Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014

We note the Committee’s continued interest in the work of the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) and welcome this opportunity of updating the Equal Opportunities Committee regarding our views on the state of readiness of Glasgow 2014.

Our prime interest is, of course, on how people will get to and from the Games events. Since we wrote on 2 February 2012, we are pleased to say there have been a number of significant developments. These include the establishment by Glasgow 2014 of two groups to consider accessibility issues:-

(a) Accessibility Reference Group

(b) Accessible Transport Board

The first of these groups was established in 2012. The membership is drawn from a number of groups representing the interests of disabled people plus MACS, Glasgow 2014 and Glasgow City Council. The remit of the group has to a large extent concentrated on the accessibility of the actual venues and we are reasonably confident that the venues will be physically accessible for all spectators and that appropriate provision will be made to accommodate the needs of spectators who require further support - for example in terms of audio/visual information.

The Accessible Transport Board was established much more recently with membership drawn for the partners involved in providing transport infrastructure and operating transport services. We are pleased to say that MACS was invited to be represented on the Board. However, while the first meeting of the Board took place in December 2013 and we were led to believe it would then be meeting at monthly intervals as at the date of this letter, a second meeting had yet to be called and we are concerned about this.

This is not to say that nothing may be happening in terms of ensuring that the transport arrangements are fully accessible but we have no way of knowing or of advising the Scottish Government on this aspect. Part of the problem may lie in an apparent lack of continuity of personnel in Glasgow 2014. The people mentioned in our letter of February 2012 have moved on to other organisations - as have their successors.

Glasgow 2014 has published its Accessible Transport Strategy which we have seen and commented on. This is short on detail of actual arrangements for accessing venues as this was seen as the role of the Accessible Transport Board.

The other aspect which is of some concern to us is the legacy of the Games. We have no doubt about the willingness of Glasgow 2014 to leave a legacy in terms of great interest in sports and physical activity. However, this requires commitment by a number of parties to ensure that this happens. The Glasgow 2014 organisation will no longer exist as a coordinating body as it will be wound up after the Games.

Again from the point of view of MACS, our concern is whether disabled people will be able to...
continue to access venues as readily as they should be able to access the Games venues in August 2014. Indeed this applies to transport infrastructure generally. There will have been substantial investment in infrastructure for the Games which will be supported by thousands of staff and Games volunteers. We therefore have no doubt that these people will do their best to ensure that transport arrangements work during the Games. However this support will not be there after the Games.

In summary, therefore, there has been many positive developments regarding the preparedness of the Games since we last appeared before Committee. However, we still have concerns regarding the detailed transport arrangements and more especially in terms of the legacy of the Games in this respect.

We note the suggestion that the Committee may conduct a number of visits to be followed up by an evidence session in advance of the summer with a follow-up session after summer to review the success of the measures put in place.

MACS would be very willing to assist the Committee in any way we can.

Anne MacLean OBE
Convener
MACS
17 March 2014