



IMNI Disability Stakeholder Forum – Minutes of Fourth Meeting 12 April 2022

12 April 2022: 11:30am – 13:30pm (via tele-conference)

Present: Chair: Michael Lorimer (ML) - Omnibus Partnership
Gillian Clifford (GC) – RNIB
Eithne Gilligan (EG) - Age NI
Michael Holden (MH) - Centre for Independent Living
Tony O'Reilly (TOR) – NWFPD
Nuala Toman (NT) - Disability Action
Bronagh Byrne (BB) – Independent
Rebecca Mansell (RM) - BDA

In attendance: IMNI Commissioners:
Helen Henderson (HH) - NIHRC
Steven White (SW) NIHRC
NIHRC Officers:
Rhyannon Blythe (RB)
Julia Buchannan (JB)
Sarah Simms (SS)
Lauren Shaw (LS)
ECNI Officers:
Paul Noonan (BD)
Brian Drury (BD)
Cynthia Rice (CR)
BSL Interpreters:
David Wycherley (DW)
Karen Green (KG)

Apologies: Alison Lockhart (AL) - IMTAC
Orla O'Hagan (OO) - Children in Northern Ireland
June Best (JB) - ECNI / IMNI Commissioner
Stephen Mathews (SM)- ECNI / IMNI Commissioner

1 Welcome and Introductions

1.1 The Chair welcomed participants to the fourth meeting of the IMNI Disability Forum, acknowledged apologies and noted the following developments in relation to Forum Membership:

- RM will represent BDA until further notice.
- Orla O'Hagan had confirmed that she would be point of contact for Children in Northern Ireland.
- Julie Larmour-Knight has left Mindwise and IMNI are seeking to confirm a replacement nomination.
- Mencap – Ronnie would prefer to attend physical meetings (as opposed to virtual). IMNI hoping to establish a hybrid approach for future meetings (dependant on easing of Covid guideline restrictions).

Action: IMNI to review possibility of hybrid physical / virtual options for future meetings.

2 Minutes and Matter Arising

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2.2 Request that future meetings be hosted via Zoom to provide enhanced accessibility.

Action: BD to consider further and discuss with the Director ECNI PPSE Team.

3 Research into Implementation of the UNCRPD in Northern Ireland

3.1 ECNI officers provided an overview of the research findings by Disability Action and confirmed that the final full version of the report would be disseminated to all members soon.

Action: BD to disseminate final version of UNCRPD compliance report

3.2 NT (one of the research authors) noted that although the report is over 500 pages, there is limited evidence of positive

progression towards implementation of UNCRPD rights. Whilst there are some examples of improving practice at Departmental level there is lack of overall strategic cohesion at Executive level.

- 3.3 An IMNI Commissioner asked for examples of positive developments in the implementation of the UNCRPD. Several Forum members highlighted positive developments including: the development of the IMNI Forum; integrated education at local level; inclusive co-design of transport initiatives such as the Belfast Glider; the legal requirement for Changing Places toilets in new builds; and a commitment to introduce a Sign Language Bill in the next Assembly mandate.

4 Mainstreaming the UNCRPD into the Disability Strategy

- 4.1 Forum members discussed progress made with regard to the development of the Disability Strategy. The Chair confirmed that DPO representatives of the Co-Design Group had met with DfC Minister Hargey and the Ministerial Steering Group on 5 April and presented the Group's priorities.
- 4.2 Forum members involved confirmed that the general discussion was positive but couldn't comment on behalf of the Disability Strategy Co-design Group position until this has been agreed at their next meeting. Members asked that discussion and notation be handled carefully given the confidentiality commitments involved in the processes.
- 4.3 Forum members noted that the IMNI's role and the work of the Dedicated Mechanism provide opportunities to progress key asks for the Strategy.

Action: RB to enquire about potential DMU involvement / input.

5 Examination of next UK State Party Report by UNCRPD Committee

- 5.1 IMNI officers confirmed that consideration by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of a List of Issues for its next examination of progress on implementation

of the UNCRPD by the UK had been delayed until March/April 2023. IMNI Officers anticipated drafting a submission on the List of Issues by December 2022.

Action: IMNI officers.

- 5.2 NT confirmed that civic society have been advised by the UNCRPD secretariat to progress with shadow report. The draft UK shadow DPO report was prepared in March and will be updated before submission in December. A draft NI specific list of issues has been shared by Disability Action with stakeholders and can be made available to Forum Members upon request.

Action: NT

6 Commission Updates

- 6.1 IMNI officers updated Forum members on recent disability rights related work undertaken by the two Commissions. This included:

- NIHRC: Training for Forum members; policy engagement responses included: Consultations on Hate Crime Legislation; Domestic & Sexual Violence / Equally Safe Strategy and the UK level enquiry into covid related inequalities;
- ECNI: Policy engagement responses included: Consultations on Hate Crime Legislation; Domestic & Sexual Violence / Equally Safe Strategy; Housing Supply and Inconsiderate Pavement Parking.

7 Continuous Development

- 7.1 The Chair led a brief discussion on possible continuous development for the Forum. Forum members identified a number of a number of potential topics for training including introductory BSL, equality proofing budget processes and financial decision making and section 75.

Action: PN to liaise with A&C colleagues on possibility of S75 training.

8 Any Other Business

- 8.1 The Chair led round of thanks and best wishes to SS who is leaving NIHRC for a new post.
- 8.2 A Forum member asked if there were developments in relation to NIHRC'S Human Rights Body accreditation status. An NIHRC officer confirmed that it was anticipated that the review of the Commission's accreditation status would be complete by year end and that there was a possibility that the current A status may be impacted by budget cuts proposed by the NIO.
- 8.3 The Chair encouraged Forum members to help shape and inform the content of future meetings by proposing items for the agenda. It was agreed that Members would contact the Chair directly with suggestions.

Action: BD to share contact details for the Chair with members.

- 8.4 Some Forum members indicated that they would welcome a Forum discussion on the meaning of progressive realisation of UNCRPD and incorporation of the Convention. Benchmarking best practice in other regions was also proposed.

Action: BB to share research related to these areas.

9 Date of Next Meeting

- 9.1 BD confirmed that unless substantive issues arise that merit an earlier meeting date, it is anticipated next meeting would be scheduled for the Autumn (October / November).