A SECTOR DEAL FOR DISABILITY

Supporting employment and growing an industry

Liam Booth-Smith and Professor Francis Davis

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Any errors or omissions remain our own.

Liam Booth-Smith and Professor Francis Davis

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Executive Summary

To meet the government's aim of halving the disability employment gap by 2020 policy must change. The behaviour of employers and consumers must change. The challenges disabled people face when attempting to enter the workplace are significant. As the government's *Improving Lives* green paper makes clear, "there is a lack of practical support to help (disabled) people stay connected to work and get back to work. This has to change."

There are positive signs too. Whilst wider than in 2010 the disability employment gap has begun to close.[1] Studies, many cited in this report, highlight the commercial and social benefits employing a disabled person generates.

Yet despite these affirming signs, there are still major obstacles to overcome. The pay gap between disabled and non-disabled people is widening.[2] Disabled pupils perform worse than their non-disabled peers and are nearly twice as likely to be NEET.[3] Consumer markets still too often treat disabled people and the experiences created for them as 'sub-par'. Government can't solve these problems on its own, but it can lead the response. Government should be bold and commit to a **sector deal for disability** as part of the emerging industrial strategy.

This sector deal should address long standing barriers to the participation of disabled people in the labour market by offering enhanced support and incentives to employers, training providers and individuals.

It should also acknowledge the emerging industry developing around disability. The 'purple pound' is worth somewhere between £212 billion and £249 billion a year.[4] Scope has estimated the specialist equipment market for disabled people in the UK is worth over £720 million a year.[5] Internationally governments are supporting and investing in the assistive care markets. The number of people needing support for living with a disability is set to rise, let alone the huge number living with a disability now but without the benefit of assistive technologies, sometimes as simple as a wheelchair or the right glasses.

A sector deal for disability wouldn't just be about meeting an abstract employment target, although the many individuals behind that target would benefit immensely. It should be about shifting the perception of disability as a barrier to full participation in our economy. It should encourage investment and confidence in our emerging assistive technology companies so that they might become world leaders in their field. And it should send a message to those people are disabled that government stands ready and willing to support them in meeting their potential.

1 House of Commons Library (2017) – Disability employment gap

2 Ibid

3 Mencap Survey (2014) - Discontent with SEN provision

4 DWP (2014) – Purple Pound press release & Scope (2017) – Response to the Industrial Strategy consultation

5 Consumer Focus (2010) - Equipment for older and disabled people: an analysis of the market

Recommendation 1

We call on the government to create a 'sector deal' for disability as part of the emerging industrial strategy. It should offer measures to increase the participation of disabled people in the labour market and support the development of the industries and businesses growing up around the needs of disabled people.

Recommendation 2

As part of a sector deal for disability we propose employer national insurance contributions (NIC) for disabled workers should be abolished. There is recent precedent for the targeted removal of employer NIC from a particular demographic group. In his 2013 autumn statement then Chancellor George Osborne announced the abolition of employer national insurance contributions for workers under the age of 21. This principle should now be extended to disabled workers.

Recommendation 3

DWP to establish and chair a new working group on skills, access and employability for people with disabilities to support the sharing of best practice amongst councils, CCGs, schools and colleges locally. Preferably this should utilise existing networks, for example, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Local Enterprise Partnership network.

Recommendation 4

Infrastructure investment should be made 'disability sensitive' seeking wherever possible to create clusters of investment. This could in the first place take the form of 'Invest to Save' pilots where HS2 investment, DWP's spend, BEIS priorities are co-located. Also, Crown Commissioners should be mandated by ministers to provide frameworks and guidelines that make all infrastructure procurement 'disability deal' senstive.

Recommendation 5

Enterprise investment relief should be enhanced for businesses operating in the disability industry where there is a credible export opportunity. In addition where a new start up is owned, significantly co-owned and/or led by disabled people the SEED scheme should be permitted to apply to a wider range of sectors and business focuses. A particular area of focus should be in unlocking such investment to create a new market in accessible housing for young disabled professionals and in the development of more property based solutions to shared living and holiday and hotel centres with an especial affinity for disabled customers.

Recommendation 6

Therefore we recommend that the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) consider a designated cross government assistive technologies' unit to specifically champion the investment, both local and global, potential of British tech firms within OLS or as a strategic new initiative built on a 'disability deal'.
We also recommend that as part of an OLS move to recognise assistive technology as 'more than medical' by involving DWP, DEFRA, DCLG, Department for International Trade , and DFID as well as BEIS and DH as key, high profile and integrated partners in the development of next steps. This new unit or strategic initiative a national working group be established involving input from disability organisations, assistive technology ventures

of varying sizes, government departments and those local authorities with existing clusters or emerging strong commitments to this niche.

Recommendation 7

We recommend the government establish a national working party to explore how more can be done to build the investment community around the disability sector and how more might get done with less by pooling with other sources of finance and the other reliefs that we have elsewhere in the report.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that the National Citizen Service, Uprising, Catalyst and other government backed next generation leadership initiatives should develop a 'NXG Disability Track' and to support this locally every metro Mayor should appoint a 'Next Generation' Disability Champion.

1. Does 'disability' merit a sector deal?

Households with a disabled person spend between £212 billion and £249 billion a year.[6] The UK government spends more on benefits for disabled people (£56 billion) than it does on defence (£35.6 billion) while the total aviation industry is valued at £52 billion GDP.[7] Over 12 million people in the UK are registered disabled including 16% of the working age population.[8] People with disabilities aren't just in receipt of significant government investment, they also represent a powerful consumer base and an increasingly important slice of the labour market and pool of entrepreneurs and leaders. Undeniably the power of the *Purple Pound*[9] is immense. Yet, it is a peripheral force in government's economic thinking.

The government's recently published industrial strategy green paper didn't mention disability or disabled workers. Receiving concerned feedback with regard to this omission from parliament and organisations led by, and supporting, disabled people in the run up to the election the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) consequently organised a round table at Director level with private, public and civic sector participation but with subsequent changes of staffing and an election inter-regnum progress to date has been limited.

This needs to change. Government is encouraging sectors and industries to collaborate and come up with suggestions to improve economic competitiveness and productivity. According to its pre-election schedule it had hoped to announce the first of these early in the Autumn.[10] Very often in pursuit of such opportunities government has a focus on certain places and key minorities such as those from the black and ethnic minority communities[11] but in our consultations for this report we were repeatedly reminded that when it comes to disability, mainstream opinion lacks full insight. Disabled people shouldn't be left on the outside looking in; we need a sector deal for disability.

Before we outline the specific policy proposals and areas of focus that should make up a sector deal for disability we must place the argument into context; is there enough economic value in and around disability and can we define it as a 'sector'?

1.1 Employers are missing an opportunity

Whilst wider than in 2010 the disability employment gap has begun to close, but too slowly.[12] Less than half of disabled adults are in employment (47.6%)

6 DWP (2014) – Purple Pound press release & Scope (2017) – Response to the Industrial Strategy consultation

7 AOA.org.uk (2014) - New report shows aviation contributes £52 billion

8 DWP/ODI (2014) – Disability facts and figures statistical release

9 'Purple Pound' is the name given to the amount spent by households with a disabled person in them

10 Office for Life Sciences (2017) - London MedTech: Realising the potential

11 The British Business Bank, for example, is required to report the number of BME led firms its Start-Up Loan Scheme backs but there is no such equivalent tracking available for firms led by disabled people or adding value to the 'purple economy'.

