

# **Cross Party Group on Deafness**

**Wednesday 20 April 2022 at 6.30pm to 7.40pm**

**Via Zoom (an online video conferencing platform)**

## **Minutes**

### **Present**

#### **MSPs**

Convenor – Colin Beattie (Scottish National Party)

Karen Adams (Scottish National Party)

### **Invited guests**

Deafblind Scotland (DbS) – John Whitfield

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

Scottish Government – Gillian Heavie

Scottish Government – Susan Shippey

The Scottish Sensory Hub, the ALLIANCE – Hazel McFarlane

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

Secretariat – Janis McDonald (the ALLIANCE)

Assistant Secretariat – Derek Todd (The Scottish Sensory Hub, the ALLIANCE)

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

British Deaf Association Scotland (BDA Scotland) – Avril Hepner

Deaf Action – Philip Gerrard

Deafblind Scotland (DbS) – Isabella Goldie

Donaldson's – Kath Cooper

Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group – Ann Ferguson

Forth Valley Sensory Centre – Jacquie Winning

Hearing Link – Nicholas Orpin

National Deaf Children's Society Scotland (NDCS Scotland) – Lois Drake

North East Sensory Services (NESS) – Graham Findlay

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

Scottish Sensory Centre – Teresa Quail  
Sensory Impaired Support Group Ayrshire (SISG Ayrshire) – Denise McClung  
West Scotland Deaf Children’s Society (WSDCS) – Charlene Dolan

## **Individuals**

Donald Richards

## **Language Service Professionals**

BSL / English Interpreter – Bruce Cameron  
BSL / English Interpreter – Helen Dunipace  
Electronic Notetaker – Gail Richardson  
Electronic Notetaker – Melanie Coulter

## **APOLOGIES**

### **MSPs**

Annabelle Ewing (Scottish National Party)  
Paul O’Kane (Scottish Labour Party)

### Invited guests

Scottish Government – Gussie White  
Scottish Government – Maxwell Barber

## **Non-MSP Group Members**

Association of Sign Language Interpreters Scotland (ASLI Scotland) – Tessa Slaughter  
British Association of Teachers of the Deaf Scotland (BATOD Scotland) – Jean McAllister  
Deaf Equality and Accessibility Forum South Lanarkshire (D.E.A.F. South Lanarkshire) – Enrique Canton  
Deaf Links – Alana Harper  
Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group – Sian Bertram (nee Woolner)  
Hearing and Sight Care – Deirdre Aitken  
Hearing Link – Lorna Armstrong  
NHS Highland Deaf Services – Lynda Campbell  
Highland Sensory – Gillian Mitchell  
Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Scotland (RCSLT Scotland) – Glenn Carter  
Scottish Register of Language Professionals with the Deaf Community (SRLPDC) – Maureen Greig

Scottish Sensory Centre – Sheila Mackenzie  
The Scottish Sensory Hub, the ALLIANCE – Jonathan Reid

## **Agenda item 1**

Welcome and Introductions.

The Convenor, Colin Beattie MSP, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## **Agenda item 2**

2a.) Attendance and Apologies.

Noted and listed in a separate note as well as on this record.

2b.) Membership.

Disability Agenda Scotland (DAS) no longer exists and is removed from the membership.

John Mitchell, a regular attendee and strong supporter of the Cross Party Group on Deafness and deaf awareness, has died after a short, terminal illness. The Convenor held a minute of silence to mark respect for him.

2b.1) New Members.

We welcomed Sense Scotland and Lanarkshire Deaf Club to the membership.

## **Agenda item 3**

Minutes of last meeting – Wednesday 12 January 2022.

They were approved by the Convenor and unanimously agreed by the group.

Matters arising were covered in Agenda.

## **Agenda item 4**

4a.) Children and Families

### **4a.1) Attainment and Education**

Lois Drake / Mark Ballard, NDCS Scotland, spoke to the paper circulated.

Lois Drake spoke on Attainment. The figures are stark. NDCS Scotland will be leading a campaign. It was noted that there were no specific figures on dual sensory loss. Also, it raised issues regarding Mental Health for young people. We will share the report from Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group (DGHHG).

