

Cross-Party Group on Changing Places Toilets

5th of January 2022 | 6pm to 6:40pm

Present

MSPs

Paul O’Kane MSP
Alexander Stewart MSP
Jeremy Balfour MSP
Elena Witham MSP

Invited guests

None

Non-MSP Group Members

Angela Dulley

Apologies

Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP

Welcome

Paul welcomed everyone to our Teams meeting and stated it was the inaugural meeting for Changing Places Toilets. Paul explained that the meeting would begin with the nomination of office bearers and then explained the need for the group and our aims and ambitions.

Election of Office Bearers

Convener – Paul O’Kane was nominated as Convener by Jeremy Balfour and seconded by Elena Witham

Vice Convener – Jeremy Balfour was nominated by Alexander Stewart and seconded by Elena Witham

Secretary –Angela Dulley was nominated by Paul O’Kane and seconded by Jeremy Balfour

All nominations were accepted.

Aims and objectives of the Cross-Party Group

Paul started by stating our focus is to seek to drive forward and deliver the work that has been looked at - to raise awareness of the essential need of accessible toilets for all of Scotland's citizens and we would like to investigate the feasibility of a Changing Places Toilets fund for local authorities and small community groups to access.

This would continue the work of Jeremy Balfour MSP and former MSP, Mary Fee.

There is a section of our society that cannot access their basic human needs being met. Adults and children who have a disability are having their toileting care needs met by lying on a toilet floor with no privacy or dignity. This is due to lack of facilities. This can lead to a host of problems – infection, mental health issues due to not leaving their home and possibly hospitalisation.

This, in the long run, affects the Public Purse. As a group, we would like to explore retail and business to change their outlook on disability and how changing their business model could be beneficial to all. We would give Parents, Carers and SEN Teachers the opportunity to join our CPG and give testimony of their lived experiences and what they would like the Group to take to the Scottish Government to consider.

We would investigate the subject of Tourism; to invest in Scotland being the holiday destination of choice for families living with disability; confident that all family members are catered for if the correct investment and advertising was in place. To give parent/carers the opportunity to discuss their lived experience of holidaying abroad with the pitfalls of medical and travel insurance being extremely expensive.

Potential investment would assist the Scottish tourism industry that has suffered badly over the past two years with Covid-19. Alexander asked if we could include VisitScotland as tourism is an important part of our economy.

Elena stated that in her constituency, East Ayrshire Council used the service of an Inclusive Design Advisor and this instigated a large proportion of Changing Places toilets appearing in her area.

Jeremy suggested that we could raise a F.O.I. and ask all local authorities if they use an Inclusive Design Advisor.

We would propose to invite The Royal Incorporation of Architects Scotland to discuss the feasibility of change to the design of what a disability toilet should resemble, to allow all citizens the right of choice. This would continue the work that led to the Planning (Scotland) Act update which included Changing Places Toilets Regulations. We believe that change of the standard disability toilet to a Changing Places toilet should start at the point of design.

Based on research, we would propose to Architects that they include Changing Places toilets as standard and rationalise for them not to consider the original disabled toilet, that is no longer fit for purpose.

AOB

Date of next meeting

- Not available until Standards Committee ratifies Cross Party Group

Actions

- Angela Dulley to forward election of bearer's nominations to Sam Currie
- Paul O'Kane to await meeting in front of Standards Committee
- Angela to formulate a F.O.I. to all local authorities once Group is ratified
- Angela to invite VisitScotland once Group is ratified
- Angela to invite RIAS once Group is ratified

Paul thanked the Group and closed the meeting 6:40pm