12 House of Commons Library (2017) – Disability employment gap

compared to nearly 80% of non-disabled adults.[13] The pay gap between disabled and non-disabled people is widening.[14] The UK labour market isn't taking advantage of disabled workers and when it is we're not paying them fairly.

Employers are missing out on an important opportunity to grow their businesses and send a positive message to consumers. 77% of the public would think more highly of a company which made an extra effort to employ someone with a disability.[15] Research by the charity Mencap also suggests people with a disability are likely to be more loyal to an employer, staying with them for longer than a non-disabled person.[16] This is supported by a 2007 study by De Paul University which found specifically in the retail and hospitality sectors (industries with high staff churn) employees with a disability stayed in the job longer than those without.

The same study conducted a cost benefit analysis of employing disabled versus non-disabled people. From the study's thirteen participating companies the data indicated across all three assessed sectors (healthcare, retail, hospitality) people with disabilities had fewer scheduled absences than those without and across all sectors participants, with and without disabilities, had nearly identical job performance ratings.[17] Organisations should build these opportunities into both the habits of existing firms and the choices of start-up and growth ventures from the outset and when this happens 'you unlock a virtuous cycle of value'.[18]

1.2 Consumer markets must do better

Estimates vary on the true value of the purple pound but it is safe to say it is well above £200 billion, making it a significant consumer force on the home front, not to mention a growing force globally. Whilst disabled people are not a homogeneous group with similar needs and tastes, there are general issues raised around accessibility and fairness in a host of consumer markets. Household bills, clothing, insurance and transport are all markets where disabled people have been found to be at a disadvantage and where flexing to their needs and aspirations can unlock value.[19]

Multiple interviewees for this report cited the poor accessibility prevalent in consumer markets but also how businesses weren't "helping to create the impression we want disabled people as our customers".[20] The point was repeatedly made during the research that consumer markets are an important way in which we change society's view of disability sensitive products or experiences as being seen as somehow "sub-par".[21]

1.3 The education system helps and hinders

Disabled pupils perform worse than their non-disabled peers and are "nearly twice as likely to be NEET".[22] According to a Mencap study in 2014, 65% of parents of children with special educational needs felt their child wasn't receiving as good an education as other children in mainstream schools. We know education, particularly at the higher level, can improve outcomes, with the employment gap between disabled and non-disabled graduates being far smaller

13 Equality and Human Rights Commission (2017) – Being disabled in Britain

14 Ibid

15 Mencap (2016) – The benefits of employing someone with a learning disability in your workplace

16 Ibid

17 De Paul University (2007) McDonald & Hernandez – Exploring the bottom line

18 Interview and briefing with Age UK

19 Extra Costs Commission (2015) – Final report

20 Interview Response

21 Ibid

22 Mencap Survey (2014) - Discontent with SEN provision

(approx. 5%) than the national average.[23]

However, the numbers of disabled people entering higher education are relatively small compared to those who could benefit from further education or technical qualifications. Any sector deal should consider the barriers the current technical system places on people with disabilities and whether there is scope to create greater access to opportunity. One example raised was the need for a level 2 qualification to get access to an apprenticeship scheme. It was suggested to us that removing this requirement for people with disabilities would create a more flexible arrangement for employers and employee.

Another example raised was a working assumption that the key issue for all disabled people will be academic under achievement and a future reliance on benefits. This implicit and explicit assumption can mean that often educational and other support does not invest in those disabled people who have the potential to make very recognisable contributions, beyond sport, but which will be recognisable well beyond the disability community. Mentoring support immediately upon graduation for non-workplace issues of access such as housing and travel needs were mentioned here. Similarly we were told of the partially sighted inventor of the reclining bed-seat on aeroplanes who works for a world leading design consultancy.

1.4 Potentially world leading businesses are growing up around disability

Scope has estimated the specialist equipment market for disabled people in the UK is worth over £720 million a year.[24] Consumer Focus suggests the market could even be twice that size if some commercial assessments are to be believed.[25] Accurate data on the precise size of the market is difficult to gather because of the fragmented way in which products and services are purchased and commissioned. Whilst the number of disabled people in the UK has remained relatively constant in recent years (approx. 12 million), our population is aging and this means more technological needs rather than less. As a 2016 Papworth Trust study makes clear, "the prevalence of disability rises with age"[26] meaning it is likely the number of people living with a registered disability will increase and with it create additional demand in the specialist equipment market and others. Businesses who create products and services to support disabled living have an increasing consumer base, not just in the UK but internationally.[27] Indeed, the focus with which some foreign governments are targeting these sectors suggests a new global market of immense proportions.

The US assistive technologies market is growing at a compound rate of 6% per annum sitting at $55 billion dollars in 2016.[28] There areassistive technology (AT) products on the European market with an estimated annual sales value of 30 billion euros.[29] In Australia AT spend is running at 44 billion dollars per annum while Japan is currently investing over a third of its significant robotic research budget in products designed to lighten the load of the country's nearly 2 million care workers.[30] China (PRC), estimates that its own sector will be soon valued in excess of $100 billion and has, by government decree, since 2016 been orienting some of its science parks, research and development activity and global technology transfer partnership efforts to build the position of key national brands

23 Ibid

24 Consumer Focus (2010) - Equipment for older and disabled people: an analysis of the market

25 Ibid

26 Papworth Trust (2016) – Disability in the United Kingdom

27 World Health Organisation (2011) – World report on disability

28 BCC Research (2015) – Disabled and elderly assistive technologies

29 www.fernuni-hagen.de/FTB/aaate/ppt/minconf/minconf.pp

30 Adelaide Advertiser (2017) – Assistive tech a billion dollar opportunity and Trendforce (2015) – Japan's robotics industry bullish on elderly care market

who they judge to have potential domestically and abroad.[31]

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) this will not change soon and there are huge gaps in market provision. Globally some 200 million people with low vision do not have access to glasses or other similar devices. 70 million people need a wheelchair and only 5% to 15% of those in need have access to one. 360 million people worldwide have moderate to profound hearing loss while hearing aid production currently meets less than 10% of that need. Further heightening the challenge there are training and education gaps too. Over 75% of low-income countries have no prosthetic and orthotics training programmes. Countries with the highest prevalence of disability-related health conditions tend to be those with the lowest supply of health workers skilled in provision of assistive technology (as low as 2 professionals per 10 000 population).[32]

This is a meaningful business niche only recently recognised in the launch of the APPG Assisted Technology by Paul Maynard MP, Lord Holmes and others across the houses of parliament. It is a niche in which the UK could play a leading global role and could potentially form part of a post Brexit export and trade settlement.

1.5 Can we define disability as a 'sector'?

A sector deal for disability would be a significant step towards achieving the government's goal of halving the disability employment gap. Recent studies have suggested this target might not be reached by 2020 and so urgent action is required.[33] Whilst disability might not be considered a sector in any traditional sense, its demand generating capability, spending power and structural challenges are sectoral in scale. As the EEF (the manufacturing industries representative trade body) states on its website; "the definition of a sector can be as broad or as narrow as it needs to be".[34] And this 'disability sector' has the potential to contribute to mitigating the 'gap' *and* contribute to other aspirations expressed in the industrial strategy. For example the shape of infrastructure investment, the power of public procurement, in the development of skills across the lifespan and, as we have noted, the cultivation of leading technology firms and new sources of entrepreneurship.

