

## Cross-Party Group Annual Return

**Name of Cross-Party Group**

**Cross-Party Group on Shared Parenting**

**Date Group Established** (the date of establishment is the date in this parliamentary session that the Group held its initial meeting, where the office bearers were elected and not the date that the Group was accorded recognition. All Groups should hold their AGMs on, or before, the anniversary of this date.)

**17/01/2018**

**Date of Most Recent Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**26/09/2023**

**Date Annual Return Submitted**

**07/05/2025**

**Date of Preceding AGM** [this date is required to aid clerks in verifying that the most recent AGM has taken place within 11 to 13 months of the previous AGM]

**08/11/2022**

**Group Meetings and Activities**

Please provide details of each meeting of the Group including the date of the meeting, a brief description of the main subjects discussed and the MSP and non-MSP attendance figures.

Details of any other activities, such as visits undertaken by the Group or papers/report published by the Group should also be provided.

The Group met on **7<sup>th</sup> March 2023**.

MSPs Fulton MacGregor and Bob Doris were present.

Eight members of the group were present. Three Scottish Government civil servants and one MSP staff member were in attendance. Invited speakers were Cathy Sexton (Fathers Network Scotland) and Erin Cosans (Angus Council 'Involving Dads' project).

#### Agenda Item 1

INVOLVING DADS: Erin Cosans, Angus Council, presented the findings of their recent survey across departments and agencies within Angus Council to discover how they make their services accessible and relevant to fathers and father figures; and how fathers perceive their engagement with those services.

#### Agenda Item 2

FATHERS NETWORK SCOTLAND: Cathy Sexton, Director of Fathers Network Scotland, gave a presentation about recent developments in FNS work including Resources for Dads & Family; New Learning and Resource Hub for professionals; and Development of Training for Professionals.

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A further meeting took place on **13<sup>th</sup> June 2023**.

MSPs Fulton MacGregor and Gillian MacKay were present.

Twelve members of the group were present. Two members of the Scottish Government civil service and an MSP staff member were in attendance. Two guests were invited to make presentations: Andrea Poland (and colleagues) from Social Security Scotland and Ian Maxwell from Shared Parenting Scotland on New Information and New Thinking internationally about Brain Function in Parents and Children.

#### Agenda Item 1

Social Security Scotland. Andrea presented a brief overview on the range of Social Security Scotland benefits, while policy colleagues provided a focused view on Child Disability Payment and recently

published Decision Making Guidance on Managing Assistance on behalf a Child.

#### Agenda Item 2.

New information and new thinking internationally about brain function in parents and children. Ian Maxwell has attended recent conferences in Athens and Los Angeles that heard neuropsychological research findings that provide entirely new insights into brain function in parents and children. A Portuguese study looked at the long-term impact of parental conflict on children's brain architecture. Studies from Spain and Greece reveal how the brains of both mothers and fathers are affected by pregnancy and early caregiving.

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A further meeting took place on **26<sup>th</sup> September 2023**.

MSPs Fulton MacGregor and Finlay Carson were present.

Twelve members of the group were present. Two members of the Scottish Government civil service and an MSP staff member were in attendance.

#### Agenda Item 1

What are Fathers Telling Us? Cathy Sexton, Co-Director of Fathers Network Scotland presented preliminary findings of their Fathers Survey. More than 1,000 dads responded to Fathers Network Scotland's call to share their parenting experiences and have their voices heard. This was numerically FNS's biggest response and revealed significantly greater commitment of fathers to parenting their children as well as insight into the barriers they encounter.

#### Agenda Item 2

Paying the Price. Sarah Rogers, Public Affairs Officer, Families Outside talked about 'Paying the Price', research by Families Outside, which explores the financial costs to families of supporting someone in prison and after release. The research found the burden of care and costs falls disproportionately to women and highlighted the role of prison in creating, sustaining, and deepening poverty amongst children and families. Alongside the research findings, the report identified key

policy solutions and recommendations to improve outcomes for children and families affected by imprisonment.

### **MSP Members of The Group**

Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group.

**Fulton MacGregor MSP (SNP)**

**Jeremy Balfour MSP (Con)**

**Michael Marra MSP (Lab) (Resigned 13.06.2023)**

**Finlay Carson MSP (Con)**

**Bob Doris MSP (SNP)**

**Gillian MacKay MSP (Green) (Joined 13.06.2023)**

### **Non-MSP Members of The Group**

For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.

<b>Individuals</b>	
<b>Organisations</b>	Shared Parenting Scotland, Scottish Youth Parliament, Fathers Network Scotland, Relationships Scotland, Family Mediation West, Parent Network Scotland, Men in Childcare, Midlothian SureStart, Children's Health Scotland, The Spark,, Families Outside, Circle Scotland, Parenting Across Scotland, Engender, Home Start, Grandparents Apart, Connect, CYPCS, Early Years Scotland, Dads Rock, Coalition of Care and Support Providers Scotland.

### **Group Office Bearers**

Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have

more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.

<b>Convener</b>	Fulton MacGregor MSP
<b>Deputy Convener</b>	Jeremy Balfour MSP
<b>Secretary</b>	Shared Parenting Scotland
<b>Treasurer</b>	-

### **Financial Benefits or Other Benefits**

**Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) the Group anticipates receiving from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.**

**There were no expenses and no revenue.**

### **COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 6 OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

**I, Convener of the Cross-Party Group on Shared Parenting, hereby declare that, in line with the requirements of Section 6 of the Code of Conduct, this CPG has:**

5 MSP Members from 3 different political parties	X
Held at least 2 quorate meetings in the last 12 months	X
Held an AGM within 11-13months of the date of registration or the last AGM	X
Submitted an annual return form within 30 calendar days of the AGM	

Provided Standards Clerks with 10 calendar days' notice of all meetings		X
Provided minutes of all meetings		X
Signed	Fulton MacGregor MSP	
Date	07/05/2025	