

Notice of Motion (Full Council)

Title of Motion: **Potential Changes to Disability and Long-Term Sickness Benefits**

Date of Council meeting the motion is to be submitted to: 22 July 2025

Proposer: **Councillor Les Trumpeter**

Seconder: **Councillor Will Gill**

Motion:

“Council notes that Government has brought forward a paper on changes to disability and long-term sickness benefits, including Personal Independence Payments (PIP). PIP is a benefit not linked to work that is designed to help people with the additional unavoidable costs of their disablement and reports have suggested that the Government is considering freezing PIP payments in 2026 and tightening eligibility criteria, including for reassessments. The chaos in Westminster in recent weeks has left many in Sandwell worried and concerned about the future of their PIP.

Council further notes that many disabled people use PIP to cover the cost of getting to and from work, for paying for essential equipment and for meeting social care charges. The Resolution Foundation has commented that “Freezing PIP next year will result in a real-terms income loss for around four million people, 70 per cent of whom are in low-to-middle income households”

Council considers that whilst it is right that the Chancellor and Government has oversight over all those budgets, this should not be at the expense of pushing disabled people into poverty, recognising the comments of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation which states that “If the Government cuts disability and long-term sickness benefits it will be unethical, short-sighted and can only deepen hardship.”

Council believes that if Government does decide to make significant cuts to PIP and other disability and long-term sickness benefits, there is likely to be a direct impact on Sandwell Council and its partners in several ways, such as a potential:

- Increase in demand for council financial assistance.
- Increase in demand for the council’s means-tested Disabled Facilities Grant
- Increase in demand for advice and support from the Council’s Local Area Co-ordinators (with the team already carrying vacancies) and partners such as Citizens Advice.
- Increase in the number of disabled residents who may be unable to afford care charges, impacting on their ability to continue to live independently.

- impacts disabled people currently in receipt of the high-rate mobility component of PIP who may see their awards downgraded will the risk some may lose their entitlement to a Motability vehicle, which would impact significantly on social isolation and create further dependence.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Council's scrutiny function to convene a Task & Finish Group when detailed Government proposals on disability and long-term sickness benefits are known to identify likely impacts on the demand for support from the council and its local partners.