In this spirit we believe disability should be recognised in the government's industrial strategy. By crafting a specific '**sector deal for disability**' we can encourage employers to realise the benefits and capture more value from the purple pound. We can support the growing industries around disability and help turn them into world leaders. Most importantly we can help the millions of disabled people currently without the purpose and pleasure work and entrepreneurship provides into meaningful employment and increase the range of opportunities for them to demonstrate their agency.

31 State Council People's Republic of China (2016) – China to promote rehabilitation and assistive products industry

32 World Health Organisation (2016) – Assistive technology fact sheet

33 City of London University (2016) – Disability employment gap release

34 EEF (2017) – Putting together a sector deal

2. Supporting more disabled people into work

"There is a lack of practical support to help (disabled) people stay connected to work and get back to work. This has to change."

Rt Hon Damian Green MP and Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP,
Improving Lives Green Paper, 2016

Supporting more disabled people into work isn't just good economic sense, it's also good for the individual. We know that the right type of work improves a person's physical and mental health.[35] However, as we established in the previous chapter the barriers to workforce participation for disabled people are high.

Government already offers support for disabled individuals and businesses looking to employ people with disabilities, but much more is needed if we are to make significant progress towards halving the disability employment gap. In this chapter we explore the opportunities for further policy development in employee incentives, devolution, new mayoralties, public sector procurement and local growth initiatives in order to support an increase in the workforce participation of people with disabilities.

2.1 Employer incentives

The relationship between disabled employee and potential employer is shaped by too much fear. For disabled employees it is of discrimination. According to the charity Scope over half of disabled people have experienced bullying or harassment at work.[36] For employers it can be the fear of cost or liability.[37] Whilst the academic evidence suggests there is no increased risk from hiring a disabled person there is a perception, according to one business leader interviewed, that there might be a "double whammy" of negative customer reaction and increased cost to the business.[38]

Whilst Government can help to counteract this perception by increasing awareness of the support it already offers employers, via such schemes as Access to Work,[39] more is needed to half the disability employment gap by 2020. A common theme in response to this question of what more can be done to encourage employers has been reducing the cost burden. In 2014 Lord Freud infamously suggested disabled people potentially be paid less in order that they might enter employment more easily.[40] Recently businesswoman and campaigner Rosa Monckton made a similar argument in favour of a 'therapeutic wage' or 'exemption' for disabled people. The principle behind this argument, that a reduction in cost burden to employers will increase the possibility of them employing people with disabilities, would likely work according to the

35 DWP and DH (2016) - Improving Lives green paper

36 Scope (2017) - Disabled people fear losing jobs (press release)

37 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3217147/

38 Sourced from interview

39 DWP (2017) - Access to work factsheet

40 BBC (2014) - Welfare minister apologises

business leaders we interviewed. However, all raised ethical concerns and said they personally would not pay a disabled person less. Whilst this insight is drawn only from our interviews and research roundtable the point of contention appears to be the disabled person losing out financially compared to non-disabled peers. Therefore, it is a reasonable assumption other forms of cost reduction to the business, but ones that did not personally disadvantage the disabled employee, would have a similar effect on hiring as a lower wage.

Therefore, as part of a sector deal for disability we recommend employer national insurance contributions (NIC) for disabled workers should be abolished.

There is recent precedent for the targeted removal of employer NIC from a particular demographic group. In his 2013 autumn statement then Chancellor George Osborne announced the abolition of employer national insurance contributions for workers under the age of 21.[41] This principle should now be extended to disabled workers.

Costs of removing employer-based National Insurance contributions for those with disabilities[42]

Business savings from a NIC exemption

- The total employer-based NIC on a disabled person earning £23,099 (the average gross annual pay) would be £2,061.58 per year.
- The average pay for full-time workers exclusively is much higher — at £34,414 – and this would save a business £3,623.05 per worker per year.

Effect on Treasury revenue

- A disabled person on an average salary would pay £4,112.48 a year in income tax and employee-based NIC whilst the employer-based NI contribution is £2,061.58.
- The below table shows the gains that the Exchequer would make if the recommendation had the effect of increasing employment up to the average employment rate for the UK. This ranges from £723m (if the recommendation brought the disability employment rate to 55.1%) to £3.5bn (if the recommendation brought the rate to a parity with the average employment rate for the UK as a whole).
- The disability employment rate for October-December 2016 was 50%.

41 HMRC (2014) - Abolition of employer national insurance contributions for under 21s

42 The ONS, when looking at the economic activity of people with disabilities, uses three types of categories:
- Equality Act Disabled (those with disabilities defined under the Equality Act 2010)
- Self-Report Disabled (a 'broad self-report definition')
- GSS Standard Disabled (designed to be consistent with a conceptual framework of disability that encompasses medical, individual and societal factors as documented in the International Classification of Functioning (ICF), the World Health Organisation's definition of disability and the disablement process)

As the first definition is more clear, we've used those categorised as 'core disabled' under the Equality Act 2010.

Disability employment rate	Number of extra jobs compared to employment rate in October-December 2016	Additional tax and NIC as a result of increased disability employment from recommendation	Revenue forfeited through abolition of employer-based NIC [43]
55.1%	352,498	£1,449,640,975	£726,703,532
60%	696,783	£2,865,507,797	£1,436,476,115
65%	1,045,590	£4,299,967,346	£2,155,569,214
70%	1,394,396	£5,734,426,896	£2,874,662,313
74.8% (average employment rate for UK)	1,729,250	£7,111,508,063	£3,564,991,688

2.2 Devolution

Nationally designed and directed programmes might work for large employers, but over 99% of businesses in the UK are SME.[44] To reach the overwhelming majority of employers you'll need action locally. Many of our respondents argued that councils have a crucial role to play in coordinating employment support and opportunities for people with disabilities because they often have established relationships. This can often give the local authority an advantage when working with a disabled person compared with Jobcentre Plus, for example, where sometimes inadequate specialism on disability and the specific circumstances of an individual in question "can leave people feeling like they're not properly supported".[45] Authorities like Gloucestershire County Council have already shown what good local intervention can achieve, managing to lift the employment rate for people with learning disabilities from 5% to 23%, compared to the 6% national average.[46] Councils are already actively engaged in this space, but sharing evidence based best practice is necessary if places are to make informed commissioning decisions and unlock the best practice within local government as well as Job Centre plus. Unfortunately the available data highlights how significant the variation in disability employment rates are across England.

43 Number of extra jobs from a higher disability employment rate was calculated through the number total number of people (in employment and as a whole) defined as 'Core Disabled' under the Equality Act 2010, October-December 2016. Source: Table A08: Economic activity of people with disabilities aged 16-64: levels, GB, ONS.
Estimated changes in tax and national insurance contributions were calculated through using the average gross annual pay of £23,099 (source: Table 1.7a Annual pay - Gross (£) - For all employee jobs, UK, 2016, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2016).

