

Cross Party Group on Dyslexia

Thursday 28th September 2023 at 6pm

(via Microsoft Teams)

Minute

Present

MSPs

Oliver Mundell MSP, Rachael Hamilton MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP

Non-MSP Group Members

Cathy McGee; Dean Smith; Margaret Crombie; Mrs Brown; Paul McNeill; Susie Agnew; Ross Duncan; Michelle Luciano; Julie Ross; Ann Menzies; Owen (no last name given).

Apologies

Pam Gosel MSP, Cathy Mcgee, Paul McNeil, Margaret Crombie, Jean Tennent

1.Introduction

Mr Mundell welcomed the group and thanked everyone for their attendance, he welcomed Paul McNeill who had taken over from David Jones as the secretary. Mr Mundell put on record a vote of thanks to David Jones and wished Paul McNeill all the best in the new role.

Mr Mundell indicated that Paul McNeill would take the meeting forward with a short presentation and some discussion and action points.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were approved.

3. Business arising from the minute

The group discussed the response from the letter to the First Minister and although now immediate actions to take forwards the group agreed to take discuss and consider at future meetings.

4. CPWG – Update Presentation

Paul McNeill updated the group on some initial discussions about the next year actions or direction of the group, the focus would be on two main topic areas.

1. Support for Adults to gain free at the point of contact assessments for dyslexia.
2. Improved access for young people to gain additional IT/Digital support within the education environment.

Paul McNeill provided the group with a presentation on these topics and indicated that the group would seeks to support these areas and seek to gain actions over the coming year.

5. Response to letter sent to First Minister

There was no major feedback on the response received but the group agreed that it would be good to follow up on who would be the key minister to support adults with dyslexia.

6. Support for Adults to gain free at the point of contact assessments for dyslexia.

The group raised a number of points:

Stuart McMillian – indicated it was disappointing that this area had not moved forward since the initial motion in 2017. Mr McMillian indicated that it would be good to raise this subject within the parliament during Dyslexia Awareness Week – Action To seek if this would be possible.

The group discussed the importance and relevance of an adult having an assessment and although not solution it would help a person get some additional support or the adequate changes required.

The group discussed the other aspects of not having an assessment due to the cost, in terms of a person's wellbeing, self-esteem or ability to support their own child.

A few people highlighted the areas of good practice within the civil service and other industries.

7. Improved access for young people to gain additional IT/Digital support within the education environment.

The group discussed this point with these areas being raised:

Margaret Crombie – raised the point about what is the correct IT/Digital equipment that is required and when IT equipment is provided does the teachers or support staff have the relevant training to help.

Julie Ross - raised the concern over the cost of the equipment and the access or cost to the training courses to help support with IT equipment.

Mr Mundell – raised the point that it would be good to gather more information about what current picture in Scotland and also that it is important to remember that by simply giving a dyslexic child IT equipment does not just solve the problems or challenges.

Mr McMillian – Raised the point the IT/Digital software moved very quickly but was so important to understand what was required. Mr McMillian raised again the importance of raising the profile and stated he was willing to help raise the profile within the Scottish Parliament.

Paul McNeill – said he would follow up on this area and start to create a framework that would provide a picture of what is provided in Scotland and asked for people to feedback to him with any information.

8. Any other business

It was highlighted about Dyslexia Awareness Week between 1st and 8th November and all MSPs would be given badges to wear throughout the week.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place Wednesday 6th December 6.00-7.15 p.m.