**London, East and South East regional TUC meeting – 7 December 2021**

**22 participants**

**Poverty**

“The level of poverty and how the government is hiding it.”

“The majority of disabled people are in poverty. This needs to be sorted.”

**Transport**

“Transport access and mobility. Improving access to transport removes isolation, it helps mental and physical health – it’s an invisible benefit to society.”

A cost analysis was done that showed that for every £1 extra spent on increasing transport accessibility, there are £3 of economic benefits. Many disabled people are not online and don’t do online shopping so if they can’t travel, that money stays unspent.”

“Transportation in both rural and urban environments.”

“If you don’t fund mobility, the world is going to stop moving.”

“Brighton and Hove have a free accessible transport service and it pays for itself. Transport for London is meant to be becoming self-funding but is one of our least accessible transportation networks.”

“I’m concerned about electric buses coming in. Electric buses are not for everyone like we have been told. Out of 67 seats only 2 are accessible for disabled people – this just isn’t acceptable.”

“If we can’t get to a job, we can’t do the job.”

**Co-production**

“We need to have a disabled person as Minister for Disabled People.”

“It should be compulsory to have disabled people on policy-making groups otherwise there is no reflection of our interests. They should be disabled people only.”

“We need to be leading this work – not other people talking for us.”

“I’m sick and tired of putting up and shutting up.”

**Social model, inclusion and equality**

“At COP26 the Israeli delegate could not come in. Access hadn’t been thought of. But access and inclusion doesn’t just benefit disabled people, it benefits everyone.”

“The social model [of disability] counts for everything and it should be in everything.”

“We need the social model in law.”

“The Equality Act 2010 has not been totally implemented.”

**Covid**

“Invisible disabilities and mental well-being were not seen during Covid. The poorest people were disproportionately – people like ambulance drivers just wanting to sit outside their houses – but Number 10 got away with having a party and breaking the rules. The rich can get away with it while people with mental distress and invisible disabilities were being targeted and suffering.”

“We must have equality but we don’t.”

**Employment**

“Participation in employment is the biggest thing disabled people need. How many disabled people have independent lives? There are barriers to mainstream education and no equal opportunities in employment. Opening jobs up for us should be the most basic thing to do for us.”

“We want to become members of society.”

**Social Security**

“I want to get rid of Universal Credit.”

**Social care**

“There are so many things wrong with this country but one of the biggest is the crisis in social care and in funding for social care.”

“We need a National Care Service that fully respects workers’ rights.”

“Privatisation in the care sector is leading to profits being siphoned off to the Cayman Islands.”

“Denial of Blue badges.”

**Covid and healthcare**

“Not everyone is able to have the Covid vaccine. Other countries are locking down at the moment but this government isn’t. No one should be forced to lose their job because the science isn’t there yet for them to have a vaccine.”

“Appalling state of healthcare available to disabled people during the pandemic.”

“Unlawful use of Do Not Attempt Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitations orders.”

“Not evil people, it’s a culture.”

“People go to work to do the best and they find they are being instructed not to do their best.”

“The pharmaceutical industry needs to be more straightforward. We need someone to explain to us what the drugs we are given actually do and the side effects.”