

Final Version

Disability Equality Scotland

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday 23 January 2019 at 10.00am

Spinal Injuries Scotland

Fullarton Court, Unit C

11 Drumhead Place, Glasgow G32 8EY



**Disability
Equality
Scotland**

Attending:	Linda Bamford (LB)	Convener
	Dorothy McKinney (DMK)	Vice Convenor
	Susan Fulton (SF)	Director
	Janis MacDonald (JM)	Director
Skype:	Scott Stewart (SS)	Director
	Morven Brooks (MBr)	Chief Executive Officer
	Emma Scott (ES)	Equalities Projects Manager
	Ian Buchanan (IB)	Access Engagement Officer
Minutes:	Maeve Bain (MBn)	Senior Administrator

Item 1 Welcome and Apologies

LB welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received, in advance, from Colin Miller, Carolyn Griffiths, Steven McGhee, Kenny Milne and Maureen Morrison.

LB stated that there had been an open invitation for all members of staff to attend the Board Meetings, apart from Closed Sessions and she confirmed that there would be a closed Board session, between 11.30 and 12.00 noon, today.

LB stated that all papers had gone out in time and asked those present if they felt they had enough time and enough information within the papers to allow them to make decisions that would be required today.

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All Directors confirmed they had.

LB then asked everyone to let her know if any issues or decision required more time or debate as they progressed with the agenda and before decision making.

Item 2 Agreement of Minutes from last meeting

Although the last minutes had been previously, electronically, agreed, DMK mentioned the Code of Conduct on page seven. She asked if there was a working Code of Conduct for the Access Panels and IB stated that there was, however, it was no longer fit for purpose and a revised, fresh Code was under consultation. After a discussion it was agreed that IB would include this topic in an Access Panel Survey, to go out to all Panels. IB stated he would send an amended and refreshed Code of Conduct to the Board for review. Action IB.

It was agreed the previous minutes would be amended with “It was confirmed that a Code of Conduct has been in place since 2015, however the Code of Conduct is required to be revised with Access Panels. This will be taken forward in consultation with Access Panels through the Access Panel Survey.”
Action MB

Proposer of minutes SS
Secunder of minutes DMK

Item 3 Agreement on what we want to achieve from today’s meeting

1. Sign off outstanding actions from the October 2018 meeting
2. Cover areas of Governance to support and protect the future of the organisation. This would be covered within the CEO report, under agenda item 7 and with board briefing paper 1.
3. Finish on time

Item 4 Outstanding Actions for sign off by CEO and Board

Action 1. MBR stated the arrangements for the Access Panel Conference were progressing, with the theme being “Improving sustainability and local engagement”.

Monica Lennon MSP has agreed to sponsor the “Parley at the Parly” event on 14 March 2019, arrangements for which were well under way. This event would offer a good opportunity for Panels to engage with Ministers and for DES to get across the importance of sustainable funding for the Panels, including for their growth and development. IB stated that two members per Panel could attend and Panels were requested to present any questions to Ministers in advance, to help streamline the event. IB added it would be a good idea to arrange a tour of the Parliament buildings for the Panels, on the day.

The Board asked IB if he could look into this and if possible, arrange the tour. Action IB.

MBr added that a further event is planned on two way communications with Access Panels in May 2019, dependent on continued funding.

Action 2 MBr stated that she was currently revising the Communications Strategy and LB asked if a draft could be submitted to the Strategic Sub Committee by 31 January 2019.

Action 3 Complete

Action 4 Complete

Item 5 Approval of New Members

18 Individual and three Corporate members were approved by the Board.

Item 6 CEO’s Update

1. Operational Activities

MBr tabled her report, which was followed by questions from the Board.

LB asked how often DES should engage with Ministers and, after discussion, it was agreed that six monthly pro-active updates would suffice, keeping us on their radar.

MBr explained the previous induction methods adopted by DES and asked if any Directors felt they would benefit from a further session. SF said she would appreciate an induction session, as she had joined after the last session, delivered by the CTSI. MBr stated she would contact the CTSI to organise this and she would also arrange for SF to meet the staff via Skype, to discuss their job roles.

