

## Minutes of the CPG on Disability

Including Minutes of the AGM on the CPG on Disability

Wednesday 18 September 2019 at 1pm – CR 1

### **Attendees:**

MSPs: Jeremy Balfour MSP (Convenor), John Mason MSP, Jackie Bailie MSP, Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children & young People.

Secretary: Office of Jeremy Balfour MSP

Treasurer: Mike Harrison, Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA)

**Other Attendees:** Katie Mackie, office of Jeremy Balfour MSP; Julia Shillitto, office of Jeremy Balfour MSP, Caron Jenkins, Versus Arthritis; Stephanie Fraser, Bobath Scotland; Tony Slaven, STUC Disabled Workers' Committee/Unison; Iain Smith, Inclusion Scotland; Maggie Ellis, WSA and EKTG; Terry Robinson, Individual; Maureen McAllister, Versus Arthritis; Andrew Ewen, Leonard Cheshire in Scotland; Seonaid Cooke, TalkTime Scotland; Stanley Flett, AAD; John Miller, Action Duchenne; Moira Vaughan, Edinburgh Access Panel; Pauline Stratford, Skills Development Scotland; Donna Tomlin, Contact Scotland; Maggie Killin, Edinburgh Access Panel; Vikki Manson, ILF; James Orrell, Scout Scotland; Robert McGeachy, Camphill Scotland; Callum Macdonald, Royal Blind; Colette McDiarmid, MND Scotland; Davina Shiell, Royal Blind & Scottish War Blinded; Patricia Hewitt, Parent Carer Individual; Alisdair O'Hara, National Deaf Children's Society Scotland; Frank McKillop, ENABLE Scotland; Collette Walker, Individual; James McLeod, Individual; Amanda Cordeon, SG (GIRFEC); Gillian Howie, SG, Katie Carmichael, Dyslexia Scotland; Cate Vallis, RNIB Scotland.

**Apologies were received from:** Stuart McMillan MSP, Deputy Convenor; Alexander Stewart MSP; John Ballantine, Edinburgh Access Panel; Andrew Fraser, Royal College of Psychiatrists; Deirdre Henderson, Inclusion Scotland; Robin Wickes, Edinburgh Access Panel; Alison Skillin, OTCC, UK owner Trained Assistance/Service Dogs Campaign for Change; Grant Carson GCIL, Peter Carruthers, SEAG; Amanda Burns, Quarriers; Mark Magee Quarriers; Tina Yu, Sense Scotland; Claire Mooney, Individual; Paul Cockburn; Aurora Constantin; Salenda Begley MBE, Family Fund; John Sutherland, Consultant; Harvey Tilley, ILF; Janis McCulloch, Scout Scotland; Rebecca Scarlett, Lead Scotland.

### **Minutes:**

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies, review of minutes from last meeting.
2. Jeremy proposed at the meeting on 5 June 2019 that his office take over the secretariat of the CPG. He asked if the group was content with his proposal and also that a charity take the lead at meetings with a programme of business.

This was formally accepted by the group and Jeremy asked for anyone interested in running a session, to contact him.

### **3. AGM Business**

The office bearers were reconfirmed:

- Jeremy Balfour MSP as Convenor
- Stuart McMillan MSP as Deputy Convenor
- Office of Jeremy Balfour MSP as Secretary
- Mike Harrison as Treasurer

The other MSP members were also reconfirmed:

- George Adam MSP
- Jackie Baillie MSP
- Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP
- John Mason MSP
- Pauline McNeill MSP
- Anas Sarwar MSP
- Colin Smyth MSP
- Alexander Stewart MSP

The following non MSP individual and organisation members were reconfirmed or added to the list:

Non MSP Individuals:

- Paul Cockburn
- Aurora Constantin
- Patricia Hewitt
- Michael McEwan
- Janice Connelly
- Carolyn Hunter
- John Sutherland MBE
- Hazel Kelly
- Wilma McLean
- Claire Mooney
- Emma Pauley
- Rebecca Pender
- Yvonne Stevenson-Robb

Organisations:

- Office of Jeremy Balfour MSP - secretary
- Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance, (SATA) – treasurer
- Action Duchenne
- Action on Hearing Loss
- ASD Fife Community Hub
- Bobath Scotland Cerebral Palsy Therapy Centre
- Capability Scotland

