

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (SCOTLAND) BILL – MARK GRIFFIN MSP

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

This document summarises and analyses the responses to a consultation exercise carried out on the above proposal.

The background to the proposal is set out in section 1, while section 2 gives an overview of the results. A detailed analysis of the responses to the consultation questions is given in section 3. These three sections have been prepared by the Scottish Parliament's Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU). Section 4 has been prepared by Mark Griffin MSP and includes his commentary on the results of the consultation.

Where respondents have requested that certain information be treated as confidential, or that the response remain anonymous, these requests have been respected in this summary.

In some places, the summary includes quantitative data about responses, including numbers and proportions of respondents who have indicated support for, or opposition to, the proposal (or particular aspects of it). In interpreting this data, it should be borne in mind that respondents are self-selecting and it should not be assumed that their individual or collective views are representative of wider stakeholder or public opinion. The principal aim of the document is to identify the main points made by respondents, giving weight in particular to those supported by arguments and evidence and those from respondents with relevant experience and expertise. A consultation is not an opinion poll, and the best arguments may not be those that obtain majority support.

Copies of the individual responses are available on the following website <http://www.markgriffinmsp.org.uk/content/bsl-bill/>. Responses have been numbered for ease of reference, and the relevant number is included in brackets after the name of the respondent.

A list of respondents is set out in the Annexes

- Annexe A – numbered as received
- Annexe B – in alphabetical order.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Mark Griffin's draft proposal, lodged on 27 July 2012, is for a Bill to:

Promote the use of British Sign Language (BSL) by requiring the Scottish Ministers and relevant public authorities to prepare and publish BSL plans.

The proposal was accompanied by a consultation document, prepared with the assistance of NGBU. This document was published on the Parliament's website, from where it remains accessible:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/29731.aspx>.

The consultation period ran from 27 July to 31 October 2012, and was subsequently extended by the member to 7 November 2012.

The consultation period was marked by an official launch on Monday 30 July in the Scottish Parliament. This was advertised in the national and local press. All public authorities in Scotland were lettered or emailed, with a copy of the consultation document enclosed. A number of charities – in particular charities with a link to Deafness, disabilities and equality – were informed also. In addition to the publicity in local and national newspapers, Deaf organisations represented on the Cross Party Group on Deafness, publicized the Bill on their respective websites and in newsletters.

The consultation exercise was run by Mark Griffin's parliamentary office.

The consultation process is part of the procedure that MSPs must follow in order to obtain the right to introduce a Member's Bill. Further information about the procedure can be found in the Parliament's standing orders (see Rule 9.14) and in the *Guidance on Public Bills*, both of which are available on the Parliament's website:

- Standing orders (Chapter 9):
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/26514.aspx>
- Guidance (Part 3):
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/25690.aspx>

SECTION 2: OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

In total, 222 responses were received. This total was made up of 49 responses from organisations¹, 172 from individuals (including 39 anonymous responses enclosed with the submission from “Sign and Be Heard” (SABH)², and one petition³ with 937 signatures. It should be noted that 76 of the individual responses contained wording in similar terms.⁴

The responses can be categorised as follows:

- 14 (6%) from public sector bodies and organisations (including 3 health boards/related bodies and 11 local authorities);
- 20 (9%) from representative/membership bodies (including voluntary sector organisations, campaign groups, a trades union body, a police association and support service providers);
- 11 (5%) from charities;
- 3 (1%) from organisations representing children and young people’s interests;
- 1 from an education provider;
- 1 petition (with 937 expressions of support);
- 171 (77%) from private individuals (members of the public)
- 1 MP (as an individual).

Twenty-four of the responses from organisations had some connection with deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing people through, for example, being representative or membership organisations, providing support, training or other services, or having a

¹ Responses from organisations 30 – 32 were identical, but have been logged separately as they were submitted by different sub-groups from within a larger organisation.

² The 39 submissions from SABH have been treated as individual responses.

³ The petition has been treated as one submission and its terms were as follows: “We, the undersigned, support the general aim of the Proposed BSL Bill (Scotland) because we would like to see the aim extended to include the cultural aspects of BSL and the Deaf Community in a similar way to that of Gaelic. We would also like the aim to be extended to include a better awareness not only of the language among the hearing population, but also an awareness of the rich culture and history of the Deaf Community in Scotland. We would want to see a firm commitment in the Bill to include Deaf people as advisers to the Scottish Government so that they are at the heart of the Bill as it is their language. There should be a BSL Board like Gaelic speakers have and the Board should have a majority of Deaf BSL users on it. The legislation should be designed to promote the use of BSL, secure the status of the language and ensure its long-term future.”

⁴ The terms of the 76 responses included the following wording: “I support the general aim of the proposed Bill, but would like to see the aim extended to include a better awareness not only of the language among the hearing population, but also an awareness of the rich culture and history of the Deaf Community in Scotland. I want to see a firm commitment in the Bill to include Deaf people as advisers to the Scottish Government so that they are at the heart of the Bill as it is their language. I want there to be a BSL Board like Gaelic speakers have and I want the Board to have a majority of Deaf BSL users on it.”

campaigning role. (The use of upper or lower case in “Deaf/deaf” is consistent with the use by the respondent where comments have been attributed.)

One anonymous individual response (in addition to those submitted under cover of SABH) and one confidential response were also received.

There was a substantial overall majority of support from respondents for the aims of the proposed Bill to promote the use of BSL and raise awareness of the language. There was also majority agreement that legislation was required and was the appropriate mechanism to meet those aims.

A minority view was that legislation was not required if deafness was considered to be a protected characteristic in terms of the Equality Act 2010, and that there was already legislative drive for BSL to be promoted through the disability provisions of that Act. However, it was countered that “other people whose first language is a spoken language other than English do not have to declare themselves “disabled” in order to access services and information in their language” (Scottish Council on Deafness). A number of other alternatives to legislation (such as the development of a national strategy, were also suggested.

In terms of whether there was a case for specific action to promote BSL as opposed to other minority languages, those supporting the case argued, amongst other things, that BSL was a language under threat and that BSL users might not have access to a spoken language. Against this, others argued that, by legislating for a specific group, attention and resources might be directed away from other disadvantaged groups, languages or forms of communication, or that there might be an equally pressing need to promote other means of communication.

A strong theme was that the general aims of the proposed Bill should be extended to include the promotion of the cultural aspects of BSL and an analogy was drawn with treatment of Gaelic since the implementation of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

Possible indirect benefits of increased awareness were also highlighted, such as improved access for BSL users to services and information, as well as improved consistency across public bodies. In terms of the proposed Bill increasing awareness of the case for access to free BSL classes for deaf children and their families, there was broad agreement that this would be the case and strong arguments for the provision of this service were also detailed.

