

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Cross Party Group for Learning Disability
Committee Room 1, Scottish Parliament
Tuesday 16th June 2015**

People who were there

Anabelle Goldie MSP (Deputy Convener)
Joan McAlpine MSP



Jan Savage (ENABLE Scotland (Secretariat))
Kayleigh Thorpe (ENABLE Scotland)
Linda Allan (Scottish Government)
Pauline McDonald (Scottish Government)
Colin Menabney (ENABLE Glasgow)
Sally Ann Elfverson (ENABLE Glasgow)
Rachel De Loan (Downs Syndrome Scotland)
Dr Fergus Douds (RCPsych in Scotland)
Idem Lewis
Edward Fairweather
Christine Carlin (Mindroom)
George Ruston (Mindroom)
Chris Creegan (SCLD)
Jenny Miller (PAMIS)
Ronny Lee (PAMIS)
Edward Fairweather
Kristie Brown
Ken McMahon (British Psychological Society)
James McNab (People First)
Katy Coates (People First)

Caroline Gray (Quarriers)
Florence McQuilter (Quarriers)
Laurelle Harvey (Quarriers)
Ewan Hamilton (Key Community and Politics Group)
Sonya Bewsher (LDAS)
Linda McCaig (Irlen Scotland)
Ivan Cohen (ENABLE Edinburgh ACE Group)
Keith Boucher (ENABLE Edinburgh ACE Group)

People who could not come and sent apologies

Jackie Baillie MSP
Alison McInnes MSP
Jim Eadie MSP
Liam McArthur MSP
Alison Johnstone MSP
Sarah Waterson (RNIB)
Sofi Taylor (NHS GG&C Mental Health Services)
Sue Tait (Ark Housing Association)
Eric Mitchell (Capability Scotland)
Lorne Berkley (Quarriers)



1. Welcome

Annabel Goldie MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting.



2. Minutes of the last meeting on 21st May 2015

Annabel asked if the minutes of the last meeting were correct or if there were any mistakes.

Ken McMahon said there was a mistake in the part about the Mental Health law.

The minutes say that Ken said “the current law talks about which professionals are allowed to treat people.”

He said this should be changed to “the current law talks about which professionals are allowed to be responsible for the treatment of people”.

Everyone said this change was OK.

Everyone agreed the rest of the minutes were correct.



3. Matters arising – things that came out of the last meeting

A new law about Mental Health

At the last meeting we talked about a new law about Mental Health.

At the moment the law covers people who have a learning disability.

Most people said they think the law should not cover people who have a learning disability.

So the Cross Party Group said we would like to change the law.



At the last meeting we agreed a plan to try to change the law.

Laws go through lots of stages and at each stage people can try to change parts of the law.



The group agreed that Jackie Baillie would try to change the law when it went through the next stage.

Jackie tried to change the law to make the Government promise to look at whether it should cover people who have learning disabilities within 3 years.



Annabel said MSPs have to vote on whether they agree with this change to the law.



She said MSPs would vote on 24th June.

Fergus Douds is from the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

He said the Royal College of Psychiatrists do not think it is a good idea to change the law so it doesn't cover people who have learning disabilities.



He said that in New Zealand they had changed the law so it doesn't cover people who have learning disabilities.

He said it was not good for people who have learning disabilities.

He said it meant that people could not get help when they needed it.

He said they had to bring in a new law to make sure people who have learning disabilities could get the help they need.

James McNab said the Mental Health law affects people who have a learning disability who commit a crime.



He said the law means they can be sent to hospital for a long time rather than go to jail for a short time.

Jan Savage said the change Jackie has written will not change anything about the law just now.

She said the change is only a promise that the Government will have a review to decide in future if the law should cover people who have learning disabilities.



Annabel said information about the change Jackie has written will be sent to the group.

UPDATE about the new Mental Health Law

MSPs voted not to change the law to make the Government promise to look at whether it should cover people who have learning disabilities within 3 years.

52 MSPs agreed with the change Jackie had written. 59 MSPs did not.

There were some stories in the news about Jackie trying to make this change.

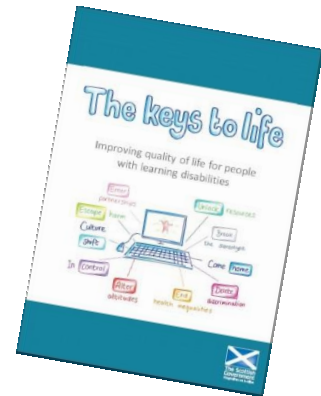
This helped make the Minister, Jamie Hepburn, promise that the Government will look at whether Mental Health Law should cover people who have learning disabilities in future.

This promise is now written down in the Scottish Government's Disability Delivery Plan 2016-2020.

4. Keys to Life

The Keys to Life is a plan from the Scottish Government to make life better for people who have learning disabilities.

There is a team from the Scottish Government who are working on the Keys to Life.



Linda Allan and Pauline MacDonald from Keys to Life team were at the meeting.



They told everyone what is happening with the Keys to Life.

Linda said over the last 2 years people with learning disabilities have told the Government what is important to them.

