

## **Note of Meeting**

### **Independent Living Fund Scotland: Northern Ireland Stakeholder Group Meeting**

**Mencap Centre, 5 School Road, Newtownbreda, Belfast BT8 7BT**

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016: 11:00am - 2:00pm**

## **Present**

Charles Rainey – Chair

Niqi Rainey

Margaret Docherty

Robert Simpson

Marie Simpson

Richard Saale

Colette Jones

Christine Bartlett

Margaret Maloney

David Maloney

Dennis Curie

Rachel Curie

Fiona Curie

Kieran McCarthy

Valerie McCarthy

Jimmy Johnston

Ewan Macgregor

Anita Shannon

Elizabeth Gray

Fiona Coles (Mencap)

David Macdonald (in attendance from 11.15am)

## **Apologies**

Paul Kinnear

## **In Attendance**

Harvey Tilley  
Margaret Wheatley  
Holly Child  
Liz McGarrity

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Following introductions, Charles gave a brief overview of the aims and purpose of the stakeholder group for the new members who were attending this meeting for the first time. Charles asked if Holly could send out the terms of reference to the new members.

**Action: Holly to send terms of reference to new members of the group.**

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

It was agreed that the minutes from the last meeting were fine.

### **3. Matters Arising**

There was discussion amongst the group about why there had not yet been a commitment to re-open the Fund in Northern Ireland and concern regarding unspent monies and how this money is not, at present, recycled back into the fund in Northern Ireland.

Subsequently, the group decided that any further discussion on these areas must take place outside of this particular group and that members would need to establish another forum and sub group to speak to the Northern Irish Government about these areas directly.

**Action: Any members who want to be involved with the separate sub group please contact Charles directly.**

#### **4. Update ILF Scotland Available Income Policy**

Margaret explained that a proposal for a change to this policy had been submitted to the Scottish Government ILF Sponsor Team for the Minister to agree. However, they have subsequently come back and asked for further information, which Margaret will then provide before it going back to the Minister for final approval.

Margaret explained that whatever the Scottish Government and the Minister decide regarding this policy, ILF Scotland will also consult and speak with the Northern Ireland Sponsor Team to agree what the outcome will also be for Northern Ireland recipients.

The group asked what the timeline for a decision would be and whether any statistical information could be shared with the group. Margaret explained that we would be looking for a decision to be made by the Scottish Government Minister over the next few months and for any potential policy change to be implemented during 2017. However, again, she emphasised that there would be continual consultation with the Northern Ireland Sponsor Team regarding this policy for ILF recipients in Northern Ireland.

**Action: Harvey to have a conversation regarding the Available Income Policy proposal change with Northern Ireland Sponsor Team.**

**Action: Margaret to send statistics for any proposed change to the Available Income Policy to Charles.**

#### **5. Update on matters happening in Scotland, i.e. Scottish Living Wage, new fund and COSLA/ILF Scotland agreement.**

Margaret explained that the Scottish Government Minister had given approval to ILF Scotland to enable ILF recipients in Scotland who directly employ Personal Assistants to pay the Living Wage for every active (wakened) hour of daytime support. However, there has been no commitment from the Northern Ireland Government to enable this to happen for ILF recipients in Northern Ireland.

Harvey explained about the current progress of the new fund in Scotland and that there is one more meeting left before the final proposal is sent to the Scottish Government Minister for a final decision to be made.

Harvey explained that a joint statement had been published and agreed between the Convention of Local Authorities (COSLA) and ILF Scotland for a shared vision of independent living.

ILF Scotland have had discussions with the Northern Ireland Sponsor Team about producing a similar statement between ILF Scotland and the Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland. ILF Scotland are just awaiting feedback from the Northern Ireland Sponsor Team on how to progress this.

**Action: Holly to send the link to the report from the engagement events to all members.**

**Action: Harvey to feedback progress on this to the group at the next meeting.**

## **6. Update Employment Policy Review**

Margaret explained that a group has been established with a variety of stakeholders, ranging from ILF recipients to representatives from local authorities and payroll agencies to look specifically at reviewing the employment policy. It was explained that the group has had one meeting so far, but when more work has been completed this would be shared with the Stakeholder Group.

## **7. Update National Insurance, ILF Scotland Policy**

Margaret explained that for many Scottish ILF recipients, it was no longer necessary for ILF Scotland to pay this cost, but ILF Scotland recognises that for many (if not all) recipients in Northern Ireland that their packages work slightly differently and that any employment costs

are usually all tied up together in one hourly rate. It was also explained that, in most cases, this combined hourly rate is matched to the Health and Social Care Trust direct payment rate.

There were then concerns raised by the group with regards to the differing direct payment rates across each of the Health and Social Care Trusts and how this will impact on ILF recipients in Northern Ireland. It was agreed that Harvey would speak to Philomena from NICIL to discuss these concerns and what perhaps could be done moving forward.

**Action: Harvey to speak to Philomena from NICIL about the group's concerns and what can be done going forward.**

## **8. Any other business**

- How can recipients find out the scheduled date of assessment visits?

The group asked if there was a specific way for recipients to find out when their assessment visit would take place. Harvey explained that the best way to do this was to contact us directly and speak to our designated Northern Ireland Specialist Caseworker Gill Love and she would be able to sort this and answer any questions anyone had in relation to their assessment.

**Action: Holly to send all ILF Scotland contact details to all members to ensure that they have them.**

## **9. Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place at Mencap Centre, 5 School Road, Newtownbreda, Belfast BT8 7BT on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 from 11am – 2pm.