

## Background Briefing

It is relevant in the context of the MSP's present stance to be mindful of how the present incarnation of the Cross Party Group on M.E. came about:

- On 13<sup>th</sup> May 2011, with a new Parliament in place following elections in Scotland, Sir Peter Spencer, CEO of the charity Action for M.E., sends an e-mail round committee members of the prior CPG.

His message is titled 'Cross Party Group on M.E.' and asks if we agree that Alex Fergusson MSP, a former convener, should be invited to call a meeting of former committee members and any interested MSPs and to chair it until new officers have been elected during that meeting.

Sir Peter advises:

*It is relevant here that 13 of the current MSPs responded positively in committing their support to M.E. and/or the Manifesto for M.E. in the run up to the elections.*

- Confirmation of the meeting is notified by Susan Webster, Action for M.E.'s Project Co-ordinator (Scotland) and prior secretary of the CPG on M.E.

Susan states:

*Alex Fergusson MSP has kindly agreed to chair a meeting inviting MSPs to join the CPG on M.E., on Wednesday 15th June at 1pm in Committee Room 5. CPG committee members are also invited to attend. Alex will chair this meeting but is hoping another MSP will take over as Convenor of the CPG on M.E.*

- The offer is accepted and a meeting takes place on 15<sup>th</sup> June. A convener - Mary Fee - and two vice conveners - Jim Eadie and Siobhan McMahon - offer to serve this Cross Party Group on M.E. and their offers are accepted. There is that no indication this is anything other than a relaunch of the Cross Party Group on M.E. Neither is there any hint that any of the MSPs present have reservations about this.

It is against this background that the recent forcing of a vote on the remit of the Group with the promise of closure of the Group if members wish to continue as a CPG on M.E. took place.

Helen Brownlie, 25% M.E. Group representative in Scotland

Jane Giakoumakis, Lanarkshire ME Support

Connie Nelson, CPG Member.

*committee members of prior CPG*

*recipients of the above correspondence and present at the 15<sup>th</sup> June meeting*