

Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Disability –
Minutes 4 December 2013

Present: Michael McMahon MSP (Chair)
Annabelle Ewing MSP
Siobhan McMahon MSP
Neill Walworth
Iain Smith, Inclusion Scotland
Mike Harrison SATA
Stan Flett, SATA
Ahmed Yousaf, Remploy
Lesley Carcary, Lead Scotland
Sonia Bencher, SIAA
Maggie Ellis, Phoneability
Helen Hunter, Quarriers

1. Previous minutes were approved as an accurate account

2. DISABILITY HATE CRIME

Discussion taken place with the secretariat of the CPG on Learning Disabilities in relation to forming a joint strategy on disability hate crime. ENABLE Scotland, secretariat for the group, are developing a national campaign targeting the bullying of people with learning disabilities. They have commissioned research from Strathclyde University to develop an evidence base through literature, through a literature review and key informant reviews to inform the campaign. This will be launched in May 2014. They are also hoping to raise awareness of school pupils of the concept of hate crime with the hope that early interventions will have a positive long term impact. Quarriers have also run a pilot project in a primary school in relation to raising awareness of bullying and hate crime. ENABLE raised the request from the CPG in Disability to work together on the hate crime agenda with the CPG on Learning Disability and they are happy to work with us on this and open to the idea of a joint meeting at some point in the new year.

A focus plan would be helpful and the opportunity to look at joint work on researching the experience of the police force in managing hate crime; this is something that the groups could perhaps look at together.

ACTION: It was agreed that we would progress with this proposal and it was suggested that we invite the police along to the joint meeting to speak.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Unfortunately due to a misunderstanding the speaker for this topic has not been able to come along. Some of the issues around Eligibility Criteria have been raised in a variety of areas. Local Authorities are inconsistent in its application. This is an issue in relation to Self Directed Support which is going to be implemented in April 2014. If people with a disability are not eligible for services they can't get Self Directed Support.

There is also concern in relation to the absence of an independent review system. One member raised the issue of students who live in one area and seek to study in another; resulting in different packages of support. Some Local Authorities will not support students who want to study a course in another area resulting in students not getting to study the course they want to. Issues have also been raised recently by the Children's Commissioner in relation to the experience of parents trying to access services.

ACTION: It was agreed that we would invite Ian Hood to speak on Eligibly Criteria and Kirsten Stalker from the University of Strathclyde to present her research she carried out on behalf of the Children's Commissioner

4. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

There seems to be no consultation between the NHS, who design and distribute wheelchairs for people, and those contractors who design new buses. The aisles are too narrow for the chairs and if people can't get on the bus this prevents access to work. SATA are doing their best to raise awareness of this and would welcome support. Annabelle Ewing mentioned that she has had correspondence in relation to standardisation issues. Maggie Ellis informed a report had been produced in relation to this in Europe.