

# Cross Party Group on Learning Disability

March

19

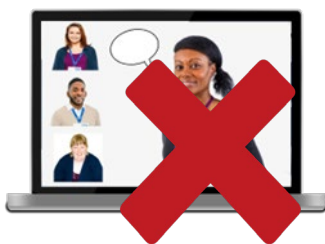
Notes from the 8th meeting on 19 March 2024. The meeting was on Zoom.



## People who came to the meeting

- **Sioned Williams MS** – Member of the Senedd, Chair
- **Sara Pickard** – Mencap Cymru, co-Secretary
- **Samatha Williams** – Learning Disability Wales, co-Secretary
- **Adrian Jones** – NWAAA
- **Alexandra Badwi** – hft
- **Amy Parsons** – Pobl
- **Bill Fawcett**
- **Bryony Dolby** – hft
- **Celia Watson** – NWAAA
- **Chris Davies** – Cardiff Council Adult Services
- **Darren Smith**
- **Emma Alcock** – Cwm Taf People First
- **Gaibhin McGranaghan** – United Response, My Vote My Voice
- **Georgia Miggins**
- **Gwen Anslow** – All Wales Forum

- **Helen Delargy** – Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- **Ishbel Hansen** – Swansea Parent Carer Forum
- **Ismail Kaji** – Mencap, My Vote My Voice
- **James Dash** – Pembrokeshire People First
- **Joe Powell** – All Wales People First
- **Josh Cripps**
- **Julia Hawkins** – hft
- **Julie Isaac-Evans** – TSW Training
- **Kai Jones** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Kate Young** – Mencap Cymru
- **Kathryn Symmons** – Swansea Council
- **Kelly Stuart** – All Wales People First
- **Louise Peck** – Your Voice Advocacy
- **Lucy Hinksman** – Pembrokeshire People First
- **Lucy O'Leary** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Marg McNiel** – SEE Around Britain
- **Mark Isherwood MS** – Member of the Senedd
- **Matthew Dix** – Mencap
- **Nicholas Davies** – Cardiff & Vale Parents Federation
- **Ramona Murray** – Conwy Council
- **Rhian Jones** – Drive
- **Richard Redmond** – Conwy Connect
- **Sion Jones** – Mencap Cymru
- **Tracey Drew** – All Wales People First
- **Tracy Thomas** – Pembrokeshire People First
- **VictoriaWaller** – Gig Buddies Cymru
- **Zoe Richards** – Learning Disability Wales



**People who said they could not come to the meeting**

- **Elisa Vigna** – NCMH

## About this document



This is an easy read version. The words and their meaning are easy to read and understand.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. They have been explained in a box below the word. You can see what all the words in **blue** mean on **pages 20-21**.

# 1. Welcome and introductions



Sioned Williams, Member of the Senedd and **Chair** of the Cross Party Group, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The **Chair** of the group is the person in charge of the meetings.

# 2. Annual General Meeting or AGM



Sara Pickard from Mencap Cymru explained that the next part of the meeting would be the **Annual General Meeting** or **AGM**.

An **Annual General Meeting** or **AGM** is a special meeting that a group, company or organisation must hold each year.

There are normally rules about what must happen during the meeting, like voting for new people or things.

### 3. Voting for the new co-Secretaries

The group had to vote to decide who would be the **co-Secretaries** for the next 12 months.



The **Secretary** is the person or organisation in charge of organising the group. For example, booking meetings and sending out agendas.

A **co-Secretary** is when more than 1 person shares the job of **Secretary**.



Sioned asked if anyone would like to be the **co-Secretaries** of the group for the next 12 months.



Sara Pickard from Mencap Cymru and Sam Williams from Learning Disability Wales said they would like to be **co-Secretaries** again.



The group voted for Sara and Sam to be the **co-Secretaries** for another 12 months.

## 4. Voting for the new Chair



Then Sara asked if any Members of the Senedd would like to **Chair** the group for the next 12 months.



Sioned Williams said she would like to **Chair** the group again.



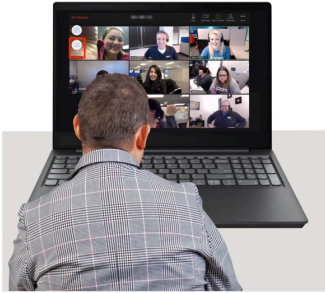
Mark Isherwood Member of the Senedd and other members of the group voted for Sioned to **Chair** the group for another 12 months.

