

Cross Party Group on Racial Equality in Scotland

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 3rd November 2015

Attendance

Present:

Bob Doris MSP	MSP (Convener)
Hanzala Malik MSP	MSP (Deputy Convener)
Jatin Haria	CRER (Secretariat)
Rebecca Marek	CRER (Secretariat)
Arun Gopinath	CSREC
Elisabetta Spano	ELREC
Foyso Choudhury	ELREC
Ehtisham Ullah Khan	ELREC
Geoff Palmer	ELREC
Naren Sood	EMCC
Naeem Khalid	Frae Fife
Kash Taank	Glasgow Life
Nabirye Balyejusa	Score Scotland
Nicola Livingston	Scottish Council of Jewish Communities
Faten Hameed	Scottish Iraqi Society
Adeyemi Johnson	Sheku Bayoh Campaign
Nicola Hay	Show Racism the Red Card Scotland
Davidson Chademana	University and College Union & Sheku Bayoh Campaign
Naseem Anwar	University of Strathclyde
Nasar Meer	University of Strathclyde
Khalida Hussain	Voluntary Action Fund
Mahmud Al-Gailani	VoX Project, Mental Health Foundation
Mohammed Razaq	WSREC
Harriette Campbell	WSREC / ACWA
Anita Shelton	Individual
Jennifer Roberts	Individual
Zahila Hassan	Individual

Apologies:

Jamie McGrigor MSP	MSP (Deputy Convener)
Johann Lamont MSP	MSP
Jackie Baillie MSP	MSP
Danny Boyle	BEMIS
Fiaz Khan	CEMVO

Nila Joshi	Edinburgh Interfaith Women's Group
David Watt	Education Scotland
Euan Page	Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland
Shaben Begum	SIAA
Trishna Singh	Sikh Sanjog
Lydia House	SPTC
Meg De Amasi	Stirling Multicultural Partnership
Gozie Joe Adigwe	STUC Black Workers Committee
Rohini Sharma Joshi	Trust Housing Association
Jonathan Ssentamu	Waverly Care African Health Project
Akhtar Khan	Individual
Mohammad Afzal Chaudhrey	Individual

Welcome and Introductions

Convener Bob Doris MSP called the meeting to order at 18:15, and welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Attendees introduced themselves in turn.

Annual General Meeting

Bob Doris MSP noted that the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections were approaching, and that the CPG should make special effort to engage incoming MSPs from the beginning of their term to increase MSP attendance at the CPG.

The formal Annual General Meeting was commenced, with all existing office bearers being proposed for re-election unopposed. Jamie McGrigor MSP was nominated in absentia, and accepted the nomination following the meeting.

The office bearers for the CPG on Racial Equality in Scotland for 2015/2016 are therefore:

Convener – Bob Doris MSP

Deputy Convener – Hanzala Malik MSP and Jamie McGrigor MSP

Secretariat – Jatin Haria, Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights

Following this, Bob Doris MSP introduced the Draft Annual Return 2015, presented for approval by the Secretariat. Following clarification on membership and financial benefits, the return was approved by the group.

Organisations not listed as official members will be added to the list following the submission of the Annual Return.

Presentation and Discussion: The Scottish Government's Race Equality Framework for Scotland – Jatin Haria

Jatin Haria provided an overview of the work CRER is undertaking for the Scottish Government's Race Equality Framework for Scotland (REFS). His presentation addressed the following topics:

- The REFS is a new approach, following from the Race Equality Statement 2008-2011, involving work with strategic partners.
- The REFS is led by the Scottish Government Equality Unit, with support from CRER, and involves research, consultation, and developing content.
- Policy development for the REFS will be evidence-based, and a variety of engagement methods will be used.
- Crucially, the framework will last 10-15 years, and will be a living document that can be refreshed on an ongoing basis.
- The consultation phase has involved engagement through the Community Ambassadors Programme, work with Reference Planning Group thematic workshops with practitioners, policy makers, and experts across sectors, and an online SurveyMonkey.
- In total, 62 Community Ambassadors were trained, with 42 questionnaires returned, incorporating the views of 389 members of minority ethnic communities; 40 individuals participated in Reference Planning Groups, 120 participated in thematic workshops, and 175 responded to the SurveyMonkey.
- Evidence from the consultation is being collated in a database and analysed.
- Four interim evidence papers have been produced using desk-based research; the final versions will incorporate the views from the consultations. These themes are:
 - Community Cohesion and Safety
 - Participation and Representation
 - Education, Employment, and Income
 - Health and Social Care, Housing, Family, and Home.
- All the evidence will be used to create content and actions for the REFS and to finalise evidence papers. The REFS will set out the evidence and establish actions and outcomes. The Scottish Government will agree the final content.
- All participants will receive feedback following this.
- The REFS is due to be launched in spring 2016.

Jatin Haria accepted questions and comments from members. Issues explored included:

- The development of the questions for consultation and the thematic groups.
- The response rate and demographics of respondents to the SurveyMonkey.
- The accessibility of the consultation and consultation with to "hard-to-reach" groups.
- Ways to improve community engagement and access to consultations.
- The opportunity for further engagement with the Fairer Scotland consultation.
- The importance of learning lessons, and ensuring the process for engagement and consultation is followed up on and evaluated to learn best practice. Knowledge needs to be taken forward.

