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Disability Equality Scotland
Annual General Meeting 2020



Minute: 25 August 2021, 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Virtual AGM, Via Zoom.

Attendee list can be found in Appendix 1.

1. Welcome

MB, Chief Executive Officer, welcomed everyone and confirmed that there were 48 delegates in attendance (of which there were 8 Directors, 5 Staff and 4 interpreters and captioners) and more than 15 were voting members. MB declared the meeting to be quorate.

MB introduced the Convener, LB and Treasurer, CM and indicated that the remainder of the Directors would join on screen for the Questions and Answers (Q&A) session later in the agenda.

MB gave thanks to Susan Fulton who is completing her term as Director after today's meeting and thanked Janis McDonald who stepped down as Director from the Board during this year.

MB ran through the ways that attendees could interact during the session through the chat and Question and Answers (Q&A) functions. Closed captioning and BSL interpretation were also available and explained.

MB explained that voting members should have a link to allow voting on all resolutions. MB instructed voting members to open this link to complete the initial details.

LB, Convener, introduced herself and thanked the members, staff team, Board of Directors and Access Panels for pulling together and working hard during the pandemic. LB acknowledged Disability Equality Scotland for offering guidance and support during this time.

LB gave specific thanks to the members for responding to the Weekly Polls, through which Disability Equality Scotland has been able to stay

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connected to its membership and use these experiences to relay concerns and suggestions to Scottish Ministers, policy makers and service providers helping to reduce inequalities.

2. Morven Brooks, Approval of AGM Minutes: 25 August 2020

MB confirmed that all delegates should have received a copy of the draft minutes from the AGM held on 25 August 2020. Voting members were asked to vote to approve **Resolution 1** the minutes from 25 August 2020.

- Proposer: Scott Stewart
- Seconder: Colin Millar

MB checked whether there were any matters arising. There were none.

3. Morven Brooks, Presentation of the Annual Report 2020-2021

MB welcomed everyone again to the AGM celebrating the achievements Disability Equality Scotland in 2020/2021. MB reported that it had been a particularly successful year for Disability Equality Scotland. The organisation has dealt with the pressures of COVID-19, by ensuring that it acted on the views of its members. The clearest example of this was the harrowing stories of confrontation and abuse felt by disabled people when exempt from wearing a face covering. Disability Equality Scotland used this evidence to work with the Scottish Government to administer the National Face Covering Exemption Card since October 2020.

MB talked through the organisation's main achievements for 2020-2021. These included:

- Increased the membership by 62% from the previous year, bringing our membership to over 1200 members.
- Distributing key public health information to our members about the response to COVID-19 via monthly newsletters and quarterly magazines.
- Administering Scottish Government's Face Covering Exemptions Card. As of 31 March 2020, we supplied over 61,000 physical

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exemption cards and over 40,000 digital versions. We have also answered over 2,700 calls to the helpline since it opened.

- Engaged with Disabled People and Disability Organisations through webinars. During the period April 2020 to March 2021, we delivered six Disability Webinars across the following topics: Thistle Assistance Card, Spaces for People, Face Covering Exemptions, Return to Public Transport, 20-Minute Neighbourhoods and a Disability Hustings event.
- Increasing resources and raising awareness of our Inclusive Communication Hub. We have utilised the Hub as a platform to stress the importance of ensuring key public health messages about the COVID-19 pandemic are shared in a variety of accessible formats.
- Providing our Easy Read Service, which makes information more accessible. The service steadily received an increase in requests providing the organisation a stable income. During this year we have worked on 52 Easy Read projects providing Easy Read translations for Scottish Government directorates, the Scottish Government Public Appointments Team and for other partners.
- Gathering the views from members on 52 topical weekly poll questions. Our weekly poll summary reports contributed to Equality Impact Assessments and influenced Scottish Government policy and guidance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Adapting content on the Disability Safety Hub in response to COVID-19 to reflect guidance and resources produced to provide support to people during the pandemic. We developed our own mental wellbeing guide, which signposts to relevant resources, including the SAMH 'Mental Health Information Hub'. We also developed a new resource category that is dedicated to scam awareness in response to the increase in scam related crime during the pandemic.
- Increasing the views of the Accessible Travel Hub to just short of 100,000 page views. This increase was mostly due to the valuable information we shared about changes to public transport during the

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pandemic, including resources relating to the exemption card campaign.

