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Ms Sue Webber MSP
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Education, Children and Young People
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Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Via email: ecyp.committee@parliament.scot

7 March 2023

Dear Convener,

Evidence Session on the Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) (Scotland) Bill

Following my previous correspondence of 28 February, highlighting the publication of the Literature Review: *Transitions to Adulthood for Disabled Young People*, I am now writing in response to a number of action points originating from my appearance, and that of the Minister for Equalities and Older People before the Committee on 22 February 2023.

Attainment and initial leaver destinations for pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN)

I offered to provide the Committee with statistics which show improvement for attainment and initial leaver destinations for secondary and special school leavers to demonstrate where improvement has been made. Since my appearance in front of the Committee, the [Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 5 2023](#) edition has been published. This publication shows that:

In 2021/22, 93.0% of secondary and special school leavers from publicly funded schools in Scotland with an Additional Support Need were in a positive destination 3 months after the end of the school year. This is an increase from 92.4% in 2020/21 and the highest proportion since consistent records began.

The attainment gap between mainstream school pupils with ASN and with no-ASN achieving 1 or more national qualifications at SCQF Level 5 (National 5) or better by the time they leave school has reduced by more than half from 40 percentage points

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in 2009/10 to 18.8 percentage points in 2021/22.

The attainment gap between pupils with ASN and with no-ASN achieving 1 or more national qualifications at SCQF Level 6 (Higher) or better by the time they leave school has reduced from 37.2 percentage points in 2009/10 to 30.4 percentage points in 2021/22.

In (August) 2022, 74.1% of candidates with ASN achieved a pass at National 5, an increase of 5.5 percentage points from 2018 (68.6%). 72.7% of candidates with ASN achieved a pass at Higher in this year's exams, an increase of 1.4 percentage points from 2018 (71.3%).

In 2021/22, 75.0% of school leavers with ASN had achieved one pass or more at SCQF level 5 or better. This is an increase of 10.1 percentage points from 2014/15 (64.9%).

In 2021/22, 42.9% of school leavers with ASN had achieved one pass or more at SCQF level 6 or better. This is an increase of 9.6 percentage points from 2014/15 (33.3%).

Independent Living Fund Scotland's (ILF) Transition Fund

The Committee raised an important question about people's awareness of the support available through the Independent Living Fund Scotland's Transition Fund. The Minister for Equalities and Older People agreed to explore how we can strengthen the raising awareness of funds and other such support as part of our next steps. However, I thought it might be useful for the Committee to hear about the different ways that information on the ILF Scotland's Transition Fund is currently disseminated. I will also be considering, alongside Ms McKelvie, as to what I can do to further raise the profile of this important Fund.

On the 30th November 2022, ILF Scotland held an event to celebrate 5 years of successful operation of the Transition Fund and to showcase the accomplishments and life-changing achievements of the young disabled people in Scotland who have benefitted from a grant. The event took place at the Glasgow Science Centre and was attended by nearly 200 young disabled people and their families from across Scotland, my colleague Ms Todd, the Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport, as well as other key external stakeholders, such as representatives and policy makers who work in the area of transitions in the health and social care sector across Scotland.

Promotion of the Transition Fund also includes:

- A programme of engagement and delivery of workshops to promote the Transition Fund in local communities through working with schools, job centre staff, representatives from Skills Development Scotland, representatives from third sector organisations, as well as other health and social care professionals working directly with young people.

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- Marketing campaigns across ILF Scotland’s website, media releases, promotion through disabled influencers, external newsletter and email campaigns, through social media and social care and education specific publications.
- Participation events held by external stakeholders.
- The ILF Scotland Young Ambassadors provision of support in promoting the Transition Fund to other eligible young people.

National Transitions to Adulthood Strategy – Timeline

As the Convenor of the Committee, you asked that someone came back to you with an idea of timescales for the development of the National Transitions to Adulthood Strategy in order to provide the Committee with some reassurance on the progress of this important Programme for Government commitment.

The Committee heard how to date, we have been laying the foundations to deliver on Scotland’s first National Transitions to Adulthood Strategy through research, engagement and through the work with ARC Scotland on the Principles into Practice trials which will conclude on 31 March 2023. The next steps in the development of the Strategy focusses on external engagement to develop the proposed scope, vision, aims, and priorities.

As the Committee also heard, we have invited key representatives of disabled young people, parent carers, education, social work, health, local authorities and third sector partners to form a new external working group to help take forward the work on the Strategy. Invited members will meet on 14 March 2023 to consider the work plan and timeline for the development of the Strategy. This will include ensuring sufficient time to allow for the meaningful engagement and participation of disabled young people.

I will write again to the Committee shortly to provide a further update and details on the proposed timescales for the development of, and public consultation on the Strategy once a workplan has been discussed and agreed with our partners within the working group.

Thank you once again for the opportunity afforded to myself and Ms McKelvie to give evidence to the Committee on the Member’s Bill, and on the important work we are progressing across Government to improve the lived experiences and outcomes of disabled children and young people and their families in Scotland.

Best wishes,

CLARE HAUGHEY