

# **Cross Party Group on Deafness**

**Meeting, Wednesday 20 March 2024 at 6pm.**

Via Zoom (an online video conferencing platform)

## **Minutes - Present**

### **MSPs**

Convenor – Colin Beattie MSP (Scottish National Party)

Roz McCall MSP (Conservative)

### **Invited Guests**

Kirsten Abioye,

Hannah Tweed (The ALLIANCE)

Douglas Lyons (Colin Beattie MSP staff member)

Lucinda Fass (SG Policy Officer)

Colin Heatherington/ Jonathan Reid (Deafblind Scotland)

Amanda McNamara, Brian Shannon, Teresa Quail – With NDCS presentation

Jo White – QMU

### **Non-MSP Group Members**

Secretariat and Assistant: Janis McDonald, Amy White (The ALLIANCE)

Tori Bishop-Rowe (AVUK)

Cathie Finestone (BATOD)

Philip Gerard (Deaf Action)

Alana Harper (Deaf Links, Tayside) left early/IT issues

Isabella Goldie (Deafblind Scotland)

Mark Ballard (NDCS Scotland)

Julie Ferguson (Education Institute for Scotland)

Rachel Mapson (Queen Margaret University)

Teri Devine (RNID)

Jill Bradshaw (ATLA-Scotland)

Linda Sharkey (Audiology Heads of Service)

Brogan Ferguson (RCSLT)

Angela Bonomy (Sense Scotland)

Lyn Pornaro (DES)

Nicholas Orpin (Hearing Link/Hearing Dogs)

Deborah Innes (Scottish Deaf Mental Health Service)

Adele Gorman (Napier University)

### **Individual Member**

Nil

## **Language Service Professionals**

Georgina Donohoe, Nicki Dunipace (BSL/English Interpreters)  
Gail Richardson, Carol Shedden (Electronic Notetakers)

## **APOLOGIES**

### **MSPs**

Mark Griffen MSP (Scottish Labour)  
Karen Adams MSP (Scottish National Party)  
Annabelle Ewing MSP (Scottish National Party)  
Carol Mochan MSP

### **Non-MSP Group Members**

Ann Ferguson Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group  
Anita Grover (AV UK)  
Jacquie Winning (Forth Valley Sensory Centre)  
Dougie Bryce (DES)  
Gary Quinn (Heriot Watt University)  
Tessa Slaughter (ASLI Scotland)  
Enrique Canton (Deaf Equality and Accessibility Forum South Lanarkshire)  
Kath Cooper (Donaldson's)  
Deirdre Aitken (Sight Action Sensory Services)  
Jane Gallacher (Scottish Cochlear Implant Centre)  
Douglas Bryce (Disability Equality Scotland)  
Glenn Carter (RCSLT Scotland)  
Joanne O'Donnell (Sense Scotland)  
Carla Marchbank, Graham Findlay (North East Sensory Services)  
Jim Harrigan (Scottish Paediatric Audiology)  
Gillian Heavie, Lee Shennan, Scottish Government  
Prof John Ravenscroft, Sheila MacKenzie (Scottish Sensory Centre)  
Donald Richards (Individual member)

### **Agenda item 1 - Welcome and Introductions**

Amy White reminded attendees about the communication supports and ensured everyone could access the meeting effectively.

The Convenor welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded people to say who they were and what organisation they represented before making contributions.

### **Agenda item 2 – Attendance, Apologies and Members**

Attendance and apologies noted in the minutes.

Membership: 2 new members proposed and agreed.

**Organisational** member: Napier University - Adele Goman, PhD Lecturer, School of Health, and Social Care.

**Individual** member: Danny Sweeney.

### **Agenda item 3 – Approve the minutes from last meeting and discuss matters arising**

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 17 January 2024 were approved. Matters arising are substantive on the agenda.