- Bringing together disabled people with transport providers and key decision makers to discuss experiences of public transport in different regions around Scotland. We held five events in the reporting period.
- Launching a Hate Crime Charter for Public Transport on 24 March 2021. On the day of launch, the materials shared via Disability Equality Scotland social media channels (Facebook and Twitter) reached 56,000 people. When taking into consideration the social media activity of partner organisations, it is estimated that the campaign materials received an organic reach of over 300,000 individuals. The campaign received recognition from Scottish Ministers.
- Continuing to add resources and promote our Inclusive Design Hub highlighting best practice in inclusive design for planners, developers, architects and building professionals in Scotland.
- And we have continued to support the current active 35 Access Panels, which operate across Scotland. Covid resilience has been the theme throughout this reporting year. Access Panels have responded well to new ways of working and have had to adapt to using Zoom to ensure accessibility remains front and centre with all the new adjustments being made.

MB stated that the last year has strengthened the purpose of Disability Equality Scotland and we have worked to reach more disabled people than ever, creating a greater impact, and driving change on behalf of our members.

MB concluded by announcing the launch of our annual Member's Survey, details of which would be emailed to all members after the AGM concludes.

4. Colin Millar, Treasurer's Report

CM stated that the financial performance to the year end 31 March 2021 had been positive. There has been an increase in income over

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expenditure of £30,983, compared to the previous year of £1,300. This was due to the increase in our Easy Read translation service, and the additional funding received to administer the Face Covering Exemption Card Campaign.

The year ended with a balance of £81,058 (compared to £50,075 for the previous year).

Income receipts for the year totalled £371,206 – this changed from the previous year (£288,340).

The organisations income is generally healthy.

Expenditure for the year totalled £340,223, well within budget of restricted funding received.

CM reported that trustees considered that three months of annual expenditure was an appropriate level of reserves to hold to meet the day to day running costs of the charity. The total funds held at the end of the financial year was £81,058 (2020: £50,075) of which £45,159 (2020: £18,202) is unrestricted reserves. The trustees continue to seek funding to assist in increasing the reserves to the appropriate level.

CM noted that whilst the current unrestricted fund level is below the reserve we would want, it is our priority for the coming year to increase our fundraising activities and income opportunities. We are currently developing a Fundraising Strategy to ensure we meet our target.

CM confirmed that these accounts were approved and adopted by the board of directors on 28 July 2021.

Voting members were asked to vote on **Resolution 2** to approve the report of trustees and audited accounts for the year. The vote was approved.

5. Colin Millar, Review of Fees and Subscriptions payable by members

CM confirmed the fees and subscriptions would remain unchanged for the following year.

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Voting members were asked to vote to on **Resolution 3** approve the fees and subscriptions. This vote was approved.

6. Colin Millar, Appointing External Examiners

CM reported that the appointed Community Accountancy Scotland would continue their services for 2021/2022.

Voting members were asked to vote on **Resolution 4** to delegate to the Board the re-appointment of Independent Examiners (Community Accountancy Scotland). This vote was approved.

7. Morven Brooks, Election of Board Directors

MB explained the voting process. Each voting member had been provided with a link to an online voting form and received biographies for each Director standing for re-election.

MB confirmed that fifteen proxy votes had been received in advance.

MB stated that resolutions are proposed as an ordinary resolution. For these resolutions to be passed, more than 50 percent of the votes cast must be in favour of the resolution.

MB explained that the Company's Articles of Association (Article 31b) contained detailed rules for the appointment and retirement of Directors. There is a formal procedure in place to select and appoint new Directors to the Board. These Directors are required to retire at this Annual General Meeting dated today. They can offer themselves for re-election by members. Under the Articles, all Directors are required to submit themselves for re-election at intervals not exceeding three years.

MB talked attendees through the voting process to re-elect the following Directors:

- **Resolution 5** To elect as a director of the Company Ms. Lauren Asher (co-opted on 15 October 2020)
- **Resolution 6** To elect as a director of the Company Ms. Rhianne Forrest (co-opted on 15 October 2020)

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- **Resolution 7** To re-elect as a director of the Company Ms. Carolyn Wilson-Smith
- **Resolution 8** To re-elect as a director of the Company Mr. Colin Millar
- **Resolution 9** To re-elect as a director of the Company Mr. Kenny Milne
- **Resolution 10** To re-elect as a director of the Company Ms. Maureen Morrison
- **Resolution 11** To re-elect as a director of the Company Mr. Scott Stewart

Voting Results

The meeting paused for a comfort break, to gather votes and accommodate the BSL interpreters and Captioner present.

