



Northern Ireland Stakeholder Group Meeting Minutes

3 September 2024



What this document is about



This is an Easy Read document.

It is a set of Minutes to say what happened at a meeting.

In this document the Independent Living Fund Scotland is ILF Scotland for short.



The meeting was at The Mount Conference Centre and on Zoom.



It was on 3 September from 11 in the morning to 3 in the afternoon.

Who was at the meeting?



David McDonald (Chairperson) on Zoom
Caroline Wheeler
Niqi Rainey
Robert Dallas

ILF Scotland Staff



Peter Scott

Harvey Tilley

Linda Scott

Lee House

Robert White on Zoom

Karen Burnett on Zoom

Who was not at the meeting?



Frances McHugh

Collette Jones

1. Welcome and introductions



David welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from the last meeting



The minutes were checked and agreed.

ILF Scotland's Communications Team will put them on the website.

Actions from the last meeting



- David will ask a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) to sponsor an event about reopening the Fund – this has been done



- Harvey will see how ILF Scotland can help – this is still happening

- Linda will ask for a National Minimum Wage increase for Independent Living Funding – this has been done



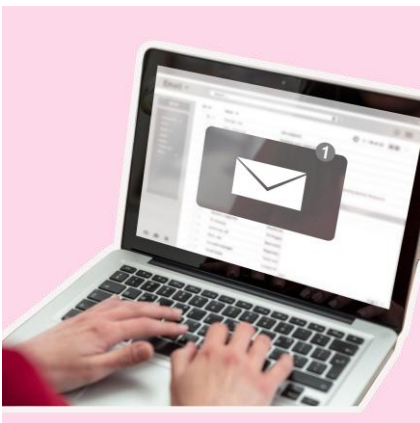
- Linda and Lee will arrange a meeting – this has been done



- Harvey will find out how the Group can become a Disabled Person's Organisation (DPO) – this has been done
- Linda will look at membership for **IMNI** Disability Forum – this has been done

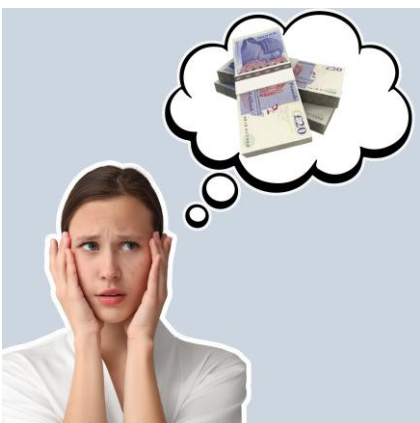
IMNI is the Independent Mechanism in Northern Ireland (IMNI).

It promotes and protects the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



- Lee will email Helen McLaughlin about membership – this has been done but she has not replied

3. What do we need to talk about?



Caroline is worried about:

- the delay in increasing the ILF hourly rate and how it affects Personal Assistants (PAs) on Universal Credit



- some payments are made every 4 weeks and some are made every month

Caroline asked for more information about Universal Credit.

Linda and Colin will ask an expert on Universal Credit to come to a meeting.

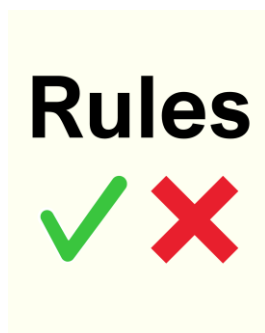


Niqi asked if the Stakeholder Group could become a DPO.

Harvey said they have discussed this but have not got legal advice yet.

Linda said the **Terms of Reference** would need to be changed if this happened.

Terms of Reference explain the work of an organisation and how it will be done.



Peter said the Group would need different rules to be a DPO and ILF Scotland would have to make changes first before this could happen.

Members agreed the Group will stay as it is for now.



Linda said our rules say the Group can send a representative to the Disability Forum of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism for Northern Ireland (IMMNI).

Members agreed to do this and David will look at how to make this happen.