It was agreed that if members wish to submit further information and opinions as part of the REFS consultation, they should email Jatin Haria directly as soon as possible.

Presentation and Discussion: Data on BME Self-Reported Discrimination in Scotland – Dr. Nasar Meer

Dr. Nasar Meer presented his research on BME self-reported discrimination in Scotland. His presentation touched on the following topics:

- While there are many qualitative studies, not much quantitative data on this subject that is particular to Scotland exists. UK-wide data is often insufficient, and does not provide a clear picture of perceptions of discrimination and prejudice exclusively in Scotland. Furthermore, data on the direct experiences of BME people is lost.
- This research is preliminary and will be broadened if additional funding is secured. However, it is an important starting point.
- The survey process involved 503 individuals.
- The research addresses topics such as:
 - Personal experiences of discrimination in Scotland
 - Whether discrimination is felt to be a widespread problem in Scotland
 - What personal characteristics have led to discrimination
 - Public spheres in which discrimination is experienced (education, health, housing, transport, work, pay)
 - Reporting discrimination
 - Encouraging others to report discrimination
 - Confidence in authorities to pursue discrimination cases
 - Confidence in laws against discrimination
 - The Scottish Government's efforts to tackle discrimination
- Key findings included:
 - 31% of the aggregated sample "agreed" with the statement, "I have experienced discrimination in Scotland in the last 5 years." (This is varied amongst different groups, e.g. nearly 45% of respondents with a Black African Caribbean heritage agreed with that statement, compared with 29% of Asian heritage, and 23% of mixed heritage respondents.)
 - Nearly 35% agreed with the less personalised statement, "Discrimination is a widespread problem in Scotland," and 42% agreed with the statement that, "Other people would perceive discrimination to be a problem in Scotland."
 - Of those who reported experiencing discrimination, 82% felt this was due to their real or perceived ethnicity, and a further 42% felt it was due to their real or perceived religion.
- There is significant variance among ethnic groups of experiences of discrimination.
- Scotland appears to have more of a problem with discrimination than UK-wide surveys indicate.

- The difference in actual reporting of discrimination, which is very low, and encouraging others to report discrimination, which is very high, indicates that BME people are living with and negotiating everyday racism and institutional racism, but have confidence in the law and authorities.
- The research also indicates that BME people in Scotland have a strong Scottish identity and ownership of Scotland.

Dr. Meer accepted questions and comments from members.

Dr. Meer agreed to send the report around the CPG to answer further questions about methodology, scope, demographics, and findings. The Convener thanked Dr. Meer, and suggested he be invited to the CPG again, as his research continues.

Presentation and Discussion: Update from the Sheku Bayoh Campaign – Davidson Chademana and Adeyemi Johnson

Davidson Chademana and Adeyemi Johnson of the Sheku Bayoh Campaign addressed the group about the work of their campaign. Their presentation touched on the following topics:

- The story of Sheku Bayoh, who died in police custody in Kirckaldy in May 2015.
- The ongoing investigation into the death of Mr. Bayoh, and the many stories told to the family in the days, weeks, and months following the death of Mr. Bayoh
- The misrepresentation of information and falsities the press have published about Mr. Bayoh, and attempts to blame him for his death
- The lack of apology from Police Scotland following the death of Mr. Bayoh
- The lack of police conviction following over 11 deaths in Scotland of individuals in police custody.
- A meeting in London in late October of families who had lost loved ones who were in police custody from around the world.
- A mobile app created by the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States, which allows users to video crimes occurring, and send the footage directly to law firms.
- Efforts to bring this system to Scotland so that people can report crimes without fear.
- The plans of the Sheku Bayoh Campaign to write about the experiences of families following the death of a loved one in police custody, and the need for support, answers, and help with costs. The families of victims should be practically supported.
- The need for Police Scotland to be held accountable, and the uncertainty as to who holds Police Scotland accountable
- The need for a study into police culture and institutional racism since the Stephen Lawrence inquiry

- The actions of the Sheku Bayoh Campaign to camping to find answers and accountability

Davidson Chademana and Adeyemi Johnson accepted questions and comments from members. Issues explored included:

- The strength and perseverance of the family
- The need for BME communities to show solidarity and support the campaign
- The need for an independent judicial review, and for the involvement of the Lord Advocate
- Personal experiences of racism from the police
- An upcoming judicial inquiry in England and Wales into deaths in police custody
- The need for Scotland to undertake a similar inquiry
- Upcoming meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, and the need to gather evidence of police brutality to present to him at the meeting
- The Sheku Bayoh Campaign's need for funds for experts and legal advice.

The Secretariat agreed to send information to the CPG, encouraging members to submit their own experience and highlighting the campaign's need for funds.

Matters Arising

The Convener advised that following the events of the previous meeting on 18th February 2015, the CPG wrote to the CPG on Rare Diseases, on behalf of a member who believed she was excluded from participating in the CPG on Rare Diseases. Following correspondence from the CPG on Rare Diseases, this was found to be a misrepresentation of the events.

As such, the minutes of the previous meeting will be amended. The CPG also agreed to issue an apology to the CPG on Rare Diseases.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved, following the approved changes made to "Any Other Business".

Any Other Business

Due to time constrictions, Any Other Business was not addressed at this session of the CPG.

Dates of Future Meetings

Upcoming meetings will be held on Tuesday 12th January from 18:00 to 19:30, and on Wednesday 9th March from 13:00 to 14:00.

