

Cross-Party Group on Disability

Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 1pm-2.30pm on Teams

Minute

Present

MSPs

Jeremy Balfour MSP
Brian Whittle MSP

Invited guests

Dr Vikki McCall – University of Stirling
Dr Dianne Theakstone – University of Stirling

Non-MSP Group Members

Mike Harrioso – Treasurer – SATA - Member
Linda Bamford – MACS – Member
Joanne Devit – MACS – Member
Marg McNeil – See Around Britain – Member
Maggie Ellis – WSA & EKTG – Member
Dr Caroline Gould – Skye & LochAish Access Panel – Member
Gwen McNeil – STUC Disabled Workers Committee – Member
Tony Slaven – STUC Disabled Workers Committee - Member
Daisy Thomson – Into Work – Member
Jordon Anderson – Individual – Member
Anne Meikle – Versus Arthritis – Member
Alison Pendragon – OTCC – Member
Gavin Yates – Enable Scotland
Nicoletta Primo – Sight Scotland & Sight Scotland Veterans – Member
Alyssa Faulkner – Individual – Member
Sue Bowen – Dyslexia Scotland – Member
Claire D'All – Euan's Guide – Member
Mark Gaffney – Scottish Disability Sport – Member
Amanda Foster – Individual – Member
Jill Pritchard – Horizon Housing Association – Member
Lorna Cameron – Horizon Housing Association – Member
Andrew Ewen – Leonard Cheshire – Member
Colette McDiarmid – MND Scotland – Member

Observers –

Sarah Reilly – Individual – Observer
Katie Edwards – Police Scotland – Observer
Robert Dick – Stirling Access Panel – Observer
Eileen McMullan – SFHA – Observer
Dorothy-Grace Elder – Observer – Voluntary Sec SP on Chronic Pain - Observer
Terry Robinson – Individual – Observer
Susan Robertson – CEC Strategic Commissioning Officer, Edin HSCP - Observer

Observers -

Julia Shillitto, Secretariat, Office of Jeremy Balfour MSP
Hannah McNicol, Office of Jeremy Balfour MSP
Morag Innes, Office of Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP
Nariese White, Office of Gillian Mackay MSP
Briony Taylor, Office of Gillian Mackay MSP

Apologies

Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP (Deputy Convener)
Alexanders Stewart MSP
Paul O’Kane MSP
Carol Burt, I Am Me
Marianne Scobie, DGA Online
Caron Jenkins, Versus Arthritis
Lyn Pornaro, Disability Equality Scotland
Robin Wickes, Edinburgh Access Panel
Lindsey Currie, Non Member, Individual
Maureen McAllister – Versus Arthritis

Agenda item 1

Welcome by Jeremy Balfour MSP. Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP gives her apologies as still in Committee.

Minutes of 6 December 2023 were approved. It was noted for Maggie Ellis that the correction to the non Members of the CPG attending at the 6 December meeting were:-

Jacqueline Cowan – Police Scotland – Observer
Emma Innocent – Observer
Sarah Reilly – Observer
Dr Vikki McCall – Observer

Jeremy also confirmed that at the next meeting which will include the AGM, there will be a discussion on funds, which Maggie Ellis raised.

New Members duly approved are:-

Sight Scotland and Sight Scotland Veterans, (Nicoletta Primo)
Alyssa Faulkner as an Individual
Jordon Anderson as an Individual

Agenda item 2

Presentation by Dr Vikki McCall, Professor of Social Policy, CIHCM, Faculty of Social Sciences at Stirling University – ISPA report – how we future proof and tackle stigma related to ageing, disability and place through good inclusive design in homes and the wider environment. Joining on the call, Eileen from the Scottish Federation Housing Association and Research Assistant, Dr Dianne Theakston. At the heart of this project is starting to think a little bit more in a nuanced way about how we tackle stigma in relation to place, age and disability.

SLIDES – ISPA (Intersectional stigma of placed based ageing) - were displayed and included with circulation of the agenda:-

- Urban stigmatisation should be tackled, people are prejudiced towards certain areas
- Pursue & gather evidence, and tackle stigma around this by inclusive design so people don't feel discriminated by and have access to places for everyone.
- Need to tackle processes of urban stigmatization where sometimes places get a label of problem places or problem people.
- There is also discrimination attached to different disabilities
- Access to services is harder depending on disability, age and place
- Pool ideas about good integrated inclusive design.
- Inclusive design can combat stigma and make people not feel different or get treated differently.
- White PVC handrail makes someone stick out. Makes people feel vulnerable.
 - Inclusive design: put in handrail that looks like a flower planter
- Good Inclusive design is pertinent to everyone, we are all getting older and any of us could injure ourselves.
- Working with partners, like Eileen & SFHA building up the inclusive living toolkit or Practice to help organisations make cultural changes.
- Doing research in representation of disability in neighbourhoods, building a cohort of community peer-researchers, tackling inequalities via organisational change.
- In terms of adaptations, budgets have been reduced, haven't been really prioritised.
- ISPA networks: community peer-researchers, inclusive living alliance, project advisory board, early career network.

- What ISPA will deliver: conduct neighbourhood mapping exercises, establish longitudinal quantitative base, quantitatively policy and scoping reviews and more (on slides).
- Has sent out the one-year report
- They have 50 community peer-researchers
- Do we discriminate by design?
- We need to think about future proofing our housing because we have an aging population

It's a call to action in a way in this project, but it's also an opportunity that if people are interested in being involved they are very welcome.

Any questions send to:- Vikki.mccall@stir.ac.uk

Question and Answer Session: -

Maggie Ellis – This CPG has been looking at how people in general break the law in equality and inequality – in Scotland for example – Accessible Toilets. – There is no action about people who break the law. – The research is there but often goes unread by Politicians.

