

Cross Party Group on Dyslexia

Minutes of the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Dyslexia held in the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 6th February 2013.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Margaret Mitchell MSP welcomed members to the meeting, She introduced the speakers Yvonne Baird from the Department of Work and Pensions and Ahmed Yousaf, Employment Services, Remploy.

Attending

Rosemary Bowe, Julie Ross, Irene Lumsden, Linda McCaig,, Lisa Ross, Bill Sadler, Martin Davies, Joe Moran, Yowann Byghan, David Jones, Aileen Orr, Julie Trotter, Elspeth Dow, Mary Evans, Cathy Mcgee, Margaret Crombie, Claudia Beamish MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP

2. Apologies

Mairi McIntosh, Susan Agnew, Liz Rogers, Glenda Hannah, Margaret Crankshaw, Marie Lockhart, Nicola Whitfield, Stuart Lucas, Jennie Guise, Elaine Smith MSP

3. Minutes of previous meeting held on Wednesday 2nd October 2012

The minutes were approved. Proposed by Rosemary Bowe and seconded by Linda McCaig.

4. Business arising from previous minute

Bill Sadler asked if a meeting with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities CoSLA had taken place. David Jones explained that a meeting between Dyslexia Scotland and CoSLA had still to take place and that a date was being negotiated.

5. Presentations

The Convener explained that the focus of the meeting was around employment issues and support. She introduced Yvonne Baird from the Department of Works and Pensions to speak about the Access to Work programme. Yvonne provided information about the programme, its priorities and the criteria to get support from the programme. She highlighted the importance of understanding the needs of a dyslexic employee and the support available within the workplace. She explained the benefits for employers and employees in creating a positive working environment.

Following a number of questions the Convenor thanked Yvonne and introduced Ahmed Yousaf from Employment Service from Remploy.

Ahmed spoke about the objectives of Remploy's Services for supporting people with dyslexia and its strategy to support individuals through a holistic approach. He highlighted the tools used to support employees and informed the group of a three year study of Remploy's services which was being undertaken by Bangor University. He provided case studies of how employees with dyslexia had been supported through specific initiatives such as the Dyslexia in Engineering Campaign in 2012.

The members asked a number of questions about the involvement of Bangor University, the statistics around the numbers of people coming into employment who had already been identified as dyslexic. It was noted that 27 out of 30 new placements were unidentified dyslexics or had dyslexic traits. A number of members commented on the amount of work being undertaken by both organisations.

It was agreed that copies of the slides would be sent to members of the group when available.

6. General Discussion

David Jones gave an update on the changes to the procedures for the operation of cross party groups following the approval by the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee of recommendations resulting from the review of cross party groups. The changes were mainly

administrative and had been adopted to ensure consistency across the various cross party groups in terms of the operational practices.

7. Any other business

Linda McCaig asked about the follow up to the HMle Inspection Report on Dyslexia undertaken in 2008. Cathy Mcgee from Dyslexia Scotland advised that Education Scotland would be undertaking a review during 2013 and that details were still be finalised by Education Scotland.

Diane Smith had written to the Secretary requesting information about the issue of training and qualifications of teachers relating to dyslexia. Cathy Mcgee from Dyslexia Scotland stated that she had been in correspondence with Diane Smith in relation to the issue.

Date of next meeting: to be confirmed.