

Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Disability – Minutes 4 September 2013

Present:

Michael McMahon – MSP	Frank Morgan – DG Voice
Siobhan McMahon - MSP	Robert Allen – DG Voice
Annabelle Ewing – MSP	Ann Hunter – Unison Scottish Disabled Members Committee
Jackie Baillie – MSP	Iain Smith – Inclusion Scotland
Helen Hunter- Quarriers	Ahmed Yousaf – Remploy
Paul Mullan - Quarriers	Sheila Finlayson – Leading Disability Alliance
Mike Harrison – SATA	Ian Hood – Leading Disability Alliance
Brian Masson – SATA	Colin Millar – SPAEN
John Ballantine – SATA	Keith Lynch – People First (Scotland)
Terry Robinson – SATA	Rhona Neill – People First (Scotland)
Alan Rees – SATA	Sue Kelly – Inclusion Scotland
Stan Flett – SATA	
Neil Wallworth – Edinburgh Coalition Against Poverty	

Apologies:

Rachel Stewart – SAMH	Marianne Scobie – GDA
Faye Keogh – Turning Point	John Sutherland – LC Disability
Derek Kelter – Momentum	Frances Scott – Shaw Trust
John Sutherland – LC Disability	Susan Grasekamp – SDEF
Susan Archibald – Archibald Foundation	John Stirling – Disabilities Fife
Patricia Osborne – The Brittle Bones Society	

1. Welcome and introductions

Chair announced that Ms Kate Sanford was moving on and wanted to recognise the effort she put in to the role of Secretary over the past 2 years. Expressed his thanks for all her effort and help over the last 2 year period.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes approved and seconded by Annabelle Ewing.

3. Brian Masson – SATA – Background to SATA research into economic & social impact of accessible transport for disabled people in Scotland.

Brian Masson Development Worker SATA gave some background to the organisation. Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance's aim is to work for the provision of accessible transport in Scotland as a basic right for all people.

Brian summarised SATA's research into the economic and social impact of accessible transport for disabled people in Scotland. Disabled people have increased mobility but less awareness issues disabled people have re transport. The following issues emerged from the research:

- No information and advice given to people purchasing mobility devices
- Urgent need for disability awareness raising for staff
- No consistent approach to accessible transport across Scotland
- Companies are not customer focussed
- Needs of people should be identified

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Examples given of Finland. With a population similar to Scotland they identified the needs and implemented a plan over 3 years for accessible transport, however there are less transport agencies there than in Scotland.

Discussion around the issues. Ian Hood LDAS stated that they work in a number of different areas and transport is frequently raised as an issue. Councils have cut subsidies in buses; in Edinburgh taxi drives are exempt from providing accessible transport if they have bad backs whilst in Glasgow there are no exemptions. There are different standards across Scotland. Brian suggested the need to design vehicles around demographics. Mobility is crucial in the lives of disabled people.

4. Disability Hate Crime Update – Helen Hunter, Quarriers

Helen had contacted the Secretariat of the Learning Disability CPG to suggest a joint meeting on the topic. They have been focussing on bullying and secured Government funding for a Literature Review in this area which will be launched next year.

5. Keith Lynch, People First & Sue Kelly, Inclusion Scotland – “Everyday Misery” – Hate Crime and Disability related Harassment. Introducing an Easy Read Toolkit for Disabled People’s Organisations

Keith Lynch Vice Chair of People First a disabled person's organisation run by members and Sue Kelly, Inclusion Scotland presented on disability hate crime. Keith is a member of 'Speak Out Against Hate Crime Group and they wanted to introduce their toolkit for Disabled People's Organisations and Organisations that support disabled people. This toolkit is designed to increase awareness and encourage people to challenge hate crime. Keith told us that hate crime happens more often than most people think. His members have to deal with daily. The Equalities and Human Rights Commission Report 'Hidden in Plain Sight' highlighted that harassment is common. Keith said some people put up with it because it has always happened yet they are continually told to ignore it. Hate crime is a massive problem for people with Learning Difficulties and Keith highlighted this by showing a DVD. He urged workers to act quickly to ensure people supported to report disability hate crime. In 2011-12 4,518 reports of alleged race offences and only 68 reports of disability hate crime with only one report led to a conviction.

Speak Out group work to raise awareness and have been presenting to primary school children.

Keith and Sue circulated the easy read version of the toolkit which can also be accessed via the People First website.

Discussion highlighted need to educate people about the issues and the impact of harassment and bullying. It was suggested that the toolkit be distributed through local libraries. Third Party reporting centres are not widely known. Police Scotland receive many phone calls from people which relate to disability hate crime and they are all recorded. Information is there but little or no analysis of it. Frank Morgan reported from Dumfries and Galloway Voice that they are working with the police on training for 3rd party reporting centres. He said all the organisations involved have a responsibility to distribute information as part of general awareness raising.

Chair thanked everyone for their presentations and input to an interesting and challenging discussion on both accessible transport and disability hate crime.

6. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 4th December 2013

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