 **January 23rd 2016**

**Marriott Hotel, Glasgow**

1. **Present**

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| Bob Jones | Aberdeenshire |
| Sheona Craig  | Clackmannanshire |
| Jill Sloan | Dumfries and Galloway |
| Mary O’Connor | Dundee City |
| Douglas Chappelle | East Dunbartonshire |
| Joe McLachlan | East Renfrewshire |
| Margaret Leitch | Falkirk |
| Joanna Murphy (Vice Chair) | Glasgow |
| Richard Porter (Deputy) | Glasgow |
| Eleanor Symon | Moray |
| Billy Gibson | North Ayrshire |
| Charlotte Harrison | Orkney |
| Debbie Newlands | Renfrewshire |
| Jason O’Flynn | Perth and Kinross |
| Fiona Nicholson (Vice Chair) | Shetland |
| Morag Leslie Smith  | South Ayrshire |
| Maria Galli (Deputy) | South Ayrshire |
| Cheryl Burnett | South Lanarkshire |
| Julie Wild | Stirling |
| Iain Ellis (Chair) | West Dunbartonshire |

**Apologies**

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| Tony Rafferty | Aberdeen City |
| Alison Bowyer | Edinburgh City |
| Ann MacDonald | Nah-Eileanan Star |
| Barrie Sheppard | North Lanarkshire |
| Eric Lumsden | West Lothian |
| Fergus Weir | Highland |
| Roslynn Oliver | Inverclyde |
| John Rice (co-opted) | South Lanarkshire |
| Clare Carroll (Deputy) | South Lanarkshire |
| Martyn Parsons | Scottish Borders |
| Carol Snow | East Lothian |

**Vacancies**

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|  | Angus |
|  | Argyll and Bute |
|  | East Lothian |
|  | Fife |
|  | Midlothian |

**Also in attendance**

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| Gillian Myers (Minutes) | NPFS Admin and Info Assistant |
| Lorraine Sanda | Strategy and Performance, Learning Directorate, Scottish Government |
| Sara Spencer | Project Manager, Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland (CPAG) |
| Gillian Hamilton | Chief Executive, Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) |

**2. Chair’s Welcome**

Iain thanked everyone for coming, welcomed new representative Sheona Craig (Clackmannanshire) and Maria Galli, (Deputy South Ayrshire) .

**3. National Improvement Framework presentation**

3.1 Lorraine Sanda spoke about the National Improvement Framework, (NIF) focussing specifically on the recently published policy strategy document (http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491758.pdf). Lorraine began by giving some background on the NIF and the drivers behind it. The policy document sets out how things should happen at the national and local level. Lorraine went on to explain the 4 priorities of the NIF (improvement in attainment; closing the attainment gap; improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing; and improvement in employability skills) - and that it will be reviewed annually in partnership with stakeholders.

3.2 Lorraine invited questions from the Forum on the NIF. Forum members asked about: the impact of schools on children’s health and wellbeing; the emphasis from schools that is currently placed on getting into university rather than other career paths; the lack of communication between some schools and parents and how evidence will be gathered from the proposed standardised testing. Lorraine explained that the NIF will gather evidence from 6 ‘drivers’ (school leadership; teacher professionalism, parental engagement, assessment of children’s progress, school improvement; and performance information) to get a picture of how things are working across the country. The evidence from these drivers will inform the implementation of the NIF.

3.3 Lorraine will share the pack of resources about the NIF that will be provided to schools with NPFS.

**4. Cost of the School Day Report**

4.1 Sarah Spencer from the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland delivered a presentation on the Cost of the School Day report (http://www.cpag.org.uk/node/2450). She explained the background to the report and spoke of the huge challenges faced by schools when dealing with families living in poverty (1 in 5 families in Scotland; 1 in 3 in Glasgow). Sarah spoke about the impact of poverty on children’s participation in school and related activities; and how this should be addressed as this is a barrier to raising attainment.

4.2 Sarah invited feedback from the Forum on the report and asked for ideas about how schools may address some of the issues caused by poverty. Forum members expressed concerns about: safer routes to school; children walking long distances carrying heavy bags in all weathers as they can’t afford public transport; and the inconsistencies between how much schools charge for things – for example, home economics lessons and lockers. Ideas voiced by forum members to help solve some poverty-related issues included: schools not asking for payments for various things just before the end of the month; recycling school uniform from lost property and cutting down on dress down days; and the responsibility of parent councils to keep equality in mind when planning school discos etc – i.e. charge just enough per ticket to cover costs so that it is less of a barrier to families.

