

# Press release: Strategy seeks one million more disabled people in work by 2027

'Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability' sets out how the government will work with employers, charities, healthcare providers and local authorities to break down employment barriers for disabled people and people with health conditions over the next 10 years. This will be delivered through in-work programmes, personalised financial and employment support, and specialist healthcare services to help more people go as far as their talents will take them.

The UK has near record high employment levels with over 32 million people in work, including 600,000 more disabled people in the last 4 years alone. However, ill health that keeps people out of work costs the economy an estimated £100 billion a year, including £7 billion in costs to the NHS. The government is committed to not only getting people into work, but helping them to remain and progress so they can reap the rewards of having a job.

The government announced today's plans in response to its [Work, health and disability green paper consultation](#) which closed earlier this year and received around 6,000 responses from stakeholders and the public.

Work and Pensions Secretary David Gauke said:

Everyone should be able to go as far as their talents can take them, but for too long disabled people and people with health conditions have been held back from getting on in work.

Today we've set out an ambitious 10-year strategy to end this injustice once and for all. By bringing employers, the welfare system and health services together we're taking significant steps to ensure everyone can reach their potential.

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

Mental ill health can affect anyone, from any walk of life at any time. For too long society has dictated that people with physical and mental health issues or a disability are a burden. Ensuring that more people with disabilities or long-term health conditions can get into and stay in work would not only enhance their lives, but actually enrich our economy too.

This strategy will help shape the future for hundreds of thousands of people with disabilities and mental health issues as we continue to tackle the stigma that so many people face when trying to get

into and progress in work.

Two new employment trials will also be launched in the West Midlands and Sheffield City Region combined authorities to provide employment support. The government is also investing around £39 million to more than double the number of Employment Advisors in Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services.

Meanwhile, all 40 recommendations of the recent [Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employers](#) are to be taken forward by the government. This includes establishing a framework for large employers to voluntarily report on mental health and disability within their organisations. Employers are a central part of plans, and encouragingly over 5,000 companies of all sizes have now signed up to the [Disability Confident](#) scheme to promote disability inclusion.

Sarah Kaiser, Diversity and Inclusion lead at Disability Confident employer Fujitsu, said:

It is fantastic to see the government is committing to seeing more disabled people enter the workplace. Fujitsu has significantly benefited from being Disability Confident, giving us access to untapped pools of talent and enabling us to increase our retention of employees with disabilities.

We have also worked with our employees with disabilities to ensure our products and services become even more accessible, benefitting our customers too. This is not just the right thing for employees, but also significantly helps the employer.

Creating an environment where employees feel comfortable to be completely themselves and tell us if they have a disability allows us to put in place the right adjustments to properly enable them to do their work, whilst providing a working environment that emphasises support. This not only results in increased employee satisfaction but also performance, realising value for the organisation too.

Also announced today are the next steps for the [Fit for Work](#) service. Its assessment services will come to an end in England and Wales on 31 March 2018 and 31 May 2018 in Scotland, following low referral rates.

Employers, employees and GPs will continue to be able to use the same Fit for Work helpline, website and web chat, which offer general health and work advice as well as support on sickness absence. An 'Expert Working Group on Occupational Health' has been appointed to champion, shape and drive a programme of work to take an in-depth look at the sector.

In the last year, the government has taken decisive steps to support people with disabilities and health conditions, including:

- Introduced the Personal Support Package, which includes £330 million of funding over 4 years.

\*Ending re-assessments for claimants with the most severe lifelong disabilities, illnesses or health conditions on Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Universal Credit.

- Recruiting hundreds of additional Disability Employment Advisers and new Community Partners to bring specialist advice and support into the jobcentres.
- Introducing a new 'Health and Work Conversation' between people on ESA and their work coach, focusing on what they can do rather than what they cannot.
- Launching the Disability Confident Business Leaders Group, which helps to drive continued employer engagement through effective leadership and peer-to-peer support.
- A trial voluntary work experience programme for young people with limited capability for work. This will enable young people to benefit from time in the workplace with a mainstream employer to build their confidence and skills, enhance their CV and demonstrate their ability to perform a job role.
- Extending 'Journey to Employment' job clubs to 71 Jobcentre Plus areas with the highest number of people receiving ESA.

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## [Press release: First Secretary encouraged by constructive Cardiff talks](#)

First Secretary of State Damian Green MP said he was encouraged by the constructive nature of the latest round of Brexit talks with the Welsh First Minister in Cardiff today.

He was speaking after the latest bilateral talks in Cardiff with Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns MP and the Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones AM and

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford AM.

Mr Green said the meeting with Carwyn Jones had enabled the two governments to make progress in ensuring that all parts of the UK are ready for our withdrawal from the EU.

The discussions are to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place under the EU (Withdrawal) Bill for distributing powers returned from the European Union and identifying where common frameworks will be required.

**First Secretary of State, Damian Green said:**

We are now making real progress in ensuring that all parts of the UK are ready for the extra powers that are coming back from the EU to the UK. The talks today with the First Minister were very constructive and I thank him for that.

