MINUTES OF MEETING
CROSS PARTY GROUP ON ADULT LEARNING

26 November 2013

Committee Room 3, The Scottish Parliament

Attendees – attached

MSP attendees – Jean Urquhart MSP

Agenda items

1. **Welcome and introductions**

1.1 Jean Urquhart MSP welcomed attendees. She explained that today was an extraordinary day at the Scottish Parliament with the launch of the Referendum White Paper. That being the case the substantive business of the Group would take place a short distance from Holyrood, at Edinburgh University.

1.2 Jean Urquhart MSP reported that the Standard and Procedures Committee had now formally agreed to the formation of the Group.

2. **Alan Armstrong and Graeme Logan Education Scotland**

2.1 There followed a short presentation from Alan Armstrong and Graeme Logan from Education Scotland. They set out for the Group the Scottish Government's plans around developing an adult learning policy and invited the group to contribute its thinking into that work. It was noted that having learners feed into that work was hugely valuable.

2.2 There followed a question and answer session with Alan and Graeme around the following:-

2.1 Are you working from a statement that defines adult learning ?

It was acknowledged that there is a need to have a definition of Adult Learning and it would be important to have the views of the CPG group on that definition.

2.2   What process will the consultation exercise take and what are the themes for the action plan and statement ?

2.3   The Strategic Forum, set up by Mike Russell MSP, is currently tasked to take this forward through their networks and forums. The process aims to be as open and accessible as possible.

2.4   Jim Crowther, - Edinburgh University shared some ambitions for adult learning that he thought important -

 - Lifelong
 - Address needs of older learners
 - Life- wide
 - Negotiated curriculum
 - Voluntary
 - Motivated
 - Learner-led

2.5   The high value of what adult learning does for adults was expressed and it was noted that the creation of the Group was timeous. The Group also offered the opportunity to challenge elected representatives and for adult learners to express the real power of adult learning.

2.6   Further points were made that for a strategy to work there had to also be clear guidance to help adult learners make informed choices. Particular efforts should be make to reach learners who were marginalised and were not likely to easily find adult learning opportunities.

3.   Open Space Discussion - Edinburgh University

3.1   Attendees then took part in an Open Space discussion around the question *'What is our vision for an adult learning policy for Scotland?'* That led to eight specific conversations around key themes. The groups then put forward their thoughts in relation to the overall question. What emerged is captured in the table below.

Date of Next Meeting:
The meeting agreed that the next meeting date would be investigated once room availability was known.

Theme	Key ingredients of an adult learning policy
Loneliness and social isolation	- Should help regenerates communities and nurture positive relationships within communities. - Should foster community spirit . - Promotes health and well-being.
Informal learning	- Should effectively marry provision with needs. - Learners should be 'leading learning' themselves.
	- Recognition of the informal learning that takes place in a huge range of places. This must be valued and recognized within any adult learning policy.
	- Policy must not devalue informal learning – it's important.
	- Take account of the fact that not everyone wants accreditation / exams / assessment.
	- Must be able to recognise informal learning through a range of ways, for example badging, certificates, financial reward.
Inclusion, access and participation	- Should help remove the many barriers to higher education.
	- Should be designed to help people at transition points in their lives, for example, approaching retirement, into work, bereavement, post hospitalization.
	- Adult learning opportunities should raise awareness and should involve mass marketing and tailored advertising.
	- Should set out routes and follow-on opportunities available - which will give confidence to adult learners.
	- Adult learning should respond appropriately to needs.
	- Social prescribing offers real opportunities to promote the opportunities and benefits of adult learning.
	- Should make sure everyone feels included.
Funding	- Should include a clear financial commitment by Government.
	- Funding should provide a life-long commitment to learners from Government.
	- Opportunities for adult learners should be accessible for all, irrespective of ability to pay.
	- Funding should be in place for uncertificated courses
	- Should be grants or direct government funding to cover