In terms of basing the proposed Bill largely on the model of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 by including a strategy for promoting the use of a language, most respondents felt that there should be a specific Scottish Minister designated with that responsibility and that, most appropriately, it should be the Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland’s Languages under the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, although a number also felt that it should fall to all Ministers who had responsibility to ensure that such work was integral to all Government departments in line with the public sector equality duty.

There was general support for the establishment of an Advisory Board to advise the designated Minister(s) and strong arguments were made for the majority of membership being BSL users, although others argued for the benefits of a broader membership or for the inclusion of other forms of communications or equality groups on such a Board.

SECTION 3 – ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Purpose of the proposed Bill

The proposed Bill would encourage the use of BSL in Scottish public life and raise awareness of the language among the hearing population by requiring—

- The Scottish Government to create a designated, or lead, Minister for BSL.
- The Scottish Ministers to develop a Scottish Government BSL strategic plan detailing what action the Government is taking and plans to take to promote BSL within areas of its responsibility.
- “Relevant public authorities” to produce action plans to be published by these authorities and submitted to the Scottish Ministers.
- The Scottish Ministers to report to the Scottish Parliament at least twice in a Parliamentary session on the content of their strategic plan and on the performance of the public authorities in terms of their BSL action plans. (In practice, during the first half of a parliamentary session, Scottish Ministers would prepare and publish their strategic plan and guidance, which would be laid before the Scottish Parliament. In the second half of the parliamentary session, the Scottish Ministers would report to the Scottish Parliament on how they were performing in relation to the strategic plan; the report would include details of the relevant authorities’ plans and performance).

Question 1 – General aim of the proposed Bill

Question 1

Do you support the general aim of the proposed BSL Bill? Please indicate “yes/no/undecided” and explain the reasons for your response.

One hundred and fifty-two respondents answered this question, including 42 organisations and 110 individuals. Of those, 148 (97%) were supportive of the aims of the proposed Bill and two (1.5%) were opposed. The remaining two (1.5%) respondents had either mixed or other views.

There was a general overlap in responses to this question and Question 2, which sought views on the need for legislation – these two sections of the summary should be considered together.

Reasons for supporting the aims of the proposal related to benefits (direct and indirect) – such as assisting in the promotion of inclusion, the importance of the cultural aspects of BSL, increasing access to services where interpreters were required, and improving communication and the need for learning BSL to be more easily available. Where these issues are addressed in substantive responses to other questions in the consultation, they are not expanded on at length here.

Recognition of BSL as an indigenous language

A strong theme throughout a significant number of responses was that BSL should be recognised as an indigenous language: in support of this contention, Deaf Action provided examples of countries which had formalised recognition of their indigenous sign language within their legal structures and referred to UN instruments such as the *Declaration on the Rights of the Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, which recognised the need for linguistic protection. The organisation “Signature” argued that: “BSL, the language of Deaf people, is the fourth indigenous language of Scotland”.

In addition, it was argued that learning BSL—

- could provide a second language to emphasise meanings;
- improve general communication skills;
- should be seen as significant as learning a foreign language;
- in the context of the shortage of interpreters, might make people more aware of possible job opportunities for people using BSL.

Cultural aspects of the language

Twenty-two organisations referred to the cultural aspects of BSL, indicating a wish to see it as a language in its own right similar to Gaelic. The Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD), for example, believed that the general aim should be extended to include the promotion of the cultural aspects of BSL and the Deaf community’s history similar to Gaelic language and speakers.

A significant number of individual respondents (76, in addition to those signatories to the petition), while not answering the question specifically, provided a general comment that they supported the general aim of the proposed Bill, but would like to see the aim extended “to include [amongst other things] a better awareness not only of the language among the hearing population, but also an awareness of the rich culture and history of the Deaf Community in Scotland”.

Accessing services and information

Respondents highlighted that implementation of the proposal, by increasing awareness of BSL, might lead to improved communication and consequently access to services and information. Capability Scotland, for example, referred to examples of areas in which, they believed, BSL users appeared to be discriminated against, including housing, health, social care, justice and legal services. Further, Inclusion Scotland stated that: “It is common for service users who are BSL users to have negative experiences of services or not to get access to information that is crucial to them accessing essential services due to their communications requirements ... [which can put up barriers] to independent living, but can also breach Deaf people’s Article 8 right to a private life”.

Three organisations (British Deaf Association Scotland, Self Directed Support Scotland and Inclusion Scotland) cited further evidence of communication barriers that could be experienced in accessing services—

“Recent research from a consortium of seven organisations including the BDA shows that Deaf people have problems when they go to hospital or the GP. Out of 305 Deaf people, 84% of respondents reported they did not have access to a sign language interpreter. 68% asked for [an interpreter] for an appointment with the GP, but did not get one. Even with one, 36% made a complaint because they could not understand the interpreter”.

A note of caution was sounded by Capability Scotland who felt that, while failure to meet the communication needs of BSL users could put them at a disadvantage in relation to accessing goods and services which, “in some cases, were likely to constitute a violation of the Equality Act 2010”, it was essential that steps were taken to implement the duties of that Act before new legislation was introduced and that proper consideration should be given to potential overlap between the proposed Bill and existing equality law.

Rights of the child

In providing their explanation for supporting the general aims of the proposed Bill, the National Deaf Children’s Society (NDCS) and Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) referred, amongst other things, to Article 29(a) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: “the development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values”. In addition, SCCYP referred to Articles 30 and 31, on the rights of linguistic minorities.

Question 2 – The need for legislation

Question 2

Do you believe legislation is required? If not, what other non-legislative means can be followed?

One hundred and fifty respondents provided a direct response to this question, including 42 organisations and 108 individuals. Of those, 133 (89%) expressed the view that legislation was required, and 17 (11%) were either opposed to some degree, or had mixed or other views (such as being supportive of the aims of the proposal but not the need for legislation, or preferring the option of making use of existing legislation).

Those supporting the need for new legislation were generally of the view that BSL users should be classed as a linguistic minority, with BSL being treated as “a language and not an additional communication support need and requires clear and distinct legislative powers for its preservation and promotion to ensure the equality of Deaf people in Scotland” (British Deaf Association). This view was held by the majority of individuals who responded to this question and a number of organisations, illustrated by the following—

- The Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) felt that there was no legislation supporting BSL as a language in its own right and BSL users as members of a linguistic minority and that: “... Since other people whose first language is a

spoken language other than English do not have to declare themselves “disabled” in order to access services and information in their language, why should Deaf BSL users? For as long as this is the case, there is no equality for Deaf BSL users, only discrimination”.

