

Cross Party Group on Visual Impairment in the Scottish Parliament

Minutes of the Cross Party Group on Visual Impairment meeting held on Tuesday 13 September in Committee Room 3, Scottish Parliament

Present:

Stuart Mcmillan MSP, Neil Bibby MSP, Colin Smyth MSP, Miles Briggs MSP, Brian Whittle MSP, James Adams, RNIB Scotland; Angus Scott, NHS Forth Valley; Adam Hillhouse, NESS; Paul Bartley, Optelec; Sandra Black; Valerie Breck, Visibility; Marian Butchart; Catriona Burness, RNIB Scotland; Amanda Burt; Campbell Chalmers, RNIB Scotland; Matthew Clarke, Haggeye; Helen Court, NHS; Jane Donnelly; Fiona Finlayson; Anne Marie Fleming, RNIB Scotland; Cllr Sheila Hands, Richard Hellewell, RBS; Clair Henderson, Alliance; Jane Horsburgh, Guide Dogs; Caitlin Howie, RNIB Scotland; Bob Ironside, PK Vision; Matthew Leitch; Sheila Mackenzie; Maureen MacMillan, Sight Action; Mary Macrae; Paul McCloskey, Edinburgh Libraries; Debbie McGill, Optometry Scotland; Gillian Mitchell, Sight Action; Terry Moody, RNIB Scotland; Rod Murchison; John Paterson, SCOVl; Sally Paterson, Royal Blind School; John Ravenscroft; Ken Reid RNIB Scotland; Ghislaine Reifner, Sight Action; Terry Robinson RNIB Scotland / SATA; Allan Russell, RNIB Scotland; Fiona Sandford, Visibility; Janelle Scotland, Association of Talking Newspapers; Layla Theiner, Disability Agenda Scotland; John Turley, Site Scotland; Mary Travers; Cate Vallis, RNIB Scotland; Kate Wallace Visualise; Peter Ward; Sandra Wilson, RNIB Scotland.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Stuart McMillan MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Liam Kearney, Scottish Government; Dominic Everett, Royal Blind School; Graham Findlay, North East Sensory Services (NESS); John Paterson, SCOVl; Ann Robertson, NESS; Colin Gallagher, Guide Dogs; Clare Young, RNIB Scotland; Jayne Armour, RNIB Scotland; Hussein Patwa, RNIB Scotland; Mo Colvin, RNIB Scotland; Mersey Jeyasingham; Mhairi Thurston; Stephanie Rose; Ann Robertson; Amanda Hood, Royal Blind School.

3. Establishment of new Cross Party Group and Election of Office Bearers

Nominees for Office Bearers had been proposed as follows:

Convenor: Stuart McMillan MSP (seconded by Neil Bibby MSP)

Vice Convenor: Neil Bibby MSP (seconded by Stuart McMillan MSP)

Secretary: James Adams, RNIB Scotland

Nominations were opened for additional proposals, but none were made. The office bearers were elected unanimously.

4. Official inauguration of new Cross Party Group by the newly elected Convenor

Stuart McMillan MSP noted the tremendous work the Cross Party Group (CPG) have undertaken over the years. The Chair is keen to work with the CPG and members, with there being no hesitation to raise any issues or items they wish discussed by contacting either himself or James Adams.

5. Priorities for next Parliamentary term

The Chair is committed to working with the CPG to establish a plan of issues that should be tackled over the next period. Topics already highlighted include but aren't exclusive of:

- Health and Social Care Integration
- Hidden Sight Loss
- Eye health prevention
- Eye health digital review
- Accessibility of online services
- See Hear strategy
- Registration
- Ophthalmology services
- Low vision services
- Social Security Bill
- Transport Bill
- Educational attainment
- Brexit impact / EU legislation
- Accessible health information / appointment cancellations
- Accessible health screening
- Bus Charter / Street Charter
- Acute services e.g. injection therapy
- Mental Health

After some discussion was agreed that members of the CPG should submit their ideas to Stuart McMillan MSP in advance of the next meeting. It is important for all of the above issues to be tracked. However, most do not have to be reported on every quarter. CPG Secretary James Adams will pull together a proposal of future subjects to be taken forward, noting when updates should be brought to the CPG.

Actions

- Email to go to CPG members asking them to propose key topics, bearing in mind that the CPG meets four times per annum, sending ideas for discussion to Stuart McMillan MSP.
- James Adams to pull together list of subjects for future discussion to be circulated before next CPG meeting.
- Notwithstanding collecting suggested topics from CPG members, it was agreed to go ahead with inviting Professor Carrie MacEwen to give an update on review of the registration procedure and the Social Security Minister Jeanne Freeman to speak on social security.
- It was agreed to raise the question of accessible health information for patients with the Scottish Government.

6. AOCB

6.1. Future meetings: Dates for future meetings will be established as early as possible, with a proposed plan to be circulated in advance of the next meeting.

Actions

Meeting dates for 2017 to be circulated.

7. Future meetings

- TBC