Following the comfort break, MB confirmed that:

- Ms. Lauren Asher has been elected as director receiving more than 50% of votes
- Ms. Rhianne Forrest has been elected as director receiving more than 50% of votes
- Ms. Carolyn Wilson-Smith has been re-elected as director receiving more than 50% of votes
- Mr. Colin Millar has been re-elected as director receiving more than 50% of votes
- Mr. Kenny Milne has been re-elected as director receiving more than 50% of votes
- Ms. Maureen Morrison has been re-elected as director receiving more than 50% of votes
- Mr. Scott Stewart has been re-elected as director receiving more than 50% of votes

8. Members Questions and Suggestions

Time was set aside for member's questions and suggestions. All Board Directors present now joined the Panel for the discussion and introduced themselves. This included:

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Linda Bamford, Convenor: Linda was appointed as Director on 14 November 2016 and is now in her second term. Linda has a passion for equality and doing the right thing and strives through her work and volunteering to bring about transformational changes that will assist everyone to lead their lives as they choose.

Dorothy McKinney, Vice Convenor: Dorothy was appointed as Director on 20 March 2017 and is now in her second term. Dorothy has over 35 years' experience in Human Resources, is a trained and experienced Mediator, she has Fellowship of the CIPD and a passion for 'Doing the Right Thing'.

Colin Millar, Treasurer: Colin was appointed as Director on 4 May 2018, currently served one full term. Colin is currently the Chief Executive Officer (Executive Director) of the Scottish Personal Assistant Employers Network (SPAEN). With lived experience Colin seeks to support others to live full, active, and inclusive lives and fulfil their potential and ability.

Maureen Morrison, Director: Maureen was appointed as Director on 4 December 2017, currently served one full term. Maureen is passionate about the mission of Disability Equality Scotland, driven by her 'lived experience' of issues effecting disabled people both visible and hidden.

Scott Stewart, Director: Scott was appointed as Director on 5 December 2017, currently served one full term. As manager for Disability Information Scotland, an organisation supporting disabled people, Scott is aware of the challenges experienced by disabled people, their families and carers and constantly strives to break down the barriers that hinder the opportunities of disabled people in our society.

Carolyn Wilson-Smith, Director: Carolyn was appointed as Director on 4 May 2018, currently served one full term. Carolyn's areas of expertise include human resource development, organisational development, project management, consultation, and engagement.

Kenny Milne, Director: Kenny was appointed as Director on 17 May 2018, currently served one full term. Kenny empathises with others who

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are faced with the same difficulties of becoming disabled in later life. He also brings his managerial experience to the organisation.

Lauren Asher, Co-opted Director: Lauren was co-opted as Director on 15 October 2020. Lauren is a full-time Youth Worker based in Dumfries and Galloway. Diagnosed with Asperger's and mental health conditions, Lauren is a passionate advocate for equality and inclusion.

Rhianne Forrest, Co-opted Director: Rhianne was co-opted as Director on 15 October 2020. Rhianne is a Creative Writing, Journalism and English literature Graduate. She has worked on projects such as Thistle Assistance and more. Rhianne submitted her apologies for today's AGM.

Attendees were then able to submit their questions to the panel through the chat function on Zoom.

MB addressed some comments in the chat function that suggested the AGM was not as accessible as it could be and that some members did not receive paperwork in advance. MB reiterated that this year's format was the same as the 2020 AGM but that the team would take away comments on accessibility as reflective learning. MB reiterated that papers were sent out in advance to all members who had requested them and reminded members to update their communication preferences with the team.

There were specific questions from members relating to information on Access Panels. MB referred members directly to IB or AB for information on panels.

LB thanked the members for their contributions to the weekly polls, which Disability Equality Scotland have taken to policy teams and used as examples of lived experience, which has informed policy and planning out of lockdown.

MB addressed a series of questions from one member about social care service support with input from CM on personal assistants. MB confirmed Disability Equality Scotland has been involved in discussions on this topic and asked CM for clarification on a point in relation to

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whether disabled people's human rights or personal data have been breached by claiming the £500 payment from the Scottish Government. CM confirmed that when taking on a PA disabled people take on the role of employer and are expected to verify, they are employing someone in a social care capacity.

There were some suggestions from members about potential weekly poll questions, which MB acknowledged. MB also reassured members that all weekly poll questions remain open and can be revisited by members via the www.yoursayondisability.scot website.

Thank You and Close

MB thanked the members for attending the AGM and asked attendees to complete a short evaluation survey to give feedback on the meeting.

Close

List of Attendees attached in Appendix 1.

Full results of voting received on resolutions in Appendix 2.