44 House of Commons Library (2016) - Business statistics briefing paper

45 Sourced from interview

46 Gloucestershire County Council's Forwards Employment Team has 35 young people with SEND on Supported Internships with 16 employers across the county

Figure 1: Employment rate for those defined as 'core disabled' under Equlity Act 2010, aged 16-64, by local authority[47]

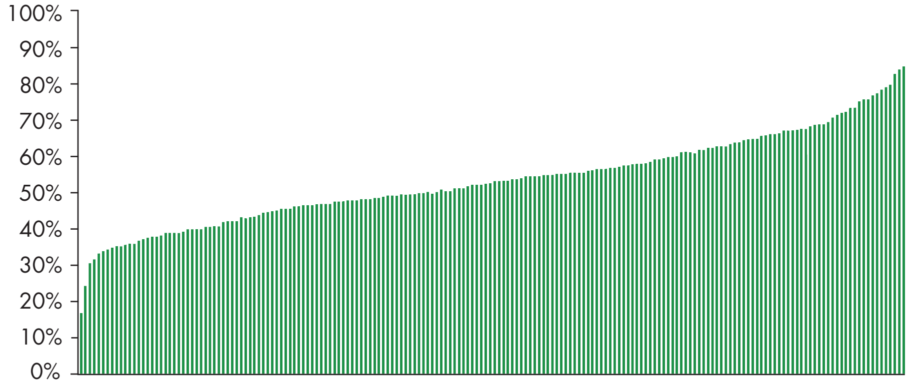
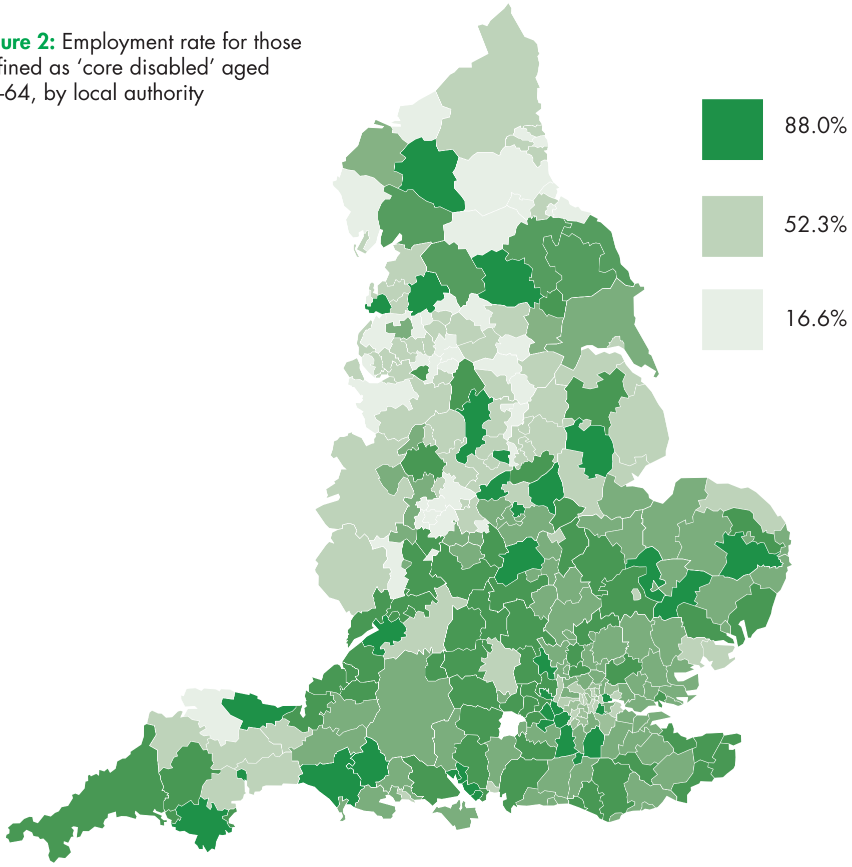


Figure 2: Employment rate for those defined as 'core disabled' aged 16-64, by local authority



It's important to note that the quality of data available via the ONS on disability employment is weak. 37 local authorities had data based on a sample of 3-9 people. Out of the remaining areas that had a higher sample, the average confidence rate in the data is ±14%. Nonetheless, the evidence available supports the conclusion good practice is achieving results, like in Gloucestershire, and must be shared and that immense variation ought to benefit from hyper local and flexible responses within an innovative and supportive framework.

Therefore we recommend the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to

47 Data Source: Nomis (ONS)

establish and chair a new working group on skills, access and employability for people with disabilities to support the sharing of best practice amongst councils, CCGs, schools and colleges locally. Preferably this should utilise existing networks, for example, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Association of Local Economic Partnerships.

2.3 Metro-Mayoral Leadership

Significant among the local agents to which one might turn to seek inspiration and fresh approaches in unlocking the potential of disabled people are those city leaders who have recently gained personal mandates based on personal manifestos.

'Metro Mayor's' or 'Combined Authorities' were introduced in 2016 under government's devolution agenda to enable decentralisation of decision-making and the local allocation of central powers in matters of industrial strategy and economic development – and, by negotiation, powers in other fields too such as health, welfare and skills. There are currently six elected Metro Mayors representing key areas across England: Andy Street for West Midlands, Andy Burnham for Greater Manchester, Steve Rotheram for Liverpool City Region, James Palmer for Cambridge and Peterborough, Ben Houchen for Tees Valley and Tim Bowles for West England.

We turned to the published manifestos of the successful Mayoral candidates to tease out their expressed interest and strategy with regard to disabled people. We have tabulated those existing commitments made by the elected Metro Mayors, in the context of economic development, below:[48]

Mayor Andy Street (West Midlands)	• Launch target employment initiatives for disadvantaged groups who find it difficult to get into work, such as those with disabilities • Make West Midlands a centre of excellence for women's and disabled sports
Mayor Andy Burnham (Greater Manchester)	• Aspire to make Greater Manchester the "most inclusive city-region in the country on disability issues" • Ensure that bus services are more accessible to disabled people • Supporting efforts to make Greater Manchester more "autism friendly" and establish a network of interested individuals and organisations such as Autistic Wigan, who want to drive real change in this area • Take a tougher approach to disability hate crime • Establish new structures in consultation with Greater Manchester Coalition of disabled people — this is a positive step towards developing a better understanding of the needs of the community and giving more agency to the disabled community in decisions that affect them

48 http://gmcdp.com/about-us) http://www.jamespalmer4mayor.co.uk
https://teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/what-we-are-delivering/key-strategies/
http://www.timbowles.org.uk/campaigns
http://www.steverotheram.com
http://www.burnhamformayor.co.uk
https://andy4wm.co.uk

Mayor Steve Rotheram (Liverpool City Region)	• Provide leadership to promote equality and tackle discrimination — adhere to the principles of the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities • Advocate for people impacted by poor mental health — addressing the stigma and promoting the services they need • Become an 'autism' friendly region — ensure that people feel valued and supported across the region • Establish a Fairness and Social Justice Advisory board to review every aspect of the Metro Mayor's and combined authority's policy and practice – the board will have representatives of disadvantaged and marginalised groups • Supporting people into work by pressing Department for Work and Pensions to give the city its own contract package — develop own bespoke service that addresses the unique needs of the city-region
James Palmer (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)	No specific mention
Ben Houchen (Tees Valley)	No specific mention
Tim Bowles (West of England)	No specific mention

Clearly while a few Mayors have made explicit proposals and commitments that touch on, or are cognate to, a focused attempt to address the economic and entrepreneurial opportunities of people with disabilities. It is our contention that these major conurbations will need to go further if they are both to address their own local needs and act as national and international exemplars for others as Mayors have the potential to do.

In Teeside could a 'disability deal' approach help influence the shape of Mayor Houchen's proposed 'Quality Jobs Programme'? Might Mayor Palmer consider seeking to make the 'economic security of the region' of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough more (inclusively) secure? How might Mayor Street of the West Midlands enhance his proposed 'Mayor's mentoring scheme' to provide the additional backing that some disabled people might need? Could Mayor Bowles sensitise his commitment to housing, making 'all' lives better and strategic transport investment to a 'disability deal' locally?

What shape would local 'disability deal' growth plans take if consciously chosen by these powerful new forces in their localities?

