

Disability Stakeholders Group 5

Draft minutes of meeting of 27th May at 10:30am

Online Meeting via Zoom

In attendance

Renee Dempsey (Independent Chairperson), Maeve O'Reilly (Secretariat), Tom Casey, Annette Costello, Elaine Howley, Des Henry, Brendan Lennon, Michelle Scanlan, Michael McCabe, Joanne McCarthy, Marian Maloney Nolan, Vivian Rath, Elaine Rogers, Maria Walls.

Apologies

Dee Hayes, Dermot Hayes.

1. Meeting Agenda

- Draft meeting agenda, document DSG5/76, was agreed.

2. Declaration of interests

- No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Chairperson's Correspondence

(i) Letter to Senator Erin McGreehan

- A letter was sent to the Senator thanking her for meeting with the DSG sub-committee to discuss the public and political participation of persons with disabilities and for following up on issues raised in the meeting with the Disability Matters Oireachtas Committee.

(ii) Letter to Ministers Rabbitte and Noonan regarding political participation of persons with disabilities

- A letter was sent to inform Minister Rabbitte and Minister Noonan of the DSG sub-committee meeting with Senator McGreehan and to follow up on the Minister's recommendation that the DSG seek a meeting with Minister Burke regarding the same issue.

(iii) Letter to Minister Burke

- A letter was sent to Minister Burke requesting a meeting to discuss the political participation of persons with disabilities as it relate to the implementation of NDIS actions 29 and 77.

4. Minutes and matters arising

Minutes

- The Secretariat circulated to the Group the draft minutes of the meeting of 25 February 2021 (DSG5/75). Minor amendments to the minutes were made and accepted by all. The minutes of 25 February 2021 were agreed and finalised.

Matters arising

(i) Publishing the minutes of the DSG meeting online

- It was agreed that the minutes will be anonymised in order for them to be published online going forward.
- A member raised a concern that the previous NDIS SG meeting was an information session rather than a working session. Concern was expressed that the DSG Chair does not have more input into the agenda so that it fits with the priorities and representation of the DSG. It was noted that it is a positive development that the DSG Chairperson's statement will be moved to the top of the agenda at the NDIS meeting going forward.

5. Reports from Disability Consultative Committees

(i) Department of Disability, Children, Equality, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)

- The first meeting of this DCC will take place on Tuesday 1st June.
- The traffic light report and a draft terms of reference for this DCC was shared with the DSG representatives.
- The DSG currently has two representatives on this DCC, but as it is such a big Department, the representatives suggest that the DSG should be represented by additional members in order to cover all the briefs.
- It was suggested that the group develop a strategy for engagement with this Department as it is such an important and large Department.
- The Group highlighted concerns that the Disability team in this Department is understaffed. There is also a concern that staff turnover may result in losing the positive engagement the Group has built with the Department. The positive relationships developed demonstrates the value and effectiveness of the DSG. It is suggested that the Chair's statement to the NDIS SG acknowledge the positive engagement from this Department and share the Group's concerns about losing it.

- A DSG member suggested it would be good to have further clarity on the future of the DSG beyond the next 18 months, and the structure of DCEDIY given the funding coming over from the Department of Health, in order to plan ahead more effectively.
- A Group member highlighted that the draft terms of reference for the DCEDIY DCC is quite narrow in its focus. It is primarily concerned with engaging with the DSG, but the Department also has a responsibility to engage with a wider group of stakeholders. It is suggested that the model followed by the Department of Transport has worked well in which DSG stakeholders and other groups are part of the same meeting
- The Group suggests that owing to its size, DCEDIY may need to consider having more than one DCC or having various DCC sub-committees.
- **Action:** Members to send any feedback on the draft Terms of Reference for the DCEDIY DCC to the relevant DSG representatives.

(ii) Department of Education

- The DSG representatives reported that three meetings of this DCC have taken place since the last DSG meeting in February.
- The first of the three meetings introduced new members to the DCC, including representatives from the NCSE and the Department's Special Education section. Representatives from Further and Higher Education have moved to the new Department of Further and Higher Education Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS).
- The second meeting aimed to clarify the NDIS actions under the responsibility of the Department in order for the DCC members to have a shared understanding of the objectives and to facilitate more relevant and in-depth progress updates by the Department in the DCC meeting.
- A meeting took place on May 26th in which the traffic light report was discussed. It was reported that the Department of Social Protection is not engaging fully in the cross-departmental Transitions group.
- The next meeting of this DCC has been scheduled for September.

(iii) Department of Further and Higher Education Research, Innovation and Science

- A new DCC is being set up by this Department and the first meeting is set for the end of June.
- The DSG representative for this Group is seeking to put the development of a Terms of Reference on the agenda for this meeting.

(iv) Department of Health

- The meeting of this DCC was postponed because of ICT problems due to the recent ransomware attack.
- Service providers also take part in this DCC. The DSG representative reports that this adds a helpful perspective.
- Part of the Health budget is moving to DCEDIY, but it will be locked into service agreements. It is noted that it is very difficult to break out of Section 38/39 structure.
- The DSG representative highlighted that their impression was that the NDA was going to develop indicators for measuring the NDIS in order to replace the current traffic light report system. It is the view of this DSG member that indicators would be preferable to traffic light updates when the next iteration of NDIS is developed.