4. Hourly rate increase



Linda said information has been sent to the Government in Northern Ireland about how the hourly rate for PAs should go up to follow National Minimum Wage increases.

Colin said a decision should be made later this month.



David said the increase should be done in April because doing it later in the year and backdating payments causes problems for PAs who get Universal Credit.

Peter will tell Colin about this.

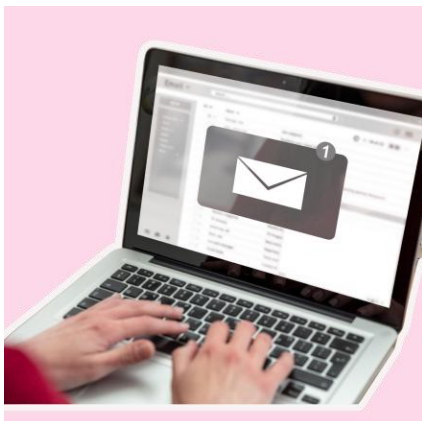
5. Policy update



Linda said:

- in Scotland the maximum award was changed to 3 hundred and 30 pounds a week
- the main work in Scotland had been about re-opening the Fund and making sure that applications are being completed quickly

6. Re-opening the 2015 Fund review



Colin and his team will send information this month to the new Minister, Mike Nesbitt, MLA about re-opening the Fund.

Deena sent 2 letters to the Minister about this and Colin will check for a reply.

7. Terms of reference



Members are worried that this group is small and there may not be enough people to make decisions.



Linda said the Group's Terms of Reference need 5 Permanent Members to be present for a **quorum**.

A **quorum** is the smallest number of people who must be at a meeting for it to take place.

Peter said the ILF Board Quorum is 3.



Members agreed to change the number for a quorum to 3.

Linda will send out changed Terms of Reference so that members can agree to the changes by email.

8. Name of group



Linda said in Scotland the Recipient Advisory Group changed its name to the ILF Scotland Advisory Group

This made it clear they were not giving advice to people who got ILF money.

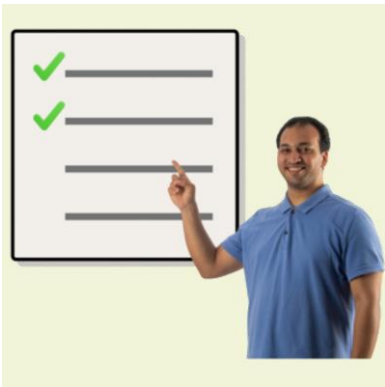
David suggested NI Advisory Group.
NI is short for Northern Ireland.



Niqi was worried that someone joining the Group would feel they had to give advice and that the Group name could put people off being members.

David said:

- it is wrong to call us stakeholders
- we are only advising ILF Scotland and local Government representatives
- the Advisory Group in Scotland had not found it difficult to use the name and more people became members



The Members agreed to change the name to ILF NI Advisory Group.

Linda will send out this change with the Terms of Reference changes.

9. Membership



Members agreed this had been talked about earlier.

10. Centre for Independent Living NI proposal



Deena Nimick is Campaigns and Policy Manager for the Centre for Independent Living Northern Ireland (CILNI).

The Chief Executive Officer of CILNI is Bryan Myles.

The Members thanked Bryan and Deena for their work with this Group.



Deena and Bryan cannot now be members of this Group.

David said we should find other ways to use Deena's and Bryan's experience, expertise and enthusiasm.

11. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson



Members agreed with Peter's idea that when emails are sent to the Group we include information about the roles and responsibilities of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

12. Christmas lunch arrangements



Lee will email Christmas lunch details soon.

13. Disabled people's Parliament

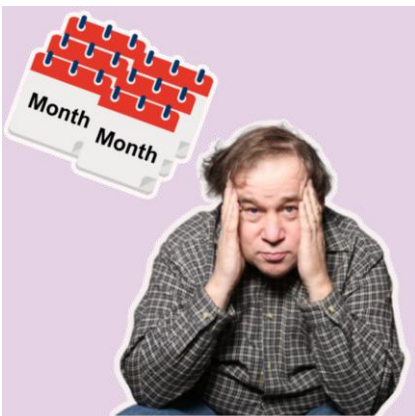


David asked if Members want to attend the Disabled People's Parliament.