MBr stated that she would create a monthly update/ newsletter on Governance and emerging issues and would include links to new, relevant information. This would only be a one page update with the intention of keeping people informed including between Board meetings. It was agreed that this would be useful, and the Board thanked MBr and welcomed this suggestion.

MBr related that we were still waiting to hear from the Cabinet Secretary about our funding from Section 10 and this was causing some anxiety with staff. MBr and SS suggested that we write an open letter to the Secretary stating how important continued funding is to our organisation and to the Access Panel Network. The Board agreed.

Equality Project Manager's Report

The following questions and issues, emerging from the content of the report, were discussed.

LB asked that an invitation be extended to Hilary Stubbs, MACS Vice Convener and Lead for Ferries and Airports Workstream, to the Accessible Travel Event in February, as the focus was airports, passenger assistance and air travel.

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LB congratulated ES on getting a mention from the Transport Minister via Social Media, on the launch of the Disability Safety Hub. ES stated that the Minister will be invited to Parley at the Parly event in March.

Safety Hub - LB enquired whether the Disability Safety Hub had been tested for visual accessibility. ES confirmed that it had, by Equality Projects Assistant, JD.

ES stated that JD had chosen Inclusive Communication as the theme for the next Open Door, whilst promoting the Inclusive Communication Hub. As Inclusive Communication is so important, underpinning every aspect, LB suggested compiling a Hints and Tips paper to send to Scottish Ministers, Parliamentary Committees and stakeholders, to make things easier for them and to keep the topic on their agenda and start using inclusive communication styles to benefit everyone. Action: MBr will take this forward.

Access Engagement Officer's Report

The following questions and issues, emerging from the content of the report, were discussed.

IB related to the Board that the new hospital being built on Skye had taken on board a lot of information regarding accessibility in the construction and layout of the building. Guidance had been offered by the Skye and Lochalsh Panel.

IB stated that he would invite Badenoch and Strathspey Access Panel to complete a mini walk-through of the new building.

It was mentioned that Disabled Go had changed their name to AccessAble.

JMD related that Glasgow Access Panel were planning an access walk-through in Glasgow Museum and intended to request money for a Go Pro Camera, from the APG fund. She added that Kelvingrove Art Gallery was also on their radar for a walk-through.

SF advised that Access Panels were not NRAC (National Register of Access Consultants) qualified and as such, should not carry out audits due to the potential legal situation Panels could find themselves in. They can only carry out access walk-throughs as a person with lived experience of disability.

A discussion ensued on seeking funding to provide NRAC training for Panels and IB suggested adding a question on this topic to the Access Panel Survey, which would be going to all Access Panels, shortly. The Board agreed that this was a good way forward re-capturing Access Panels' thoughts on training via the survey. Action IB.

SF agreed to circulate a full list of NRAC qualified people in Scotland.

A further discussion ensued on the strategic way forward for the Access Panels and it was agreed that this discussion would be taken forward in April 2019, once we have evaluated the Access Panel survey and if continued funding has been received from Section 10.

It was noted that the IIA Project Worker, AMM, had received positive feedback from the focus groups she had organised on Investing in Access.

2. **Board Annual Calendar of Activities** LB stated that DES are on track with all areas of governance and related activities for the coming year. LB and DMK confirmed that the Corporate and Finance and Risk Management sub committees have joined together to become the Strategy Sub Committee.
3. **Reflective Learning Log** The Board welcomed and discussed the reflective learning log including the value of documents being proof read by a third party before they leave the office.
4. **Finance** LB confirmed that the expenditure had been well controlled and DES were now in a more stable position financially in terms of running costs against allocations but again confirmed that sustainability was an on-going high risk given the funding methods.

The immediate priority for the coming year was to advertise our easy read service, to attract more income.

It was noted that RBS had recently become a sponsor, which was a great achievement and hopefully could open up other opportunities for sponsorship.

Transport Scotland had agreed to work with DES on the next funding round, which was encouraging news.

