**Guest Speakers:**

Ed Clift: ODI

Rhian Davies: Wales Disability Reference Group

David Baker and James Wooding: Wales Network of Young Disabled People.

**Day One: Tuesday 24th July**

**1. Minutes, action points and matters arising**

1.1 The minutes were checked for accuracy, and the following amendments were agreed:

(a) page 5; para 2.5: There is a double negative in the sentence which should be removed, so that it reads ‘this is something that cannot be left.’

(b) page 5; para 2.5: the point about regional meetings not being appropriate also applies to other large meetings as it may not be possible for people to break into small groups to talk about issues.

(c) Page 9; amend para 5.2 to make it easier to understand. New sentence to read ‘Sally thought that the Aims, which are set out in paper 06/04, could become the basis of the Strategic Plan.’

(d) Page 10; para 5.4: DEAC should be spelt out to read ‘Disability Employment Advisory Committee.’

**The minutes were then agreed as a true and accurate record.**

## **1.2 Action points:**

It was agreed that an update on action points would be taken as part of the feedback session on Day 2.

## **1.3 Matters arising:**

(a) it was agreed that in future the minutes would not refer to people by name but would instead use terms like ‘the following points were raised in discussion...’

(b) a shortened version of the minutes will be put on the website, not the full transcript.

(c) It was felt that the minutes are generally too long. It was agreed that the Management Sub Group would discuss this with the Secretariat to agree on a format that may reduce the overall length.

**Action point: Management Sub Group to discuss format of minutes with Secretariat**

(d) A copy of the 'Not dead yet' response to the Human Tissue Bill was presented to the meeting, along with an update on the latest position. The Joint Committee are publishing its findings from the hearings this week.

**Action point: Secretariat to send the 'Not dead yet' response out to all Members**

(e) Members were given a short report back from the meeting between the facilitators and the Minister. It had been suggested to the Minister that ODI hold a series of meetings with disability organisations to discuss the

issues around ratification of the UN Convention of Disability Rights.

**Action point: Working with Government sub group to discuss with ODI on how to take this forward.**

## **2. Discrimination Law Review**

2.1 Ed Clift from the ODI presented paper EQ2025/07/03 to the meeting, explaining proposals for bringing together discrimination laws to form part of a new Single Equality Bill.

2.2 The meeting was presented with a second paper, EQ20205/07/04. Each section of this paper was read out and discussed. Members agreed a list of 47 points arising from the paper, which should form the response from Equality 2025 to the Government's consultation 'A Framework for Fairness - proposals for a Single Equality Bill. It was agreed that members could submit further comments and views by 14 August. This could include practical examples that illustrate any of the points, and also proposals that the current consultation document does not include, but members think should be covered.

## **Action points:**

**(a) The list of 47 points, as amended by the meeting, should be included in the minutes.**

**(b) Members to send any additional comments or points to Rowen by 14 August.**

**(c) Working with government sub group would work with Rowen to draft a final document, to be submitted to Government as the Equality 2025 response.**

**(d) The response should be copied to the Minister for Disabled People.**

## **Day two: Wednesday 25 July**

### **3. Media Strategy**

3.1 Options for a logo were voted upon, and logo 3 was the most popular. However there were some concerns that the logo symbolised speech and may not be acceptable to Deaf people. There was some discussion about how the logo might be made more acceptable and it was agreed that this would be taken back to the design agency to explore some variations. Tom Berry from the ODI will then send the revised proposals to the Media Sub

Group who will make a decision by 14 August. It was agreed that it would not be appropriate to put the logo and strapline out for testing.

3.2 There was a discussion about the strapline and it was agreed that the best one was 'Working for disability Equality. It was mentioned that perhaps the strapline should refer to working with government.

3.3 It was noted that the final design needs to take account of language implications when it is used in the devolved areas. General consensus was that Members wanted the logo agreed quickly so that it can be used in publicity material for the Public Meeting. On the colour, it was agreed that advice would be sought from RNIB on what colours would be most appropriate but this was likely to be black and yellow and the design company will be asked to show different colour options as well.

**Action point:**

**Tom Berry to discuss with the design company and go back to the Media Sub group with proposals for a final decision by 14 August.**

3.5 The meeting was presented with paper EQ2025/07/05. There was some discussion around the value of having a public meeting compared to other methods of meeting and talking with disabled people.

3.6 Concern was expressed that members do not have enough guidance on what they can and cannot say in public. Secretariat explained that this guidance was being developed.

3.7 Finance was also raised as an issue. It is important to consider the impact on the Budget.

3.8 Following discussion, it was agreed that:

- (a) the proposals in paper 07/05 should be agreed;
- (b) the minutes should record that Members feel it is now time to develop a public role;
- (c) there is a need to recognise that people with long term health conditions are covered by the DDA but may not see themselves as being disabled. Members need to find ways of engaging with such people;
- (d) disabled people, particularly older disabled people, often have unequal access to the internet. We should recommend to Government ways of improving access;

(e) Equality 2025 must make an effort to contact hard to reach groups of disabled people. Ideas are required from Members and from ODI on how to do this.

**3.9 Public meeting:** Secretariat reported that the venue has still not been settled as yet. Will probably be in the International Conference Centre in Birmingham but the Secretariat are waiting for confirmation that the dates requested are available.

