

For the attention of:

Rebecca Hilsenrath (Chief Executive)

David Isaac CBE (Chair)

Dr Rachel Perkins

Over the last year People First Chair Christine Spooner has been meeting with the Department of Health and Social Care with the support of Deighton Pierce Glynn legal firm. The meetings are a result of a formal complaint regarding the lack of accessible information during the passage of the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Bill. Despite the Government's legal responsibility to make sure that the people affected by changes to law understand them, no accessible information was produced during the limited consultation process.

Every day people with learning difficulties have to fight for information to be communicated in a format that they can understand. Many government bodies and agencies fall short of their obligations to provide accessible information.

Up until March 2020 funding from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) covered costs for the legal support Deighton Pierce Glynn. However, we were recently informed that EHRC would no longer support this case. If continued, it would have made a big difference to us getting accessible information. It would have made sure we were consulted properly. It could have helped set an very important precedent. Up to now, it helped us fight for our rights for reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

This issue goes beyond the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Bill and is not a one off incident. We have been and continue to be 'treated less well or put at a disadvantage' in relation to our disability.

Having worked hard on this for nearly two years we are angry that this has been dropped without any explanation.

So who can we rely on to protect our human rights in the future?

We would appreciate if you would treat this as a priority issue as it highlights the continued struggle we are facing during Covid-19.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Lee

Director of People First (Self Advocacy)