People said lots of things were important, such as:...

- love



- friendships



- being part of the community.



Linda said the Keys to Life plan lasts for 10 years.

Everything can't be done at once.



So the Scottish Government have listened to people. They have written a plan for what to work on for the next 2 years. 2 years.



She said the plan will help the Government make sure the important things in the Keys to Life happen.

There will be another plan written after the 2 years

Plan for the next 2 years

Linda said there were 4 main areas the Government will work on for the next 2 years.

The 4 main areas are...

- Make sure people with learning disabilities are healthy
- Make sure people with learning disabilities are treated well
- Make sure people with learning disabilities can get access to the same things as everyone else



- Make sure people with learning disabilities can be part of the things they want to be part of

Linda talked about the work that has been done on these things so far.

Then Linda talked about what else is going to happen over the next 2 years.

Linda said the Keys to Life team are working with lots of other teams in the Scottish Government.



She said they can only make things better if everyone works together.

Annabel thanked Linda and Pauline for their presentation.

Then people asked questions about the plan

Advocacy

Annabel said at the last meeting we talked about how important advocacy is for people who have learning disabilities.



She said people who have learning disabilities don't know they have the right to get independent advocacy.

Annabel asked what the Scottish Government are doing to make this better?

Linda said they are working with organisations to find out what advocacy services are out there already.

The organisations include Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance and SCLD.

They are also finding out where there are no advocacy services.

Benefits

Annabel said at the last meeting we talked about how changes to benefits are affecting people who have learning disabilities.

People said benefits can be very complicated.

So it is important that people get help and advice.

Annabel asked what the Scottish Government are doing to make sure people who have learning disabilities get help with benefits?

Linda said the Scottish Government give money to ENABLE Scotland so they can help people with their benefits.

She said the Government will meet with ENABLE Scotland about this work

She said they want to make sure the money the Government gives ENABLE helps more people in Scotland with benefits.



Buses

Idem Lewis said lots of day centres had closed in Glasgow.

He said this means there are more disabled people on buses during the day.

He said bus companies do not understand that more disabled people are using the bus.

Annabel suggested the Cross Party Group could write to bus companies in Glasgow about this.



Linda said the Keys to Life plan did not have anything in it about buses Linda said the new plan includes work on transport because people said it was important

Linda said the Keys to Life team will work together with the Transport team in the Scottish Government to make things better.

Pauline said there was a meeting in March about how to make transport better for disabled people.

There is an Easy Read report about the meeting.

You can read the report here:

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/reports/TSA.pdf>

Pauline said there will be a workshop on 27th August to look what should happen next.

James McNab said in Fife, Stagecoach run some of the buses.

But the buses are old and the lifts don't work.

Annabel suggested the Cross Party Group should write to Stagecoach about this.



Trains

James McNab said if you want help to use the train you have to tell the train company 24 hours in advance.



Jan Savage said ENABLE Scotland had a campaign about this.

The campaign said people should not have to give so much notice.

A new company has taken over running trains in Scotland.

The company is called Abellio ScotRail.



They have changed the rules so now people now only have to give 4 hours notice.

And they said that by 2025 people will only have to give 1 hour's notice if they want help to use the train.

Annabel suggested the Cross Party Group should write to Abellio ScotRail to tell them this is a good idea.

Jobs

Idem said people with learning disabilities are not getting help to get a job.

He said there should be more support to get a job.



And there should be more support for people in work too.

Linda said the Scottish Government is looking at good work that is happening to help people find jobs.

She said she knows that job coaching can be very important in helping people at work.

People going to England for special care

Fergus Douds said part of the Keys to Life is about people who need special care.

Some people who need special care have to go to England because they can't get it in Scotland.

The Keys to Life says that people should be able to get this care in Scotland.

Fergus said the Scottish Government have to decide what to spend money on to make life better for people who have learning disabilities.

He asked if any money would be spent on setting up services so people could get care in Scotland?

Linda said the Scottish Government will be asking people to bid for extra money in the new plan and to share good ideas. One area extra money will be available will be complex care.

She said the Scottish Government think this is very important.

Information about people who have learning disabilities

Sonya Bewsher said she thinks people who have learning disabilities are staying in hospital longer than they should.

She thinks this is because people don't get enough support to leave hospital.



Sonya said a group called the Learning Disability Observatory is collecting information about people who have learning disabilities.



She asked if they will find out if people who have learning disabilities are staying in hospital longer than they used to.

Linda said yes, this is one of the things they want to find out.

Chris Creegan is from SCLD.

He said SCLD write a report every year that has lots of information about people who have learning disabilities.



He said the information comes from local councils.

He said SCLD are working with Scottish Government and the Learning Disability Observatory to make sure this information links up.

Learning Disability Nurses

Joan McAlpine MSP asked about specialist learning disability nurses.



Linda said the Scottish Government have made sure more learning disability nurses are being trained.

She said more student nurses are learning how to support people who have learning disabilities too.

5. Annual General Meeting

All Cross Party Groups have to follow some rules.