- The British Deaf Association believed that non-legislative means had not worked and that “the Equality Act only covers Deaf people if they declare themselves to be disabled. To access services and information in one’s own language should not be covered by “protected characteristic” of disability ... this is an anomaly that requires legislation to clarify”.
- The STUC stated that: “Not all deaf people identify themselves as being disabled and therefore lose the protection afforded under the [2010] Act”.
- One individual respondent felt that it was “highly questionable” to consider a deaf BSL user to be covered by the Equality Act 2010, noting that this meant that an individual who uses BSL as their first language was to be considered “disabled” and did not reflect an “equal standing”, as speakers of, for example, Polish, Urdu, Chinese or Gaelic would not be considered disabled. (Individual response no.16)

The National Deaf Children’s Society (NDCS) believed that, in the case of BSL, promotion of a language and promoting equal access are inextricably linked and that, to remove potential barriers to its passage through the Scottish Parliament, “any explicit reference to improving access which strays into the realm of reserved Equality Act duties ought to be removed. This will be a secondary impact of the intended legislation”.

Benefits of legislation

The advantages of legislation identified, amongst other things, were that it could provide an additional imperative for actions and good intentions which might be of lower priority within a framework of “voluntary” objectives. In addition, legislation could provide “the catalyst for action which transcends current and future Government priorities and a clear framework for public bodies to justify continued efforts to promote the use of BSL as a modern language of Scotland”. (NDCS)

Opposition

Arguments opposing legislation or expressing concerns included—

- NHS Education for Scotland (NES) did “not agree that the proposed legislation would be the most appropriate way to address the issues” and felt that since deafness was considered to be a protected characteristic in terms of the Equality Act, “There is already a strong legislative drive for the production of information in BSL and for enhancing access to services for users of BSL in the disability provisions of the Equality Act 2010... Furthermore, the public sector equality duties (both general and specific) already require public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination”.

- Orkney Equality Forum and Capability Scotland felt that by legislating for needs of one specific group, attention and resources would be directed away from other disabled people and those with other protected characteristics.

Alternative measures

Some respondents suggested possible alternatives to new legislation, including—

- A voluntary code of conduct/guidance.
- Re-interpreting or adding to existing legislation.
- A nationwide pilot of web based interpreters, which could be useful in GP practices.
- A national strategy to include—
 - training in relevant means of communication, particularly funding for training of BSL interpreters and enabling a range of means of communication eg BSL DVDs;
 - best practice guidelines;
 - recommendations that would enable public bodies to act based on the need in their area.
- Strengthening of current arrangements – for example, more public campaigns, schools incorporating deaf awareness into health and wellbeing programmes, councils producing annual performance reports that include disabilities.
- NES reported that the Scottish Government would shortly launch the consultation on its sensory impairment strategy, and recommended that BSL provision could be considered within the context of that strategy rather than additional legislation, which would, it was argued, allow the Scottish Government to take a more targeted approach, aligning investment to address the specific priority issues in a coordinated way across the public sector.

Education services

In addition to responding to the issues raised by the question, a number of respondents provided additional comments in relation to education services—

- The SCCYP felt that the provisions of the proposed Bill should extend to developing awareness of teacher education and the Commissioner would be keen to see improved guidance to complement the legislation: “For those children who want and need to use BSL as their means of communication, the absolute minimum should be BSL level 3 [NVQ certificate], with a commitment to continued CPD”.
- The NDCS also felt that there should be guidance or a new duty for increased level of the BSL skill set for specialist teachers of deaf children and echoed

the view that the BSL qualification standard should be minimum BSL level 3 not level 1 (foundation). In addition, it would like to see BSL being offered as a modern language option. This would not require legislation but public authorities “could certainly be supported to justify spending decisions around investment in BSL provision by having reference to the requirements of primary legislation to promote BSL”.

Question 3 – Benefits and challenges

Question 3

What, if any, might be the main benefits of the proposed Bill? Do you see any challenges? Please list these.

There were 144 responses to this question, with 104 from individuals and 40 from organisations.

Those advocating the benefits of the proposed Bill highlighted the following—

- Awareness would be raised, not just for BSL users but of deafness, hearing impairment and cultural issues for the deaf community.
- There might be indirect benefits, such as BSL being used more in the media – the BBC was not one of the public bodies listed, but had taken Gaelic seriously and could similarly provide more material in BSL.
- Deaf BSL users would be recognised as a linguistic minority, not simply as “disabled people”.
- The number of BSL users would increase, so more hearing people would be Deaf and BSL aware, resulting in Deaf BSL users being less marginalised.
- Consistency across public bodies would be provided.
- The numbers of BSL users in Scotland would increase, leading to more interpreters and appropriately qualified teachers of deaf people.
- It could assist in providing opportunities for other children to learn BSL, improving access to BSL in the school curriculum and helping facilitate communication and an inclusive environment for all children.
- It would encourage a national review of current methods of communication and services provided.
- Greater availability of BSL interpreters would help avoid issues of confidentiality that arise when family/friends act as interpreters.

- It would support the aims of the Scottish Government for a wealthier and fairer, smarter and healthier Scotland.

Individuals responding under the SABH response commented that enhanced communication might result for all, allowing “peer groups of all ages to communicate” (SABH 19) and “benefits ... not only be[ing] to deaf people, but those who wish to learn to sign”. (SABH 39)

The SCCYP believed that promoting BSL “as an indigenous language will help Scotland meet its international obligations and increase awareness and understanding of the needs of this group of people, particularly across Scottish public bodies. I believe there will be knock-on benefits for instance, a better knowledge of the linguistic rights of Deaf BSL users, leading to better access to information and services and in turn will help to reduce marginalization and isolation”. Similarly, the National Deaf Children’s Society felt that such a Bill would “send a very powerful message to the Deaf community that Scotland values the diverse nature of languages used by its people, respects the history and language of its Deaf community and seeks to secure the status of the language used by that community”.

Challenges

A number of possible challenges were identified in implementing the Bill and these included—

- Since there were few statistics on the numbers of Deaf BSL users and where they lived, this might be used as an argument for not producing plans.
- Complaints from other language groups feeling that their needs required same level of attention.
- The lack of statistics and not being aware of the size and makeup of the Deaf community.
- There was allegedly little movement with Gaelic language plans and the same might happen for BSL action plans.
- Ensuring public bodies did not treat the requirement as another layer of bureaucracy and did only the minimum to implement.
- Qualified teachers of deaf children might be diverted from deaf education to teaching BSL as a modern language to hearing children, limiting the time available for direct support of deaf pupils.
- Standardised training and guidance for professionals and parents around BSL/bilingual debate could remove the ideological barriers to accessing BSL.

The British Deaf Association (Scotland) cited potential challenges as including “experts” who “insist that Deaf people should make more effort to integrate within the wider community using speech and listening. BDA Scotland’s response is that

improved linguistic skills in a minority language leads to improved skills in a majority language ... this Bill is a great opportunity to open up the mainstream community to Deaf people and in doing so, improve their writing and reading skills in English”.

Question 4 – Specific action to promote BSL

Question 4

Do you agree with the case for taking specific action to promote BSL (as opposed to other minority languages)?

