

Cross-Party Group on Disability & AGM

Wednesday 12 June 2024 on Teams

Minute

Present

Jeremy Balfour MSP
Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP
Emma Roddick MSP

Invited guests

Lorna Cameron – Horizon Housing Association
Debbie Horne – Independent Age

Non-MSP Group Members

Mike Harrison – Treasurer of CPG
Stephanie Fraser – Cerebral Palsy Scotland
Linda Bamford – MACS
Joanne Devit - MACS
Dr Caroline Gould – Skye & LochAisch Access Panel
Penny Hendrick - PA/DR Inclusive Fitness & Wellbeing
Daisy Thomson – IntoWork
Derek Kelter – Individual
Denis Robert Shovlin – Individual
Tony Slaven – individual
Maggie Ellis – WSA & EKTG
Maureen Morrison – Spinal Injuries Scotland
Kim Dams – DG Voice
Alex Thelwell – DG Voice
Terry Robinson – Individual
Jenny Miller – PAMIS
Donna Tomlin – Contact
Lyn Pornaro – Disability Equality Scotland
Ben Littlejohns – Versus Arthritis
Marg McNiel – See Around Britain app
Patricia Ferguson – Individual
Stephanie Miller - CAS

Julia Shillitto - Secretariat
Hannah McNicol – Office of Jeremy Balfour MSP
Thomas Rannachan – Office of Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP

Apologies

Gillian Mackay MSP
Katie Edwards – Police Scotland
Nicoletta Primo – Sight Scotland
Fina McDonald – Sight Scotland
Robin Wickes – Edinburgh Access Panel
Jill Pritchard – Change Practitioner OCT
Salena Begley – Family Fund
Carol Burt – lamMe
Hussein Patwa – MACS
Alison Pendragon – Assistance Dogs Council
Sue Bowen – Dyslexia Scotland

Agenda item 1

AGM Business

Apologies as noted.
Minutes of the AGM on 27 July 2023 approved.

Appointment of Office Bearers:-
Convener – Jeremy Balfour MSP
Deputy Convenor – Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP
Treasurer – Mike Harrison
Secretariat – Julia Shillitto
Emma Roddick MSP is rejoining as an MSP member of the CPG.

No matter arising.
No Items of Correspondence
Treasurer's Report - Account will be left open, with funds standing at £91.14.
No Other Business.

Close of AGM Business.

Agenda item 2

New Members approved:

Assistance Dogs Council (ADC) – Alison Pendragon
Dr Lisa O'Leary – Individual
Stephan Tait – Individual

Agenda item 3

Presentation by Lorna Cameron, Chief Executive Officer from Horizon Housing Association – Promoting accessible, inclusive homes for life.

SLIDES WITH MINUTE

Accessible and Inclusive Housing – why it is so important

- There is a chronic shortage of accessible housing in Scotland and as a direct result of being in an unsuitable house get injured
- Good design makes a possible difference
- Accessible housing is a human right, there is an equality issue at stake
- Passive housing has been addressed; it would be great if accessible housing was also addressed
- Making houses accessible makes them sustainable

We must acknowledge that accessible housing is a complicated issues that needs work from across sectors.

A 2 min video clip from one of Horizon Housing Association tenants:-

Susan Kerr - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eZBGPGDOOY>

Q&A

- Lorna Cameron to Maggie Ellis - confirmed to Maggie Ellis that Disability doesn't only include those with a physical disability but also includes a range - cognitive, physical, neurodiverse, and sensory. Good networks to and Jeremy is speaking at a summit in September. Maggie mentioned Westminster only deals with England.
- Lorna Cameron to Linda Bamford - wants to make sure they are sustainable as we work towards Net Zero and using energy efficiently and keeping bills to a minimum by draft proofing external walls, doors and windows insulation.
- Lorna Cameron to Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP – future proofing housing, specifically on particular needs and targets/standards - there are many things that can be added to houses that are simple and less costly in the long run, such as flexible design & accessible spaces. It is all about small fixes and extensive consultation – it is better to do this than have to make adaptations at a later date.
- Lorna Cameron to Dr Caroline Gould - agrees that the minimum 1.5m turning circle is too small. Is going to talk to agencies and organisations about this problem. Review of housing for varied need, as so many needs have

changed – Rurally it is sometimes difficult to get the specialised staff. At the summit discussions will include agencies and what will have more impact and what is needed to create a system that will work.

