

CROSS-PARTY GROUP ANNUAL RETURN

NAME OF CROSS-PARTY GROUP
Cross-Party Group on Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse
DATE GROUP ESTABLISHED (the date of establishment is the date that the Group held its initial meeting, where the office bearers were elected and not the date that the Group was accorded recognition. All Groups should hold their AGMs on, or before, the anniversary of this date.)
28th June 2011
DATE ANNUAL RETURN SUBMITTED
20th September 2013
GROUP MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES Please provide details of each meeting of the Group including the date of the meeting, a brief description of the main subjects discussed and the MSP and non-MSP attendance figures. Details of any other activities, such as visits undertaken by the Group or papers/report published by the Group should also be provided.
26th September 2012 This meeting incorporated the AGM. Anne Macdonald, our long serving co-convenor stood down from the position and the group thanked her for her commitment and service. Anne will continue to be a member of the CPG. The focus of the meeting was to review the work undertaken from 2011-2012 and to agree a programme of future priorities for the CPG. The group agreed that the meeting with Michael Matheson, Minister for Public Health had been constructive and agreed to keep physical health issues on the on-going agenda for the CPG. Issues decided upon for future considered included: sexual exploitation, witnesses and evidence giving in court; physical health issues; addictions and their links to CSA and the quality of life for survivors. The meeting also discussed Lord Carloway's proposed reforms including the abolition of corroboration. It was decided that the CPG would submit a response to the consultation on Carloway's reforms. It was also agreed that the group would write to Kenny MacAskill, Cabinet Secretary for Justice on the issue to talk about corroboration and vulnerable witnesses.

MSPs Attending: 2
Non MSPs: 18

30th January 2013

The group welcomed the Cabinet Secretary for Justice Kenny MacAskill to the CPG to discuss corroboration and vulnerable witnesses. In particular the Cabinet Secretary commented on how unfortunate it is that witnesses now almost feel like victims themselves and emphasised the need for clarification and standards of service in order to make sure to protect the most vulnerable.

The Cabinet Secretary also outlined the Scottish Government's stance on corroboration, namely that it is the quality and not the quantity of evidence that matters and stated that he had clear assurances from the Crown that cases would not rely on a single source of evidence.

The Cabinet Secretary also answered a number of questions from CPG members on a wide range of subjects including the right to silence and the right to legal advice, sentencing and the media and connections between CSA and other offences.

Given the number of issues discussed around vulnerable witnesses, evidence giving and the nature of court proceedings, it was the advice of Cabinet that the group contact Sheriff Welsh from the Judicial Institute to discuss the training of judges in relation to CSA and the treatment of vulnerable witnesses. The group agreed to write Sheriff Welsh.

MSPs Attending: 3
Non MSPs: 19

The CPG was fortunate enough to have a presentation from Sheriffs Welsh and Duff of the Judicial Institute on the issue of judicial training about CSA.

The Sheriffs discussed at length the training provided by the institute for members of the bench and highlighted that in 2013 they had two, two-day seminars planned that would cover child witnesses and CSA cases and further seminars on vulnerable witnesses in general.

There was also discussion of what steps can be taken in the courtroom to aid vulnerable witnesses and the role judges have in ensuring that witnesses are not subject to oppressive and aggressive questioning.

The meeting was very constructive and the Sheriffs were keen to continue to engage with the CPG on the development of judicial training. To that end it was agreed to pass on the contact details of CPG members to the Sheriff and since then many members of the CPG have held meetings with Sheriff Welsh.

MSPs Attending: 2
Non MSPs: 20

18th September 2013

This meeting incorporated the AGM. Margaret gave an overview of the work the CPG from 2012-2013. Marnie Collin in her role as treasurer gave a financial report and membership fees were discussed. It was decided that, if they felt inclined, that group members of the CPG could pay more in fees to help support individual members who perhaps were struggling with the annual subscription cost.

CPG members Sharon Guest and Mark Ballard from Barnados gave a presentation on child sexual exploitation, remarking on their interactions with the National Working Group on the issue and detailing their own petition which is currently the subject of an inquiry by the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee. The main point was that CSE should be considered on the scale of CSA. The need for young people in particular to be educated about healthy, respectful relationships was emphasised and it was agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education on this.

A number of members noted their constructive meetings with Sheriffs Welsh and Duff since the meeting in May. They reported back that it was the suggestion of the Sheriffs, as they can only handle what takes place in the court room and to only a degree in order to maintain their impartiality that the CPG look into engaging with the COPFS and Police Scotland. It was agreed that this could be looked into for a future meeting.

MSPs Attending: 1 – agreed that decisions made at this meeting would need to be formalised at the next meeting of the CPG in January 2014.

Non MSPs: 16

MSP MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

Please provide names of all MSP members of the Group. Note that only names need to be provided, no party designation or other information is required.

Margaret Mitchell
Kenneth Gibson
Alison McInnes
Elaine Smith
Jackie Baillie

NON-MSP MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.

Individuals

Carol Willson
Lorna-Ann Deans
Emma Ducklin
Andrew Campbell
Elayne McBride

	Sarah Nelson Linda Hutton Sandra Ferguson Javita Narang Eric Swanepoel John Nelson James Evans Jenny Svanberg
Organisations	Open Secret Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project Moira Anderson Foundation Children 1 st 18 and Under Barnardos NHS Borders NHS Lothian Rape and Sexual Abuse Line, Dingwall SAMH Stop it Now Health in Mind Circle Scotland Harris Howard Safe, Strong and Free SAVI Quarriers Say Women Safe Space Break the Silence British Psychological Society Crisis Counselling Services Relationships Scotland Roshni
<p>GROUP OFFICE BEARERS</p> <p>Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.</p>	
Convener	Margaret Mitchell MSP
Vice Convener	Kenneth Gibson MSP
Co-Conveners	Sarah Nelson; Martin Henry
Secretary	Javita Narang
Treasurer	Marnie Collin

FINANCIAL BENEFITS OR OTHER BENEFITS RECEIVED BY THE GROUP

Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) received from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.

Details of material support should include the name of the individual providing support, the value of this support over the year, an estimate of the time spent providing this support and the name of the organisation that this individual is employed by / affiliated to in providing this support.

Groups should provide details of the date on which the benefit was received, the value of the benefit and a brief description of the benefit.

Not applicable

SUBSCRIPTION CHARGED BY THE GROUP

Please provide details of the amount charged and the purpose for which the subscription is intended to be used.

£15.00 per parliamentary year for refreshments at meetings and travel expenses of speakers. Organisation members of the CPG who wish to contribute more are able to do so.

CONVENER CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Margaret Mitchell MSP
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