Of the 139 responses to this question, 124 (89%) agreed with the proposal to take specific action to promote BSL, two (1.5%) disagreed, and 13 (9.5%) had mixed or other views, in particular, arguing that the promotion of BSL should not be to the detriment of other forms of communication.

Views from those endorsing the proposal included—

- Specific action was required as BSL was a language under threat.
- BSL users might not have access to a spoken language and BSL was likely to be their sole language, which was not the case for other minority languages.
- Some others used a minority language as their only language but there was effective ESL [English as a second language] provision so they could become fluent in English quickly.
- The small number of BSL interpreters and communicators meant that action was required to increase their numbers.

Other respondents had mixed views: while supporting the need for specific action it was felt that—

- The imposition of a new legal duty on relevant public authorities to produce BSL action plans could be to the detriment of other equality groups.
- There was an equally pressing need to promote and raise awareness of other means of communication.
- It should not be at the expense of other minority languages.

In opposing the need for specific action for BSL, East Lothian Council countered that there were many more methods of inclusive communication, not just for deaf people – such as Braille, Moon, symbol systems, pictures, expressive boards, talking mats and IT and it would like to see support for people to use the communication methods that suited them best.

One respondent who attended a Scottish Advisory Group on Deafblindness meeting on the proposed Bill commented that: “I agree with supporting BSL. I would ask as a deafblind person that hands-on BSL and deafblind manual also be promoted”.

Question 5 – Improving awareness of the case for access to free BSL classes for deaf children and their families

Question 5

To what extent might this proposed Bill improve awareness of the case for access to free BSL classes for deaf children and their families?

What other non-legislative measures might be required?

One hundred and forty-six respondents answered this question, including 40 from organisations and 106 from individuals. One hundred and thirty-two (90%) were generally positive and one (1%) did not feel that the Bill would improve awareness (although acknowledging that free BSL classes would be beneficial). The remaining 13 (9%) respondents had either mixed or other views.

There was strong support from respondents that the proposed Bill would greatly improve awareness of the case for access to free BSL classes for deaf children and their families and many also felt it would increase awareness more generally. East Renfrewshire Council commented that: “The very fact that this aspect of the proposal will be debated will help increase awareness of the case for access to BSL classes”.

Arguments setting out the case for the provision of such classes included—

- There was a perception of unfairness that parents and families should have to pay to learn a language that would allow them to communicate with their child/sibling/relative.
- Few hearing parents currently learned BSL. It would encourage parents to learn BSL and pass on their knowledge to other family members.
- The issue also flagged up the need for BSL tutors to have an excellent understanding of BSL as a language and of deaf culture, as well as understanding the needs of the family.
- Efforts should be made to ensure that the peers of deaf pupils were also actively encouraged to take BSL classes which would help to reduce the exclusion that many deaf children might face.

One respondent (Capability Scotland), while recognising that the Bill would improve awareness of case for access to free BSL classes, also believed that children and families using alternative means of communication should have access to training and classes.

One local authority (East Lothian Council) did not believe it was appropriate to use legislation to promote “awareness” of an argument, while another (South Lanarkshire Council) did not feel the Bill would improve awareness of the case for access to free BSL classes: determining the scale and location of the Deaf community within that council area and then targeting activities in these areas might assist in promoting awareness.

Non-legislative measures

In terms of other non-legislative measures that might be required—

- One individual respondent (25) suggested that a scoping exercise might need to be conducted, to review “access to and provision of BSL learning and qualifications, through the Curriculum for Excellence, for Deaf children whose first language is BSL” and “the quality, cost and the process involved in the provision of linguistic access”.
- Another individual (29) expressed a similar viewpoint, but expanded on this to “include health services promoting this as family development”.
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran suggested other actions to increase awareness, such as national campaigns, training in schools, needs analysis and a recruitment drive.
- East Renfrewshire Council suggested that “building on the existing national database to improve local data collection on the needs and financial circumstances of local Deaf and Deafblind people and their families would also help make the case for such free provision”.

A number of respondents raised issues relating to education services—

- The SCCYP commented that, in relation to pre-entry assessments for Deaf people going into further and higher education, if there was a failure to fully understand BSL as a language and culture this could lead to students receiving inappropriate materials. It was hoped that action plans would lead to better understanding and assessments. As a minimum, students should also have access to BSL interpreters rather than communication support workers.
- The Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters (SASLI) felt that BSL lessons should be part of the Curriculum for Excellence, and the Scottish Qualification Authority should work with Deaf organisations, registration and membership bodies of communication support professionals and academic bodies to produce school and vocational qualifications in BSL.
- The National Association of Tertiary Education for Deaf people (NATED) thought that qualifications for BSL tutors should be looked at urgently, as such tutors were currently not qualified to work in schools, but could be registered and receive additional training to provide a peripatetic teaching service.

Question 6 - Designated Scottish Minister

The proposed Bill is based, in many respects, on the model of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, which includes a strategy for promoting and facilitating the promotion of the use and understanding of a language. In the case of Gaelic, a Board prepares a national plan; in the case of BSL, this would be the responsibility of the Scottish Ministers. It was hoped that an Advisory Board would be established to advise and assist the designated Scottish Minister.

Question 6

Should there be a designated Minister to take the lead on BSL in the Scottish Government or should this be the responsibility of all Scottish Ministers?

What benefits or challenges will a designated Minister have for BSL and for Deaf People and what in your opinion should the role of the designated Minister entail?

One hundred and fifty-four respondents answered this specific question, including 42 from organisations and 112 from individuals. The majority, 130 respondents (84%) felt that there should be a designated Minister to take the lead on BSL in the Scottish Government. The remaining 24 (16%) expressed a range of views, such as responsibility being mainstreamed to all Ministers, or that alternative arrangements should be made.

Of the 130 responses expressing a view on a designated Minister, 76 (59%) thought that the appropriate Minister should be the Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages under the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, while two (1%) believed that the Minister with the relevant portfolio was the Minister for Public Health. The remaining 52 (40%) responses did not specify a preferred Minister.

In relation to whether BSL should be the responsibility of all Ministers, 30 respondents included this view in some form within their response, although in many this was a mixed view with, for example, support also being expressed for a designated Minister to lead.

Comments from respondents who expressed other views included—

- It was not appropriate for Ministers to “champion BSL to the disadvantage or exclusion of other means of communication.” Instead the Ministers for Language and for Equality had roles to play to ensure that inclusive communication was promoted and that the needs of the Deaf community and their families were understood and considered in service provision. (East Lothian Council)
- A Scottish Minister should have lead responsibility for alternative forms of communication, including BSL, Maketon, Signalong as well as other forms of alternative and augmentative communication. (Capability Scotland)

- The relevant Minister would be one overseeing responsibility for disabled people (Sense Scotland). Similarly, Inclusion Scotland felt that such a designation could result in unintended unfairness to other disabled people and a Minister for Disabled People should have responsibilities to include promoting and taking necessary steps to realize all rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People. (UNCRPD).
- Deaf Ex-Mainstreamers' Group Ltd (DEX) referred to the Welsh language model, where the Welsh Language Board was accountable to the Welsh Minister and to the Welsh Assembly. The Welsh Assembly worked with the Welsh Language Commissioner to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, investigate any interference with the individual's freedom to use Welsh and establish a Welsh Language Tribunal, if required. It was suggested that: "In Scotland, a BSL Act could have as lead parliamentary officer the Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages and a BSL Tribunal could be established where ... bodies have not complied with their duties".