(v) Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

- A concern was raised by the DSG representative that there has been no DCC meeting for this Department since November 26th 2020, and that prior to that meeting, it had been a year since this DCC had met.
- The DSG representative is concerned that this demonstrates a lack of commitment to disability matters within the Department.

(vi) Department of Social Protection

- A meeting is scheduled for next week.
- The DSG representative highlighted that this Department previously had a wider stakeholder meeting which included the DSG, but that it now meets with the DSG member separately. It was suggested that the DSG representative could request to maintain the separate meeting but to join the wider stakeholder meeting as an observer.
- The DSG representative asked DSG members for any suggestions for items to be added to the agenda of this DCC meeting. DSG members suggested a discussion about the publication of the Indecon report regarding the cost of disability and the gap between those on Disability Allowance and those on Pandemic Unemployment Payment.

(vii) Department of Justice

- There has been no DCC meeting since 22nd September 2020.

(viii) Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

- There has been no DCC meeting since last year.

(ix) Department of Transport

- The Department of Transport listened to concerns raised by DSG members and scheduled a meeting on April 15th 2021. They also arranged an additional meeting on Monday 31st May 2021 with DSG representatives only in advance of the main DCC meeting due to take place on Wednesday 2nd of June. The DSG representative notes that there is a strong commitment to engaging with the DSG within this Department.

(x) Report on the Comprehensive Employment Strategy

- The DSG representatives on the CES Group developed a short paper highlighting issues in need of attention to be presented in a meeting with Minister Rabbitte this afternoon. The DSG members report that there is a lack of urgency around the strategy which this paper hopes to address.
- The DSG members highlight that the cross-governmental approach to the Strategy is a good idea in principle, but the challenge is that there is no one Department responsible for delivery. This results in piecemeal delivery of work.
- **Action:** The CES paper will be published on the DSG webpage.

6. DSG Standardised Reporting Template for DCCs

- A draft Standardised Reporting Template for DCCs was shared with the DSG members for discussion.
- It was suggested that the updated NDIS actions from the Mid-term Review be added to this template.
- It was noted that the NDA produced a paper linking the NDIS Actions with the UNCRPD Articles.
- The Group discussed whether it is the role of the DSG to identify gaps between the NDIS Actions and UNCRPD. It was suggested that the Participation and Consultation Network and the NDA have each produced papers outlining these gaps.
- It is intended that the Standardised Reporting Template will be shared with the Chairs of all the DCCs once it is agreed by the DSG members and that DSG members will use this template in their reports back from DCC meetings.
- **Action:** Secretariat to request the NDIS Mid-Term Review actions from DCEDIY.

- **Action:** Secretariat to request the NDA paper linking NDIS Actions with UNCRPD.
- **Action:** All DSG members to send any comments on the draft Standardised Reporting Template to the Secretariat.

7. Personalised Budgets

- Two DSG members are working on a paper outlining the issues in relation to personal assistance. The Group members are working with Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI) and the Inclusive Living Network (ILN) to develop the content of this paper. The paper will then be shared with the Chair.
- It is intended that upon this paper being finalised by the DSG, a meeting will be sought with Minister Rabbitte to discuss further in order to progress the issue.
- The Group discussed the issue of individuals competing with service providers when it comes to hiring staff for personal care and for hiring equipment.

8. Any Other Business

- **Shared Island Initiative:** The Chair and the Secretariat attended an event as part of the Shared Island Initiative series. A note from the event was circulated to DSG members.
- **Building Back Better consultation:** A consultation was held by the National Disability Authority in relation to disability inclusion in a post-Covid society. The outcomes of the discussion will be developed into a paper to be shared with Minister Rabbitte and made available on the NDA website.
- **UNCRC Consultation:** Two representatives from the DSG have been invited to take part in a civil society consultation on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The invitation will be circulated by the Children's Rights Alliance in due course and the Secretariat will share it with the DSG members.
- **DSG Webpage:** The names of DSG Members have not yet been added to the DSG webpage.
- **Action:** Secretariat to follow up with DCEDIY about adding DSG members names to the webpage.
- Concern was expressed that **minutes from the NDISSG** meeting held on March 23rd 2021 have not yet been received. This means DSG members may not have sufficient time to review them before the next meeting on June 15th 2021.
- **Action:** DSG Secretariat will request the minutes from the Department.

- **Department of An Taoiseach:** A DSG member highlighted that the DSG had previously discussed that it may be of value to have a disability focal point within the Department of An Taoiseach. It was noted that this matter has been raised in the Disability Matters Oireachtas Committee. The DSG member suggested it may be raised as an item in the Chairperson's statement. Upon further discussion it was agreed that calling for this may be beyond the remit of the DSG.
- The date of the next NDISIG meeting is June 15th 2021.

• Signed: _____
Chairperson

• Signed: _____
Secretary