	the cost of course provision, room hire, equipment.
	- Free facilities based on what people in communities want (similar to library services).
Technology	- Learning and use of technology should be pitched at the level of the learners' individual needs.
	- Hardware and appropriate software should be accessible.
	- Technology used by learners should be aligned to that used in the workplace.
Intergenerational	- Should improve the quality of life for all, through intergenerational learning.
	- Helps prevent loneliness in older people.
	- Helps families learn together.
Learner-centered policy development	- Learners should always be the main source of policy development.
	- should ensure that learning opportunities are always co-designed and co-produced with adult learners themselves.
	- Should support government policies around, for example, community empowerment and integration of health and social care.
	- Should be community based and distinct from further and higher education.
Community based adult learning	- Should develop a common understanding of what CBAL is.
	- Should recognise the value of the social practice model of adult learning.
	- Should centre and focus on providing adult learning that is truly transformative.

November 2013

Attendees:

Margaret	Allan	National Learners Forum
Ann	Anderson	Learners Network
Kenny	Anderson	SWAPWEST
Wendy	Anderson	National Learners Forum
Mohammed	Anwar	National Learners Forum
Alan	Armstrong	Education Scotland
Una	Bartley	Open University
Irene	Black	Learners Network
Fiona	Boucher	Scotland's Learning Partnership
Lee	Callaghan	Scotland's Learning Partnership
Hans	Callison	
Derek	Catto	West Lothian Council
James	Clelland	Learners Network
Margaret	Colquhoun	Nifty Fifties
Kirsty	Conlon	Universities Scotland
Gerard	Connaghan	Nifty Fifties
Kate	Connaghan	Nifty Fifties
George	Crawley	Nifty Fifties
Jim	Crowther	Edinburgh University
Rose	Cunningham	Nifty Fifties
Betty	Currie	Nifty Fifties
John	Currie	Nifty Fifties
Marie	Dailly	Dundee City Council
Mary	Docherty	Learners Network
Alex	Downie	Scotland's Learning Partnership
Agnes	Duffy	Nifty Fifties
Chris	Fairgrieve	National Learners Forum
Alex	Fleming	Nifty Fifties
Anne	Gallagher	Nifty Fifties
Kirsty	Gemmell	Dundee City Council
Ed	Gibbon	Stirling Council
Mary	Gibson	Learner Network
Gordon	Giles	Renfrewshire Council
Noel	Grant	Nifty Fifties
Ellen	Hamilton	Learners Network
Gerry	Hamilton	Men Only Computers
Bill	Hay	Learners Network
John	Henderson	Colleges Scotland
Sam	Henderson	Learners Network
Rosemary	Irvine	Nifty Fifties
Josh	Jones	Skills Development Scotland
Linda	Judge	Beehive
Barry	keegan	Learners Network
Graeme	Logan	Education Scotland
Gordon	Mackie	University of Strathclyde
Margaret	Magill	Learners Network
Helen	McCallum	Learners Network
Barbara	McCrindle	Learners Network
Linda	McDonald	Learners Network
Graham	MacLellan	Inverclyde Council

Mairi	McAuley	Nifty Fifties
Alistair	McDonald	East Lothian Council
Rose	Murdoch	Dumfries & Galloway Council
Liz	Neil	Learners Network
John	Paton	Learners Network
Vicky	Petrie	City of Edinburgh Council
Maureen	Petrie	Falkirk Council
Gail	Phee	Nifty Fifties
Robert	Rae	Scotland's Learning Partnership
David	Reid	Fife Mining Heritage
Betty	Robinson	Learners Network
Diane	Robertson	Learners Network
Margaret	Rollo	Learners Network
Dannu	Smith	Learners Network
Kay	Smith	Nifty Fifties
John	Sweeney	North Lanarkshire Council
Mary	Ure	Nifty Fifties
Tracy	Waddell	Scotland's Learning Partnership
Lorna	Waddell	National Learners Forum
Rena	Wallace	ALFiE
Jean	Watson	Nifty Fifties
Clark	Whyte	Clackmannanshire Council