5. **People** MB related that everything was satisfactory with reviews and weekly team briefs ongoing.

6. **Risk Management** LB and MBr confirmed that a full review of the organisational risks had been undertaken in Jan 2019 with the following risk movements.

Finance risk had increased from 10 to 15 due to the unknown future of the Section 10 funding. This increase was in the likelihood of the risk as the impact was already agreed as high (5).

People risk had gone down from 10 to 5. Morven stated she would include in the reviews how her working remotely affected each member of staff and she had agreed a simple measure with LB during her interim appraisal.

Sickness absence had gone down from 12 to 6, due to upskilling and cross skilling staff with a view to carrying on the work while a staff member was absent.

The overall risk to the organisation being maintained at 7, which is a medium score. It was noted again that the main risk to the organisation remained finance, in terms of how DES was funded from the Scottish Government.

All amendments to the Risk Log were approved by the Board.

7. **Challenges for the next quarter**

- Securing existing funding streams

- Seeking funding opportunities
 - DEAL Training
 - Easy Read support / staffing
 - Section 10 (Access Panel Network support)
- Managing roles and support with staff
- Developing new partnerships (MSPs, Ministers, Youth Access Panel and Councillors) – meetings scheduled

LB asked if there were any questions. No questions were raised.

8. Priorities for the next quarter

- Securing existing funding streams
- Seeking funding / partnership opportunities relating to DEAL training (Section 10 to be announced shortly)
- Prepare Transport Scotland Business Plan for 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
- Monitor and review communications
- Approval of Communications Strategy, implementation with staff
- Parley at Parley event at Scottish Parliament
- Access Panel annual survey
- Strategic planning review meeting

LB asked if there were any questions. No questions were raised.

Item 7 Flexible Working Policy

LB confirmed that everyone had had time to read the previously circulated paper and asked if there were any questions. DMK advised that the Flexible Working Policy had been updated to include Homeworking and that she was content that it covered best practice. Policy agreed.

DMK noted that no amendments were required to the CEO's trial period of working from home as a result of this policy being agreed and stated that a formal letter would be sent to MBr, confirming her trial working from home. CG suggested that Appendix 10: Data Protection, is updated to reflect current changes in legislation relating to GDPR. MBr will take this forward as an action and agreed to send to full Strategy Sub Committee for final approval.

Item 8 Sub Committees

Previously discussed under Board Annual Calendar of Activities

Item 9 Confirmation of Today's Actions

1. Access Panel Survey to include a question to seek feedback on the Code of Conduct for Access Panels (IB)
2. Enquire about the possibility of a tour of the Parliament building for Access Panels attending Parley at the Parly (IB)
3. Send a copy of the Communications Strategy to the Corporate Sub Committee by 31st January 2019 (MBr)
4. Create a one page hints and tips guide to inclusive communication, to be sent to Scottish Ministers, Parliamentary Committees and stakeholders (MBr)
5. Arrange a Directors' Induction for new Directors with CTSI (MBr)
6. Request an update from Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel on their involvement with the new hospital build (IB)
7. Prepare a paper on new wording for the "access walkthroughs" being conducted by Access Panel members in the absence of NRAC qualifications. Wording to be addressed in the Access Survey (IB & SF)
Send open letter regarding Section 10 funding, to the Cabinet Secretary (MBr & SS)
8. Prepare a formal letter to MBr regarding her working from home status (DMK)
9. Sub group chairs to provide dates for first sub group meetings to MBr after MBr confirms 2019-20 Board meeting dates, times and venue (MBr and Leads of sub-committees)

Item 10 AOB

SS gave a brief overview of the meeting he and DMK had had with Deaf Scotland. He said it had been very positive and that he would keep the Board informed on further progress.

Item 11 Closed Session

Item 12 Close

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Minutes reviewed and agreed: 30 April 2019

Proposed: DMK

Seconded: JMD

Signed:

A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to read "Linda Bamford", is displayed on a light grey rectangular background.

Linda Bamford, Convenor