

THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT CROSS PARTY GROUP ON HUMAN RIGHTS AGM

1st October 2014, Committee Room 3

Minute

Attendees:

John Finnie MSP
Alison McInnes MSP
Jamie Hepburn MSP
Rod Campbell MSP
Hunter Watson – Psychiatric Rights Scotland
Pauline Nolan – Inclusion Scotland
Rosalind Greig – Inclusion Scotland
Brandi Lee Lough Dennell – LGBT Youth
Rebecca Marek – Scottish Youth Parliament
Felix Spittal – SCVO
Nada Shawa – Freedom from Torture
Dr Sonali Shah – Freedom from Torture/ University of Glasgow
Pat Elmsie - Treasurer and Migrant Rights Scotland
Carole Ewart – Human Rights Consortium Scotland
Siobhan Reardon – Amnesty International Scotland
Julie Hepburn – Amnesty international Scotland
Elizabeth Millership – Amnesty International Scotland
Tom Wightman – Autism Rights
Sean McCollum – Scottish Drugs
Maureen Falconer – UK Information Commissioner’s Office
Kait Laughlin
Euan Page – EHRC
Aidan Collins – HIV Scotland
Ellen Maloney
Martin Verity – United Nations Association of Scotland
Danny Boyle - BEMIS

1. Welcome

Mr Finnie welcomed the membership.

2. Apologies

Apologies were not read out however were received from:

Sandra White MSP
Alison Johnstone MSP
Patricia Ferguson MSP
John Lamont MSP
Marco Biagi MSP
Humza Yousaf MSP
Leah Granat – Scottish Council of Jewish Communities
David Freeland – Information Commissioner’s Office
Emma Gray – Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
Carol Young and Jatin Haria – CRER
Nareen Sood
Lisa McKenzie – Howard League for Penal Reform
Niall McLuskey

Jill Tammi – Article 12
Kurt Mills – Glasgow University and GHRN
Andrew Bevan – International Justice Mission
Laura Paton – HMICS
Elaine Webster – Glasgow University
Kenny Selbie – West Lothian Council
Eric Mitchell – Capability Scotland
John Welford – No2ID
Andrew Muir – Psychiatric Rights Scotland
Fraser Latta – Latta & Co. Solicitors
Helen Martin – STUC
Gabrielle Stewart – College of Occupational Therapists
Anela Anwar – ROSHNI
Jo Ozga – SCIAF
Deirde Flanigan – SHRC
Ken McLennan

3. Election of office bearers and approval of 2014 Annual Return

The following office bearers were nominated and agreed by the Group.

- John Finnie MSP as convener
- Patricia Ferguson MSP as co-convenor
- Alison McInnes MSP as co-convenor
- Carole Ewart as Vice-convenor
- Pat Elsmie as Treasurer
- Siobhan Reardon, Amnesty International Scotland as Secretariat

Carole Ewart stated that happy to stand for position of Vice-convenor on the condition of more inclusion in discussions in order to give her role more purpose. This was noted by John Finnie.

NOTE: The Annual Return 2014 was not approved at this point but will be circulated for comment and submitted to the Scottish Parliament's Standards clerk.

4. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

- 4.2 Pat Elsmie to look into costs for refreshments for future meetings.
Pat declared that the funds are in a good financial state.
- 4.3 Andrew Muir to contact Inclusion Scotland.
Pauline Nolan, Inclusion Scotland, confirmed that discussions had taken place with Andrew Muir, in his absence from the meeting.
- 4.4 Carole Ewart to work up a proposal with regard to presenting / inviting speakers to a future CPG.

Carole confirmed that the proposal will be circulated to CPG members in the near future. This includes potential to use the Universal Periodic Review process and a handbook which the Human Rights Consortium has produced, in order for CPG member organisations to deliver presentations on how to utilise the UPR process in their sphere of work.

Interest stated from the UN Association of Scotland.

Also potential under the UK Government's duty to deliver a report under the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in June 2015. Submissions already being received by the UN. There is scope for member organisations to undertake joint working to craft how to assert human rights in Scotland and illustrate the work being undertaken in Scotland, sharing these experiences with MSPs. This should include issues such as access to justice.

This represents a change to traditional presentation models but there was agreement by the group to consider this type of presentation model.

- 4.5 Siobhan to circulate past examples of presentations / speakers
This was done within the Annual Return 2014 which highlighted presentations made to the group throughout 2013/14. This led to a fuller discussion with regard to possible presentations to the CPG:

Kait Laughlin sought clarification on the procedure for raising issues for discussion by the group. Was advised that these matters should be raised under AOCB in advance of the meeting.

Pauline Nolan had suggested that Inclusion Scotland present to the CPG on the process of reporting under the UNCRPD. She asked whether a double event could be carried out with the Disability Cross Party Group to draw on multiple experiences.

Hunter Watson had offered to make a presentation on Covert Medication linked to Article 12 of the UNCRPD.

John Finnie recommended a member poll to gauge what interest there was on a number of identified topic areas.

ACTION: Members to respond with a list of three areas of interest.

5. Treasurer's report

This was circulated in advance, and confirmed by Pat Elsmie who was in attendance.

Also stated that there had been no membership contributions collected in 2013/14 and should consider collecting member contributions for 2014/15.

ACTION: Views on membership contributions to be sought from members for the next meeting.

6. Presentation: The Transparency of Lobbying, Non Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act (Lobbying Act) – Felix Spittal, SCVO.

7. AOCB

No matters raised.

8. Date of next meeting

No date set but a calendar of dates requested for 2014/15 and will be circulated to the group.