

# **Cross Party Group on Deafness**

**General meeting, Wednesday 6 September 2023 at 6.15pm.**

Via Zoom (an online video conferencing platform)

## **Minutes - Present**

### **MSPs**

Convenor – Colin Beattie MSP (Scottish National Party)

Karen Adams MSP (Scottish National Party)

Douglas Lumsden MSP (Conservative)

### **Invited guests**

Kirsten Abioye – Lived Experience Family Member

Hannah Tweed – The ALLIANCE

Amanda McNamara – Teacher of the Deaf

Douglas Lyons – Colin Beattie MSP staff member

### **Non-MSP Group Members**

Secretariat – Janis McDonald (the ALLIANCE)

Assistant Secretariat – Amy White (The ALLIANCE)

AVUK - Anita Grover

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

British Deaf Association Scotland (BDA Scotland) – Avril Hepner

Deafblind Scotland (DbS) – Jonathan Reid

Forth Valley Sensory Centre – Jacquie Winning

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

Edinburgh University – Prof John Ravenscroft

North East Sensory Services (NESS) – Adam Hillhouse

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

BATOD - Teresa Quail

Sensory Impaired Support Group Ayrshire (SISG Ayrshire) – Denise McClung

West Scotland Deaf Children's Society (WSDCS) – Charlene Dolan

Highland/Caithness Sensory Services/Hearing and Sight Care – Deirdre Aitken  
EIS – Julie Ferguson  
RCSLT – Brogan Ferguson

## **Individuals**

Donald Richards

## **Language Service Professionals**

BSL / English Interpreter – Bruce Cameron  
Electronic Notetaker – Carol McGuire  
Electronic Notetaker – Melanie Coulter

## **APOLOGIES**

### **MSPs**

Roz McCall MSP  
Annabelle Ewing MSP  
Mark Griffen MSP

### **Invited guests**

**David Berry** – Scottish Government (speaker)

### **Non-MSP Group Members**

Heads of Service, Audiology – Linda Sharkey  
BATOD – Cathie Finestone  
Paediatric Audiology – Jim Harrigan  
Hearing Link – Nicholas Orpin  
Heriot Watt University- Gary Quinn  
Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group  
Association of Sign Language Interpreters Scotland (ASLI Scotland) – Tessa Slaughter  
Deaf Equality and Accessibility Forum South Lanarkshire (D.E.A.F. South Lanarkshire) – Enrique Canton  
Deaf Links – Alana Harper  
Deaf Action – Philip Gerrard  
Donaldson's – Kath Cooper  
Deaf Links – Alana Harper  
NHS Highland Deaf Services – Amanda Wilson  
Disability Equality Scotland – Douglas Bryce  
Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Scotland (RCSLT Scotland) – Glenn Carter  
Sense Scotland – Joanne O'Donnell

## **Agenda item 1 - Welcome and Introductions**

These had been covered during the earlier AGM. The Convenor reminded people to say who they were and what organisation they represented before making contributions.

## **Agenda item 2 - Attendance and Apologies and Members**

Attendance and apologies repeated from AGM.

New Members

Jim Harrigan, Head of Paediatric Audiology, NHS GGC

Anita Grover, AVUK. Website: [Auditory Verbal \(avuk.org\)](http://AuditoryVerbal.org)

## **Agenda item 3 – Approve the minutes from last meeting and discuss matters arising**

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 17 May were approved.

Matters arising

### **3.1 National Audiology Review**

The National Audiology Review (NAR) Report has just been released. We are in the process of clarifying feedback to the Cross Party Group on Deafness.

It may involve an additional meeting either before or after Christmas to cover all the business of the group.

The Convenor also raised the letter he had received from Jenni Minto MSP and Minister for Public Health and Women's Health.

He proposed it be discussed at a future meeting, alongside the NAR Report.

### **ACTION:**

Janis to arrange a meeting to discuss the National Audiology Review Report and related matters.

### 3.2 Definition of Deafblindness

The Convenor invited Julie Ferguson to give a brief report on the progress of this working group, noting a brief paper had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Annabelle Ewing MSP is Chair and there is wide representation across the group with stakeholders including professionals and those with lived experience. Julie outlined a process to create an agreed “Declaration” which should come to CPG on Deafness in December 2023. 2024 would then be for working on promotional activity and a launch of the Declaration. It is hoped the work would be included in the new See Hear Strategy and involve a Parliamentary debate, prior to its launch too.

#### **ACTIONS**

Working Group to continue

Process for meetings to discuss all the CPG on Deafness business may involve an additional meeting.

Working Group approach seems very successful and will continue.

### 3.3 Working Group: Teaching and Attainment

The Convenor noted some linkage between the National Audiology Review and attainment. Mark Ballard from NDCS spoke on the NAR Report, its strong recommendations, and the implications to correct systemic failings and challenges.

It was noted to be best to have any follow up after the Scottish Government response to the NAR Report was published. The Convenor noted the possibility of extending the meeting time to two hours.

Mark noted the working group had established itself, Karen Adams MSP is Chair. The work was proving more complex than originally imagined and the group may take a bit longer than envisioned to complete the task. Four strands of work were being taken forward. Support has been very positive. A report will be available by the December scheduled meeting of CPG on Deafness, working towards an agreed position on qualified teachers of deaf children.

## **ACTIONS**

Clarify meetings of CPG on Deafness

Continue to plan ahead

Report scheduled for December 2023

Janis to seek support for cost of additional meeting, timetable and work with the Convenor on agendas.

## **Agenda item 4 - Representative of Scottish Government Dementia Team.**

To be rescheduled.

Some discussion on the prevalence of Dual Sensory Loss and dementia, personal experiences with loved ones and how thinking is changing.

It was agreed to look at developing a working group on this topic. Roz McCall MSP is prepared to convene it. Janis is seeking assistance to lead and develop focus for the working group and its work.

## **Actions**

Janis to meet with Roz McCall.

Interested parties to contact Janis if they want to support or participate in this working group.

Other links to be considered, membership, Terms of Reference and early workplan to be considered.

## **Agenda item 5 - Any other business**

1. Rachel Mapson (QMU) reported briefly on a short course run on working with BSL users and interpreters. It was well attended by some 50 participants from a range of backgrounds and is likely to run again next year.
2. Mark Ballard (NDCS) reported briefly on BSL National Plan engagement work currently underway. The new BSL National Action Plan is due at the end of October.

## **Agenda item 6 - Date of next meeting and closing remarks**

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday 6 December 2023. An additional meeting might be added. The dates for 2024 meetings will be in the next agenda.

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