Everyone accepts that UK frameworks will be required in certain areas to protect the vital advantages of the UK domestic market. Both sides are now getting into the deep detail of how we put in place the best arrangements for the day we leave the EU.

I am confident we can keep up this momentum and have a successful Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) with all the devolved administrations in London next month.

**Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

I am encouraged by our discussions today. We are making good progress in identifying where common approaches will be needed after the UK leaves the EU, in line with the principles for frameworks already agreed.

I am confident this process will deliver agreed UK frameworks in the areas where we need them and a significant increase in powers for the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Government.

Our discussions today lay the ground for intensive talks between the two governments up to Christmas and into the New Year.

The UK and Welsh Government ministers met in Cardiff in September, then again in London on 11 October, where they discussed a set of principles to guide the discussions.

These principles were agreed at a meeting of JMC (EN) on 16 October, and the Prime Minister and First Minister held a constructive meeting on 30 October.

ENDS

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## **News story: New chairman appointed for the Central Arbitration Committee**

Business Minister Margot James has today (30 November) announced that Stephen Redmond has been appointed as chairman of the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC).

The CAC encourages fair and efficient arrangements in the workplace by resolving collective disputes in England, Scotland and Wales, either by voluntary agreement or, if necessary, through a legal decision.

Mr Redmond, a former NHS Human Resources Director, takes over from Sir Michael Burton.

### **Biography – Stephen Redmond**

Stephen Redmond is an experienced human resources and organisational development professional and was one of four national HR Directors for the NHS in the UK. Stephen has worked in central and devolved government, the NHS, health and social care and the mining industry. He has worked internationally for the British Government in developing countries and as a consultant in Asia, Russia, Eastern Europe and Africa.

Mr Redmond's previous appointments include Independent Panel Chair at the Judicial Appointments Commission, Independent Chair of the Doctor's and Dentist's Disciplinary Appeals Panel, Non-Executive Director at The Coal Authority, Fitness to Practice Chair at the Nursing and Midwifery Council and Member at the Judicial Investigation and Conduct Office.

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## **Press release: Defence Science and Technology Laboratory appoints new Chief Executive**

Gary has spent his career in the development and supply of mission-critical wireless communications solutions to public safety, industrial and transportation sectors.

He has previously held senior global positions at Sepura and at Motorola Solutions, where he had commercial responsibility for sales, services, operations and product management.

As Dstl's Chief Executive, Gary will lead an organisation of over 3,800 scientists and engineers providing specialist, and in many cases world-leading expertise, across a wide-range of disciplines.

Ahead of his arrival, Gary said:

I am excited to begin a new challenge at Dstl, in an organisation that provides such essential skills, knowledge and capabilities in support of the defence, security and prosperity of the UK.

[Sir David Pepper](#), Chairman of Dstl said:

I am delighted to welcome Gary to Dstl. He brings a wealth of experience in research and development and in organisational transformation that will be invaluable as Dstl moves into the next phase of its development. I am looking forward to working with him as he takes on his leadership role.

Gary will formally take up post on 1 January 2018. He replaces [David Marsh](#), who has been Acting Chief Executive since the previous Chief Executive Jonathan Lyle left the organisation in September this year.

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## **Press release: New powers model for Wales comes into force on 1 April 2018**

- The reserved powers model provides a clear boundary between reserved and devolved matters
- Welsh devolution will be strengthened through further powers for the Assembly and Welsh Ministers
- The new model will come into force on 1 April 2018

On 1 April 2018, a new reserved powers model of devolution in Wales will come into force, putting more decisions into the hands of Welsh Ministers, giving them important new levers to grow the Welsh economy and to deliver better public services across Wales.

The new model places Welsh devolution on a firmer foundation, making clear what is devolved, and the responsibility of the National Assembly for Wales, and what is reserved – and the responsibility of Parliament.

The regulations also bring into force many of the further powers being devolved to the Assembly and Welsh Ministers under the Wales Act 2017, including powers over elections, transport and the environment. Most of these powers will also come into force on 1 April 2018.

The announcement comes a week after the Chancellor's budget where he set out plans to increase the Welsh Government's budget by £1.2 billion and build an economy that is fit for the future.

The new reserved model will take effect at the same time as the new devolved Welsh taxes, and before the Assembly and Welsh Ministers take responsibility for a portion of income tax.

### **Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

The reserved powers model marks a significant step forward in Welsh devolution and implements the clearer devolution settlement provided in the Wales Act.

The additional powers for the Assembly and Welsh Ministers will strengthen Welsh devolution and set it on a clear course for the future.

The Welsh Government now needs to be innovative with the opportunities these new powers provide and deliver the improvements in devolved services that the people of Wales deserve.

### **ENDS**

#### Notes to Editors

Some parts of the Wales Act 2017 are already in force, including provisions that:

- reaffirm the government's commitment to the permanence of the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Government;
- remove the requirement for a referendum before the devolution of income tax to Wales; and
- double (to £1 billion) the amount Welsh Ministers can borrow to fund capital expenditure.

Earlier this month, the UK Government and Welsh Government introduced a [water protocol](#) for England and Wales which will safeguard water resources, water supply and water quality for consumers on both sides of the border