#### **Actions:**

- 1.) Understand that the National Audiology Review may or may not address education as part of its scope. We must ensure that the impact of the Review improves attainment and that strategy going forward is more joined up. This may also link to the next iteration of the See Hear Strategy.**
- 2.) Share the Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group Report.**

### **4a.2) Paediatric Audiology**

Mark Ballard, NDCS Scotland, covered key points:

Paediatrics will be part of the scope of the National Audiology Review. Currently, NDCS Scotland is concerned there may be some deaf children who have still been missed. We know NHS Lothian has been working hard to identify the children who have been missed; there may be children who have deafness and other complex needs where their deafness has not been fully identified, and we are doing some publicity to encourage teachers, professionals, parents with any concerns about a child's hearing to go to NHS Lothian or contact NDCS Scotland as the initial diagnosis may not be correct. We have reached professionals and are doing social media work to ensure no child is missed.

Also, the national audiology review group has been established, and Professor Jacqueline Taylor has been appointed chair. Letters have gone out inviting stakeholders to be members of the core group or a broader reference group. NDCS Scotland shared its thoughts on what the review needs to cover, and the Cross Party Group on Deafness seemed to be in agreement with those, so we took them to Professor Jacqueline Taylor for an initial meeting, and she welcomed them. The big issue we raised was reminding her the review came about because of parents who were concerned their children were not properly

diagnosed. They raised it with the health board and got nowhere, so they brought it to NDCS Scotland and worked with them to take it to the ombudsman. It was agreed the views of parents are central, and the scope of the review is important.

**Actions:**

- 1.) To support NDCS Scotland and its campaign.**
- 2.) To support the work of the National Audiology Review.**
- 3.) To keep on the Agenda.**
- 4.) To invite Professor Jacqueline Taylor and any relevant Cabinet Secretaries to attend CPG on Deafness at time of reporting.**

4b.) Deafblindness / Dual Sensory Loss

**4b.1) Definition for Deafblindness**

**4b.2) Brief discussion on deafblind diagnosis matters**

Isabella Goldie, Deafblind Scotland, spoke on this.

Please see the briefing paper prepared. Clearly, there is a lack of definition that can clear expectations of services and supports. There was a lot of support expressed for a more strategic approach to deafblindness and dual sensory loss. Mental Health was also raised as a major issue.

**Action:**

- 1.) It was agreed that Janis McDonald share this topic with the See Hear Leads at their next meeting and see if this can become a discrete area of work held withing the next iteration of the See Hear Strategy.**

4c.) British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan

**Interim Plan discussion – Non-tactile BSL focus**

Deferred until Wednesday 14 September 2022 meeting.

**Action:**

- 1.) To be included in the Agenda for Wednesday 14 September 2022.**

4d.) See Hear Strategy:

**Brief discussion on See Hear Strategy update**

Gillian Heavie / Susan Shippey, Scottish Government.

Please see the presentation for contact details.

Gillian Heavie gave a brief overview. Susan Shippey is on secondment from Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership and will be working on the See Hear Strategy. Janis pinched one of my slides when she said that because we want the involvement of people with an interest. The strategy was launched in 2014, and the review means we have time until 2024 to publish a revised and refreshed version. We have an opportunity here to have members involved and look at language. I have introduced it as See Hear sensory impairment strategy, and I know that language is not entirely welcomed. We should say sensory loss. There is a chance to talk about what works and what does not, what needs to be taken out and what needs to be added for the next ten years. It is Susan's second day. We have been working on planning what the review should look like, and engagement is a big part of that. Derek Todd will create a list of people and organisations seeking to be involved in the See Hear Strategy Review discussions.

**Action:**

- 1.) **Derek Todd will create a list of expressions of interest for See Hear Strategy review discussions and contact members.**
- 2.) **Contact details are on the presentation, and people are invited to make direct contact with Gillian Heavie and / or Susan Shippey at this time.**

**Agenda item 5**

AOCB

No other business.

**Agenda item 6**

Date of next meetings

Wednesday 14 September 2022 at 6.00pm

**Notice: Including AGM on Wednesday 14 September 2022**

Wednesday 07 December 2022 at 6.00pm

**Agenda item 7**

Closing remarks

The Convenor wished everyone well and looked forward to progressing between this and the next meeting.