3.10 The Members requested that the Secretariat start to look for venues in London if the Birmingham dates could not be confirmed by the end of July.

Action point: Secretariat to look for London premises for the Public Meeting if no confirmed booking in Birmingham by the end of July.

3.10 It was agreed that time would be allocated on the agenda for the next meeting to discuss the Public Meeting.

**Action point:**

**Media Sub Group and Secretariat to draft paper for next meeting, giving an update on the arrangements for the Public Meeting.**

#### **4. Independent Living**

4.1 Sally Witcher presented paper EQ2025/07/06, giving an update on the Independent Living Review. It was reported that intense negotiations are now taking place between ODI and other departments on a series of proposals and by the end of the summer it is hoped that there will be greater clarity about what recommendations can actually be taken forward. As previously reported, there is a proposal to set up thematic groups, and this will still happen if it looks like they may be useful structures to work within.

4.2 It was noted that education did not feature as one of the possible list of thematic groups. Members expressed disappointment about this. It is important that members put pressure on the Review's Expert Panel, and ways of doing this were discussed. It was suggested Equality 2025 might make its views known to Jane Campbell as chair of the Expert Panel.

**Action point:**

**Independent Living Sub group will consider whether a meeting with the Expert Panel would be useful.**

4.3 The report from the Review will be due in the next 6 months and Equality 2025 will then have an important role in pressing for implementation of its recommendations.

4.4 A supplementary paper was presented to the meeting, on behalf of the Independent Living Sub group. There was a discussion about the contents of the paper and Members provided comments to the author of the paper. It was agreed to add 'peer counselling' to the list of activities on page 14, and to rework the last paragraph. It was also agreed that the term 'disabled people's organisations' should be used rather than 'user led organisations', as this term caused confusion due to lack of clarity about its meaning.

4.5. The paper was agreed, and the sub group congratulated on the work it had put into this.

**Action points:**

**(a) The paper setting out Equality 2025's response to the Department of Health's 'User led organisation project' should now be sent by the Secretariat to the Department of Health, and copied to the Minister for Disabled People.**

**(b) It was agreed that in future all papers should have numbered paragraphs.**

## **5. Budget**

5.1 Paper EQ2025/07/07 was presented by the Secretariat.

5.2 A number of points were made in discussion:

- (a) no specific allocation has been made for access needs. Members access costs to be itemised separately as this will help make a case for additional funds when Budget is next reviewed.
- (b) a spreadsheet might have been easier to understand.
- (c) a table showing monthly actual and projected spend was requested.
- (d) Members requested an itemised list of expenditure for example on things like hotels, food, and transport

- (e) question raised regarding the cost of Equality 2025 members attending events, or providing advice to government departments - who should pay for this? Asking for payment might discourage departments from engaging with Equality 2025.

5.3 Secretariat explained that a spreadsheet does exist showing itemised costs. Secretariat are discussing with Management Sub group budget sub group the exact list of headings that should be used. It is difficult to track monthly spend due to invoicing procedure. The secretariat are trying to resolve ongoing procurement issue.

5.4 Management Sub Group confident that they and Secretariat will be able to put in place appropriate procedures to manage the Budget effectively. If other departments cannot pay for Equality 2025's time and expertise, and Access to Work cant be used to pay for access needs, neither is a problem so long as the Budget agreed for Equality 2025 reflects this. There is a need to ensure appropriate information is collected so that a good business case can be made for more funding. Members also need to think more realistically about how the Work Plan is structured so that best use is made of the available Budget.

**Action points:**

**(a) Secretariat to ensure that Members access costs are recorded separately so they can be used as evidence for future budget bids**

**(b) Secretariat to work with the Management sub group to prepare a bid for additional funding for this year to cover Member's access costs.**

**6. Guest speakers**

6.1 Rhian Davis from Wales Disability Reference group was introduced. She presented paper EQ2025/07/08. After a short formal presentation, there were some questions and discussion.

6.2 The second guest speakers, David Baker and James from the Young Disabled People's Network, presented paper EQ2025/07/09. A short discussion followed.

**Action point:**

**The Secretariat will send thank you letters to the guest speakers.**

## **7. Work Plan**

7.1 Paper EQ2025/07/10 setting out the draft work plan, was presented to the meeting. There was some discussion about its contents, and it was agreed that further work should be done on finalising the Plan.

### **Action points;**

**(a) Sub Group Convenors, to send any amendments, additions and time lines for the Work Plan to Steve by 3 August**

**(b) Steve to send final Work Plan to the Secretariat by 7 August**

**(c) Secretariat to send final Work Plan to ODI Board of management and Ministers, for their endorsement.**

## **8. Forward Planning/Any other business**

8.1 Agenda items for the next meeting were proposed as follows:

(a) ODI performance indicators

- (b) Comprehensive performance Assessment for local government
- (c) Treasury review
- (d) Budget
- (e) Consultation on guidance for government consultations
- (f) ODI update
- (g) Devolved forum report
- (h) Raising school leaving age
- (i) Healthcare for disabled people
- (j) Public meeting

Management sub group to discuss with Secretariat final agenda items. Papers for the meeting required two week before hand, so deadline is 10 September.

8.2 Management sub group to arrange for all sub groups to meet face to face twice a year.

8.3 Members expressed their thanks to Kirsten and Richard who took the role of facilitators and led them through the first difficult months.