

## Cross Party Group on Disability

### Minutes

**Status: Awaiting approval of Co-Chairs**

**Date of meeting**

**4<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**Present**

Mark Isherwood AM (Welsh Conservative – Co-Chair) Rebecca Evans AM (Welsh Labour – Co-Chair), Aled Roberts AM (Welsh Liberal Democrats), Fiona McDonald (Disability Wales), Owen Williams (Vision in Wales), Rebecca Phillips (Vision in Wales – CPGD minutes), Rhian Davies (Disability Wales); Vikki Butler (Barnardos); Tom Raines (National Development Team for Inclusion); Ruth Coombs (Mind Cymru), Will Evans, Paul Warren (Diverse Cymru), Michelle Fowler-Poe (BDA), Kate Thomas (GAVO), Sian Morgan (Remploy), Jamie Westcombe (EHRC), Clive Emery, Jackie Davies (Welsh Government), Owen Williams (Wales Council of the Blind), James Crowe (Learning Disability Wales), Jennie Lewis, Tom Davies (David Melding AM’s Office), Bob Gunstone, Jo Powell (All Wales People First)

**Apologies**

**1.**

**Welcome and introductions**

RE welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Disability. The meeting was preceded by an AGM after which a series of presentations and updates took place.

**2.**

**CPGD AGM**

The formal procedure of appointing the Chairs and Secretariat took place. Rebecca Evans AM and Mark Isherwood AM were proposed as joint Chairs by Ruth Coombs and seconded by Jim Crowe. Paul Swann was proposed as secretariat by Jim Crowe and Owen Williams.

RE expressed her thanks to Disability Wales and Paul Swann for their work with the Group.

MI noted that in relation to the next AGM, accounts and an Annual

	Report will also need to be produced.
2.	<p><b>Presentations:</b></p> <p><b>RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM ANTI-BULLING POLL –</b> presented by Vikki Butler, Senior Research and Policy Officer, Barnardos.</p> <p>VB spoke about the research findings following an anti-bullying poll. VB highlighted the key messages obtained from the research. Some of which identified the need for better diversity support in the community in mainstream youth settings, teachers needing to be better equipped to deal with bullying and many felt that Welsh Government should be leading the anti bullying practice. The full report is available on the Barnardo’s website <a href="http://www.barnardos.org.uk">http://www.barnardos.org.uk</a>.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> The group to write to the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty Jeff Cuthbert AM regarding the research findings and inviting his response to the recommendations re the role of Welsh Government.</p> <p><b>NATIONAL INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY QUALITY PERFORMANCE MARK AND CODE OF PRACTICE –</b> presentation by Tom Raines, National Development Team for Inclusion.</p> <p>NDTi were asked by the Department of Health and the A4A Board to work in consultation with providers, users and commissioners of advocacy services to build on and update the work of Action for Advocacy. As a result of this work, the QPM has now been revised. It is available to organisations providing independent advocacy in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Further information can be accessed and applications can be made via a new website which has been set up by NDTi to manage the assessment process <a href="http://www.qualityadvocacy.org.uk">www.qualityadvocacy.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>MIND CYMRU ADVOCACY SURVEY –</b> presentation by Ruth Coombs, Manager for Influence and Change, Mind Cymru.</p>

In order to review the effectiveness of the implementation of the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010. RC presented some of the findings from their survey into inpatient experience of mental health advocacy. Following conversations with over 100 inpatients, the findings to date indicate that there is an increase in the number of people eligible to have care and treatment plans having them in place. A report on all the findings will be circulated in due course.

**SERVICES & WELL-BEING (WALES) ACT ADVOCACY AMENDMENT** – presentation by Rhian Davies, Disability Wales.

RD was pleased to report that all advocacy amendments were passed and will appear in the Act.

Technical Groups have been established by Welsh Government to advise on the drafting of Regulations and Codes of Practice for specific aspects of the Act e.g. Eligibility Framework, Direct Payments and Information, Advice and Assistance. To date there is no information about when the Technical Group on Advocacy will be set up or who will be involved..

**Action:** CPGD to write to the Deputy Minister for Social Services Gwenda Thomas AM asking about the timescale and membership of the Technical Group on Advocacy.

MI invited questions from the floor around the three presentations given on ‘advocacy’.

A question was raised around the comment about Advocates feeling that they were carrying out the duties of a ‘good social worker’. The question asked whether social workers would be included in future conversations so that information could be shared.

TR agreed to feed this back.

**ILF UPDATE** – Fiona McDonald

FM gave a brief update. She reported that a consultation will shortly be carried out by Welsh Government to determine the future of ILF in Wales. FM urged members to respond to the

Consultation.

**Action:** CPGD Members to respond to the ILF Consultation

**Action:** CPGD to write to the Deputy Minister for Social Services to establish where ILF fits within the Social Services and Wellbeing Bill.

**UNCRDP REPORTING – Rhian Davies**

RD informed members that the UN Committee on the Rights of Disabled People will be assessing the UK Government's progress with implementing the Convention later in the year. It offers an opportunity for interested parties to submit their own shadow reports on progress or otherwise. DW are in the process of producing a shadow report in discussion with disability umbrella bodies in the other devolved nations. A draft will be circulated for comments.

**ACCESS TO WORK – follow up on 12<sup>th</sup> May DWP meeting (Owen Williams, Vision in Wales)**

Following the previous CPGD 'Employment' themed event, a meeting was held with DWP to discuss the Access to Work service. AtW are reducing the number of locations across the UK from 70+ to 3. 150 advisors will be relocated within DWP or will take voluntary redundancy. These specialists will be replaced and disability training will be offered internally.

Some of the concerns raised at the meeting included assessments being provided over the telephone (2/3 of all enquiries dealt with over the phone), staff not having enough understanding of clients' needs (specialist training) and the average waiting time for an initial assessment, which in some cases has been 7 weeks.

He was pleased to advise that Access to Work were keen to address the issues and will continue to meet with the group on a 3 monthly basis.

**DISABILITY WALES PROJECTS - Rhian Davies**

RD informed members of two projects currently being undertaken

by Disability Wales.

**- Enabling Wales**

Funded through a Welsh Government Equality and Inclusion Grant. The aim of the project is to develop two new Centres for Independent Living in Wales as well as a young disabled people's network. Project partners are Wales Co-operative Centre and DEWIS CIL..

3.

**- Citizen Directed Co-operatives Cymru**

Funded via a BIG Lottery Big Innovation Grant ,t will engage with local authorities, disability organisations, direct payments support schemes, as well as disabled people and their families across Wales to establish at least one citizen directed co-operative to support people with managing their direct payments.

They are currently recruiting for both posts.

**Action:** All members to raise the profile of the UN Convention during the course of their work.

**Next meeting:**

3<sup>rd</sup> September, Conwy Business Centre, North Wales.  
Theme – 'Employment and Disability'.