- Carers West Lothian
- Disability Equality Scotland
- Down's Syndrome Scotland
- Dyslexia Scotland
- EKTG
- Equality & Rights Network
- Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living (GCIL)
- Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA)
- Go Upstream
- Headway
- Inclusion Scotland
- Lead Scotland
- Leonard Cheshire
- Motor Neurone Disease Scotland (MND)
- MS Society
- Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre Lothian
- PASDA
- PhoneAbility
- Quarriers
- Remploy
- Renfrewshire Access Panel
- RNIB Scotland
- Royal War Blind and Scottish War Blinded
- Scottish Churches Disability Group (SCDG)
- Scottish Commission for Learning Disability (SCLD)
- Scottish Council on Visual Impairment (SCOVl)
- Scottish Personal Assistant Employers Network (SPAEN)
- South Edinburgh Amenities Group (SEAG)
- Scout Scotland
- Sense Scotland
- Skills Development Scotland
- STUC Disabled Workers' Committee
- Talk Time Edinburgh
- Turning Point Scotland
- Versus Arthritis
- West Dunbartonshire Access Panel

**Action:** Jeremy Balfour MSP will complete and submit the necessary paperwork to the Scottish Parliament.

**Action:** Jeremy requested submissions of £25 to cover catering costs. The group will not be provided with a working lunch at the meeting in December if submissions are not received. The treasurer, Mike Harrison will be taking submissions by cheque by post at 65 The Loan, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9AG. A transfer of funds to the bank account is preferred, The Bank of Scotland, CPG on Disability, 80-22-60, 1531 6065. Maggie Ellis requested a statement from the treasurer at the next meeting.

4. Jeremy welcomed Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children & Young People to the meeting and a discussion around children and young people with disabilities took place.

**Minister for Children & Young People, Maree Todd:**

- Emphasised that finding effective solutions to barriers faced by people with disabilities must be drawn from their lived experience.
- Insisted that children and young people are at the heart of the Scottish Government's ambitions and alluded to the Incorporation of the UNCRC.
- The Government launched a website supporting disabled children earlier in the year.
- On the presumption of mainstreaming, she said many pupils have benefited from this but acknowledged they should learn in the environment which best suits their needs, whether mainstream or specialist.
- Highlighted the Government's target to reduce the disability employment gap by half.
- It's "very frustrating" that there are some young people with disabilities who struggle with transitions between school and employment or further/higher education. Stressed importance of a culture shift that provided appropriate support for a range of conditions at every age, rather than moving "the cliff edge" from 18 to 21.
- She faced challenging questions on the deterioration of additional support in schools and that the ethos of 'inclusion' is not the reality of many pupils' experience.
- Throughout public services there needs to be a person-centred approach, with GIRFEC embedded at every stage and better continuity between children and adult services. Too many services provided in a "silo".

Jeremy thanked the Minister for attending the meeting and the Minister left the meeting.

**5 Presentations were made by:-**

Richard Baker – Royal Blind  
Frank McKillop - ENABLE Scotland  
Alistair O'Hara – National Deaf Children's Society Scotland

**Richard Baker, Royal Blind**

presented on getting it right for every child with a vision impairment.

- Highlighted the attainment gap for pupils with vision impairment, affecting employment opportunities for young disabled people
- Significant increases in the numbers of pupils with vision impairment - 4,574 pupils in 2018, twice the number of pupils than in 2010, but reductions in

numbers of Qualified Teachers of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment.

- Instances of being excluded from lessons or activities
- Lack of support to develop key life skills
- Experiences of loneliness, isolation and continuing stigma
- Some pupils feel more included in a specialist education setting but it's more difficult to secure a place
- Challenges recognised by Scottish Government in consulting on new guidance
- Next steps should be to: Ensure new guidance on the presumption has positive impact; ensuring we have the specialist teachers we need in mainstream; promote innovative approaches like flexible provision and outreach provision.

**Frank McKillop, Enable Scotland:**

- Highlighted findings from their Included in the Main report.
- Outlined the four principles of inclusion: presence, participation, achievement and support. Inclusion in reality goes much deeper than merely being present.
- Spoke about their In Safe Hands Campaign to roll out positive support training among teachers.

**Alasdair O'Hara, NDCS Scotland:**

- Noted attainment gap among deaf young people. They are half as likely to achieve Highers and Advanced Highers as their hearing peers.
- Ageing teacher population but number of pupils growing – a workforce plan needed. Recommended the introduction of a bursary scheme.

Colette Walker spoke powerfully about her son Ciaran's experience and how he has excelled at Royal Blind School. She's campaigning to improve access to and support at further education for young people with complex needs.

6. **Action:** Jeremy will take forward the presentations and write to the Minister to address these issues. Jeremy requested Richard, Frank and Alistair to put their points in writing to Jeremy so that he can write to the Minister, for a response at the December meeting.

Jeremy thanked Richard Baker for taking the lead on the meeting and the other Charities for their contributions.

**AOB**

**Action:** The secretariat will include with the minutes a Research Report on Audiology services NHS Scotland 2019 which was requested to be circulated to the group.

The next meeting of the CPG on Disability is on 11 December at 1pm at the Scottish Parliament.

**Close** The meeting closed at 2.30pm.