

Minutes of Cross Party Group on Alcohol and Drugs

Held on 4 December, 2018, Committee Room 6 at the Scottish Parliament

1 Attendance and apologies

John Finnie MSP co-convener, Tom Arthur MSP and Ruth McGuire MSP

Alistair	Brown	Scottish Association of Social Work
Joanna	Buick	
Emma	Fletcher	NHS Tayside
Susan	Grant	The Salvation Army
Laura	Hoskins	Community Justice Scotland
Ewan	Law	Rowan Alba
Dave	Liddell	Scottish Drugs Forum
Mark	McCann	MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, University of Glasgow
Tracey	McFall	Turning Point Scotland
Iain	McPhee	University of the West of Scotland
Gary	Meek	Glasgow Council on Alcohol
Justina	Murray	Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs
Cameron	Scally	
Austin	Smith	Scottish Drugs Forum
Tracey	Stewart	Rowan Alba
Tim	Stone	The Salvation Army
Michael	Trail	Jericho House
Steven	Turner	The Salvation Army
Kira	Weir	CREW
Georgios	Pappas	Big Lottery Fund

Apologies were received from Monica Lennon MSP

2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 2nd October

These were approved

3 Annual Report for 2017/18

The report was approved

4 Election of Officer bearers

These were approved as follows

Conveners: John Finnie MSP and Monica Lennon MSP

Deputy Conveners

Miles Briggs MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP, Tom Arthur MSP, SNP

5 Secretariat

Scottish Drugs Forum were appointed as the secretariat for the coming year.

6 Stigma re alcohol and drugs

The Committee heard from two speakers:

- Justina Murray, Chief Executive Officer, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs – presentation attached
- Sadie Prior, Family Addiction Support Service (FASS), Glasgow

Sadie spoke about the stigma experience by her granddaughter as a result of daughter's drug problem.

She highlighted the work of a kinship carers group in Possilpark that had 48 members and the crucial role that FASS played in supporting these groups.

The discussion highlighted the following:

Stigma

That stigma itself was a complicated issue and that potentially reducing stigma on one group may inadvertently increase it on another.

Society tended to have a view on who were 'victims' and who 'through the notion of a lifestyle choice' somehow 'deserved their plight'.

It was acknowledged that language used in the media was shocking and this needed to be challenged and MSPs should lead by example. It was highlighted that the new strategy recommended the language contained in the Global Drug Commission report and this was welcomed.

Family support

SFAAD felt funding was a massive issue and discussions with ADPs were not always that productive as they acknowledged the need but then didn't often prioritise that need.

ACEs

It was acknowledged that this could be a useful way of highlighting underlying issues but could also be stigmatizing and perhaps down played wider issues regarding poverty and inequality.

Rural issues and stigma

There were specific issues with regard to stigma around drug and alcohol problems in rural areas which related to the interconnectedness of people meaning that confidentiality could be easily be breached.

7 Topics for future meetings

It was agreed that the new strategy could be the topic of the next meeting and the Minister should be invited to speak.

8 Dates of future meetings

26 February 2019 at 6pm in the James Clerk Maxwell Room (CR4)

28 May 2019 at 6pm in the James Clerk Maxwell Room (CR4)