## 5. Annual report



Sam Williams told the group that she would be sending the Cross Party Group's annual report to the Senedd after the meeting.

The annual report must say:



- How many meetings of the group have been held in the last 12 months
- Who came to the meetings
- What the meetings were about
- How much money the group has spent.



Sam will send the annual report to Sioned for checking before sending it to the Senedd. It will then be added to the Senedd website.

## 6. Presentation about the new rules on voter ID

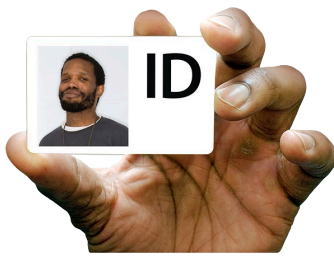


James Dash and Lucy Hinksman from **Pembrokeshire People First** talked about the new rules on showing ID when you vote in some elections.



They are worried that this might make it harder for people with a learning disability to vote.





Some people with a learning disability are very worried and anxious about having the right ID to vote.



It is difficult to find easy read information about the changes and what ID you need to vote.



Lucy said that people felt it was taking away their independence because they will need support to vote with ID.



Here are some of the things about voter ID that people with a learning disability are worried about:



- Who can see the information on my ID and what happens to the information?





- It takes away people's choice because not everyone has ID or wants to show it.



- Getting the right ID could cost a lot of money. For example, if you have to pay for a passport.



- What about **ID fraud**?

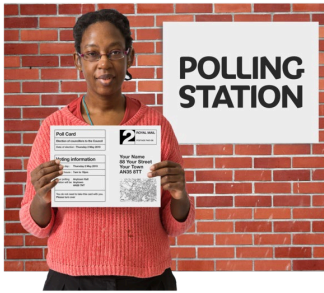
**ID fraud** is when someone uses your ID to pretend to be you and break the law. For example, to steal money or open an account in your name.



- How can I keep my ID and personal information safe?



James and Lucy also talked about some of the barriers to voting for people with a learning disability:



- Worries about what will happen when you get to the **polling station**.

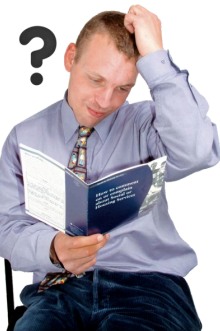
A **polling station** is a place where you go to vote in elections. It might be in a school, church hall or somewhere else in your local community.



- Problems with transport to get to the **polling station**.



- Accessibility of the **polling station**.



- Difficult to understand the information and voting papers.



- Too many people. For example, having to queue to get in or not enough space in the **polling station**.



- Difficult to remember the names of the **candidates** and the information about them.

**Candidates** are the people you can vote for in an election.



- Not having support to vote.

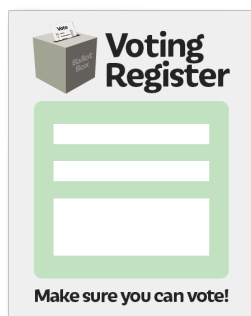
## 7. Presentation about My Vote, My Voice



Ismail Kaji and Gaibhin McGranaghan talked about the **My Vote My Voice** project.



The project is run by United Response, Dimensions UK, Mencap and Ambitious About Autism.



The project wants to help more people with a learning disability and autistic people register to vote in the next UK General Election.



The project aims to:



- Let everyone know that disabled people have the right to vote.



- Make voting more accessible for people with a learning disability and autistic people.



- Get more people with a learning disability and autistic people to vote.



- Get more disabled people into politics.



Ismail and Gaibhin talked about some of the barriers to voting that disabled people face:



- Information about elections like **manifestos** is not always in easy read. Or the easy read is not available until much later.

A **manifesto** is a list of things that a person or **political party** says they will do if they win the election.



A **political party** is a group of people with similar ideas about how to run the country.

In Wales the main political parties are Welsh Labour, Welsh Conservatives, Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Liberal Democrats.