Benefits of designated Minister

A number of benefits of having one Minister dealing with BSL were highlighted, and these included—

- Deaf people would know who was responsible and be able to approach that Minister's office direct;
- It would promote joined-up thinking processes;
- The Minister's office would be able to develop a greater understanding of BSL;
- It would make cross-departmental working easier.

Challenges for designated Minister

Similarly, some challenges were also identified—

- Managing expectations of deaf people;
- Ensuring follow through on initiatives;
- Monitoring;
- Resourcing initiatives.

Role of designated Minister

Respondents thought the role of the Minister should include—

- Engagement with all Scottish Government departments;
- Coordinating cross-government activity to promote BSL;
- Hosting a cross-government group on vulnerable deaf people (e.g. prisoners, those with mental health issues);
- Chairing the Advisory Board;
- Monitoring action plans.

Responsibility of all Ministers

Arguments for the responsibility falling to all Ministers included, in particular, those from three local authorities—

- Renfrewshire Council felt that “ensuring that responsibility is shared and the needs of the hearing impaired people are integral to the work undertaken by all Ministers in line with the public sector equality duty”.
- South Lanarkshire stated that this would “ensure knowledge is provided to raise awareness and ensuring that services are delivered in a way that is accessible for all”.
- Moray Council argued that “Deaf people are as much part of the constituency as others and the awareness of their needs should be raised in all departments”.

Question 7 – Advisory Board

Question 7

Do you believe an Advisory Board of BSL users should be established, to advise the designated minister or all Scottish Ministers? Please explain the reasons for your answer.

In total, 143 responses were received to this question, including 39 from organisations and 104 from individuals. One hundred and thirty-six (95%) were generally supportive of the proposal to establish an Advisory Board, although there were some mixed views about the make-up of its membership.

Fifty-six respondents indicated that the Board should comprise a majority of deaf BSL users (or deaf people). In addition, while not responding specifically to this question, the supporters of the petition and the 76 respondents responding in similar terms (footnotes 3 and 4 in Section 2 refer) also supported a majority of BSL users on the Board.

Arguments in favour of the establishment of an Advisory Board of BSL users were put forward in responses received under cover of the SABH submission and included—

- The Board would be able to provide “knowledgeable, fair and equal advice”.
- “These people have hands on experience” and knew the “everyday problems” that deaf people can be faced with”, and “what it is like to be isolated in their community”.
- It would enable “up-to-date information to be delivered at all times”.
- Many users had BSL as their first language.

- Information could potentially be collected and cascaded more efficiently.
- [The Advisory Board] would be able to advise on the subject better than non-BSL users; this would allow them to make informative decisions.
- It would enable the deaf community to have a say in shaping the policy.

Another respondent claimed that: “Just as a plumber should not be sent to do a chef’s job (and vice versa), there should be an Advisory Board of Deaf BSL users to advise the designated minister”. (Individual response 16)

Specific comments from organisations on the make up of such an Advisory Board included—

- The National Association for Tertiary Education for Deaf people (NATED) felt that at least 80% of the Board should be deaf, that there should not be any places for particular organisations and the Deaf community should decide the membership.
- The Scottish Council on Deafness felt that the majority should be Deaf BSL users and the remainder should be BSL users, including hearing people, BSL/English interpreters, members of Deaf organisations, and academics.
- The SCCYP considered that the make up should comprise Deaf BSL users and also BSL users who were not deaf, but with expertise in particular areas such education policy or mental health.
- Sense Scotland felt that any Advisory Board should not consist solely of BSL users. They referred to lessons learned with the Gaelic Advisory Board, one of which was, in their view, that limiting board membership to users was not the best way forward.
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran felt that it should be a mixed group: a committee or board including BSL users, families, non-deaf people and special advisers.

Other comments

A number of respondents made other comments in relation to the Board—

- One respondent who attended a Scottish Advisory Group on Deafblindness meeting on the proposed Bill, while agreeing that an Advisory Board should be established, commented that: “... this must include other communication methods including deafblind manual, hands-on signing, etc.”.
- Inclusion Scotland did not agree with the concept of an Advisory Board solely in relation to BSL and favoured an Advisory Board on disability more widely.

- Deaf Ex-Mainstreamers Group (DEX) said “a BSL Board should be established in law, and should not be an advisory board but an organisation entirely devoted to effective language planning, monitoring and enforcement”.
- NHS Grampian and NHS Orkney, while being supportive, highlighted the need to ensure geographical equity of membership and representative number of NHS and local authority representatives.
- East Lothian Council felt that an Advisory Board should cover inclusive communications more broadly.

Question 8 – Relevant public authorities BSL action plans

Question 8

Relevant public authorities will have to develop BSL action plans. Should there be a detailed list of such authorities (for example, the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament, health boards, local authorities etc.) and, if so, which ones should be included and why? Which ones should not?

One hundred and forty-three respondents directly answered this question, including 39 from organisations and 104 from individuals.

Strong support was expressed for a detailed list of relevant public authorities to develop action plans, with 79 (55%) respondents in general agreement. Twenty (14%) respondents would opt for the list being the same as that used in terms of the Gaelic Language Act, ie all public bodies with a plan for Gaelic should also have a plan for BSL. Eight other respondents (6%, all organisations) preferred the option of using an existing list, such as that used for the Equality Act 2010. The remaining 36 (25%) responses had mixed, other or no specific views.

Other suggestions with specific types of authorities included—

- Deaf Ex-Mainstreamers Group (DEX) said “the most important” authorities, in its view, were the SQA, Care Inspectorate, Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration, Scottish Social Services Council, Health Bodies, Commissions (including Audit Scotland) and local authorities’ education departments and school governors.
- Glasgow City Council felt the public bodies should include: the Care Inspectorate, National Galleries of Scotland, National Library of Scotland, National Museums of Scotland, Police Complaints Commissioner of Scotland, Risk Management Authority, Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration, Scottish Legal Aid Board, Scottish Police Service Authority, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Skills Development Scotland, Sports Scotland, Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland, Public Transport Users Committee for Scotland, Scottish Law Commission, various Tribunals (Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland, Children’s Panel, Mental

Health Tribunal Scotland, Parole Board for Scotland), all health boards, Mental Health Welfare Commission for Scotland, NHS 24, NHS Education for Scotland, NHS Health Scotland, NHS National Services Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service Board, Scottish Prison Service, Scottish Court Service, Scottish Human Rights Commission.

