

Cross-Party Group on Credit Unions

Minutes of the meeting held at 6pm on Tuesday 25 October 2016 in
The Fairfax Somerville Room, Scottish Parliament

Present

Ruth Maguire MSP (Convenor); Ben MacPherson MSP; Ashley Douglas (Scottish Parliament); Sarah Masson (Scottish Parliament); Karen Hurst (ABCUL).

Apologies

Claudia Beamish MSP (Deputy Convenor); Alison Harris MSP; Andy Wightman MSP

1. Karen Hurst, on behalf of ABCUL thanked everyone for attending, noted apologies, and in particular drew attention to those of Claudia Beamish MSP, who was particularly keen to attend but had to withdraw due to an urgent issue.
2. Karen provided some background on the CPG, which has been running since 2009, and the work that it has done.
3. Karen noted that both convenors of the group had not been re-elected at the recent election, and the previous secretariat had moved on, so the group would have to elect replacements.
 - It was proposed, and agreed, that Ruth Maguire MSP would be the Convenor.
 - It was proposed, and agreed, that Claudia Beamish MSP would be elected as Deputy Convenor. Claudia has indicated previously that she would be keen to undertake this role.
 - It was proposed, and agreed, that Karen Hurst, as Policy Officer for the Association of British Credit Unions (Scotland) would act as secretariat (ABCUL being the official secretariat).
4. There was a general discussion about the many reasons that credit unions should be promoted within Parliament. Ben MacPherson noted that he was particularly proud of the work currently being carried by Castle Community Bank in his own constituency. He also noted the important role that credit unions played in promoting financial inclusion.
5. Karen Hurst explained that a number of different bodies had published reports over the past few months supporting credit unions as a positive solution on access to affordable credit.
6. Ruth Maguire MSP noted that she was looking forward to a programme of interesting meetings, and drew attention to many of the topics that the group could discuss.
7. It was agreed that Karen Hurst would ensure that the relevant paperwork to register the CPG would be submitted and, pending formal registration, liaise with MSPs' offices regarding the date of the first meeting. It was agreed that an invitation would be issued to Angela Constance MSP, as the new Cabinet Secretary for responsibility for credit unions.
8. The meeting was closed.