More specifically;

Mayor Street (West Midlands)	Has committed to creating a procurement rule for any business that provides goods/services to West Midlands CA to provide employment or training to young people. **Q: Could this be extended to include disabled people and replicated by every Combined Authority?**
Mayor Andy Burnham (Greater Manchester)	Will, as part of Manchester's devolution settlement receive the proceeds of the new apprenticeship levy raised in the region. **Q: How could apprenticeship investment provide the wraparound support into enterprise and employment that has been proven to work elsewhere?**
	Fairness and Justice Advisory Board to review every aspect of the Authority's practice. Will establish a City Region Fair Employment Charter. **Q: Could these two initiatives take a particular interest in a 'disability deal' locally?**
James Palmer (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)	A new University of Peterborough is moving towards launch. **Q: Given the role of new universities in driving access, assistive technological innovations and the regions other tech, health, food and other clusters what opportunities does this present for a 'disability deal'?**
Ben Houchen (Tees Valley)	Expresses a desire to build on the Tees valley 'comparative advantage' track record of attracting and launching new firms. **Q: How could local and national resources be combined to create incentives around a 'disability deal' locally?**

We were especially struck by the development of a draft ethical procurement policy by the Greater London Authority that seeks to drive inclusive enterprise. This could form an example of innovation to which every locality could turn for inspiration.[49] It could certainly be a model to which the leaders of the 'Core 8' cities could emulate and improve upon.

2.4 Local Growth and the Leadership Role of Local Economic Partnerships

Localis have previously argued that the overall national industrial strategy ought properly to create the conditions for highly flexible and focused local industrial strategies to emerge which reflect the varying clusters and capabilities to be found across the UK. Collaboration and leadership with LEPs is core to Mayoral responsibilities in 'metro' areas in particular but a vital responsibility of every local authority, local firms and the majority of universities as well. The indication in the Conservative manifesto that government might explore statutory recognition for Local Economic Partnerships reflects an equivalent commitment to place and

49 Greater London Authority (2017) - Group procurement policy

economic growth.

Cornwall LEP explained to us that they were working to mainstream a focus on disability as part of their priorities. Cheshire and Warrington LEP had factored disability into their work through resourced through the European Social Fund. However, the variation in attention and strategic prioritisation across LEPs is as varied as that which we found among local authorities. Often 'disabled people' were described to us as 'hard to reach' groups and yet the power of the purple pound suggests that many ventures find no problems in reaching them as consumers at all. Is it a question of mindset?

We noted Johnson and Johnson's distinctive and energetic adoption of relevant criteria in procurement.[50] How could LEPs facilitate and remove barriers to these and other progressive approaches in every locality and especially those most challenged? As successors to the Regional Growth Fund emerge, and EU employment funding schemes are repatriated, close attention needs to be paid to the future role of LEPs and especially their role as agents to unlock jobs for disabled people and entrepreneurial opportunities. Whether they achieve statutory recognition or not they remain employer led agents of change and every LEP area encounters the 'disability employment gap'.

We therefore recommend the following:

- If the 'disability employment gap' is uniformly unacceptable every LEP ought to be encouraged to appoint a '*disability and enterprise champion*' at board and/or executive level.
- Where the local disability employment gap is above a certain percentage (to be determined locally) LEPs ought to be expected to account to BEIS, DWP and DCLG as to the suite of distinctive education, skills, investment and other measures and action they are facilitating or putting in place to mitigate such challenges.

2.5 Public sector contracting and procurement

In 2013-14 government spent £242 billion on its procurement activities — and the Green paper estimates this to be a larger sum and to rest at 14% of GDP.

We welcome the government's commitment to learn from international examples of excellent procurement strategies, such as those developed in the US, which have "shown how strategic procurement can drive innovation and the creation of new technology businesses." We welcome also the commitment to use the Cabinet Office's 'balanced scorecard' for procurement which factors into contract allocations their impacts on apprenticeships and skills. Given manifesto commitments to reduce the disability employment gap though, and the latent potential in firms founded, led and employing disabled people it is our contention that a larger proportion of the vast UK procurement fund could be put to work to do more for SMEs and disabled people specifically.

There is a number of areas in the government's current plans and departmental workloads which would make this possible without adding excessive burdens. And it can build on current directions of travel.

The green paper on the industrial strategy makes much of the procurement impact potential of HS2 as it is developed and the power of infrastructure to enhance growth. HS2 has already been making its spare facilities available on 'meanwhile leases' for social enterprises, the department of transport has been giving thought to disabled users of HS2 and Network Rail (as we shall see

50 Johnson & Johnson - Procurement practices statement

elsewhere) have begun to act creatively.[51] Moreover DWP, and DH have been trialling fresh approaches to work and health and carers employment which thus far are not linked to procurement or other investment resources[52] The presence of Social Enterprise and other Fellows in residence has assisted this process at DWP.

However, if the creation of jobs and training opportunities for disabled people were mainstreamed as part of HS2 and other infrastructure procurement criteria and inter-departmental collaboration there would be more leverage to be had.

We therefore recommend the following:

- Infrastructure investment should be made 'disability sensitive' seeking wherever possible to create clusters of investment. This could in the first place take the form of 'Invest to Save' pilots where HS2 investment, DWP's spend, BEIS priorities are co-located.
- Crown Commissioners should be mandated by ministers to provide frameworks and guidelines that make all infrastructure procurement 'disability deal' sensitive.

2.6 A British Invention At Hand: Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and a 'Disability Deal'

Before the June 2017 election the then civil society Minister, Rob Wilson, had committed to a review and more promotion of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. Developed as a private member's bill this Act provides a unique UK response to advancing the case for including key social value criteria into the design of both competitive and especially collaborative procurement processes. Thus far though this legislation has been seen as mostly a reserve enthusiasm of civil society organisations even though it is drafted with wider usage and relevance in mind. This is a conceivably significant sin of omission given the SME profile of many of the firms and purchases that we would see as concentrated into the 'disability sector.' And it has meant that the extensive powers to shape markets and investment outcomes have been underdeveloped by the procurement and commissioning professions.[53]

No wonder then that according to Crown Commercial Services[54] only 30% of local authorities and hardly any central government departments have made use of its powers to shape their decision making.

In driving a 'disability deal' to prominence there is an opportunity here to combine the use of the Cabinet Office's balanced scorecard for which the government has already expressed support with a refreshed commitment to the Social Value Act. There are timely opportunities here: DWP's Social Enterprise Fellows have designed bespoke scorecards, DH's 2016 Voluntary Sector and Social Enterprise Review exhorted[55] NHS England and others to do more in this regard while Crown Commercial Services are working on mainstreaming accessibility and anti-modern slavery measures into government procurement in the coming year. Linking this to the commitments in the industrial strategy and other intended reviews of the Social value Act from DCMS would ensure no opportunities were lost. And a parliament where the balance between parties is fine might be the perfect setting for backbenchers to bring forward a legislative confirmation of such a proposal.

The Social Value Act should shape the behaviour of every firm not just social enterprises and the voluntary sector.

51 Briefing from HS2

52 Briefing from the Department for Health

53 Interview with Bates, Wells, Braithwaite and publications from Jonathan Bland of Social Business International

54 Interview with CCS

55 https://vcsereview.org.uk/

3. Growing the 'disability industry'

As one interviewee put it, "too many still see disability solely as a problem to be managed, when in reality it should be an opportunity. If we get it right we can lead the world in brand new industries which make living with a disability easier than we could only have imagined 15 years ago."[56] Alongside the good economic and social sense of getting more disabled people into work, there is also a strong investment and export opportunity in developing the industries and businesses which support that an increase in workforce participation.

