

Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Visual Impairment

Minutes of the Cross Party Group for Visual Impairment meeting held on 28 May 2014 at the Radisson Blue Hotel, the Royal Mile, 80 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1TH

Present:

Stuart McMillan MSP

Neil Bibby MSP

James Adams, RNIB Scotland

Liz Anderton, Visibility

Tuesday Berry, Haggeye

Elaine Brackenridge, Royal Blind

Ian Brown, RNIB Scotland

Catriona Burness, RNIB Scotland

Marion Butchart, Novartis

Glenda Carson

Tracy Christie

Mo Colvin, RNIB Scotland

Jamie Cuthbertson, Macular Society

Stephen Davidson, Haggeye

Jane Donnelly, Insight Radio

Kay Eadie, Allergan

Dominic Everett, RNIB Scotland

Kirsty Goodman, Fife Society for the Blind

Mhairi Graham, SAVIE

Richard Hellewell, Royal Blind

Jane Horsburgh, Guide Dogs

Caitlin Howie, RNIB Scotland

Colin Howie, SCOVl

John Legg, RNIB Scotland

Sheila Mackenzie, SSC

Richard Marsh, Allergan

Sarah McLean, Glasgow University

Morven Paterson, RNIB Scotland

Sally Paterson, SAVIE

Wendy Rankin, Guide Dogs

John Ravenscroft, University of Edinburgh

Ken Reid, UK Vision Ambassador

Terry Robinson, Describe Online

Hal Rollason, Optometry Scotland

Allan Russell, Insight Radio

Angus Scott, Eyecare Scotland

Kathy Spowart, NHS GGC/ VINCYP

Janis Sugden, SSC

Ken Swa, SVS

Gillian Syme, Optometry Scotland

Peter Ward, Dundee Blind and

Partially Sighted Society

Helen Wilkinson, RNIB Scotland

1. Welcome and Introductions

Stuart McMillan MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. It was noted that due to the late start caused by Parliamentary business the meeting would be shorter than normal. All were invited to remain for the launch of the "Let Me Play" DVD at the reception following the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Dennis Robertson MSP

Sam Brown

Amanda Burt

John Donaldson, Scottish Braille Press

Jo Emblem, Police Scotland

Graham Findlay, NESS / SCOV

Omar Fummey, Police Scotland

Richard Godfrey-McKay, Fife Society

Sheena Guz, ADA (Scotland)

Clair Henderson, RNIB Scotland

Bob Ironside, Vision PK

Tom Lowe, SDEP

Paul McCloskey, CEC Libraries

David McKerral, National Federation

Jimmy O'Rourke

Margaret O'Rourke

Mary Rasmussen

Fiona Sandford, Visibility

Janelle Scotland, ASTN

Mhairi Thurston, Vision

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 12 March 2014 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

4.1. Responsible Parking Bill: Jane Horsburgh updated the Convenor in relation to housing transfers and the Bill. These will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

4.2. Haggeye / cinema AD provision: letters have been sent to all cinema operators in relation to the provision of AD. A reply has been received from Vue cinema who noted that they schedule AD performances where possible, but AD is not always produced.

4.3. Annual return: The annual return for the Cross Party Group was submitted on schedule.

4.4. Demand and Capacity: an update will be requested for the December meeting.

5. "Eye Right" – Getting IT right for VI children in Scotland.

Access to Assistive Technology for children and young people

Mhairi Graham, Chair of SAVIE's ICT Practice Working Group presented the new "Eye Right" report which highlights the need for effective forward planning to ensure full access to ICT for VI children. The report documents the views and experiences of children across the country and reflects the real situation in schools.

Sarah McLean, studying English Literature and French at Glasgow University, outlined her personal experiences and the vital role ICT plays for VI children for education, work and social interaction. Overall her own experiences were positive except during her 6th year at secondary school when her Braille Note could not access the school network due to security issues.

There followed detailed discussion on the planned circulation of the report. It will be issued to all Directors of Education, ICT managers and teachers and it was agreed that it should also be sent to the Chair of the Education Committee, referencing the fact that it was presented to the Cross Party Group on VI and is fully supported by the Group. It should also be sent to COSLA with the recommendation the standards are utilised as a benchmarking tool

Action

- Copy of report to be sent to the Convenor of the Education Committee
- Copy of report to be sent to COSLA.

6. VINCYP – the MCN for Children:

Dr. Kathy Spowart, Community Paediatrician, GGC NHS and lead clinician, VINCYP (Visual Impairment Network for Children and Young People) updated the meeting on the establishment of the MCN (Managed Clinical Network).

Approval to establish the MCN was received 1 year ago. The network was established on 1 April and will be formally launched on 30 May - 150 delegates are booked to attend the event. Consultation and mapping of current provision is underway and basic service standards are being drafted. It is early in the process but progress is being made.

7. SVS update

Ken Reid gave an update on recent activity including:

- Successful annual conference in March attended by record number of delegates
- Implementation plan for refreshed strategy being developed
- UK Vision Strategy conference being held in London on 12 June
- Planning National Children and Young People's conference for 2015.
- Launch of "See Hear" Scotland's joint sensory strategic framework and the development of locality plans.

8. AOCB

There was no further business.

9. Date of next meeting

- Wednesday 8 October at 1pm, Committee Room 1
- Thursday 4 December at 5pm, Committee Room 3