

Cross-Party Group on Disability

Tuesday 1 February 2022

Minute

Present

MSPs

Jeremy Balfour
Emma Roddick

Invited guests

Ashley Ryan – ENABLE Works

Non-MSP Group Members

Morag Innes
Maureen McAllister
Colin Millar
Bill Scott
John Ballantine
Aidan Reid
Anna Telfer
Carol Burt
Chole Whyte
Chris
David Martin Nicholson
Derek Kelter
Diana Winfield
Donna Tomlin
Dorothy Barbour

Emma Scott
Jenny Millar
John Keenan
Kayleigh O'Neill
Laura Gemmell
Lianne Williams
Maggie Ellis
Mike Harrison
Mike Moore
Paul Fisher
Robert Dick
Sara Hampson
Terry Robinson
Tina Yu
Tony Slaven

Apologies

Pam Dun-Glancy MSP

Paul O’Kane MSP

Tess White MSP

PC Stephanie Rose

Amanda Foster

Stephanie Fraser

David Nicholson

Ally Irvine

Olivia Carson

Robin Wickes

Approval of new members and minutes

Dorothy Barbour was approved as a new member of the CPG on Disability

Terry Robinson proposed the minutes and Bill Scott seconded. The minutes from the previous meeting on 7 December 2021 were approved

Bill Scott – Presentation on the Disability Employment Gap

Bill Scott from Inclusion Scotland provided the group with a presentation on the disability employment gap. The employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people is higher in Scotland than elsewhere in the UK. In 2021 there were 47% of disabled people in employment and 81% of non-disabled people in employment. The DWP ran a programme in England which resulted in only 5% of people taking part gaining employment. Disabled people tend to be more successful by their own methods.

Jenny Millar, PAMIS – Reassured to hear about family cares and disabled children. Would appreciate a meeting with Bill.

Maureen McAllister – Not good enough to think that a 5% conversion rate is good enough and called for the CPG to campaign and ensure that support is tailored.

Terry Robinson – A bank of case studies is needed as there are currently strong disincentives to entering the labour market.

Colin Millar, SPAEN – DWP ran the journey to employment programme which was extended to Scotland in year 2 but shelved because of FairStart. The DWP programme was successful and FairStart is showing the same figures.

Ashley Ryan ENABLE Works – Presentation

Ashley Ryan from ENABLE Works delivered a presentation on what her service is doing to support the closing of the disability employment gap in Scotland. ENABLE Works is the largest specialist provider of employability services working in 28 local authority areas. The service provides transitions for young people, employability funds for training and is driven by what the individual is looking for. Covid has exacerbated the disability employment gap with ENABLE Works reporting that 70% of clients were furloughed at the start of the pandemic.

Chris (*surname unsure*) – There is a need for invisible support especially for autistic people

Maggie Ellis – It is vital that we understand getting a job is difficult. There are disabled people who have applied for over 200 jobs and had nothing back. It is vital that in this time when people are applying for jobs online that it's what they show of themselves that matters and take care about their appearance.

AOCB

Accessible and gender-neutral toilets at Forth Valley college. Stirling Area Access Panel has engaged with the college about them placing a gender-neutral sign on an accessible toilet.

Chloe Whyte, FVC Student's Association – The toilet was created for non-binary people

Jeremy Balfour – A question will be raised in parliament about this matter and the CPG will be updated.

Action Points

- Secretariat to write to COSLA for a breakdown of employment figures for disabled people
- Jeremy Balfour to lodge a question in Parliament about accessible toilets and gender-neutral toilets

Meeting Close

There were no other matters arising so Jeremy Balfour thanked those in attendance and closed the meeting.