

## All Party Parliamentary Group on Sure Start Children's Centres

### Annual General Meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013

#### Minutes

##### Attending

Andrea Leadsom MP  
Sharon Hodgson MP  
Amber Rudd MP  
Earl of Listowel  
Anne Longfield  
Claire McCarthy  
Lucia Hodgson  
Mike Forster  
John Davies

##### Best Practice for a Sure Start Report

Andrea Leadsom opened the AGM by presenting the final report of the Group's year-long inquiry into best practice in Children's Centres (*Best Practice for a Sure Start: The Way Forward for Children's Centres*), which had been published on the morning on the AGM. It was noted that the report had already received positive media coverage, and been sent to all Group members and the Group's list of stakeholders.

It was agreed that work should now be undertaken to disseminate the report more widely, particularly amongst journalists, Ministers, Lords, Directors of Children's Services and officials at the LGA.

It was also suggested that the Ministerial Forewards to the report by Elizabeth Truss and Daniel Poulter provided a strong platform for engaging with the Department for Education and Department of Health.

##### Election of Officers

Anne Longfield briefly took over Chairing responsibilities to facilitate the election of Officers. It was noted that Richard Harrington had expressed a keen interest in being elected an Officer, even though he could not be present.

Andrea Leadsom was nominated for the position of Chair by Sharon Hodgson, seconded by the Earl of Listowel. **Andrea Leadsom was re-elected Chair of the Group.**

Sharon Hodgson was nominated for the position of Vice-Chair by Andrea Leadsom, seconded by Amber Rudd. **Sharon Hodgson was re-elected Vice-Chair of the Group.**

It was proposed that the Earl of Listowel could take on a position as a second Vice-Chair of the Group. The Earl of Listowel was nominated for the position of Vice-Chair by Amber Rudd, seconded by Andrea Leadsom. **The Earl of Listowel was elected Vice-Chair of the Group.**

Richard Harrington was nominated for the position of Secretary/Treasurer in his absence by Andrea Leadsom, seconded by the Earl of Listowel. **Richard Harrington was elected Secretary/Treasurer of the Group.**

4Children were also unanimously re-elected to provide the Secretariat for the Group.

#### **Suggestions for the Group's programme for 2013/14**

Andrea Leadsom resumed the Chair following the completion of the election of Officers.

It was suggested that in order to build on the momentum of the year-long inquiry and publication of the *Best Practice for a Sure Start* report, over the next year the Group might want to focus on a set of shorter inquiries examining specific issues raised in the report, and how to implement its recommendations.

The following issues were raised as potential subjects for such short inquiries:

- Registration of births in Children's Centres.
- Guidance for Children's Centres that want to become Childminder Agencies under proposals in the *Children and Families Bill*.
- How Children's Centres can self-evaluate better.
- The emerging findings of the Big Lottery Better Start programme (although it was suggested such an inquiry could potentially become quite large).

- Pooling budgets.
- Parent/infant psychotherapy in the earliest stages of life – the possibility of a joint session with the *APPG on Conception to Age 2* (of which Andrea Leadsom is also Chair) was raised.
- The Two-Year-Old offer.
- The role of play, particularly in the context of Early Years Educator and Early Years Teacher Qualifications (although Andrea Leadsom stated that she had received assurances for Elizabeth Truss that the Department for Education recognised the significance of this).
- Professional standards amongst nursery teachers.

It was agreed that 4Children would identify some broad themes arising from these issues and develop a prospective programme of meetings for the next year.

The AGM closed.