



Professional Interpreters for Justice (PI4J)
Report of the Steering Committee

Date: Friday, 21st August 2015

Time: 2:00 pm to 3:20 pm

Venue: Unite House - Holborn - London

Present at the meeting: A. Murray (chairing) Unite; E. Ford (NUPIT), A. Naranjo (NUPIT), S. Bishop (NRPS), L. White (NRPSI), K. Moffitt (CIoL), P. Wilson (ITI), A. Thompson (APCI), A. Minhas (APCI), G. Buckingham (Eulita), K. Slaney (SOMI).

Apologies: J. Smith (NUBSLI)

The meeting opened at 2pm.

There were six agenda points as follows:

Moj Language Framework update

CCS Framework agreement for Language services

PI4J Manifesto

Pearl Linguistics Recruitment - terms and conditions

Admission of Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru

AOB

It was decided not to tackle the matters in the order given.

The approval of the report of the previous meeting did not take place as some members of the committee had not yet read it. That report will be submitted for approval together with the present one at the next meeting.

Admission of Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru

A proposal for the admission of a representative of the Welsh Interpreters' association Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru to the Steering Committee, which had previously been made by AN in an e-mail to the members of this committee, was discussed, seconded by PW and approved unanimously by show of hands.

AN will inform Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru of the decision immediately.

Pearl Linguistics Recruitment - terms and conditions

It was suggested that because agencies such as PL are continuing to whittle away the interpreters' fees, PI4J should be more specific in their demands in this respect. Instead of referring to 'sustainable rates' or 'reasonable terms', it would perhaps be more useful to state what we thought represented a reasonable rate of pay.

AM asked whether anyone would be prepared to work on a draft schedule.

The Committee decided to study the way NUBSLI and the APTG have approached this question and decide whether a schedule of recommended payments could be included on the campaign website. Reference could also be made to the National Agreement.

Some members felt that this was out of keeping with PI4J's original purpose but others felt that terms and conditions were a central part of the campaign. No decisions could be taken without consulting the boards or committees of individual societies.

PI4J Manifesto

There has been no direct response to the manifesto. It was felt by the committee that after all the work that went into the manifesto, it should not be discarded now that the election was over, and that with a little re-drafting and perhaps retitling, it could be

used again as a statement of our aims and attached when next the steering committee contacts bodies such as the Select Committees. It was decided that AM would re-circulate the manifesto so that all steering committee members could consider whether any re-drafting was necessary.

Now that the PAC has been re-formed, with a new Chair, it was considered that when contacting them it would be appropriate to congratulate the latter on her new position.

It was decided to ask Genesis to write to the PAC.

MoJ Language Framework update

Most of the constituent societies of the Steering Committee had attended one-to-one sessions with the MoJ. Most felt that these had been perfunctory and that little had been achieved.

Some committee members speculated on the likelihood of Capita bidding again for the contract, feeling that the heavy financial losses they had sustained were enough to discourage even the largest agencies from putting in a bid. The call to tender will be issued, it is thought, during the month of October and until then there is no action that we can usefully take.

On behalf of NUPIT, AN said that after the 45-minute meeting, she had written to the MoJ confirming what had been said.

Some committee members thought that we should liaise more closely with the lawyers who are protesting about the changes to their terms and conditions.

CCS Framework agreement for Language services

There is an expectation that the MoJ will be using parts of the CCS contract in particular for BSL interpreting. If this happens the BSL and spoken language interpreters will have more common ground although the two types of interpreting are usually regarded as separate. It was remarked that BSL interpreters had leverage because the available pool

of qualified BSL interpreters is very small and the MoJ cannot afford to see them walk away as they are not so easily replaced as spoken language interpreters.

It was felt that the division into regional services might potentially be a good thing.

On the whole there is not enough information for the SC to decide on any action with regard to the CCS contract.

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm

Report by E. Ford (NUPIT)