



Minutes / Cofnodion
Cross Party Autism Group / Grŵp Trawsbleidiol Awtistiaeth
June 20 Mehefin 2018
National Assembly for Wales / Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

1 WELCOME / CROESO

Group Chair, Mark Isherwood AM, welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was also attended by Bethan Sayed AM, Hefin David AM, Mike Hedges AM, Lee Waters AM and David Rees AM.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING / COFNODION A MATERION YN CODI

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate account of the previous meeting.

3 UPDATE FROM THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES / DIWEDDARIAD GAN YSGRIFENNYDD Y CABINET DROS IECHYD A GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL.

The Cabinet Secretary outlined the progress the Welsh Government has made in implementing its refreshed ASD Strategic Action Plan, which was published in 2016. Whilst recognising that there will be families who don't currently feel supported, he said that we have come some way since the first strategy was published in 2008.

The Cabinet Secretary provided an update on the development of the Integrated Autism Service, the Learning with Autism Programme, assessment waiting time targets and the Additional Learning Needs Act. Whilst not persuaded by calls for specific autism legislation, the Welsh Government will issue a Code of Practice to reinforce existing rights and entitlements of autistic people in Wales.

The Cabinet Secretary addressed a range of questions from members, including those in relation to:

- accessible transport and the number of companions required to ensure travel safety, especially within the rail network;
- a lack of communication and inconsistency in terms of the professionals attending key meetings;
- access to further education post 16 and flexibility of choice;
- the Welsh Independent Living Grant and inconsistencies in its distribution by LAs in Wales;
- better understanding of autism by professionals within the criminal justice system; and
- an innovative proposal for an alert device for use by members of the emergency services attending an incident involving autistic people (and, potentially, any other condition also), which would be produced by a social enterprise employing people with special educational needs.

The Cabinet Secretary asked the group to provide him and his officials with these concerns in writing so he could seek to address them, along with colleagues across Government, and monitor progress. The group agreed to write to his officials following the meeting to raise the issues discussed.

The All Wales Forum and Shared Lives Cymru also raised work being undertaken to better support those with autism or a learning disability who develop further health conditions, such as dementia, as they get older. The Cabinet Secretary suggested those involved with this project liaise with the relevant officials across government as it develops.

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS / UNRHYW FATER ARALL

There was no further business raised.

5 ACTIONS / CAMAU GWEITHREDU

The group will write to the Cabinet Secretary's officials outlining the issues raised during the meeting.

The next meeting of the Cross Party Autism Group is to be held in North Wales in September. The next meeting in Cardiff will be 5 December 2018 at the Pierhead building.