3.1 Social Enterprise, Voluntary Sector and New Sources of Venture Formation and Social Investment Capital

Economic value can sometimes be a contested concept and debates between GDP, GVA, and other measurement tools commonplace. Nowhere is this more striking than in the off- classical national balance sheet contribution made by unpaid carers at £132 billion,[57] volunteers and the 'gift' relationships unlocked by voluntary sector organisations conservatively estimated at over £23 billion[58] and especially the growing UK social enterprise sector which in turn are developing their own export niches in the social care and disability realms.[59] This contribution is close to absent from the industrial strategy and this absence has knock on consequences for our nation's ability to invest and support economic growth and agency among some of our most vulnerable citizens and especially those who are disabled.

Our purpose here is not to make the case for social enterprises per se but it is to suggest that a monopolistic approach to firm size, ownership structure, and value measurement could run the risk of downgrading brave disabled entrepreneurs creating fresh pathways of opportunity not only in SMES more broadly put but also within the social economy that many find more amenable to the flexibility they require. Globally new ventures such as British Council, UKTI and DFID backed SEED Ventures in Pakistan are pushing this out into some of the poorest neighbourhoods while still empowering disabled people.[60] Kent headquartered RBLI Enterprises is growing nationally in similar fashion.

A limited size of categories fits all approach makes the chance that government might constrain innovation higher and runs the risk too of not challenging co-ops and charities, social enterprises and hybrid ventures, community interest companies and grant-making foundations to raise their game too. So in this section we simply take note of this immense empire of civil society and social enterprise and record the passion with which its distinctiveness was advanced to us and how it too sees itself as having a putative role in a 'disability deal'.

While noting the excellent work undertaken by HMG to harness dormant bank accounts to underpin wholesale lenders such as Big Society Capital again and

56 Sourced from interview

57 Carers UK (2015) - Valuing carers

58 Institute of Volunteering Research - The economic value of volunteering

59 See, for example, www.achievingforchildren.org.uk and www.provide.org.uk

60 http://seedventures.org/

again our attention was drawn to other sources of dormant, under-sweated or under-developed cash and investment flows that ought properly to be included in a strategic approach to building a 'disability deal' that seeks to enhance the civil society contribution and drive inclusive growth.

First among these was the under-developed use of the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 and a cognate caution on the part of banks to see such public contracts as a form of guaranteed income against which business growth resources could be made available to social start-ups and growth ventures.[61]

More broadly, for example, nationally charities associated with bodies that now comprise the 44 Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships within the NHS currently manage assets in excess of £2.4 billion and receive income in excess of £400 million a year.[62] Very often these charities share the same corporate trustee as the board members of the NHS body to which they are associated. While it would be entirely inappropriate to use such funds for purposes other than the reason they were given it has been striking in our research to discover the huge variety in quality and impact secured by the spend of these charities. Not only that but to observe that even DH has expressed concerns that the investment funds held here at times mirror the behaviours of other dormant funds in terms of their diminished economic and social contribution. In turn this means that significant parts of these significant funds are currently absent from social finance, disability entrepreneurship and related innovation conversations and especially those related to job creation.[63] NHS England and Sustainability and Transformation partnership Chairs have much work to do in this regard.

One should not understate the variation here: The Guys and St Thomas's Trust has in recent times begun to transform itself into a striking social innovation funder but this gold standard contrasts heavily with very staid approaches.[64]

Some of our interviewees suggested that there were equivalent under-harnessed potential in the investments controlled by CCLA on behalf of the Church Commissioners and local authority pension funds[65], in the property assets and cash flows of other faith groups[66], in under used DWP and MOD property assets, in the public benefit duties of especially the largest private schools, and in the comparatively under-developed appetite of the UK charitable foundation community to follow the example of social investors such as the Esmee Fairburn Foundation.[67]

While we are aware that some of these observations could be applied to the social enterprise and voluntary sector more generally they become particularly relevant if as part of an 'industrial strategy' in general and in the possibility to develop unique and concentrated clusters of investment and excellence in the context of unleashing the 'disability sector'.

Good practice examples:

61 Interview with UnLtd and officials at various government departments

62 http://www.anhsc.org.uk/

63 https://vcsereview.org.uk/ and interview with trustee of one NHS Trust.

64 https://www.gsttcharity.org.uk/

65 https://www.ccla.co.uk/

66 http://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/ and http://www.apbursars.org.uk/

67 Association of Charitable Foundations (2013) - Engagement in the social investment market

The Buy Social Challenge

Corporate Challenge is an initiative run by Social Enterprise UK, the membership body for social enterprises with the support of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Prince of Wales' charity Business in the Community. One of its primary aims is to demonstrate that businesses in any sector can buy from social enterprises, going beyond traditional conceptions of CSR to embed them into core business spend. Johnson and Johnson, PwC, Santander, Wates and Zurich and by Amey and Robertson Group are among the household names on board. It is a campaign open to government and which is able to support and train government bodies.

The one year evaluation of the campaign published by Social Enterprise UK shows that as well as achieving £19.8 million in spend, the Challenge has led to 125 social enterprises being connected to major corporates, the training of 35 procurement professionals in how best to work with social enterprises and an increase in awareness of the sector across the staff teams of the corporate partners.

Johnson & Johnson, for example, have a company mission is to help people live healthier, happier, longer lives. By purchasing goods and services from social enterprises, in particular, those employing people furthest from the traditional job market, they have focused their resources through a 'Social Impact through Procurement' programme. For every £1 that the company spends how can it lever £1 more for community benefit.

Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Co. – run by Royal British Legion Industries

Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Co. is a £5m turnover social enterprise employing over 100 injured veterans as well as people with disabilities, learning difficulties and disadvantaged people seeking an opportunity to get back to work after a period of unemployment. Led by Steve Sherry, Chief Executive, in recent years the venture has diversified to produce a series of products and services aimed at the local fruit, wood recycling and catering sectors as well as running a print and mail operation. Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Co. has carved out a distinctive niche as a maker of signage at scale. Drive along the M3 and the signs you see will have been manufactured in RBLI's Kent factories. More recently the venture has been making progress with some striking step changes.

The Convening power of South East Local Enterprise Partnership

South East LEP set out to develop a strand of its work that would establish it as a 'capital' of social enterprise. This included publishing a plan, holding a series of consultative conferences and identifying ground-breaking social ventures of all kinds in the Sussex, Kent and Essex areas.

Among those working in the disability space was Tomorrow's People at that time led by Baroness Stedman Scott. Tomorrow's People had enhanced the sustainability of outcomes, helping disabled people hold down jobs they won by providing wrap around support once in work - not just beforehand. They also trialed Social Impact Bonds working with East Sussex County Council.

Working with RBLI, the LEP took this one step further by introducing social enterprises to its member public bodies and encouraging them to re-examine their procurement processes and consider shifting their procurement to secure social value outcomes. For RBLI this mean success because it is an opportunity to further establish their reputation, not only as a successful social enterprise and manufacturer, but also as an advocate for disability employment and the social enterprise sector as a whole. Kent County Council are a keen supporter of social value and have evidenced this by working with RBLI to build social value into their procurement process for all road traffic signs.

