

Cross-Party Group on Shared Parenting

Tuesday 21st May 2024, Online 1800 – 2000hrs

Present: Fulton Macgregor MSP, Craig Hoy MSP

John Forsyth, Ian Maxwell, Cathy Sexton, Kenny Spence, Rowan McCall, Anne Gibson, Eoin Keane, Cheryl Brown, Janie Law, Sarah Rogers, Anne Wilson, Sara McFarlane

In attendance: Wendy Georgeson, Adam Briggs

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions

Fulton welcomed members and introduced Craig Hoy MSP attending his first meeting, and speaker online from the USA, Emma Johnson.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Megan Farr from Children and Young People's Commissioner; Aileen Peace from Avenue in Aberdeen; Adrienne Burgess from the Fatherhood Institute in London; Jane and Selina from Family Journeys in Edinburgh.

3. Minutes of September 2023 meeting and matters arising

The Minutes were approved unamended

4. The 50/50 Solution : Emma Johnson, author and advocate for equal shared parenting.

Emma Johnson is author of "*The 50/50 Solution: The Surprisingly Simple Choice that Makes Moms, Dads, and Kids Happier and Healthier After a Divorce*". She described her journey from wanting to be the parent in control after divorce to an understanding that equal shared parenting was much better for her daughter and both parents.

5. The 'Follow the Child Benefit' barrier to Shared Parenting: John Forsyth, Shared Parenting Scotland.

John Forsyth from Shared Parenting Scotland has been looking at how Child Benefit, a scheme for financial support for families with children designed for one purpose 50 years ago has become an institutional barrier built by local authorities and national agencies that works against shared parenting.

6. Work Plan, Date of Next Meeting and AOCB

The next meeting will have to be an AGM. We are behind our AGM schedule. It was left to convener and secretariat to find a date after the recess.