

Cross Party Group on Deafness

Wednesday 17 May 2023 at 6.00pm to 7.30pm

Via Zoom (an online video conferencing platform)

Minutes - Present

MSPs

Chair of meeting – Roz McCall MSP

Vice Convenor – Mark Griffin MSP

Invited Guests

The Scottish Sensory Hub, the ALLIANCE – Amy White

Kirsten Abioye – Lived Experience /Family member.

Robert Eckhart – Scottish Government

Teresa Quail and Amanda McNamara – with NDCS/BATOD input

Jenny Gray – Office of Colin Beattie MSP

Lee Shennin – Scottish Government

Sarah Lawson - Student – Deaf Links, Tayside

Non-MSP Group Members

Secretariat – Janis McDonald (the ALLIANCE)

Audiology Heads of Service Representative – Linda Sharkey

Association of Teachers of Lipreading to Adults Scotland (ATLA Scotland) – Jill Bradshaw

Deafblind Scotland (DbS) – Isabella Goldie,

Disability Equality Scotland – Lyn Pornaro

D&G HHG – Ann Ferguson

Edinburgh University/SSC – Prof John Ravenscroft

Forth Valley Sensory Centre – Jacquie Winning

Hearing Link – Nicholas Orpin

Hearing & Sight Care-Caithness – Deirdre Aitken

Highland Sensory Services – Gillian Mitchell

HWU – Gary Quinn

North East Sensory Services (NESS) – Carla Marchbank

National Deaf Children's Society Scotland (NDCS Scotland) – Mark Ballard

Queen Margaret University (QMU) – Rachel Mapson

Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) – Teri Devine

Scottish Register of Language Professionals with the Deaf Community (SRLPDC) – Leona Glennie
Sense Scotland – Joanne O’Donnell
Highland Sensory – Gillian Mitchell
Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Scotland (RCSLT Scotland) – Brogan Ferguson
Scottish Mental Health Service for Deaf people – Dr Debbie Innes
WSDCS – Charlene Dolan

Language Service Professionals

BSL / English Interpreter – Andy Gardner
BSL / English Interpreter – Helen Dunipace
Electronic Notetaker – Paula McGuire
Electronic Notetaker – Melanie Coulter

APOLOGIES

MSPs

Colin Beattie MSP
Karen Adams MSP
Douglas Lumsden MSP
Annabelle Ewing MSP

Non-MSP Group Members

Deaf Links – Alana Harper
Association of Sign Language Interpreters Scotland (ASLI Scotland) – Tessa Slaughter, Marion Fletcher, Roy Thomson
British Deaf Association Scotland (BDA Scotland) – Avril Hepner
BATOD – Cathie Finestone
Deafblind Scotland – John Whitfield
Deaf Equality and Accessibility Forum South Lanarkshire (D.E.A.F. South Lanarkshire) – Enrique Canton
Hearing & Sight Care-Caithness – Deirdre Aitken
National Deaf Children’s Society Scotland (NDCS Scotland) – Lois Drake
Deaf Action – Philip Gerrard
Donaldson’s School – Kath Cooper
EIS – Julie Ferguson
North East Sensory Services (NESS) – Graham Findlay
NHS Highland Deaf Services – Amanda Wilson

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Scotland (RCSLT Scotland) – Glenn Carter
Scottish Register of Language Professionals with the Deaf Community (SRLPDC) – Mags Greig

Individuals

Donald Richards
Dr Peter Spencer Davies

Invited Guests

Susan Shippey – Scottish Government
Graeme Aitkin – Scottish Government

Agenda item 1

Welcome and Introductions.

Roz McCall MSP Chaired the meeting. Colin Beattie MSP sent his apologies due to illness. The Vice Convenor, Mark Griffin was also present.

Agenda item 2

Apologies listed in this record.

It was noted that Paul O’Kane MSP had formally resigned from the group. It was with regret he stepped away due to volume of work.

Action: Janis to write a letter on behalf of the group to thank Paul for his contribution over the years

Agenda item 3

Minutes of the Meeting Wednesday 15 March were approved with two changes. Susan Shippey, invited guest had presented apologies and Linda Sharkey’s colleague is Allan Graham and not Graham Allan as per the minute.

Matters Arising

3.1 National Audiology Review

We are still waiting on the report. Roz McCall MSP agreed to write requesting an updated timetable.

ACTION: Letter requesting update of timetable.

3.2 Definition of Deafblindness

Isabella Goldie, CE of Deafblind Scotland noted a small working group has been put together and scheduled to meet on 21 June 2023. Professor John Ravenscroft (Scottish Sensory Centre), Angela Bonomy (Sense Scotland), Julie Ferguson (EIS) and John Whitfield have professional backgrounds and lived experience and Mike Henderson is a parent. There are 13 on the group. A draft Terms of Reference has been developed. The plan is to develop a “Declaration” on Deafblindness and look at launching it in Deafblind Awareness Week. More information will follow after the meeting in June.

Action: Follow up information to be circulated including, a list of participants, draft declaration and a timetable for launch and awareness raising.

Agenda Item 4

NDCS Children, Families and Young People

Mark Ballard & Lois Drake

Summary and update of key issues for children affected by deafness and their families and carers. Presentation attached.

Key issues include audiology waiting times, access to specialist Teachers of the Deaf, and levels of British Sign Language (BSL) across the support network, particularly friends and family, teachers, classroom assistants and allied health professionals.

Questions covered workforce planning and development issue, wider social network issues including youth workers, awareness, communication and language development and ongoing professional development of allied professionals.

Action: NDCS will support Karen Adams MSP to set up a working group to focus on issues towards improved attainment. Terms of Reference, membership and any other relevant information will follow.

Agenda Item 5

Robert Eckhart, Senior Policy Officer, Supporting Learner’s Team, Support and Wellbeing Unit, Learning Directorate, Education and Justice, Scottish Government.

“Attainment in the context of longer-term trends and what the group feels success looks like for Deaf learners”

Presentation attached.

Robert's presentation indicated some progress was being made however whilst attainment does seem to be improving the gap remains. Issues of workforce skills and planning were noted. Questions noted skills issues and a query about the success of disability student allowance to be followed up.

Actions:

Robert Eckhart will link with the working group being set up. Robert will also ask colleagues about the success of the disability student allowance and report back to the group through Janis.

Agenda Item 6

Any Other Business

Jill Bradshaw noted the lipreading training: Scottish Course to Train Tutors on Lipreading starting in August 2023.

Action: Anyone seeking further information can contact Jill by email jbradshawlipread@gmail.com

Agenda Item 7

Date of next meetings and closing remarks

Roz thanked everyone for their contributions and supporting her as Chair. Janis thanked Roz for Chairing.

Dates for 2023 at 6.00pm

Wednesday 6 September 2023 (for General Meeting & AGM)

Wednesday 6 December 2023

The acting Convenor looked forward to the reporting of the National Audiology Review, noted the work that had been involved and wished everyone well.

Please note any items of other business for the September meeting should be submitted before 12.00pm on Friday 1 September 2023.