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Appendix 1: Attendee List

Andy Stuart, Individual Member
Bernhard Anderson, Barra Access Panel
Bobby Park, Glasgow Access Panel
Caroline Gould, Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel
Chris Colebrook, Individual Member
David Gallant, Individual Member
Deirdre Aiken, Individual Member
Frank Drummond, Tweeddale Access Panel
Grace Clements, Individual Member
Hilary Stubbs, MACS
Jacki Aston, Individual Member
Jamie Smith, West Dunbartonshire Access Panel
Jim Tolmie, Oban Access Panel
John Ballantine, Edinburgh Access Panel
John Callander, Aberdeenshire South Access Panel
Ken Johnston, Oban Access Panel
Kirstie Black, Central Aberdeenshire Access Panel
Lynne Buchan, Individual Member
Mel Todd, Centre for Inclusive Living Perth & Kinross
Mike Harrison, Midlothian Access Panel
Paula McGuire, Individual Member
Peter Joyce, North Ayrshire Access Panel
Philip Gerrard, Individual Member
Rosemary (No full name provided)
Robert Dick, Stirling Access Panel
Stephanie Bain, Individual Member
Tracey Clark, Individual Member

Morven Brooks (MB), Chief Executive Officer, Staff
Emma Scott (ES), Operations Manager, Staff
Ian Buchanan (IB), Access, Training and Engagement Manager, Staff
James Davidson, (JD) Communications and Research Coordinator, Staff
Alistair Bruce, (AB) Events, Training and Membership Administrator,
Staff
Lucy Gibbons, (LG) Easy Read Trainer, Staff

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Linda Bamford (LB), Disability Equality Scotland, Convener
Dorothy McKinney (DMcK), Disability Equality Scotland, Vice Convener
Colin Millar (CM), Disability Equality Scotland, Treasurer
Carolyn Wilson Smith (CWS), Disability Equality Scotland, Director
Susan Fulton (SF), Disability Equality Scotland, Director
Kenny Milne (KM), Disability Equality Scotland, Director
Scott Stewart (SS), Disability Equality Scotland, Director
Maureen Morrison (MM), Disability Equality Scotland, Director
Lauren Asher (LA), Disability Equality Scotland, Director

Elizabeth Mooney, Sign Language Interactions, BSL Interpreter
Niamh Cochrane, Sign Language Interactions, BSL Interpreter
Gail Richardson, Closed Captioner
Paula McGuire, Closed Captioner

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Appendix 2: Full Voting Results

35 votes in total, 15 proxy ballots and 20 votes on the day.

Individual voting members: 28

Access Panel voting members: 7

Resolution 1: To agree the Minutes from Annual General Meeting held on 25 August 2020:

Agree: 91.18% (31 votes)

Disagree: 0.00% (0 votes)

Withheld: 8.82% (3 votes)

Resolution 2: To receive the Report of the Trustees and audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021:

Agree: 97.14% (34 votes)

Disagree: 0.00% (0 votes)

Withheld: 2.86%(1 votes)

Resolution 3: To approve Fees and Subscriptions payable by members (no change):

Agree: 97.14% (34 votes)

Disagree: 2.86% (1 votes)

Withheld: 0.00% (0 votes)

Resolution 4: To delegate to the board the re-appointment of Independent Examiners (Community Accountancy Scotland):

Agree: 97.06% (33 votes)

Disagree: 2.94% (1 votes)

Withheld: 0.00% (0 votes)

Resolution 5: To elect as a director of the Company Ms. Lauren Asher (Co-opted: 15 October 2020)

Agree: 97.14% (34 votes)

Disagree: 0.00% (0 votes)

Withheld: 2.86% (1 votes)

Resolution 6: To elect as a director of the Company Ms. Rhianne Forrest (Co-opted: 15 October 2020)

Agree: 91.43% (32 votes)

Disagree: 2.86% (1 votes)

Withheld: 5.71% (2 votes)

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Q11. Resolution 7: To re-elect as a director of the Company Ms. Carolyn Wilson-Smith (Co-opted 4 May 2018; Ratified 17 October 2018)

Agree: 100.00% (35 votes)
Disagree: 0.00% (0 votes)
Withheld: 0.00% (0 votes)

Resolution 8: To re-elect as a director of the Company Mr. Colin Millar (Co-opted 4 May 2018; Ratified 17 October 2018)

Agree: 91.43% (32 votes)
Disagree: 2.86% (1 votes)
Withheld: 5.71% (2 votes)

Resolution 9: To re-elect as a director of the Company Mr. Kenny Milne (Co-opted 17 May 2018; Ratified 17 October 2018)

Agree: 97.06% (33 votes)
Disagree: 2.94% (1 votes)
Withheld: 0.00% (0 votes)

Resolution 10: To re-elect as a director of the Company Ms. Maureen Morrison (Co-opted 4 December 2017; Ratified 17 October 2018)

Agree: 94.12% (32 votes)
Disagree: 5.88% (2 votes)
Withheld: 0.00% (0 votes)

Resolution 11: To re-elect as a director of the Company Mr. Scott Stewart (Co-opted 5 December 2017; Ratified 17 October 2018)

Agree: 96.97% (32 votes)
Disagree: 3.03% (1 votes)
Withheld: 0.00% (0 votes)