

MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE CROSS PARTY ASSEMBLY GROUP ON FATHERS AND FATHERHOOD

Held in the Seminar Rooms in the Pierhead Building, Cardiff Bay

Date – Wednesday 6th July 12 noon to 1pm

Attendance –

Mark Isherwood AM –
Acting Chair

Anne O'Regan

Anthony George

Robert Bunce

Neil McEvoy AM

Lady Helen Lloyd Jones

Andrew Frary

Paul Apreda

Lee Price

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and introductions – Mark Isherwood AM**
- 2. Membership and election of officials**

It was noted that the membership of the CPG currently included AMs from 3 parties namely Mark Isherwood AM (Welsh Conservatives – North Wales), Michelle Brown (UKIP – North Wales) and Neil McEvoy (Plaid Cymru – South Wales Central).

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair of the CPG. Mark Isherwood was elected unanimously unopposed.

Nominations were sought for the position of Secretary. Paul Apreda was elected unanimously unopposed.

- 3. The inspiration for and purpose of the CPG**

The inspiration for the creation of the CPG was linked to the All Party Parliamentary Group chaired by David Lammy MP (Labour - Tottenham). Feedback from the fathers who had contributed to the Welsh Dads surveys in 2015 and 2016 highlighted a number of issues around the engagement with and involvement of fathers and father figures in the lives of the children they care about – particularly when these fathers are not living with their children all of the time. It was hoped that through raising awareness of the issues facing fathers the CPG would be able to contribute positively to the development of father friendly policies and initiatives by statutory and third sector bodies.

- 4. Voices of the dads – comments from the Welsh Dads survey**

A range of comments were read out from the 2016 Welsh Dads survey which identified some of the difficulties faced by fathers in Wales.

Dads who contributed to the survey were also present and spoke powerfully about their experiences. It was identified that more work needed to be undertaken to look for success stories of good practice which could then be used to promote the greater inclusion of fathers by statutory services.

5. The future work of the Cross Party Group

- areas for consideration – guidance on the exercise of Parental Responsibility, compulsory joint birth registration, capturing data about the engagement of fathers by services funded by Welsh Government. Work to identify & counter Parental Alienation
- research projects to be considered – best practice in engaging fathers to be identified
- links with All Party Parliamentary Group on Fatherhood – connection to be made with the APPG through their secretariat provided by the charity Working with Men.
- Consideration to be given to identifying potential guest speakers for future meetings of the CPG – potentially from Fathers Network Scotland who have achieved great success with the Year of the Dad 2016

The CPG noted with sadness the death of David Drysdale the founder of Fathers Network Scotland. David was an inspirational figure who contributed much to the advancement of the positive involvement of fathers in the lives of their children. He will be greatly missed

The meeting closed at 12.50pm

Date of future meeting to be discussed by the members and circulated asap

I confirm these are an accurate minute of the meeting of the CPG

Mark Isherwood AM