

# Cross Party Group on Learning Disability

January

15

Notes from the 11th meeting on 15 January 2025. The meeting was on Zoom.



## People who came to the meeting

- **Sioned Williams MS** – Member of the Senedd, Chair
- **Samatha Williams** – Learning Disability Wales, co-Secretary
- **Mark Isherwood MS** – Member of the Senedd
- **Alexander Owen** – Senedd staff
- **Alison Line**
- **Daniel Bray**
- **Danielle Richards** – Swansea Council
- **Darren Smith** – Carer
- **Elaine Derrick** – Parent
- **Emma Scott-Davies** – Gig Buddies Cymru
- **Grace Coppock** – All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers
- **Helen Delargy** – Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- **Jackie Prosser** – Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations
- **Janis Griffiths** – Parents Federation
- **Julie Clark-Harrison** – Pobl Group
- **Kelly Stuart** – All Wales People First

- **Louise Peck** – Your Voice Advocacy
- **Mark Griffiths** – Mirus
- **Phillipa Gould** – Dosh
- **Russ Kennedy** – Dimensions
- **Sean McDonnell** – Pobl Group
- **Simon Richards** – Cardiff People First
- **Simon Rose** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Sion Jones** – Mencap Cymru
- **Tracy McCillen** – Sport Excel UK
- **Wayne Crocker** – Mencap Cymru
- **Zoe Richards** – Learning Disability Wales



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

- **Sara Pickard** – Mencap Cymru, co-Secretary
- **Julian Hallett** – Down's Syndrome Association

## 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** is a Member of the Senedd and **Chair** of the Cross Party Group.

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

Sioned welcomed everyone to the meeting.

# 2. Presentation about the cashless society campaign



Sion Jones from Mencap Cymru and parent Elaine Derrick talked about the cashless society campaign.



Sion said that some people with a learning disability and their families told Mencap about problems they had when trying to pay cash in shops and services.



More and more places have stopped taking cash so you can **only** pay with card.



This can be a problem for people with a learning disability who do not have a bank account or find paying with card too difficult.



It means that people who cannot pay with card cannot go to some places or buy the things they want. For example, tickets for a show or a drink on the train.



It can be very embarrassing for people when they try to pay for something with cash but are told they must pay with card.



Elaine Derrick said that her son Niall is autistic and has a learning disability.



Niall understands how to save and use cash but cannot use a bank card to pay for things.



When he went to Pizza Hut in Cardiff for a meal with his friends, they were told they could not pay with cash so they could not eat there.



This was very upsetting and disappointing for Niall and his friends.



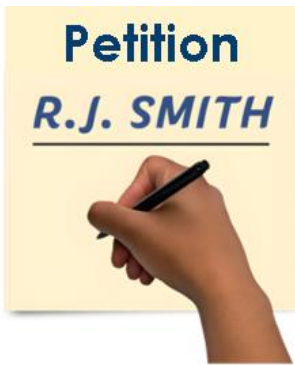
Elaine was very angry about this as it stops Niall from being independent. It stops him from having choice and control in his life.



Elaine spoke to Mencap Cymru about what happened to Niall.



Mencap Cymru decided to make a petition asking Welsh Government to make it easier for people to pay with cash.



Lots of people signed the petition and the Senedd Petitions Committee decided to look into this problem.



The Committee heard from people with a learning disability and their families about the problems they have when trying to pay with cash.



They wrote a report about what people told them. The report had ideas for how Welsh Government could make the problem better.



The first and most important idea was that all organisations and services that get money from Welsh Government should let people pay with cash.



Welsh Government replied to the report but they said **no** to most of the ideas.





There was a **debate** in the Senedd about the petition and the report.

A **debate** is when people with different ideas talk about something. They try to make others understand their point of view.



At the debate, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice Jane Hutt MS said she thought that Welsh Government **could** do more to make sure people can pay with cash.



She said she would meet with Mencap Cymru and the families to talk about how this could be done.



Sion said he hopes that Welsh Government will look at ways to make sure the organisations and services they give money to will let people pay cash.



He said that a UK Parliament Committee is also looking at this problem.

### 3. Presentation about the impact of not being able to pay with cash on people with a learning disability



Simon Richards from Cardiff People First talked about why it is important for people to be able to pay cash if they need to.



Simon spoke to ITV Wales last year about the problems people with a learning disability have when they cannot pay with cash.



Lots of people he knows who live in supported living like him do not have bank accounts or cannot use bank cards.



This means they cannot buy things online like tickets, clothes or food.





It also means that if they go somewhere like a bar, restaurant or shop that does not take cash, it can be very frustrating and upsetting.



Simon said that there are still some places that take cash.



We should let everyone know where these places are so people who need to pay cash have more choice.

## 4. Questions and ideas



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



Sioned said that she met with Welsh Government staff to talk about problems with Transport for Wales, like not being able to pay cash at the ticket machine or for a drink on the train.



Wayne Crocker from Mencap Cymru said that he had spoken to the Minister for Transport Ken Skates about this problem.



Wayne also said that sometimes places like museums or theatres say they take cash but they pay a different company to run their cafes or shops that do **not** take cash. This is called **sub-contracting**.



Mencap Cymru are trying to get some money to let people know the places that take cash by putting stickers in the window.



Sioned will write to Jane Hutt and Ken Skates to ask what Welsh Government is doing about this problem and how long it will take.

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



Llais wants to know what people with a learning disability and their families think about learning disability services in West Wales.

[You can fill in the easy read Llais West Wales survey here.](#)



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Welsh Government wants to know what people think about day services in Wales.

[You can find out more and fill in the easy read survey here.](#)



Welsh Government and the Electoral Commission wrote back to Sioned to say that they will be sending out lots of information about the changes to Senedd elections.



They said they will also be talking to different groups about how to make sure people understand the changes.



Sioned also said that a group of researchers at Cardiff University want to start a project about the lives of people with a learning disability in Wales.



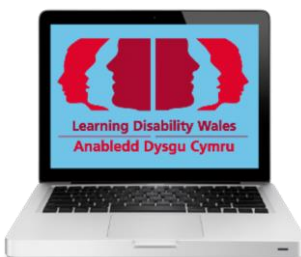
They are trying to get enough money to set up the project with people with a learning disability and carers as researchers.



Sioned will write to Welsh Government to ask if they can help with money for the research project.



The next Cross Party Group meeting will take place on **26 March 2025** 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) or Sara Pickard: [SaraE.Pickard@mencap.org.uk](mailto:SaraE.Pickard@mencap.org.uk).



Sioned thanked Sion Jones, Elaine Derrick and Simon Richards 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.

## Secretary or co-Secretary

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.

## Debate

A debate is when people with different ideas talk about something. They try to make others understand their point of view.

## Sub-contracting

Sometimes a business or organisation pays another company to do work for them or run part of their business. For example, to clean offices in a bank or run a gift shop in a museum. This is called sub-contracting.