**5. Future Conference Planning**

5.1 There was discussion around moving away from a single, national annual conference to 5 or 6 regional events as this will raise the NPFS’ national profile and reach a wider parental audience. Margaret explained how she organised and promoted the Falkirk satellite conference in November. Reps were asked to contact their LEA and discuss the opportunity to host a conference in their area. Fiona Nicholson (Shetland) spoke about a conference being planned for May in Shetland.

5.2 Discussion then followed about how best to get people to attend these regional events; how reps in neighbouring authorities could hold joint events with the relevant local authority providing a venue to keep costs down. Several reps raised concerns over how to attract parents who have little time to spare – could be held in the evening or over a half day depending on the preferences of the local area. A crèche would be provided to assist with childcare.

**Action:** Any reps interested in arranging a local event should contact the office in the first instance, and any proposal will be forwarded to the leadership team for consideration.

**6.** **Subgroups meetings**

6.1 The early years, primary, secondary and ASN groups met to discuss ongoing work and priorities.

The primary subgroup focussed on:

* Literacy and numeracy attainment;
* IT; and
* Teacher shortages.

The early years subgroup discussed:

* The expansion of the ELCC hours to 1140 and the impact this may have. Discussion points included: is it best for the child? is the current infrastructure suitable? the capacity of nurseries to increase hours; how to engage parents in discussions.

The ASN subgroup discussed:

* NPFS representation on AGASL and Doran groups.

The secondary subgroup discussed:

* Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) changes within schools and some of the wider ramifications of this programme.

6.2 Debbie Newlands, Renfrewshire gave positive feedback from a Developing the Young Workforce seminar attended in December.

**Action:** Debbie will forward details of information given at this seminar to all reps.

6.2 Julie Wild, Stirling emphasised the forthcoming expansion of early years provision to 1140 hours and that this will be discussed at a number of meetings and events over the coming months. Julie will be asking reps for their input on what local level engagement is happening.

**Action:** All reps to share with the rest of the forum (and office) on a regular basis, what they have been involved in on behalf of NPFS.

**7. Review of 2006 Act**

7.1 Iain updated the forum on the background to the review and gave a brief timeline of what has to be achieved in the coming year. He emphasised that this is probably the biggest piece of work that NPFS have been involved in.

7.2 The working group, comprised of several reps, will take the work forward, beginning with putting a specification together for the research proposal to be put out to tender. All reps are encouraged to input and will be kept regularly updated on progress.

**8. NIF/ and the Education Bill**

There was a general discussion about the NIF and how NPFS may be able to support implementation during the pilot scheme. Discussion then moved on to what parents would like to see from schools by way of reports on their children. Suggestions included asking parent councils to push their schools to consult on how they would like to see reporting on children carried out. There was then general discussion about how NPFS can increase visibility among parents/parent councils/schools. Suggestions included online chats, more newsletters perhaps tailored to local areas, and a twitter hashtag that could be used for a monthly online ‘chat’.

**9. Tackling Bureaucracy**

Joanna reminded the forum about the Sharing Learning, Sharing Assessment report which was published by the NPFS in September 2014 This report has been referenced by the Tackling Bureaucracy Group and NPFS have been asked to supply views on the various aspects of reporting to parents. NPFS will put together an online survey on reporting containing a few questions to be sent out to all on our database. The idea is that issuing this questionnaire in the next few months would fit in with schools traditional reporting timescales

**Action: Questionnaire to be formulated and issued as widely as possible.**

**10. Minutes and Matters Arising**

10.1 Previous minutes proposed by Cheryl Burnett and seconded by Debbie Newlands.

10.2.No matters arising.

**11. Scottish College for Educational Leadership**

Gillian Hamilton, Chief Executive, gave a presentation about SCEL, how it came into being, and the work it does. Further information can be found on their website <http://www.scelscotland.org.uk>. Gillian then took questions from the forum. SCEL invited NPFS representation on their Stakeholder Forum (meets quarterly) and would be happy to have further discussions about how NPFS can best engage with SCEL going forward.

**12. AOB**

12.1 Fiona Nicholson, vice-chair, informed the Forum that Carol Snow (East Lothian) has resigned. Carol sat on the Strategic Implementation Group for 1+2 Languages model so another representative will have to be found to take this forward.

**Action :** Reps with an interest in this area are asked to come forward, sending interest to Fiona in the first instance.

12.2 Reminder of Anti-Bullying Focus Group taking place in Edinburgh on 27th January.

12.3 Joanna Murphy, Glasgow and vice chair reminded members that the Careers Nutshell has been sent to every school in Scotland for distribution to all children, and to keep an eye out for it in their local schools. There has been a good social media presence around this and parents were encouraged to Tweet when they received their copy.

**The next meeting will be March 12th Edinburgh.**