A number of additional comments made by organisations included—

- “Until we know the extent to which users may need information in BSL, it will be difficult to determine which public bodies should be on the list”. (SCCYP)
- Angus Council felt that such a list should be determined by “how services and information is accessed by people who use minority languages” (BSL being included as such). It stated that: “large and medium public bodies should be included, and smaller public bodies should be included if they deal closely with deaf people”. Hearing Link (Scotland) was of a similar view: “This should mirror (as appropriate) plans and lists in place for other minority languages of Scotland”.
- In supporting the use of an existing rather than a separate list, NHS Ayrshire and Arran favoured that used in the Equality Act 2010, and 2012 Specific Duties Regulations, arguing that it should be mainstreamed in this context rather than adding an “additional layer of bureaucracy”.

Question 9 – Financial implications

Question 9

What financial implications do you envisage the proposed Bill would have for you or your organisation?

What (if any) other significant financial implications are likely to arise?

The responses to this question varied with some respondents expressing the view that the proposed Bill’s provisions might present a source of income, others indicating that it could have financial implications, and others feeling that it would have minimal or no impact.

Comments from organisations which foresaw a financial impact included—

- “There are potentially massive financial implications”. (East Lothian Council)
- The Church of Scotland noted the implications if more staff “were required to have increased knowledge and skills in the practice of BSL”.
- NHS Grampian and NHS Orkney pointed out that “... more staff would require to be trained in-house as BSL communicators, with attendant costs. An estimate is £3,500 of fees for one employee to reach Level Three and

become a communicator. There would also be a cost of allowing staff time off during the working day to attend training and carry out BSL communicator work when required”.

- NHS Ayrshire and Arran felt that, unless funding for implementation of the proposed Bill was ring-fenced, the cost of implementation would mean identifying efficiency savings and this should not be at the expense of existing services.
- The National Deaf Children’s Society was concerned that resources might be diverted from other additional support required by deaf children in the classroom. It suggested that guidance should make clear the status of legislation promoting the use of a language as “not something that can be conflated with provisions under the Additional Support for Learning Acts 2004 and 2006 and the Equality Act 2010”.

Thirteen organisations felt there would be no financial implications, and six of these indicated that the proposed Bill might have a positive financial effect, given the services they provided: the British Deaf Association (Scotland) in particular noted that: “this could be a potential source of unrestricted income”. A number of individual respondents echoed this view, suggesting that, while there might be initial costs, this should be weighed against long-term benefits, for example, frontline staff being able to assist deaf people and deaf people being encouraged to use more services.

Action on Hearing Loss referred to the Financial Memorandum for the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill – the cost of preparing a Gaelic language plan for public authorities was estimated at £10,000; implementing core functions in a plan at £0 – £150,000 per authority per year; the staff and operating costs of the Board at £355,000 per year⁵. It was suggested that BSL plans would be narrower in scope and the number of BSL users estimated to be much lower than those who speak Gaelic, so implementation costs should be at the lower end of this wide range.

Question 10 – Impact on equality and diversity

Question 10

Do you believe if this proposed Bill becomes law, it will have a positive or negative impact on equality and diversity within your organisation?

If you believe it will have a negative impact, how can this be minimised or avoided?

There was a mixed response to this question, with some respondents feeling that the proposed Bill would have a positive impact on equality and diversity, some believing that it might have a negative effect in terms of those who used other forms of

⁵ [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S1_Bills/Gaelic%20Language%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/b69s1en.pdf](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S1_Bills/Gaelic%20Language%20(Scotland)%20Bill/b69s1en.pdf)

communication, and others expressing the view it would have a neutral impact as they already followed best practice.

The following provides a flavour of the responses to this question—

- Thirty-three of the SABH respondents who answered this question felt that the proposed Bill would have a positive impact on equality and diversity.
- The Scottish Council on Deafness believed that the proposed Bill would have a neutral impact as it already worked using good practice for Deaf BSL users. Similarly, the SCCYP did not foresee any equality impacts, as BSL as a preferred means of communication was offered as a matter of course at all of its events and for publications.
- NHS Grampian and NHS Orkney was of the view that: “The only negative might be a feeling by other disability communities that they too require primary legislation to take forward their particular agenda”.
- East Lothian Council commented that there would be positive effects for BSL users and anticipated negative effects for people who had other communication needs through concentrating resources disproportionately.
- Similarly, Capability Scotland endorsed the positive impact on BSL users but was concerned that there might be a negative impact if the Bill resulted in a disproportionate share of attention and resources being invested in BSL to the disadvantage of people who do use other alternative methods of communication.
- Renfrewshire Council thought that the proposed Bill should consider the need to include a wide range of people such as those who are profoundly deaf and did speak, but who did not always use BSL – for example, Cochlear implanted people – it was felt that this would help to ensure an inclusive approach and reduce the potential of unintentional discrimination.

Question 11 – Any other comments or suggestions

Question 11

Do you have any other comments on or suggestions relevant to the proposal?

A number of respondents provided additional comments and suggestions, including the following—

Monitoring and evaluation

- There should be provision in the proposed Bill for the Advisory Board to be involved in monitoring and evaluation of national and local action plans. (SCoD)

- To help service planning and delivery, there should be a Register of Deaf People similar to that of Register of Blind people. (NHS Ayrshire & Arran)

Other forms of communication

A number of respondents highlighted that there was a need to raise awareness of other means of communication which could be substituted for speech or writing other than BSL, including accessible written material, use of note pad and pencil, BSL information pre-recorded on web sites, and video BSL signing. NHS Grampian and NHS Orkney also suggested that an “equally important step is to empower and fund Deaf people to be more pro-active in their communication skills” and provided examples of lip-reading for people with Acquired Profound Hearing Loss and Texting, 3G mobile phone technology and computers.

Similarly, Capability Scotland referred to Signalong and Makaton, for example, which were widely used means of communication for people with hearing impairments, particularly those with learning disabilities and/or limited mobility. It was believed that: “There is an urgent need to raise awareness and promote use of these alternative methods of communication as well as BSL”.

Deafblindness

Some organisations and individuals raised issues specifically in relation to deafblindness—

- One respondent who attended a Scottish Advisory Group on Deafblindness meeting on the proposed Bill commented that: “All people who use alternative communication methods should be included in the proposed Bill, e.g. hands on signing, deafblind manual, clear speech, visual frame signing, Braille, Moon, Note takers, screen readers, lip readers, in other words, any form of linguistic access BSL users who lose the ability to see must be included.” Another representative commented that: “There is little detail in how deafblind people might benefit from this bill contained in this proposal. More information is needed; if we include deafblind people in the bill, we must ensure they benefit”.
- Deafblind Scotland expressed concern that, as a marginalised group, deafblind people might become even more so and that it was important to stress that provision being made for either of the single sensory impairments, while welcomed, did not necessarily automatically benefit those who had a dual sensory impairment. This might mean requiring public bodies to ensure that special arrangements were made to include deafblind people in all public bodies’ plans and activities.