### **Agenda item 4 – Definition of Deafblindness**

Isabella Goldie noted Annabelle Ewing MSP's apologies. Rona Mackay MSP had lodged a motion in December 2023 and 36 MSPs signed up with good cross party support. The motion was taken to the chamber on 7 Feb and the debate was led by Rona and other MSPs spoke strongly in its support including: Roz McCall, Karen Adam, Carol Mochan and Stuart McMillan, MSPs.

There were about 30 deafblind people and allies from the CPGD in the Chamber.

The outcome of the debate was Minister, Maree Todd MSP responded, she offered to explore issues further, wanted to look at outcomes for countries where definitions have been adopted and raised some concerns around equality matters being reserved.

A briefing has been sent noting how much of this was devolved responsibility, enclosing section 7 guidance which states it is devolved because it doesn't include Scotland in the guidance. Information about the other countries where it has been adopted and information on the European parliament were also attached.

#### **Actions:**

1. to follow up on the Definition of Deafblindness – Deafblind Scotland;
2. to confirm SG positively endorses the work – Annabelle Ewing/Colin Beattie MSPs;
3. elicit support for this area of work - Deafblind Scotland/All members;
4. launch a “declaration” about it in the summer.

Members to promote and support the work:

<https://www.dbscotland.org.uk/defining-deafblindness/> and/or email  
Isabella Goldie at [ce@dbscotland.org.uk](mailto:ce@dbscotland.org.uk)

## **Agenda item 5**

Part one: Contribution from Scottish Government/Additional Support Needs in Education – Lucinda Fass, Policy Officer.

See attached Appendix 1. Lucinda Fass' contact email is [lucinda.fass@gov.scot](mailto:lucinda.fass@gov.scot).

Part 2: Teachers of the Deaf/Attainment  
Update from Working Group – Mark Ballard NDCS  
See Powerpoint Presentation – Appendix 2

Mark discussed 14 recommendations drafted by the working group, covering four areas of action:

1. Support and promote the Scottish Government consultation on revised guidance – link in with Lucinda.
2. Recommendations from the working group on Teachers for the Deaf – see the PowerPoint and feed any comments into Mark Ballard ASAP, and in advance of 30 April 2024 when the working group next meets. Contact: [mark.ballard@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:mark.ballard@ndcs.org.uk)
3. Working group to produce a final report, recommendations, and any next steps.

## **Agenda item 6**

Working Group on Sensory Care and Dementia

Roz McCall MSP noted that the working group is new, and last week. Membership includes NHS, care inspectorate, DBS, Age Scotland, a range of universities and we have three members from the Cross-party Group on Visual Impairment. The progress we made was to agree the terms of reference and that we should be developing sensory care standards for care homes and care at home, and to volunteer for working groups.

Three gaps in sensory care were identified. They are:

1. assessment for identification of sensory care needs,
2. implementation of support and

3. data regarding deafness, blindness, and deaf blindness.

The meetings are progressing, and next meeting is 5th June. Jill Bradshaw expressed an interest in being involved with the group and this was agreed.

**Johnathan** Reid asked about prevalence rates and assessment. In terms of dual sensory loss, how would you arrive at that without a definition?

The response noted we almost have to take the assumption that the definition is in place and work from there, and reference it wherever possible. I was encouraged with earlier points made by MSPs and advice given about pushing forward with the definition work too.

**Action:** Working Group to continue meeting and bring back update reports to the CPG on Deafness.

### **Agenda item 7**

Any other business.

The three areas of update were deferred to the next meeting. It was agreed to add an additional meeting in June, in addition to any parliamentary reception, given the volume of positive work progressing and the ambition to deliver on the definition of deafblindness.

**Action:** Janis will liaise for suitable date and communicate with the group.

### **Agenda item 8 - Date of next meeting and closing remarks**

The next scheduled meetings are:

Additional Date – tbc

Wednesday 26 June 2024: Parliamentary Reception and/or launch activity for Definition of Deafblindness “Declaration”

Wednesday 4 September 2024 (including AGM)

Wednesday 11 December 2024

**End of document.**