

Agenda

Cross-Party Group on Visual Impairment

Wednesday 1 February 2023, 13.00-14.15

- meeting to be held via Teams

Microsoft Teams meeting

Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Visual Impairment #CPGVI

Purpose of the group:

The Cross-Party Group on Visual Impairment draws together the blind and partially sighted sector in Scotland to identify issues competent to the Scottish Parliament and seeks, in a reasonable fashion, to influence policy, legislation and decision makers to better reflect the needs of blind and partially sighted people.

Agenda

Agenda item 1 - Welcome, introductions and apologies

Welcome, introductions and apologies plus GDPR statement.

Agenda item 2 - Approval of minutes of meeting of 5 October 2022

Agenda item 3 - Matters arising and Action Points report

The Action Points report is given at the end of the agenda.

Agenda item 4 - See Hear Strategy 2024: Progress and Future Plans

- Susan Shippey, Senior Sensory Loss Policy Manager|Support for Sensory Loss and Augmentative and Alternative Communication Team, Scottish Government
Followed by Q and A.

Agenda item 5 - Older people with visual impairment and the safe and effective use of medicines

Margaret (Mags) Watson, GTAP Professor of Health Services Research and Pharmacy Practice, University of Strathclyde
Followed by Q and A.

Agenda item 6 - Any other competent business

Time permitting.

Agenda item 7 - Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.

Addendum: Agenda item 3 - Action Points report

3.1. The Secretary passed on Mhairi Thurston's details to the DWP speakers on the Access to Work scheme so she can feed in views on how to make the claims process more accessible to people with visual impairment.

3.2. The Secretary forwarded the DWP presentation and contacts to the CPGVI mailing list. DWP advised using their team inbox at Disabilityservices.advocacyteam@DWP.gov.uk. This will ensure that emails are picked up if an individual is out of the office etc.

3.3. Maureen Mcallister referred to the Access to Work Forum - the Secretary to check if further action needed.

3.4. Laura Walker will contact Sarah Marshall of DWP to discuss support available to enable visually impaired people to recruit support workers.

3.5. NEC Cards and +1 Cards

The Secretary collaborated with Sight Scotland on drafting a letter to the Scottish Government on behalf of the CPGVI, asking what they can do to increase the uptake of registered people applying and getting NEC cards and to highlight the campaign run by Sight Scotland to provide free +1 companion travel.

3.6. Cost of living crisis

The CPGVI was to write to the Deputy First Minister/acting Finance Secretary asking what can be done at the Scottish level, including raising the possibility of seeking to apply the pension triple lock to benefits. Post-meeting, this action was overtaken by the DFM/Finance Secretary announcing in December 2022 that Scottish Government benefits will be uprated by over 10%.