

The Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on
Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Minutes of Meeting Wednesday 2 May 2018 1pm

Scottish Parliament Committee Room 1

In attendance

Sharon Belshaw, Break the Silence, Andrew Campbell, Co-Convenor, Ann Donnan, Safe Space, Dr Sandra Ferguson, Sinaead Griffin, Monica Lennon MSP's Office, Johann Lamont, MSP Deputy Convenor, Margaret Mitchell, MSP Convenor, Anne Macdonald, Co-Convenor, Fulton MacGregor MSP, Dr Javita Narang, Social Destination Trauma Services, Joy Patrick, KASP, Dr Eric Swanepoel, Writer and Researcher Alison Tait, Break the Silence, Gillian Urquhart, Moira Anderson Foundation, Alison Wales, NSPCC, Carol Willson, Student

Apologies

Stuart Allardyce, Stop it Now!, May Chamberlain, Relationships Scotland, Ilene Easton, Open Secret, Ruth Friskney, Barnardos, Sue Hampson, Safe to Say, Traci Kirkland, Wellbeing Scotland, Rachel Love, NSPCC, Sarah Nelson, Researcher, Janine Rennie, Wellbeing Scotland, Jackie Smith, Say Women, Alison Tait, Break the Silence

Welcome and apologies

Margaret Mitchell MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting. She particularly welcomed Joy Patrick who has recently been appointed as Manager of Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project, KASP.

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 7th March were proposed by Anne Macdonald and seconded by Dr Javita Narang with agreement that there would be a slight amendment suggested by Johann on the matter of. **Action Anne**

Matters arising

Police Scotland's Information Leaflet for Survivors

Anne has contacted DCI Henderson; however there has been no response prior to this meeting. Anne will follow up. **Action Anne**

Treasurer's Report

In Janine's absence Anne informed the group that Janine will be in contact with Joy from KASP regarding becoming a second signatory. **Action Janine**

NSPCC brief of Presentation by Rachel and Alison

This was circulated to group members by Anne.

NSPCC: Rise in sexual offences against children in Scotland

Johann read out the following which was acknowledged as making sober reading and it is our firm intention to continue to support the work of NSPCC.

The number of recorded sexual offences against children in Scotland has risen by 9% in the last year, official figures show:

- The most common form of offence related to indecent images of children.
- NSPCC Scotland found there were 4,762 offences recorded by Police Scotland in 2016/17, up from 4,368 in the previous year.
- A number of cases are believed to relate to non-recent child sexual offences.
- The rise is being partly put down to victims feeling more confident about disclosing abuse following high-profile cases.
- Improved police recording methods are also believed to be a factor.
- NSPCC Scotland has now called for improvement in support for victims.
- The figures were obtained from the Scottish government after being collated by Police Scotland.
- They follow a similar trend UK-wide where the number of offences increased from 56,324 to 64,667 over the same period.
- Matt Forde, national head of service for NSPCC Scotland, said: "These figures show a worrying trend in offending against children and should be a red flag to both the public and the government.
- "Sexual abuse can destroy a child's life, leaving them feeling ashamed and depressed or even suicidal, so it takes incredible courage to come forward and report this to the authorities.
- "That improved confidence is welcomed but our greatest concern is that, against this backdrop of increasing offending and reporting, our recent research of data and integrated children's plans across the country found very little provision to help victims recover following sexual abuse."
- The NSPCC said the availability of recovery services was "patchy and inconsistent", with delivery relying on third sector organisations.
- The charity is calling for the creation of a "Children's House" model where victims can undergo all necessary medical, forensic and therapeutic services at a single location

Invitation to Cabinet Minister for Justice

It was agreed that we will contact Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice inviting him to attend our autumn meeting to discuss relevant justice issues facing survivors. **Action Margaret and Johann**

Approach for membership

Margaret was approached by Emma Bryson who would like to join the CPG. Emma has been involved in highlighting the need for reform of the legal requirement for corroboration. Following discussion it was agreed that it might be helpful for Anne and Andrew to meet with Emma to discuss our work. **Action Anne and Andrew**

Future Work Programme

There was a brief discussion on progress on the above which has been problematic due to constraints of time by the sub group; however a draft questionnaire was distributed to members the deadline is set 30th May 2018 after this a reminder will be forwarded to agencies. **Action: Andrew, Carol, Janine and Anne**

Dr Javita Narang Presentation: Hidden in Silence Training Handbook

Javita gave a presentation about the Training Handbook that is being developed on Childhood Sexual Abuse (CSA) within the ethnic minorities in Scotland. It will accompany the documentary film that was made by Javita and Nauman Qureshi on the same topic.

This Training Tool, 'Hidden in Silence', comprising the handbook and the film, is envisaged as a user friendly resource for training professionals/practitioners/service providers across Scotland on issues concerning survivors of CSA from the Scottish ethnic minorities. Based on the core issues identified in the documentary film, the training handbook covers four key modules including: 1. the basics of CSA; 2. Police and legal proceedings; 3. Psychological trauma and services; and 4. National policies, strategies and programme.

Each module emphasises the impact and service provision, including availability, access and gaps in services, specific to the survivors from the Scottish ethnic minority communities. Both, the film and handbook, have been based on interviews and consultations with survivors of CSA and service providers across Scotland. Hence, it reflects the lived realities and experiences of key stakeholders including survivors. The handbook also emphasises the recommendations from the documentary film as well as the consultations held during the preparation of the handbook.

Javita will keep the CPG informed and updated about the progress on the development of the training handbook. The training tool, including the handbook and the film, will be made available to all service providers across Scotland when it is ready. She is happy to address any further queries of the CPG members and can be contacted at: info.socialdestination@gmail.com

AOCB

Adverse Childhood Experiences Cross Party Group

Andrew had drawn to our attention the forming of this new Cross Party Group in the parliament. The ACE study was brought to the attention of the Scottish Government when the National Strategy SurvivorScotland was formed in 2005 by Anne Macdonald and Sarah Nelson. It was used to form an understanding for the policy team in SG of the physical and psychological effects of childhood abuse and childhood sexual abuse arise following adverse childhood experiences.

There was some surprise that we had not been informed of their work, especially as there is a clear overlap on both groups. It was agreed that Anne and Andrew would approach Gail Ross MSP to discuss both our aims and objectives. **Action Anne and Andrew**

Petition

Johann sought slight amendment re petition which is being considered by the Public Petitions Committee. Johann agreed to keep the COG updated on its progress and to ensure the Public Petitions Committee is made aware of the CPG's work. It was agreed that Johann and Anne would meet to discuss. **Action Johann and Anne**

Date of Next Meeting and AGM

Date of next meeting and AGM is Wednesday 12 September 2018 1.00 pm **CR4** Scottish Parliament Building. We hope that as many members possible will attend.