

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON DEAFNESS (CPGD)

Meeting Notes of the Cross Party Group on Deafness held in the Scottish Parliament, Holyrood, Edinburgh in Committee Room 3 on Wednesday 13 June 2018 at 1.00pm

PRESENT: Mark Griffin MSP (Convenor)

Graeme Dey MSP (Vice Convenor)

Janis McDonald – deafscotland (Secretariat)

Lynda Campbell – Deaf Services Highland

Liz Kraft – RCSLT

Sally Shaw – Ideas for Ears

Denise McClung – SISG

Alasdair O'Hara – NDCS Scotland

Catherine Finestone – BATOD Scotland

Jonathan Reid – The ALLIANCE

Michelle Donaghue – Deaf Links

Teri Devine – Action on Hearing Loss Scotland

Janette Waddell – Dumfries & Galloway Hard of Hearing Group

Elizabeth Adam – Tayside Deaf Forum / DDSSC

Philip Gerrard – Deaf Action

Helen Morgans-Wenhold – BDA Scotland

Carly Brownlie – SASLI

Jill Bradshaw – ATLA Scotland

Ruth Dorman – Deafblind Scotland

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gillian Mitchell – See Hear Highland

Alan Dalziel – Action on Hearing Loss Scotland

Derek Todd – deafscotland

Adrian Carragher – Scottish Government / NHS AAA

LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS:

Andrew Dewey (BSL / English Interpreter),

David Milligan (BSL / English Interpreter),

Brenda Holliday (Electronic Note-taker) and

Gail Richardson (Electronic Note-taker).

1. WELCOME:

Mark Griffin MSP, the Convenor welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Deafness. Everyone introduced themselves for the purposes of communication support and information.

2. APOLOGIES:

Apologies will be listed in the minute of the meeting – see list at end.

3. NEW MEMBER:

The ALLIANCE was agreed as a new member. Jonathan Reid was welcomed as the nominated representative.

4. MINUTES of MEETINGS:

Minutes of Wednesday 6 December 2017

Minutes of Wednesday 13 March 2018

Both were proposed by Mark Griffin MSP and Seconded by Graeme Dey MSP.

MATTERS ARISING:

BSL Plans Update: Derek Todd gave a brief update on BSL developments including a round of BSL Plan Roadshows had been organised to support public bodies required to develop local plans.

Questioning revealed there is little or no funding to support innovation at local level, most authorities are engaging well with the BSKL partnership support services and that health and social care integration needed some follow up.

ACTION: Further update reports at meetings.

The Convenor to make enquiries about the response to BSL planning and any innovation from the integration of health and social care at local area level.

West Lothian / Teachers of The Deaf: Copy of letter received by Mark Griffin MSP attached for information. At the last meeting it was raised about the situation at West Lothian Council where there have been vacancies for Teachers of the Deaf and there was a reconfiguration of the service. The Convenor wrote to them and they have replied to say their whole education service is under review and they are doing a consultation and have asked the group to feed in. They have a number of staff absences which they say are not impacting on pupil's education which is perhaps stretching credibility. I don't know if anyone wants me to take the matter further or feed anything in to the consultation. I suggest I write back and feed in and ask them to rectify the situation around vacancies and absences ASAP. I know it was raised by BATOD and deafscotland.

It was noted that there is a grave concern about the number of Teachers of the Deaf available for any vacancies. An example of an authority having advertised for a head teacher post and there are no applicants was given. Cathie Finestone noted she has two new people coming in to be trained because she cannot get qualified Teachers of the Deaf recruited. She believed that in Dundee they are reorganising services and thought they will be under the inclusion title again. They are not losing Teacher of the Deaf title but they will be part of an Inclusion Team. NDCS Scotland noted it had also been in contact with the Local Authority in question and recently sent through details on a number of families it helped who say their services have changed. NDCS Scotland could feedback from members in West Lothian what the impact on them has been and what the Council has done to rectify it.

The Convenor requested further information in order to write a more substantive letter about the situation and how it is affecting families. He noted he should write to the Scottish Government as well about lack of applicants for jobs and no qualified available staff to fill positions.

ACTION: NDCS Scotland and BATOD to supply any relevant information to Mark Griffin MSP ASAP.

Mark Griffin MSP to write to West Lothian Council and the Scottish Government, as Convenor of CPGD, regarding the situation, the impact on families and the specialist resource issues.

Mark Griffin MSP and Janis McDonald to liaise on these matters.

5. AUDIOLOGY UPDATE

See Handout

Questions were asked about supporting the choice of individuals through vouchers / similar system (no plans at moment); digital future and “add-ons” that hearing aids could have; consistency of aftercare services; accuracy, reliability and availability of data; involvement in future developments and “coproduction”.

ACTION: Adrian Carragher agreed to give the (Cross Party) group feedback as the work develops.

6. DEAFBLIND SCOTLAND

See Handout

Ruth Dorman gave some startling data about predicted numbers, links with suicide, challenges facing this relatively new discipline as it matures, implications for anticipatory care and issues facing deaf and those with visual impairments though aging. There was limited questioning because of time constraints. It was agreed that Deafblind Scotland and deafscotland should look at areas of joint interest and work closely on mutual priorities.

7. The ALLIANCE

A brief report was presented by Jonathan Reid. Due to time constraints he focussed on ALISS and the Self-Management Funds. See Attached Report.

ACTION: A further, fuller report will be put on the agenda for a future meeting.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday 14 September 2018 at 1.00pm in the Scottish Parliament.

9. INFORMATION:

Lip-reading Awareness Week (Monday 10 – Friday 14 September 2018).

Janis noted the British Deaf Choir competition was coming to Dundee in 2019. It was hoped organisations would support it.

Mark Griffin MSP closed the meeting, thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a safe journey.

APOLOGIES:

Annie Wells MSP

Monica Lennon MSP

Carol Thomson – BATOD Scotland

Enrique Canton – D.E.A.F. South Lanarkshire

Christine Johnston – Queen Margaret University

Matthew King – Sign Language Interactions

Gary Quinn – Heriot-Watt University

Sheila McKenzie – Scottish Sensory Centre

Lyndsay Foster – Signature

Alana Harper – Deaf Links

Graham Findlay – N.E.S.S.

Ann-Marie Treacy – Deaf Connections