

Easy Read

## Cross Party Group on Learning Disability



Notes from the third meeting on 7 December 2022. 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
- **Samantha Williams** – Learning Disability Wales, Co-Secretary
- **Chris Dodds** – Cartrefi Cymru
- **Gerraint Jones-Griffiths** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Grace Coppock** – All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers
- **Grace Krause** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Gwen Anslow** – All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers
- **Helga Uckermann** – North Wales Advice and Advocacy Association
- **Hilary Whittaker**
- **Iwan Good** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Janis Griffiths** – Family carer
- **Jeremy Tudway** – Dimensions UK

- **Kai Jones** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Kara Williams**
- **Kate Wyke** – Contact a Family
- **Kate Young** – Mencap Cymru
- **Kathryn Morgan** – Shared Lives Plus Cymru
- **Kirsten Jones** – Natspec
- **Louise Peck** – Your Voice Advocacy
- **Marg McNeil** – See Around Britain
- **Mandy Powell** – Cymorth Cymru
- **Mike Jackson** – Blaenau Gwent Social Services
- **Nick Davies** – Family carer
- **Paul Hunt** – Mencap Cymru
- **Rachel Hazlewood** – Cardiff Council
- **Richard Redmond** – Person with a learning disability
- **San Leonard** – Social Firms Wales
- **Sandra Spratt** – Swansea Council for Voluntary Service
- **Sarah Mackintosh** – Carmarthenshire People First
- **Sharon Frewin** – Carmarthenshire County Council
- **Simon Rice** – Carmarthenshire People First
- **Steve Cox** – Perthyn
- **Wayne Crocker** – Mencap Cymru



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

- **Adele Rose-Morgan** – Parent carer
- **Eve Exley** – First Choice Housing Association
- **Humie Webb** – Parent and co-Chair of Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group
- **Ishbel Hansen** – Swansea Parent Carer Forum

## 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 **page 14**.

# 1. Welcome and introductions



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



Sara Pickard from Mencap Cymru explained that the meeting was about the **cost of living crisis**.



The **cost of living crisis** is about lots of things costing more and more money. Things like gas, electricity, petrol and food.

This makes it very difficult for some people to pay for everything they need.



Sara asked people to share their ideas about how Welsh Government and local councils could make things better for people with a learning disability and their families.

## 2. Presentation about how Carmarthenshire People First has been supporting members with the cost of living crisis



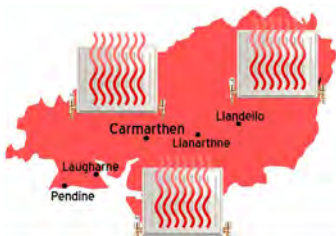
Simon Rice and Sarah Mackintosh talked about how Carmarthenshire People First have been helping members with the **cost of living crisis**.



They made an easy read book for members with lots of ideas about how to save money.



The book has recipes for cheap and easy meals.



It also has a list of local places in Carmarthenshire where people can go to keep warm.



The book also has budgeting ideas on how to look after your money.



Carmarthenshire People First have held cooking lessons to help members learn to cook easy and cheap meals.



They also ran workshops for members to learn about budgeting and looking after their money.



All of this support has helped members feel more confident and understand how to look after their money.



But Sarah said that members who live independently seem to be struggling more than those who live with family or in care homes or supported living at the moment.





This is because they have to manage their own money and pay their own bills. They are finding it harder to pay for the things they need.



The cost of things like food, electricity and gas have gone up. But people's benefits or wages have not gone up to pay for everything.

### 3. Questions and ideas



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



Sioned said there are different types of support available to help people with the cost of living crisis.



She asked if it is easy for people with a learning disability and their families to understand how to get the right support.



Sarah said it is not easy at all. People had to register online for some support and lots of members did not know how to do this.



There is not enough easy read information about the support people can get or how to get it.



Wayne from Mencap said that social care staff are also finding it hard to pay their bills because their wages have not gone up.



This means that people are looking for other jobs that pay more money.



If lots of social care staff change jobs, there might not be enough staff to support people with a learning disability in the future.





Steve from Perthyn said we need Welsh Government to support a **professional wage** for social care staff to make sure they get paid enough and do not need to change jobs.



A **professional wage** means paying social care staff the right amount for their skills, knowledge and experience. For example, paying them the same as staff working in health.

## 4. Presentation by All Wales Forum sharing stories from families



Gwen Anslow and Grace Coppock from the All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers shared stories from families of people with a learning disability who are struggling with the **cost of living crisis**.



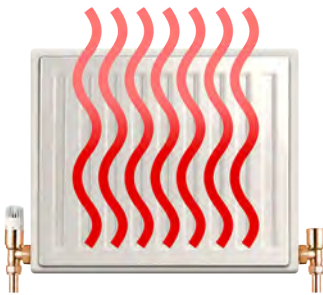
Lots of families are worried about paying their electricity and gas bills.



Some families have to use lots of electricity because their children need electrical equipment to help them every day. Things like a hoist or a special electric bed.



Or because they have to use the washing machine and tumble dryer a lot more than families who do not have a disabled child.



Some families need to have their heating on all day because of their child's health needs.

Or their child has to have lots of baths every day.



This means that these families have higher electricity and gas bills than other families who do not have disabled children.



The cost of electricity and gas has gone up a lot this year. And it will probably go up a lot again next year.



Families do not know how they will be able to pay their bills if they keep going up.



Gwen and Grace shared information about some of the support that families and carers can get to help with the cost of living crisis.



But lots of the information, advice and support services are already struggling to help all the extra people who need support at the moment.



These services need more money so that they can help more people.



It is also important that the extra money that Wales is getting from the UK Government to help with the cost of living crisis is used to support the people who need it most. Like disabled people and their families.

## 5. Questions and ideas



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



Wayne said it would be good for the Cross Party Group on Learning Disability to write to the Cross Party Group for Carers to see how we can work together.



Sioned thought this was a good idea and will write to the Chair of the Cross Party Group for Carers.

## 6. Any other business and next meeting



Sara thanked everyone who gave presentations at the meeting.



Sam said that the presentations and easy read notes of the meeting will be on the Learning Disability Wales website and the Senedd website when they are ready.



You can find all the agendas, notes and presentations of the Cross Party Group here: <https://www.ldw.org.uk/project/cross-party-group-on-learning-disability/>



Sara told the group that the next meeting of the Cross Party Group on Learning Disability will be on **15 March 2023 at 12.30pm.**



If anyone has any ideas about important things to talk about at the next meeting, you can email Sam Williams: [samantha.williams@ldw.org.uk](mailto:samantha.williams@ldw.org.uk) or Sara Pickard: [SaraE.Pickard@mencap.org.uk](mailto:SaraE.Pickard@mencap.org.uk).



Sara and Sam thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

# Hard words

## Cost of living crisis

The cost of living crisis is about lots of things costing more and more money. Things like gas, electricity, petrol and food.

This makes it very difficult for some people to pay for everything they need.

## Professional wage

A professional wage means paying social care staff the right amount for their skills, knowledge and experience. For example, paying them the same as staff working in health.