

Note of Meeting

ILF Scotland Advisory Group Meeting

Thursday 11 December, 11 am to 3 pm with Christmas Lunch
Radisson Blu Hotel, Glasgow

Present

Jim Elder-Woodward - Chairperson
Chris Mercer
Chloe and Gordon McKee
Stuart McCabe
Justina Oguguo
Joan Turner
Kate Walsh

ILF Scotland Staff

Peter Scott via Zoom
Lee House
Emma O'Neill via Zoom
Linda Scott
Jill Fotheringham
Karen Burnett via Zoom
Harvey Tilley
Senza Keswa (student placement at ILF Scotland)

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Apologies

Martha Shortreed

Not In Attendance

Nic Reid

Andy Higgins

Lors Robinson-Moseley

List of Actions:

1. Lee to send out details of the PA Research Project
2. ILF comms to circulate flyer via SM
3. Lee to send out details of the proposed meeting with the Minister once time and date have been confirmed
4. Linda to send out agenda and briefing for members
5. Lee to send out all meeting dates for 2026

1. Welcome and Introductions

Jim welcomed everyone to the meeting.

It was agreed that Lee would record the minutes.

All attendees introduced themselves and their role within the Group and ILF Scotland.

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved as accurate.

No further matters arose from the previous minutes.

Actions from Previous Meeting:

- Share Policy 41 Flexible Funding with Advisory Group (Lee) – Completed

3. Additions to Agenda

No additional agenda items were raised.

4. Matters Arising

Jill and Joan provided an update on the ongoing research into PA work being carried out by Glasgow University. Lisa, a PhD student leading the project, introduced her work to the PA Programme Board. The Group agreed that the research may be useful as linked to the PA recruitment and retention issue that prompted the ILF Scotland PA campaign and may feed into future improvements to this part of social care. The Group discussed options and agreed that Lisa should be invited to speak at the next Group meeting in March 2026. By then she should be in a position to share her interim research findings. In the meantime, Lee will circulate the flyer Lisa has produced along with confirmation of the course that Lisa is involved in. Individual Group members should feel free to contact Lisa if they would like to participate. ILF Scotland comms staff will circulate the flyer via social media.

Linda confirmed that the Minister was unable to attend today's meeting in person as originally intended. He offered to join for 30 minutes via Zoom but Jim decided to leave the meeting until the new year when the Group could meet purely to focus on the issues members wanted to discuss with the Minister. Two dates were suggested – 6 January in person and 20 January via zoom. Lee did a poll and 20 January is the preferred date for the majority of Group members who responded. Lee will circulate confirmed details and Zoom login information to all members.

Jim advised the Group to keep introductions brief during the Minister's session to allow maximum time for discussion. The meeting duration is 30 minutes. Linda will send out an agenda and briefing for members.

5. Review Visit Update

Linda confirmed that all review visits are up to date. However, issues raised at the last Group meeting continue to appear:

- Recruitment of PAs
- High provider costs
- Complex review processes

Peter asked if recipients had experienced any budget cuts from local authorities.

Stuart reported his package was signed off quickly for two years via a visit from an Occupational Therapist rather than a Social Worker.

Justina reported limited contact with her local authority, when her son was being discharged from hospital.

Joan shared that her Local Authority attempted to remove £5,000 from her DP account, which she successfully contested. She also expressed a desire for ILF Scotland to take over Local Authority responsibilities for all social care Direct Payments, Option 1.

6. Re-Opening of ILF Scotland Fund Update

Peter reported that the fund re-opening is progressing well. A programme of follow up calls to new recipients was underway and feedback from recipients has been positive, with many sharing stories of the significant impact on their lives.

The fund is meeting its objectives and is expected to reach 1,400 applicants by year-end. Peter noted that ILF Scotland is awaiting confirmation of the 2026 budget.

7. Policy Update

Linda provided an update on policy developments:

1. Co-Production Working Group policy progress

- Implementation of unpaid care element in the re-opened fund is complete
- Ongoing discussions on fund thresholds but existing £800 remains at present (£485 if significant unpaid care from live in carer)
- Plans for direct applications – as an interim measure, ILF Scotland has received funding from the Scottish Government’s Disability Equality Plan to fund a pilot to test applications supported and submitted to ILF Scotland from a DPO with ILF Scotland then verifying the information from local authorities before proceeding with the normal visit and assessment process. ILF Scotland have received five expressions of interest from DPOs. A decision will be made early January. The pilot will start in April 2026 and run for 12 months.
- Policy Team are currently looking at some policy alignment work between the re-opened fund and the existing (2015) fund regarding age range, reliance on disability related benefits, for example, DLA, and the capital threshold. Linda will share progress at next Advisory Group meeting.

2. Karen updated the Group on UNCRC work:

- 11 key areas underpinning the plan

- Engagement with young people aged 15 to 18, so far, will primarily relate to the Transition Fund but could also relate to new recipients of the re-opened fund.
- Collaboration with the Scottish Youth Parliament
- Child-friendly communications and training, including an e-module on child rights

Karen will share progress at the next Advisory Group meeting.

ILF Scotland is required to report on progress on meeting the UNCRC requirements for 2025 to 2026 and intends to do so in April 2026.

8. ILF Scotland Board Update

Linda confirmed that the Board and the Scottish Government have approved ILF Scotland's Strategic Plan 2025 to 2028, which is now published on the ILF Scotland website.

The Board also approved the Feedback Strategy and Service Charter. Emma is exploring additional feedback mechanisms for 2026 to 2027 and will involve Advisory Group members in this.

Two new Board appointments will be announced shortly: one from Northern Ireland and one from Scotland. A further member is being considered and if successful, should be able to support Transition Fund work.

9. Any Other Business

The agenda for the next Joint Advisory Group meeting was discussed, with PA recruitment and retention remaining a priority. Linda suggested that feedback mechanisms be covered at that meeting as well and

advised that the NI Advisory Group had asked for Award Management to also be discussed. The Group agreed.

Jim highlighted the importance of funding DPOs to support the re-opened fund.

Linda confirmed that Anne-Marie Monaghan will attend the next Scotland Advisory Group meeting in March 2026.

The Group expressed interest in arranging a meeting with the full ILF Scotland Board, which Linda suggested would be April at the earliest.

10. Future Meetings and Arrangements

The next meeting is proposed for mid-March 2026.

Lee will circulate all meeting dates and times before the new year.

The Group agreed to hold two in-person meetings and two online meetings in 2026, one in the summer and one at Christmas.