**Position Statement**

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**Human Rights**

The Human Rights Act 1998 has over many years protected us without prejudice.

Our rights under the Act mean that human rights are for everyone, no matter who they are. The law means that everyone must be treated with equal dignity and respect.

The Act is about power and people, and getting the balance right. It limits the power of Government and public authorities. It enables us as people with learning disabilities to hold public organisations to account and seek justice if our rights are not looked after.

The Human Rights Act matters to us as people with learning disabilities because of the inequalities that exist for us. We feel protected by it.

The Covid pandemic taught us a lot about how important the Human Rights Act is to us as people with learning disabilities. The pandemic gave us lived experiences of inequalities during adverse times, and the Act helped us to stop some of those inequalities.

For example, our civil liberties were affected much more than people without learning disabilities.

Many providers introduced premises-wide restrictions, which were much stricter than needed by law. It meant that many of us who did not need to shield were deprived of our civil liberties.

Many of us living in care were not able to visit our family members. Many of us living in supported living were not able to have our permitted one hour exercise per day.

Some of us received ‘Do not resuscitate’ letters for no reason other than our learning disabilities.

Under the Human Rights Act the restrictions imposed on us were not 1) Lawful 2) Proportionate or 3) Least restrictive.

The Human Rights Act 1998 helped us to affect change for the better during very difficult times. It remains is a crucial tool for us to retain as we move in to the future.

**Our calls:**

It is important to us that Human Rights Law stays the same.

If ever human rights law is changed, it must give us the same rights as the Human Rights Act or better.

It is essential that Human Rights Law stays as a primary law so that our human rights are respected and upheld above all else.

Human Rights Law fits with the spirit of our laws in Wales and it is important that this does not change.

It is important to us that any changes to law do not present additional financial barriers to us in accessing justice.

The Human Rights Act helps to bring a balance between safeguarding and protecting civil liberties. It is essential that this does not change.

**NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US!**

James Tyler, Chair of the All Wales People First, National Council.

In consultation with the All Wales People National Council.