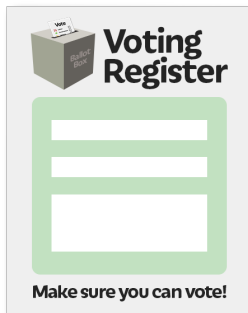
- **Polling stations** are not always accessible.



- People sometimes feel discriminated against when trying to vote at a **polling station**.



The My Vote My Voice project wants people and organisations to share accessible information about voting and people's rights.



They want to get lots of people with a learning disability and autistic people to register to vote in the next General Election.



They want people who work in **polling stations** to have training on how to work with people with a learning disability and autistic people.



They will collect information about what it was like for people with a learning disability to vote in the elections.



They will use the information to help make voting easier for people with a learning disability and autistic people in future.



You can find lots of accessible information about elections and voting on the My Vote My Voice website [www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk](http://www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk).



But not all the information is available in Welsh because the project does not have enough money to translate it all.



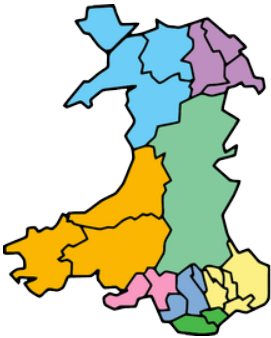
People and organisations can sign up to support My Vote My Voice on the website: <https://www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk/sign-up-to-the-my-vote-my-voice-charter/>.



## 8. Questions and ideas



After the presentations some people asked questions and shared their ideas.



Sioned Williams asked how many Welsh local councils had signed up to My Vote My Voice?



Gaibhin did not know exactly how many but thought that not many had yet.



Sioned said that the group could write to all the local councils in Wales to ask them to sign up to My Vote My Voice.



The letter could also ask if the people who work in polling stations have had training on working with people with a learning disability and autistic people.

Sioned also agreed to write to all the main **political parties** in Wales.



She will ask them to promise to send out easy read **manifestos** at the same time as their standard **manifestos** for the next Senedd elections.



Sioned also said that she would write to the Electoral Commission in Wales to ask them to help translate the easy read information about voting into Welsh.



Gwynedd self-advocacy group **Tea at 3** said that the easy read information about voting on the UK Government website is difficult to find and understand.



They also said that voting in elections can be confusing and difficult.

**Tick who you vote for**

Jo Pipkin Labour		<input type="checkbox"/>
Sangeeta Raja Lib Dem		<input type="checkbox"/>
Maggie Price Conservative		<input type="checkbox"/>
Chris Parson Green		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Zola Smith Independent		<input type="checkbox"/>

They said **ballot papers** should be in easy read with photos of each **candidate**.

A **ballot paper** is a piece of paper with a list of candidates that you can vote for in an election.

You have to put a cross or mark next to the person you want to vote for.

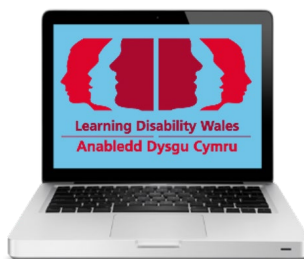


They also said that **political parties** should make accessible videos to explain their policies and help people choose who to vote for.

## 9. Any other business and ideas for future meetings



The next Cross Party Group meeting will take place on **26 June 2024** at 12.15-1.15pm on Zoom.



Sam Williams will send out the information about how to book for the next meeting.

It will also be on the Learning Disability Wales website: [www.ldw.org.uk/project/cross-party-group-on-learning-disability/](http://www.ldw.org.uk/project/cross-party-group-on-learning-disability/).



Sioned asked the group to email any ideas for things to talk about at future meetings to Sam Williams: [samantha.williams@ldw.org.uk](mailto:samantha.williams@ldw.org.uk).



Sara thanked James, Lucy, Ismail and Gaibhin for their presentations.



She also thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.



You can find all the easy read agendas and notes of the Cross Party Group here: [www.ldw.org.uk/project/cross-party-group-on-learning-disability/](http://www.ldw.org.uk/project/cross-party-group-on-learning-disability/)

# Hard words

## Chair

The Chair of the group is the person in charge of the meetings.

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## Polling station

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## Candidates

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## **Manifesto**

A manifesto is a list of things that a person or political party says they will do if they win the election.

## **Political party**

A political party is a group of people with similar ideas about how to run the country.

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