One of the rules is that groups have to have an Annual General Meeting (AGM).

At the AGM the group decides who the members of the group are.

They also decide who is going to help run the group.

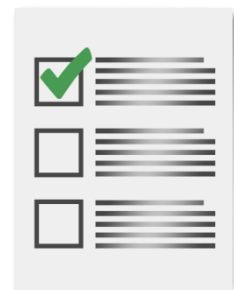


Members of the Cross Party Group

Annabel said the list of members had been sent out by email.

Annabel asked everyone if the list of members was correct.

Everyone said it was correct.



MSPs on the Cross Party Group

Annabel said these MSPs had agreed to stay on the Cross Party Group:

- Jackie Baillie MSP
- Joan McAlpine MSP
- Jim Eadie MSP
- Liam McArthur MSP
- Alison Johnstone MSP
- Alison McInnes MSP.



Annabel said that this means that we have MSPs from different political parties on the group.

Annabel thanked all the MSPs for being part of the group.

Convener of the Cross Party Group

The Convener is in charge of the meetings.

Jan Savage said that Jackie Baillie wanted to stay as Convener.

Annabel nominated Jackie Baillie as Convener.

The rules say another MSP has to agree with this nomination.

Joan McAlpine said she agreed with the nomination.

So Jackie Baillie will stay as the Convener.



Deputy Conveners

The Deputy Conveners are in charge of the meetings if the Convener can't come to the meeting.

Jan Savage said that Jim Eadie wanted to stay as Deputy Convener.

Annabel nominated Jim Eadie as Deputy Convener.

Joan said she agreed with this nomination.

Annabel said she would also like to remain as a Deputy Convener.

She said she needed 2 MSPs to nominate her and agree with the nomination.

But there were not enough MSPs there today.

So ENABLE will write to MSPs to check they agree to nominate Annabel.



Secretariat for the Cross Party Group

The Secretariat helps to organise the meetings and writes the minutes.

Annabel proposed the ENABLE Scotland should stay as secretariat.



She asked everyone if this was OK.

Everyone said this was OK.

Annual report for last year

The Cross Party Group writes a report every year.

The report says what the group have been working on.



The report was sent to members of the group before the meeting.

Annabel asked everyone if the report was correct.

Everyone agreed the report was correct.

6. Anything else?

Kayleigh Thorpe from ENABLE Scotland spoke about their campaign called Stop the Bus.

Stop the Bus is ENABLE Scotland's new campaign.

The campaign wants to make it easier for people who have a learning disabilities to get a bus pass.



Lots of people who have a learning disability can't get a bus pass.

Some people used to have a bus pass. But they can't get one any more because the rules have changed.



ENABLE Scotland's campaign says the Scottish Government should change the rules to make it easier to get a bus pass.



Idem Lewis said he supports the campaign.

He said bus passes really help people who have learning disabilities to get out and about.

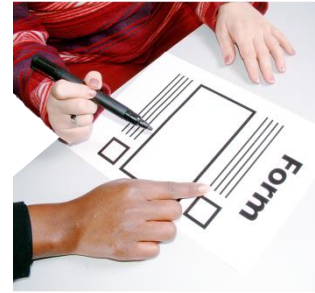
Florence McQuilter said anyone who needs a bus pass should be able to get one.

James McNab is from People First.

He said there is a form you can fill in to get a bus pass.

But you have to get someone to sign the form.

He said some staff at People First are allowed to sign the form.



Colin Menabney said Sally Ann Elfverson gave a petition about bus passes to the Scottish Government 5 years ago.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting

7. Actions – things to do before the next meeting

Who	What to do	Where we are with this
ENABLE Scotland	Send information about the change to the Mental Health Bill to Cross Party Group members	<p>*UPDATE about the new Mental Health Law*</p> <p>MSPs voted not to change the law to make the Government promise to look at whether it should cover people who have learning disabilities within 3 years.</p> <p>52 MSPs agreed with the change Jackie had written. 59 MSPs did not.</p> <p>There were some stories in the news about Jackie trying to make this change.</p> <p>This helped make the Minister, Jamie Hepburn, promise that the Government will look at whether Mental Health Law should cover people who have learning disabilities in future.</p> <p>This promise is now written down in the Scottish Government's Disability Delivery Plan 2016-2020.</p>

Who	What to do	Where we are with this
ENABLE Scotland	Write to bus companies in Glasgow about more disabled people using buses since day centres have closed	Annabel Goldie MSP wrote to Glasgow bus companies.
ENABLE Scotland	Write to Stagecoach about lifts not working on their buses	Annabel Goldie MSP wrote to Stagecoach.
ENABLE Scotland	Write to Abellio ScotRail to say the Cross Party Group thinks it is a good idea to reduce the amount of notice people have to give if they want help to use the train	Annabel Goldie MSP wrote to Abellio ScotRail.
Convener	Confirm Annabel Goldie as a Deputy Convener of the Cross Party Group	Jackie Baillie MSP has proposed Annabel Goldie MSP as a deputy convener of the Cross Party Group. ENABLE Scotland will ask another MSP to second this before the next meeting.