Members are interested in attending as individuals or as members of the Group.

David will tell the Group what happens next and when the next meetings are.

13. Re-opening the 2015 Fund



David is worried that it is taking a long time to get the Department of Health to reopen the Fund in NI.

Scotland reopened its Fund nearly 9 months ago.

David said we should:



- invite the new Minister of Health, Mike Nesbitt MLA, to meet us to encourage him to reopen the Fund in NI
- have people who get ILF money at the meeting
- re-start the Working Group
- get support from the Health Committee



- organise an event at the Assembly about reopening the ILF and invite the new Minister of Health and other MLAs to join us at it
- invite MLAs to ask the Minister of Health questions about reopening



David has invited an MLA to sponsor the event at Stormont in December.

David said we should invite Jim Elder-Woodward and the Scotland Advisory Group to the event



Niqi said that someone who gets ILF Scotland money should make a video or come to the event to talk about the difference the money has made to them.

Linda said that restarting the Working Group should be discussed with Colin.

Members will do all these things.

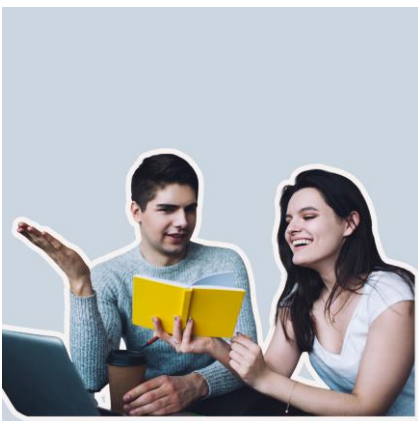
14. Promoting PAs



Caroline said PAs are Personal Care Assistants and we must recognise the difference between a carer and PA.

David said the most important work is the value of the work of PAs paid with ILF.

Emma will look at this.



Linda said that in the ILF Scotland Advisory Group:

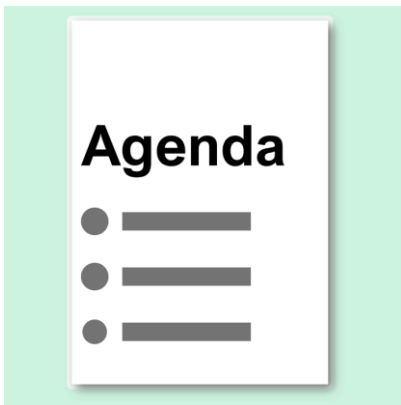
- they have done a case study on Joan Turner
- Chloe McKee is writing a blog with her PA



Caroline will meet online with people in NI to talk about this.

Members agreed this should be talked about at the next Joint Stakeholder Meeting in October.

15. Any other business – anything else we need to talk about?



Members will keep the re-opening of the Fund in NI on the agenda with more information about how many people have applied for money.

Linda will ask Peter and Harvey to do this.

Actions from today's meeting



1. Lee or Linda will write to Permanent Members who have not been at many group meetings to ask them to confirm that they do not want to be in the Group.

2. David will check that Kieran has stopped being Vice Chairperson.

3. Linda or Colin will ask an expert on Universal Credit to come to a meeting.

4. David will check on IMMNI membership.

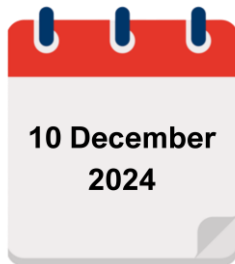
5. Linda will email members with information for members to check and agree about:



- the Terms of Reference
- the Group name change and Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, with their roles and responsibilities

6. Lee will email out Christmas Lunch arrangements.

16. Next meeting and arrangements



The next meeting will be on Tuesday 10 December with Xmas Lunch.

This is the end of the Minutes.

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