- Lorna Cameron to Denis Robert Shovlin - he wants Horizon to come to one of the Falkirk Council meetings to share their ideas, especially to represent non-physical disabilities, and will include Council housing and Local authorities. Lorna agrees with Denis, the more we can share the better.

Jeremy thanked Lorna Cameron for coming to the meeting. She is happy to continue the dialogue. Lorna Cameron - lorna.cameron@horizonhousing.org

Agenda item 4

Presentation by Debbie Horne – Independent Age – Scotland policy and public affairs Manager focused on recent report ‘homing in’ and the experiences of disabled people in relation to their housing and key point from report.

SLIDES WITH MINUTE

- Independent age is a charity for older people living in poverty, disabled people are among those who are more likely to live in poverty.
- 15% of older people who have a disability live in poverty
- 4/10 older private renters with a disability describe their financial situation as difficult
- Research found some 24,000 on Council waiting lists.
- Some people feel as though their only option is to render themselves homeless.
- Older private renters are twice as likely to think their home is unsuitable than older private renters without a disability.
- Only 36% of older tenants with a disability feel aware of their housing rights.
 - o They also feel reluctant to assert their rights. Some fear that applying for adaptations could lead to eviction by landlords.
 - o Half of older renters are not satisfied with the quality of their home and believe them substandard, (ie – home is never warm, damp, wind whistles in.
- Independent age recommends a framework of rent controls, and that the Scottish Parliament passes the Housing Bill and that the Scottish Government establishes a regulator for the PRS drawing on learnings from social housing regulator to drive up standards. To make older people with a disability aware of discretionary payments and how to access them.

Q&A

- Linda Bamford asks if there have been campaigning around the discretionary housing payments to help the older and disabled that there is support.. Debbie Horne says there is a low uptake from older people for social security. Many

old people aren't aware of discretionary payments and how to access them or there is a stigma.. Low uptake of housing benefit.

Older people could access extra support but are sometimes unaware or are concerned about the stigma associated with it.

Debbie Horne is happy for members to contact her with any questions at :-

Independent Age - @independent age – Debbie.Horne@independentage.org

Jeremy thanked Debbie for her presentation.

Agenda Item 5

Terry Robinson -, CPG Member addressed the group to vocalise his view on making the CPG more of a campaigning CPG.

- Worries that the CPG is not achieving outcomes.
- Where he lives in Glasgow, human rights are not accepted and the Law is being broken.
- Terry advocates for safer accessible pavements
- He wants a positive strategy that will lead to real and positive outcomes

Jeremy – Some CPG's work slightly differently, part is information sharing, some are more campaigning. Jeremy asked the members to think about the future of the CPG and suggested a small working group with Terry, to work on areas of policy. Jeremy asked those who are interested to contact Julia. Julia.shillitto@parliament.scot

(Taken from the Chat : Stephanie Fraser, Maggie Ellis and Tony Slaven would like to be in the working group).

Agenda Item 6

Any Other Business

Maggie Ellis wished to raise the Equality Act and review of accessible toilets.

Maggie was unable to unmute herself so Jeremy advised the group that Maggie has emailed the First Minister for a meeting focusing on Accessible Toilets and we are waiting to hear how he responds.

Stephanie Fraser – Cerebral Palsy Scotland – two links are shared with the group to spread awareness:-

Cerebral Palsy Scotland Link to the manifesto is here: [Make people with cerebral palsy count - Cerebral Palsy Scotland's election manifesto - Cerebral Palsy Scotland](#)

The Neurological Alliance of Scotland published their mental health report, to coincide with Mental Health Week on 13th May. The link to the report is here: [Mental Health report final \(scottishneurological.org.uk\)](https://www.scottishneurological.org.uk/mental-health-report-final)

Jeremy – updated the group on the Disability Commissioner – Equalities committee are now taking evidence and the next session is on Tuesday 18 June, and will engage with a disabled individual. Jeremy will be giving evidence at the end of Sept/early October. He thanked everyone who made submissions. Regarding the Neurological Commissioner, the consultation is now closed and will reflect over the summer. Response is due early Autumn.

Denis Robert Shovlin – wearing his 'Freedom of Mind' choir top, encouraged all to try singing as it's good for your mental health. He also said if anyone would like to invite his choir to sing he would be happy to arrange it.

The date of the next meeting has been changed and is now scheduled for 2 October 2024 at 1pm-2.30pm.

Close.