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**PRESS RELEASE**

No: 508/2012

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> August 2012

**Netto Claims Credit for GSLP/Lib Initiatives!**

The statement from Mr Netto in relation to Disability Allowance betrays his lack of understanding of the Allowance – despite him being the ex-Minister for Social Services.

Under the GSD Government, disabled persons who received Disability Allowance would lose it completely if they found a job. Mr Netto must either not to have appreciated this or is now trying to mislead the public with his most recent, self-serving remarks.

In fact, Mr Netto's statement is quite unbelievable. In it, he claims that his questions in Parliament have changed the Government's position on the staged removal of Disability Allowance.

The GSLP/Liberal Government's position on the Disability Allowance - welcomed as it has been by disabled people and their representatives - was set out specifically as an election pledge. It is therefore quite amusing that Mr Netto should say that his parliamentary questions had been the catalyst for a policy that the GSLP/Liberals had published last December! Nothing could be further from the truth: a cursory reading of page 82 of the Government's manifesto would have saved Mr Netto from claiming a Government initiative as his own.

Under the GSLP/Liberal Administration, the Disability Allowance is removed on a staged basis after a disabled person secures employment but 25% of it remains indefinitely. This has been the position of the GSLP/Liberals since before the election.

Moreover, the first GSLP/Liberal Budget introduced further substantial benefits for the disabled.

The Disability Allowance was increased in line with inflation, which this year meant an increase of 16% in money terms, up from £304.50 per month to £353.22 per month to catch up since the last increases - also something which was provided for in our manifesto and which Mr Netto cannot therefore claim credit for.

In another benefit delivered by the first GSLP/Liberal Budget, disabled people were taken out of taxation by the extension of the Disabled Individuals' Tax Allowance – something else that Mr Netto failed to do while he was in office.

Also, in order to address the concerns of many disabled people and their families, the Government has established a scheme for the employment of disabled persons, a scheme designed to ensure that all disabled people who want a job will have one.

And, in addition to the above, all import duties have been abolished on vehicles adapted for disabled persons.

This extensive catalogue of initiatives proves that the GSLP/Liberal Government has delivered an excellent and well thought-out Budget for disabled persons - something that was much needed and well overdue after the years that Mr Netto had been in post as Minister. Perhaps he will now claim that it was his questions that stimulated all these initiatives?