The Innovating power of the Social Value Act and Network Rail

Network Rail designed a procurement process that went even further than applying the Social Value Act in its criteria of provider choice. The track provider also set out through its procurement for track-side signage a social enterprise market inviting bids from across the sector which sought to build social ventures as firms and also deliver more social value per pound.

RBLI bid into this competitive process and secured the contract to provide all trackside signage for the next four years. It is a social venture. Keeping its team in work – and in exciting, demanding and winning work - adds social value. Delivering excellent signs delivers economic and financial returns to both RBLI and Network Rail.

We therefore recommend the creation of a working party on social finance and investment and under-sweated resources.

3.2 Investor Incentives

To encourage investment in businesses that create products which support disabled living and could potentially be export businesses government, should offer tax reliefs as part of the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) and its subsidiary Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS). Relief on investment for both should be enhanced to 50% and 70% respectively. Currently the EIS provides investors with 30% tax relief on investments of up to £1m a tax year in shares of smaller, high-risk companies. The SEIS provides 50% tax relief on investments up to £100,000 and encourages seed investment in early-stage companies. With growing global demand for assistive technology and products these businesses should be attractive to investors already, but with this change to investment relief the profile of the opportunity would be raised. Enterprise investment relief should be enhanced for businesses operating in the disability industry where there is a credible export opportunity.

In addition where a new start up is owned, significantly co-owned and/or led by disabled people the SEED scheme should be permitted to apply to a wider range of sectors and business focuses. A particular area of focus should be in unlocking such investment to create a new market in accessible housing for young disabled professionals, in the development of more property based solutions to shared living and holiday and hotel centres with an especial affinity for disabled customers.

3.3 Disability and High Tech, High Margin ventures

According to government the top 342 companies in assistive technology employ an estimated 7,000 people with a turnover of £923million. Most research suggests the disruptive skills potential of this sector to create high value, high margin jobs at home, and build, fresh business models and opportunities worldwide is significant.

Internationally our competitors are on the case: Since 2016 the Chinese (PRC) government been orienting some of its science parks, R&D activity and global technology transfer partnerships specifically efforts to build the position of key assistive technology national brands who they judge to have potential domestically and abroad[68] Singapore, UAE and the US all have policy initiatives. This is not to say that the UK has not been aware of the potential through, for example, initiatives led by NESTA[69] and the Innovate UK (Technology Strategy Board)[70] and the launch of the new All Party Parliamentary Group on Assistive Technology,[71] but as the opportunity and competition grows we have heard lingering concerns that while in sports tech we are a world leader, and overall in a strong position, we conceivably need to refresh our approach to fully seize the opportunities of the future.

The question then is how to unlock investment and other support for British talent, exports, educational institutions and firms in a global marketplace in which we already have strengths.

Turning to the industrial strategy we note the strong and significant role intended to be given to The Office for Life Sciences (OLS) and he high quality of its team[72] who we know are committed to the assistive technology opportunity At the outset we should make it clear that we recognise many aspects of the OLS's work as excellent and even world beating.

Until now this vital government team has been a joint unit of the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department of Health and we welcome the proposal in the industrial strategy to strengthen its work to "champion research, innovation and the use of technology to transform health and care service " going forward. We look forward to the outcome of Sir John Bell's work on 'life sciences' as a feature of the industrial strategy.

For the OLS though assistive technology has until now sat as a very junior cousin within its overall work to support 'medical technology' more broadly. In turn this responsibility is dwarfed by a duty to back the significance of the large pharmaceutical companies, their research and supply chains and close government public affairs and regulatory interface. It is not surprising partly because of the magnitude of pharma and partly because the best resourced trade associations and external partners available to the OLS often embody, despite the best efforts of civil servants and trade associations themselves, similar structural constraints reflecting the current dominance of pharma and the very largest tech firms in the 'life sciences' conversation. In our view this poses risks to the assistive technology opportunity and at the same time creates a challenge for the government's expressed intention to have the right institutions in place to drive growth and the variety of voices that will give it energy.

Indeed one of our interviewees suggested the current design of the OLS could run the risk of inadvertently 'crowding out those who we will need to ensue breakthrough' in the next decade especially as so many assistive technology and associated digital health companies are hyper active SMEs rather than floated corporations. It could also mean that UKTI, Embassies and others charged with advancing UK Plc do not receive as full a portfolio of briefing on the potential of what is now an exploding global sector in which we do well.

Conceivably the risk may be greater still for as the global assistive technology market grows at speed current resource allocation and conversation priorities could risk subsuming it into wider conversations about pharma and very specifically *'medical'* related tech. Assistive technologies have significant salience for employment ministries, those concerned with rural inclusion, education, arts and military budgets and mainline consumer markets to name a few overseas niches. The OLS's 'pitch' around health may not do interested firms full justice.

What is more is that on the homefront medical tech in general is concentrated in London and the South East there are some indications that assistive technology

68 People's Republic of China Statement (2016) - China to promote assistive tech industry

69 Nesta Inclusive Technology Prize

70 Innovate UK (2017) - Competition briefing: emerging and enabling technologies

71 http://www.policyconnect.org.uk/appgat/home

72 Office for Life Sciences (2017) - London MedTech: Realising the potential

firms are more likely to be located in the English Midlands and North West. The existing approach could conceivably mean lost business opportunities.

Maybe more seriously in terms of market and diplomatic positioning, budget focus and international messaging the narrative of/medical tech' for assistive technology could also risk what could be the graver signal namely to lump all disabled users of tech into a bracket of 'the unwell', or the 'medically challenged' at a moment that policy, technology and investment elsewhere will be colliding to enhance and extend independence, relaunch lives and add capability to the social and civic contribution that disabled people do and can make. If we have embraced the 'social model' of disability that treats disabled people as equal citizens in our espoused domestic and overseas aid policies it would, at the least, be ironic if we undermined that position by our industrial strategy being grounded in assumptions that forced them back towards hospital and 'the medical'. A 'disability deal' could mitigate that risk, could demand that assistive technology have champions of its own, while unlocking very significant new economic value.

Therefore we recommend that the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) consider a designated cross government assistive technologies' unit to specifically champion the investment, both local and global, potential of British tech firms within OLS or as a strategic new initiative built on a 'disability deal'.

We also recommend that as part of an OLS move to recognise assistive technology as 'more than medical' they should involve DWP, DEFRA, DCLG, DfIT, DFiD, BEIS and DH as integrated partners. This strategic initiative should take the form of a national working group established to generate involvement from disability organisations, assistive technology ventures of varying sizes, government departments and those local authorities with existing clusters or emerging strong commitments to this niche.

3.4 Commonwealth Summit 2018

We are aware that DFID is planning an international conference on disability ('Global Disability Summit') for late 2018. This is to be commended. But the Commonwealth Summit provides an equal if not greater opportunity to significantly contribute to the aspiration to make 'the Commonwealth relevant to this, and future, generations'[73] by making disability and the agency of disabled people a core strand of the Summit's concerns.

The CHOGM Summit in Malta[74] was characterised by business, development, economic and youth sessions in addition to formal diplomatic activities and encounters. The equivalent sessions in 2018 provide distinctive platforms to champion firms, social ventures, and NGOs with distinctive contributions to make international econ contributions and innovations for disabled people along with raising the profile of the pressing social needs faced by people with disabilities in many Commonwealth countries. This could help the Commonwealth's *I am Able* have more profile while also providing a striking theme of social responsibility for all Commonwealth collaborators.[75] CHOGM ought to embrace a 'disability deal' summit within its mainstream heart.

