Dear Colleagues,

Paper 5/2018: Disability & Inclusion

We are delighted that the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton MP, has recorded a short video to help launch this important policy discussion paper.

As always, discussions will be more greatly informed if groups are able to include members and non-members from different age groups and with personal experience of living with a variety of disabilities. Why not use this opportunity to **reach out to new voters in your constituency** by asking if you can hold your discussion at a local sheltered housing facility or disability day-care centre? Let people know that you are interested in *them* and want to understand *their* perspective.

We want to ensure that as many associations and as many members are able to engage in this vital and wide-ranging discussion. Some groups may wish to discuss the questions over the course of two meetings. The closing date for this brief is therefore **1 January**.

Please send your responses to the paper, via CPF.Papers@conservatives.com, using the associated response form published alongside this paper in the News section of the CPF website.

A summary of responses to this paper will be sent to the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions, the Rt Hon Esther McVey MP; Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton MP; CPF Chairman, George Freeman MP; Conservative Vice-Chairman for Policy, Chris Skidmore MP; and the Prime Minister's Policy Unit within a month of the closing date for submissions.

The next paper will be on **Global Britain**, one of the five areas covered by the Prime Minister's Policy Commission, and will be published at the start of January. Thank you. We look forward to hearing your ideas on this important topic.

The CPF Team
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P.S. Please advertise the CPF paper on your website and social media pages. It would be great if you could post a photo online of your meeting too.

Disability & Inclusion

> *"The UK has achieved a great deal and has been at the forefront of developments in equality and disability rights. But we are clear that more needs to be done. We will continuously develop and deliver real and practical improvements to ensure disabled people have the same opportunities for inclusion as people who are not disabled."* (Sarah Newton MP, Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, 3 October 2018)[1]

Last year, the CPF discussed the nature of Conservatism. One group noted that we need to "communicate our conservative mission in order for <u>every person</u> to recognise something of what they <u>can achieve when barriers are removed</u>." The vision of Conservatism that most resonated with members was that of One Nation (or "One Society") Conservatism. Collectively, we defined this as "An <u>inclusive</u>, classless conservatism that embraces the needs, contributions and shared obligations of <u>all communities</u> in every region of the UK, promoting <u>social integration</u>, inter-generational solidarity and an economy that fairly <u>enables all to thrive</u>, rewarding hard work and responsibility."[2]

Both of these statements emphasise inclusion of every person and community. Yet only one-in-five voters believe that Conservatives stand for opportunity for all or for fairness.[3] How we might better communicate our conservative mission in each of the following areas:

<u>Housing</u>: Offering a better choice of accommodation can help all parts of our community, including older people and those with disabilities, to visit neighbours, friends and family, as well as to live independently for longer. We expect local planning authorities to have planning policies which use the government's optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, and which identify the type of homes needed for people with disabilities, as well as other groups, to visit and inhabit.

<u>Transport</u>: Our goal is to create a transport system that offers people with disabilities the same access to transport as everyone else, and that they can travel easily, confidently and without extra cost. Following our consultation last year on a draft Accessibility Action Plan, in July this year we published our Inclusive Transport Strategy.[4]

<u>Health</u>: People with a learning disability, mental health conditions or autism often have worse health than the population as a whole and face unequal chances in their lives. We want to reduce this health gap and support them to live full, healthy and independent lives. So, we are committed to giving mental health equal status as physical health.

<u>Employment</u>: In November 2017 we published "Improving Lives: the Future of Work, Health and Disability", which sets out actions we're taking in the welfare system, the workplace and health services to realise our commitment to seeing one million more people with disabilities in work by 2027.[5]

<u>Participation in Society</u>: Our public offices, from the UK Parliament to local government, should reflect the diversity of the UK population but currently the number of people with disabilities in elected offices is too low. That is why over the coming year we are undertaking a programme of work to consider how candidates with disabilities can best be supported.

<u>Culture Change</u>: We endorse "Purple Tuesday" (13th November), the UK's first accessible shopping day, established to promote inclusive shopping and recognise the importance and needs of consumers with disabilities.[6] We celebrate the Disability Confident Scheme's second anniversary (2nd November) and the contribution people with disabilities make in the workplace and our local economy.[7] We launched 'AT Scale', a global partnership for assistive technology with an ambitious aim to reach half a billion more people globally with essential assistive technology by 2030.[8] We also launched the Inclusive Education Initiative to support developing countries to realise the promise of truly inclusive schools, teaching and learning.[9]

Questions for discussion

1. <u>Housing</u>: How might we better build homes and buildings that everyone can access and use, so as to build a society in which all can participate fully?
2. <u>Transport</u>: How might we better adapt our transport systems so as to offer people with disabilities the same access to transport as everyone else?
3. <u>Health</u>: How might we more effectively reduce the health gap experienced by people with a learning disability, mental health conditions or autism, so as to help everyone to live full, healthy and independent lives?
4. <u>Employment</u>: How might we work more effectively with employers and people with health conditions so as to help as many as possible to get into and stay in employment?
5. <u>Participation in Society</u>: How might we better support candidates with disabilities to stand for public office, so that those elected better reflect the diversity of society?
6. <u>Culture Change</u>: How might we all deliver positive further change for people with disabilities, so that society does not miss out on the contribution of any person?
7. Is there any other question you think should have been asked or observation you would like to make?

Endnotes

[1] *Progress on the UK's vision to build a society which is fully inclusive of disabled people: letter from the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work*, Department for Work and Pensions, 3 October 2018: link

[2] *Conservative values summary*, Conservative Policy Forum, 17 November 2017: link

[3] *Lord Ashcroft: The Two Divides – Austerity, Brexit and the problem of building a winning coalition*, Conservative Home, 30 September 2018: link

[4] *Inclusive Transport Strategy*, Department for Transport, 25 July 2018: link

[5] *Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability*, Department for Work and Pensions, 30 November 2017: link

[6] *Purple Tuesday*: link

[7] *Disability Confident employer scheme and guidance*, Department for Work and Pensions, 2 November 2016: link

[8] *AT Scale*: link

[9] *New Inclusive Education Initiative for Children with Disabilities announced by DFID, Norad, and the World Bank*, The World Bank, 26 July 2018: link