Legislative competence

In relation to the matter of legislative competence, SCCYP noted that the Scotland Act 1998 “gave the Scottish Parliament power to encourage equal opportunities, particularly observing equal opportunities requirements. This is defined as: ‘the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination ... on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, ... language or social origin’ ... It is important to state that

BSL is a language in its own right ... and should be recognised as such. At present, Deaf BSL users have to rely on disability discrimination legislation to secure access to information and services in their own language”.

Engaging with the political process

Action on Hearing Loss reported that, from a consultation exercise on the proposed Bill, many participants at event had been unaware of how to engage with the political process – “You have explained the process but I don’t think that information is widely disseminated to the Deaf community.” “How do we even give feedback to our MSPs? It is difficult, so we don’t bother”.

SECTION 4 – COMMENTARY BY MARK GRIFFIN MSP

I would like to record my thanks to the Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU) for all the assistance they have provided in getting my proposed British Sign Language (BSL) (Scotland) Bill to this stage. I would also like to thank members of the Cross Party Group on Deafness (CPGD) and the BSL Bill Sub-Group, made up of members of the CPGD, for all of their advice, support and expertise.

It is a great honour to have brought forward the British Sign Language (BSL) (Scotland) Bill and I am heartened by the number of people who responded to the consultation and would like to thank everyone who took the time to do so. I was particularly pleased at the number of public authorities and charities who viewed the plans favourably. I am also incredibly grateful to the 172 individuals who made their views clear.

The number of people who responded, and the degree of favourability for the plans, is welcomed, and I certainly wish to continue with the proposal, moving forward to the next stage in the legislative process. It is important however that the plans are effectively scrutinised and I welcome those respondents that cited concerns about aspects of the proposal. I recognise that some have expressed concern that the Bill, although having a positive impact on breaking down communication barriers for BSL users, could lead to unintentional discrimination towards those who use other methods to communicate. I think it is important to recognise that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to draft a single piece of legislation for all minority languages, or other methods of communication. I have concern that some of the respondents seem to indicate that the onus be placed on BSL users to learn to lip read, and that more awareness should be undertaken to ensure that BSL users have access to a notepad and pencil and written material. It is important to recognise that BSL is the first language of many Deaf people in Scotland, and we should not make it more difficult for people to communicate in their first language.

It cannot be denied that D/deaf people in Scotland face many communication barriers, and I am under no illusion that my proposal will act as a magic wand, resolving all of these problems right away. However, I do believe that it will begin the process of creating a more inclusive Scotland, a Scotland where our D/deaf population has the same opportunities and access to information as the hearing population.

The next stage will involve lodging a final proposal with the Parliamentary authorities, something I hope to do in the immediate future.

Mark Griffin MSP

Annexe A – Respondents, numbered as received

Organisations

1	National Association of Tertiary Education for Deaf people (NATED)
2	Scottish Council on Deafness
3	Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP)
4	NHS Grampian and NHS Orkney
5	Action on Hearing Loss
6	National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)
7	Sense Scotland
8	NHS Ayrshire and Arran
9	North East Sensory Services
10	British Deaf Association (Scotland)
11	East Lothian Council
12	East Renfrewshire Council (Corporate Equality Unit)
13	Scottish Advisory Group on Deafblindness
14	Angus Council
15	NHS Education for Scotland (NES)
16	Inverclyde Council (Community Health and Care Partnership)
17	Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
18	Self Directed Support Scotland (SDSS)
19	Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters
20	Donaldson's School
21	Hayfield Support Services with Deaf People
22	Deaf Action
23	Deafblind Scotland
24	Action Deafness
25	Caithness Deaf Care
26	Renfrewshire Council
27	Orkney Equality Forum
28	Capability Scotland
29	Aberdeenshire Council Sensory Support Service
30	Tayside Deaf Hub (Dundee Deaf Sports and Social Club)
31	Tayside Deaf Hub (Tayside Deaf Forum)
32	Tayside Deaf Hub (Deaf Links)
33	Deaf Services Lanarkshire
34	Deaf Connections
35	Inclusion Scotland
36	Deaf Ex-Mainstreamers Group (DEX)
37	Scottish Youth Parliament
38	Scottish Borders Council

39	Midlothian Council
40	Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA)
41	Glasgow City Council
42	Church of Scotland
43	ACPOS (Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland)
44	Dumfries & Galloway Society for the Deaf
45	Signature Scotland
46	STUC
47	South Lanarkshire Council
48	Hearing Link (Scotland) – (confidential/not for publication)
49	Moray Council

Individual Respondents

1	David Thompson
2	Nadia Krupova
3	Marie Elliot
4	Caroline Currie
5	Tessa Padden
6	Gordon B Veitch
7	Lesley Boyd
8	Fiona Stewart
9	Iain Cameron
10	Andy Irvine
11	Barbara A Brown
12	Brenda Mackay
13	Colin McTaggart
14	Tasnim Sharif
15	Jude Caldwell
16	Lisa Li
17	Rachel Amey
18	Mark Wheatley
19	Irene Wilson
20	Rebecca Russell
21	Sally Doering
22	David and Jennifer Johnston
23	Janice McCusker
24	Nicola McNally
25	Marion Fletcher
26	Erelund Tulloch
27	Helen Mooney

28	Derek Todd
29	Maryam Imran
30	Sue Mowat
31	Soumaya Lomas
32	Scott Ellerington
33	Silvana Lennon
34	Laura Stewart
35	Shelagh Douglas
36	John Whitfield
37	Kaz Langlands
38	John A Hay
39	Stephen J Butler
40	Vincent Stewart
41	Arthur Verney
42	M Anne Waugh
43	Paul McCusker
44	Margaret Moyse
45	Linda Duncan
46	Helen Martin
47	Rachel Mapson
48	Margaret Bradshaw
49	Gill Wood
50	Niamh Cochrane
51	Kyra Pollitt
52	Shirley Wright
53	Danielle Morgan
54	Tess Hutchinson
55	David Wilson

56	Sara Lomas
57	Samuel Rojas
58	Audrey Dawson
59	Rodney Dawson
60	Rachel Evans
61	Leonard Mellis
62	Denise Lightbody
63	Margo C M Currie
64	Evonne Herd
65	J Richards
66	Paul Belmonte
67	Ben Matthews
68	Joan Forrest
69	Anne Handsley
70	John Denerley
71	Peter S Hay
72	Pamela Bogan
73	Kay Clark
74	Alastair Kelly
75	Juliette K Begg
76	Margaret Kinsman
77	Alan Drew
78	Evelyn Shaw
79	Doreen Mair
80	Lisa Davidson
81	Charlotte Wilson
82	Brian McCann
83	Ross Grant
84	Lesley King
85	Graham H Turner
86	Catherine Finestone
87	Mark MacQueen
88	Anthony J Forry
89	Lorna McNae
90	Janis Sugden
91	Abigail Apps
92	Dr Deborah Innes
93	Anne Bain
94	Edward Foley
95	Ella Leith
96	Anonymous