Therefore we recommend a national working party to explore agents such as those above to play a part in building the investment community around the disability sector and how more might get done with less by pooling with other

73 Queen's Speech 2017

74 https://chogm2015.mt/

75 The Commonwealth Secretariat (2017) - Youth campaign for disability rights (press release)

sources of finance and the other reliefs that we have elsewhere in the report.

3.5 Role Models and Next Generation Leadership

As the Paralympic and para-sport movement has increasingly moved from its minority position to mainstream recognition, a few parts of the disability movement and community have reacted with concern. While celebrating the human achievement of these intensely competitive events they have been anxious not to allow such sporting success distract from the full range of vulnerabilities and challenges faced by disabled people. Important though sporting successes are, they argue – and the related step changes in assistive technology that they have facilitated – thousands more live with conditions and in social circumstances where opportunities are more constrained. So 'celebrating success', it's suggested distracts from naming 'the inequalities disabled people face'.[76] At stake of course in this advocacy has been the political question of how best to empower disabled people as a whole to secure a fair deal and land a position of equal treatment and access to equal contributions at home and abroad. 'Leadership', 'role models' and an advocacy of social mobility have been treated with caution. And the net result, we have concluded, is that disabled people are being marginalised and excluded from positive initiatives that the government has sought to affirm.

We noted the work represented in Lord Davies's Review into the position of women on boards of FTSE companies.[77] Margot James has hosted a roundtable specifically focused on diverse economies which also allowed MENCAP and the Shaw Trust to attend. Their presence though was secondary t the government welcoming Baroness McGregor Smith's report on ethnic minority representation in the leadership of firms[78] and the announcement of an enduring committee that would advance inclusion but whose members did not have substantive track records of driving the inclusion of disabled people.

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission and BEIS have showed enduring interest in the low number of women appointed to FTSE boards. They and others have been intensely concerned to champion and affirm those rising the most senior roles in their fields from the black and ethnic minority communities. And yet turning to their published strategies there is either no mention of disabled achievers or an almost uniform assumption that disabled people are dependent on rather than agents of entrepreneurialism, business or civic success. The British Business Bank is required to report on BME take up of its start-up loan schemes but has no such responsibility with regard to disabled people. Especially at the EHRC its historic omission in this regard, combined with its current intention to make its Commissioner for disabled people redundant to develop a more generic approach risks compounding this gap.

This is crucial because the evidence seems to suggest that it is only those public bodies and firms which have unleashed the power of designated staff networks, and/or introduced targeted mentoring schemes, and/or been pro-actively willing to reach out into dynamic private and SME firms that have been consistently successful in lifting, cracking or breaking 'glass ceilings' to full participation for women, LGBT and BME communities. And while these initiatives are now more mainstream in the city, and actively represented in next generation leadership development programmes for 'under-represented' groups such as UpRising and Catalyst (both funded by government) they remain significantly 'disability blind'.

By contrast the Shaw Trust and Lloyds Bank last year launched the disability *Power 100* setting out the names of disabled people many of whom are household figures in media, arts, business and civil society as well as sport.[79]

76 Martyn Sibley (2016) - Britain's most influential disabled people and interview with John Willis

77 Speech by Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP (2015) - response to Lord Davies review

78 Energy Brokers (2017) - Diversity and the industrial strategy

79 Shaw Trust (2016) - Launch of the power list

A new wave of charities and social enterprises, such as Cambridge's award-winning *Power 2 Inspire*[80] are asking how disabled achievers can be used not just to inspire disabled people but also move on the thinking and behaviours of able bodied young people. The Hampshire *Festival of the Mind* celebrates 'mental wealth' as a resource of resilience from which many could learn.

Looking across the country's various sectors the biographies of, to name a few, Lord Shinkwin and Lord Holmes, Baroness Martha Lane Fox and Andrew Marr, Winston Churchill and Beethoven, Alistair Campbell and Ian Drury, David Blunkett and hundreds of disabled graduates now emerging from Russell Group and other universities, provide a challenge to a culture of disability advocacy that runs the risk of not celebrating the achievements, example and challenge that individual journeys of success can contribute. It also risks keeping a silent lid on especially those disabilities of the mind that are still the focus of particular stigma.

It is our contention that this caution regarding 'success' in parts of the disability community is adding to the obstacles that disabled people face and that the industrial strategy and a putative 'disability deal' provide an important context to break down such unfounded concerns and so provide fresh opportunities. And the lack of challenge from public bodies has compounded this inequity. It is time to champion disabled leaders beyond sport and most especially in the economy.

Therefore we recommend that the National Citizen Service, Uprising, Catalyst and other government backed next generation leadership initiatives should develop a 'NXG Disability Track' and to support this locally every metro Mayor should appoint a 'Next Generation' Disability Champion.

80 http://power2inspire.org.uk/ and http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/hampshire-festival-of-the-mind/ and http://www.mentalwealthfestival.co.uk/

4. Recommendations

We make the following recommendations to central government.

Recommendation 1

We call on the government to create a 'sector deal' for disability as part of the emerging industrial strategy. It should offer measures to increase the participation of disabled people in the labour market and support the development of the industries and businesses growing up around the needs of disabled people.

Recommendation 2

As part of a sector deal for disability we propose employer national insurance contributions (NIC) for disabled workers should be abolished. There is recent precedent for the targeted removal of employer NIC from a particular demographic group. In his 2013 autumn statement then Chancellor George Osborne announced the abolition of employer national insurance contributions for workers under the age of 21. This principle should now be extended to disabled workers.

Recommendation 3

DWP to establish and chair a new working group on skills, access and employability for people with disabilities to support the sharing of best practice amongst councils, CCGs, schools and colleges locally. Preferably this should utilise existing networks, for example, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Local Enterprise Partnership network.

Recommendation 4

Infrastructure investment should be made 'disability sensitive' seeking wherever possible to create clusters of investment. This could in the first place take the form of 'Invest to Save' pilots where HS2 investment, DWP's spend, BEIS priorities are co-located. Also, Crown Commissioners should be mandated by ministers to provide frameworks and guidelines that make all infrastructure procurement 'disability deal' sensitive.

Recommendation 5

Enterprise investment relief should be enhanced for businesses operating in the disability industry where there is a credible export opportunity. In addition where a new start up is owned, significantly co-owned and/or led by disabled people the SEED scheme should be permitted to apply to a wider range of sectors and business focuses. A particular area of focus should be in unlocking such investment to create a new market in accessible housing for young disabled professionals and in the development of more property based solutions to shared living and holiday and hotel centres with an especial affinity for disabled customers.

Recommendation 6

Therefore we recommend that the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) consider a designated cross government assistive technologies' unit to specifically champion the investment, both local and global, potential of British tech firms within OLS or as a strategic new initiative built on a 'disability deal'. We also recommend that as part of an OLS move to recognise assistive technology as 'more than medical' they should involve DWP, DEFRA, DCLG, DfIT, DFiD, BEIS and DH as integrated partners. This strategic initiative should take the form of a national working group established to generate involvement from disability organisations, assistive technology ventures of varying sizes, government departments and those local authorities with existing clusters or emerging strong commitments to this niche.

Recommendation 7

We recommend the government establish a national working party to explore how more can be done to build the investment community around the disability sector and how more might get done with less by pooling with other sources of finance and the other reliefs that we have elsewhere in the report.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that the National Citizen Service, Uprising, Catalyst and other government backed next generation leadership initiatives should develop a 'NXG Disability Track' and to support this locally every metro Mayor should appoint a 'Next Generation' Disability Champion.

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