Vikki McCall – It is good to hear toilets and accessibility is being flagged because toilets and accessibility is a key priority. The impact of research is important and not to be put on a dusty shelf. Evidence needs to be converted into action.

Jordon Anderson – Accessibility – accessible doorways – often something labelled accessible but it might not be. General public need to be more informed as well.

Vikki McCall - : Sometimes things are labelled accessible, but are not. Standards of buildings are still based on recommendations from 1998, which is under consultation and review.. Also the accessible way may not be the dignified way.

Dr Caroline Gould – On the Isle of Skye - can't access Accessible Toilets. Architects don't learn about accessibility on their courses. Dr Gould is a qualified access auditor. Architects don't learn about accessibility on their courses in Scotland. Dr Gould can't travel by taxi, bus or train, she is in a wheelchair and can't bend at the knee. There has been more recent research proven, bigger turning circles but when you have a minimum turning circle that is considered the minimum for a self propelled wheelchair with somebody who can bend their legs at the knees, you're not even dealing for in the current building standards for people who are attendant pushed wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs, Motorized scooters or anything like that. Concerned about key safes and carers not protecting privacy. How do we get involved in remote and rural areas. Has experienced hate crimes.

Vikki McCall – asked for Dr Gould to link in. Would be very interested in following up with her.

Terry Robinson - Was a member of a Glasgow- Inclusive Accessibility Org, has quit out of protest. Consultation was taken as approval, Law breaking goes on. Research doesn't help. There is not enough action.

Vikki McCall - we can't give up. Consultation burnout is real. We need to get people to open their eyes and see the wider picture. This is something we should all be fighting towards. Need to share information with local areas, ground level approach. Impact on policy often difficult.

Marg McNeil – See Around Britain app – asked for as many as possible to submit photos to www.seearoundbritain.com to let others know about accessibility in public places/venues. On the webpage, 'About' – for Volunteering access panel. Last year Emma Roddick participated in the Disability Summit and Marg received a reply on 23 January that her officials will be in touch to follow up with him.

Dorothy-Grace Elder - Mentioned Members' Business: S6M-11700: Rona Mackay: Definition of Deafblindness after 5pm today. Is anyone checking all the organisations that are being managed by the government to check that people with disabilities are on these and receiving money due.

Maggie Ellis - The reality for many people is that they are 100s of miles away from the nearest hospitals. When we were in the European Union, all of this was in hand. She was in a group in Brussels years ago, at the time we had the best transport, now it is the worst in Europe because we don't follow the system. With a single system approach, you must have a short medical report to be there for everything, from housing, blue badge etc. The Architects and teachers are not receiving training.

Vikki McCall - the cost doesn't lie with developers, so there is no incentive for them to make buildings accessible - adaptations. We must provide incentive through standards, or force them through regulations.

Robert Dick - Accessible and adaptable homes, the situation is unacceptable, evading needs. BS800 and BS9266 a whole plethora of documents on lifetime homes is out there– needs to improve housing for people who are ageing, there are standards but they are not applied.

Vikki McCall – Agree, each Local Authority has its own standard. People start from scratch and try to find guidance when you need it. Carers are also participants – a household approach.

Jordon Anderson – Accessibility is a human approach written in Law. The real approach is that it can't be a tick box exercise.

Vikki McCall – It would be unethical if no action taken.

Jeremy Balfour MSP – Thanked Vikki and her colleagues. Will note her email contact for the group. - Vikki.mccall@stir.ac.uk

Vikki McCall – Thanked the group and confirmed she knew she would learn a lot from the expertise in the room.

Agenda item 3

Jeremy advised the group that the Disability Access Panel Report is now complete. On behalf of the CPG he will send it to relevant bodies, such as Ministers, Transport officials and NHS asking for their feedback and it may be appropriate in due course to ask various bodies to come and speak at a future meeting. This report will be included with the minutes.

Any Other Business

Dorothy-Grace Elder, Observer – Voluntary Sec SP on Chronic Pain – informed the group that the Scottish Government Debate is taking place immediately after the CPG : *Delivering Record Social Security Investment in Scotland to Tackle Cost of Living Crisis and Inequality* for those with an interest in it. Jeremy advised he is speaking in this debate.

Jeremy updated the group on his Disability Commissioner bill which will be lodged in the Scottish Parliament on Friday 9 February.

The link to the introduced Bill and all explanatory papers is at <https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/disability-commissioner-scotland-bill/introduced>

For a hard copy of the bill please email: Jeremy.Balfour.MSP@parliament.scot

Once read, please let Jeremy have your feedback, either positive or negative. The bill will be allocated to a lead committee. Jeremy thanked everyone for their support and contribution.

Robert Dick, Stirling Access Panel – briefed the group about disabled people being excluded from certain building projects. There are a number of issues to raise regarding the planning decisions behind the Rhoderic Dhu Viewpoint at Loch Katrine.

Action : Jeremy advised that because it is being dealt with by public bodies, he would write as a CPG to them, asking why disabled people are being excluded from the building project underway for the construction of a pathway and towers within the Rhoderic Dhu Viewpoint at Loch Katrine, without establishing a Reasonable Adjustment.

Maggie Ellis - asked for briefing notes not to be read out at meetings but for a discussion to take place. Maggie also asked if emails could be shared.

Action : Jeremy said he would check with the data team if that is possible, or if there is an opt in or opt out rule.

If any member has any topics for June or Autumn CPGs they will be added to the list.

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 12 June at 1pm-2.30pm and will include the AGM.