APPG on Literacy meeting minutes

Theme: Criminal justice **Date**: Tuesday, 13 October 2026 **Time**: 14:00-15:30 **Location**: Room T, Portcullis house

Attendees:

- Gareth Snell MP (Chair)
- Minister Catherine McKinnell MP
- Samantha Dixon MP
- Perran Moon MP
- Lord Keen of Elie
- Baroness Hayman
- Representative of Navendu Mishra MP
- Representative Adam Dance MP
- Hilary Ineomo-Marcus, Trustee at the National Literacy Trust
- Dr Joe Oliver, Evaluation Manager, Adolescent and Adult Literacy at the National Literacy Trust
- Rebecca Perry, Head of Adult Literacy and Criminal Justice at the National Literacy Trust
- MK McGrath, National Year of Reading Criminal Justice Project Manager at the National Literacy Trust
- Roisin McDermott, Head of Policy and Public Affairs at the National Literacy Trust
- Helen Rampton, Policy and Public Affairs Manager at the National Literacy Trust
- Olivia Potter, Educational Placement, Research and Policy at the National Literacy Trust

Apologies:

- Lord Foulkes
- Darren Jones MP
- Lord Naesby
- Alison Griffiths MP
- Joy Morrisey MP
- Sir Roger Gale MP
- Carla Denyer MP
- Andrew Mitchell MP
- Cat Smith MP
- Andy Slaughter MP
- Gurinder Singh Josan MP
- Dr Ellie Chowns MP
- Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

Notes:

The Chair welcomed attendees and opened the meeting. Representatives from the National Literacy Trust then presented key areas of the organisation's work including:

- Rebecca Perry highlighted the range of programmes that the National Literacy Trust runs across the criminal justice space, spanning creative writing, oracy and reading for pleasure.

- MK McGrath shared the success of the recent first-of-its kind National Year of Reading literacy festival in the youth estate, including how it was created, what it involved and the positive impact that has extended beyond the festival.

- Both Rebecca and MK then outlined literacy need as a persistent challenge in the criminal justice space that, with sufficient funding and resource, the National Literacy Trust is well-equipped to tackle.

- Hilary Ineomo-Marcus shared his lived experience of literacy challenges in the prison estate and insights from his work at National Prison Radio. He then discussed how the National Literacy Trust programmes build confidence and engage participants through creative formats, helping to encourage reading, writing and self-expression.

Several attendees raised issues around funding cuts and prison library provision.

Minister Catherine McKinnell provided insight from her role into the power of literacy in the criminal justice system and engaged in discussion on the need to remove barriers to accessing literacy and enrichment activity as an essential first step.

There was also discussion about literacy enrichment as a gateway to education, strengthening family bonds and rehabilitation and we invited the Minister to visit our programmes to see the benefits of our work in action.