

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON DEAFNESS (CPGD)

Notes of the Cross Party Group on Deafness meeting (CPGD) held in the Scottish Parliament, Holyrood, Edinburgh in Committee Room 5, (First Floor, T1.40-CR5) on Wednesday 04 March 2020 at 1.00pm.

DRAFT

PRESENT: Colin Beattie MSP – Vice Convenor chaired meeting Neil Bibby MSP

Janis McDonald – Secretariat

Teri Devine – Action on Hearing Loss Scotland

Jean McAllister – BATOD Scotland

Gillian Baxter – EIS

Sheila Mackenzie – Scottish Sensory Centre

Moira Andrew – The Donaldson Trust

Graham Findlay – North East Sensory Services

Alana Harper – Deaf Links

Elizabeth Adams – Tayside Deaf Forum

John Mitchell – Individual member

John Whitfield – Deafblind Scotland

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rae Cahill – Action on Hearing Loss Scotland; Craig Watson – Individual.

LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS:

Linda McKenzie (BSL / English Interpreter)

Linda Wilson (Electronic Note-taker)

Paula McGuire (Electronic Note-taker)

1. WELCOME:

Colin Beattie MSP, Vice-Convenor chaired the meeting. He presented Mark Griffin's apologies and noted the Parliament had been called to sit at 1.30 shortening the meeting time considerably. The agenda would be altered to deal with Education, a substantive and important item. Janis would hold discussions at the end of the meeting to prepare for the next one. Janis noted Derek Todd was unavailable and gave apologies.

Due to the time pressure introductions would be at 1.30pm.

2. APOLOGIES:

Derek Todd – deafscotland; Donald Richards – COMMTACS; Carol Thomson – Cathie Finestone – BATOD Scotland; Alasdair O’Hara – Lois Drake NDCS Scotland; Andy Carmichael – ASLI; Lorna Armstrong – Hearing Link Scotland; Gillian Mitchell – Sight Action / SHEELS; Isabella Goldie – Deafblind Scotland; Rachel O’Neill – University of Edinburgh; Jill Bradshaw – ATLA Scotland; Sally Shaw – Ideas for Ears; Denise McClung – SISG; Enrique Canton – D.E.A.F. South Lanarkshire; Kim Hartley-Kean – RCSLT Scotland; Maureen Greig – SRLPDC (ex SASLI).

3. MINUTES of the LAST MEETINGS:

3.(i) The Minutes of the previous meetings were passed as an accurate reflection by attendees.

The September 2019 meeting was approved by the Convenor, Colin Beattie MSP and Neil Bibby MSP.

3.(ii) The December 2019 meeting was not quorate and the notes will be appended to the minute of this meeting.

3.(iii) Matters Arising:

Education

Substantive item on agenda

Deaflympics

Events Scotland has been contacted and is seeking further information.

4. MEMBERSHIP:

No new members.

5. EDUCATION

For the benefit of the attendees Janis gave a brief introduction to the topic and the work the group had been doing on it. She presented the apologies from Alasdair O’Hara and others at NDCS Scotland who were unable to attend the meeting due to competing demands. She noted key points in the presentation and briefing NDCS Scotland had prepared. (See attached papers)

She reminded the group about the meeting recently with Christina McKelvie MSP, Minister for Older People and Equalities recently to make representation on a number of matters.

Education and health were the main items for those discussions. She also noted the erosion of specialist teaching posts and specialist units has been a standing item under AOCB. She described recent issues in the South Lanarkshire Council area related to Hamilton School for the Deaf and specifically a proposal to delete the specialist Head Teacher post that had raised concern. A paper taken to the recent Council Committee did not delete the post but appears to have reserved the right to do so.

Discussions noted that the recent CRIDE report showed some improvements for deaf children but that the overall attainment results were challenging. The need for early years intervention and specific interventions for deaf children with additional support needs were highlighted. The costs for British Sign Language (BSL) training, the level of teacher BSL capability and qualifications were raised as concerns too. The CPGD Convenor, Mark Griffin MSP has been briefed on the relevant matters.

The meeting chair, Colin Beattie MSP invited discussion which broadly fell into three areas:

Attracting and keeping well trained people to specialist educational posts;

Maintaining and improving standards of teaching and the outcomes for pupils;

Providing funding and educational activities to meet career aspirations and promotion.

ACTIONS:

The discussion to be fed back to the Convenor who is considering next steps regarding local and national issues. Next steps may include parliamentary questions or letters of representation to senior politicians.

Any evidence of issues to be forwarded to deafscotland.

6. PREVENTABLE DEAFNESS

The meeting closed at this point due to parliamentary priorities.

There was no time to discuss this matter. NHS Health Scotland has been contacted to look at next input for next meeting.

7. AOCB:

There was no time for AOCB. Please send in any agenda items to Janis McDonald, Chief Officer at deafscotland:

chiefofficer@deafscotland.org in her role as secretariat, she will then raise them with the Convenor.

8. DATE of NEXT / FUTURE MEETINGS:

Wednesday 02 September 2020

Wednesday 02 December 2020

All are subject to change depending on parliamentary business priorities. Meetings will be held at The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh at 01.00pm-02.30pm.

There was a post meeting discussion:

It was suggested the group works towards a short manifesto for the next election agreeing a number of priorities asks. It will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

The group present were keen to try for a manifesto.

Broad headings may include:

Education

Health / Mental Health and Wellbeing

Social Care

Social Security

Public Health

Older Adults and Dementia

See attachments:

Notes of December 2019 Meeting

Briefing from NDCS Scotland

Presentation from NDCS Scotland