97	Maire McCormack
98	Matteo Cerri McCormack
99	Brian Shannan
100	Margaret Kydd
101	Karalyn Church
102	Carla Marchbank
103	Simon Crabb
104	Mary McDevitt
105	Alison Pell
106	Jacqueline Rogers
107	Hamish Rosie
108	Suzanne Victoria Frew
109	Joanne Lironi
110	Amy Cheskin
111	Irene Lochrin
112	Jamie Church
113	Hilary Kearney
114	Linda Richards
115	Hilary McColl
116	Ben Newton Wylie-Black
117	Rachel O'Neill
118	Martha Carnegie
119	Carrie Neilson
120	Neil Mullin
121	Grant Ferguson
122	L K Young
123	Susan Gibson
124	Joseph Sheridan
125	Dr Audrey M Cameron
126	Robert M Duncan
127	Donald M Richards
128	Shaurna Dickson
129	Nicola Young
130	Tamara Young
131	Judy Byrne
132	Mike and Morag Davis
133	Mike Crockart MP
134	Sign And Be Heard (containing 39 individual anonymous responses)

The member also received a petition with 937 signatories.

Annexe B – Respondents, alphabetical order

Organisations

Aberdeenshire Council Sensory Support Service	29
ACPOS (Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland)	43
Action Deafness	24
Action on Hearing Loss	5
Angus Council	14
British Deaf Association (Scotland)	10
Caithness Deaf Care	25
Capability Scotland	28
Church of Scotland	42
Deaf Action	22
Deaf Connections	34
Deaf Ex-Mainstreamers Group (DEX)	36
Deaf Services Lanarkshire	33
Deafblind Scotland	23
Donaldson's School	20
Dumfries & Galloway Society for the Deaf	44
East Lothian Council	11
East Renfrewshire Council (Corporate Equality Unit)	12
Glasgow City Council	41
Hayfield Support Services with Deaf People	21
Hearing Dogs for Deaf People	17
Hearing Link (Scotland) – (confidential/not for publication)	48
Inclusion Scotland	35
Inverclyde Council (Community Health and Care Partnership)	16
Midlothian Council	39
Moray Council	49
National Association of Tertiary Education for Deaf people (NATED)	1
National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)	6
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	8
NHS Education for Scotland (NES)	15
NHS Grampian and NHS Orkney	4
North East Sensory Services	9
Orkney Equality Forum	27
Renfrewshire Council	26
Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP)	3
Scottish Advisory Group on Deafblindness	13
Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters	19
Scottish Borders Council	38

Scottish Council on Deafness	2
Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA)	40
Scottish Youth Parliament	37
Self Directed Support Scotland (SDSS)	18
Sense Scotland	7
Signature Scotland	45
South Lanarkshire Council	47
STUC	46
Tayside Deaf Hub (Deaf Links)	32
Tayside Deaf Hub (Dundee Deaf Sports and Social Club)	30
Tayside Deaf Hub (Tayside Deaf Forum)	31

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Begg, Juliette K	75
Belmonte, Paul	66
Bogan, Pamela	72
Boyd, Lesley	7
Bradshaw, Margaret	48
Brown, Barbara A	11
Butler, Stephen J	39
Byrne, Judy	131
Caldwell, Jude	15
Cameron, Dr Audrey M	125
Cameron, Iain	9
Carnegie, Martha	118
Cheskin, Amy	110
Church, Jamie	112
Church, Karalyn	101
Clark, Kay	73
Cochrane, Niamh	50
Crabb, Simon	103
Crockart, Mike MP	133
Currie, Caroline	4
Currie, Margo C M	63
David, Mike and Morag	132
Davidson, Lisa	80
Dawson, Audrey	58
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Denerley, John	70
Dickson, Shaurna	128
Doering, Sally	21
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Drew, Alan	77
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Ellerington, Scott	32
Elliot, Marie	3
Evans, Rachel	60
Ferguson, Grant	121
Finestone, Catherine	86
Fletcher, Marion	25
Foley, Edward	94
Forrest, Joan	68
Forry, Anthony J	88
Frew, Suzanne Victoria	108
Gibson, Susan	123
Grant, Ross	83
Handsley, Anne	69
Hay, John A	38
Hay, Peter S	71
Herd, Evonne	64
Hutchinson, Tess	54
Imran, Maryam	29
Innes, Dr Deborah	92
Irvine, Andy	10
Johnston, David and	22

Jennifer	
Kearney, Hilary	113
Kelly, Alastair	74
King, Lesley	84
Kinsman, Margaret	76
Krupova, Nadia	2
Kydd, Margaret	100
Langlands, Kaz	37
Leith, Ella	95
Lennon, Silvana	33
Li, Lisa	16
Lightbody, Denise	62
Lironi, Joanne	109
Lochrin, Irene	111
Lomas, Sara	56
Lomas, Soumaya	31
Mackay, Brenda	12
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Mair, Doreen	79
Mapson, Rachel	47
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McCusker, Janice	23
McCusker, Paul	43
McDevitt, Mary	104
McInally, Nicola	24
McNae, Lorna	89
McTaggart, Colin	13
Mellis, Leonard	61
Mooney, Helen	27
Morgan, Danielle	53
Mowat, Sue	30
Moyse, Margaret	44
Mullin, Neil	120

Neilson, Carrie	119
O'Neill, Rachel	117
Padden, Tessa	5
Pell, Alison	105
Pollitt, Kyra	51
Richards, Donald M	127
Richards, J	65
Richards, Linda	114
Rogers, Jacqueline	106
Rojas, Samuel	57
Rosie, Hamish	107
Russell, Rebecca	20
Shannan, Brian	99
Sharif, Tasnim	14
Shaw, Evelyn	78
Sheridan, Joseph	124
Stewart, Fiona	8
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Sugden, Janis	90
Thompson, David	1
Todd, Derek	28
Tulloch, Erelund	26
Turner, Graham H	85
Veitch, Gordon B	6
Verney, Arthur	41
Waugh, M Anne	42
Wheatley, Mark	18
Whitfield, John	36
Wilson, Charlotte	81
Wilson, David	55
Wilson, Irene	19
Wood, Gill	49
Wright, Shirley	52
Wylie-Black, Ben Newton	116
Young, L K	122
Young, Nicola	129
Young, Tamara	130
Anonymous	96

Sign And Be Heard – (containing 39 individual anonymous responses) 134

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