

Cross-Party Group on LGBTI+ issues

Draft minute of Wednesday 14 December 2016 meeting

Venue: Scottish Parliament, Committee Room 4

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Jamie Greene MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament (Convenor)
Patrick Harvie MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament
Kezia Dugdale MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament
Ben Macpherson MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament
Annie Wells MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament
Ross Thomson MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament

Liam Stevenson	TIE Campaign
Jordan Daly	TIE Campaign
Colin Macfarlane	Stonewall Scotland
Maruska Greenwood	LGBT Health and Wellbeing
Cara Spence	LGBT Youth Scotland
Stuart Duffy	Pink Saltire
Liam Beattie	HIV Scotland
Izzy Proctor	HIV Scotland
Aaron Slater	Fearless
Alistair Rose	SX and Waverley Care
Tim Hopkins	Equality Network
Hannah Pearson	Equality Network

Observing:

Paul F Cockburn	Individual
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Apologies:

Rona Mackay MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament
Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP	Member of the Scottish Parliament

The meeting was chaired by Patrick Harvie MSP.

2. Introductions and new members

It was agreed to accept the request of Pride Glasgow to join the group. The group secretary will add them to the mailing list and notify the Standards Committee team.

3. Administrative issues: donations for refreshments, mailing list and document sharing arrangements, social media

It was agreed to collect donations at meetings to cover the cost of refreshments, with the secretary administering.

It was agreed that a private mailing list would be created for the purposes of group correspondence and file sharing. The group secretary will look into the possibility of using Google groups.

It was agreed that the group wouldn't have separate social media accounts at present, as the majority of MSPs and organisation members use their own social media channels. The possibility of creating an LGBTI+ CPG Facebook page in the future was discussed, but it was agreed that in the meantime when referencing the group on social media, members would use a group hashtag, such as #LGBTI+CPG (to be decided at the next meeting).

It was agreed that members will ask the permission of the group in advance if they wish to publish or publicise anything related to the group's activities. The group will be a safe environment for members to engage in discussion.

4. Note from the previous meeting

Members requested clarification of the numbering system on the "wish-list" of potential issues – these indicate how many members mentioned each issue, but should not be interpreted as priorities.

5. Timeline context for LGBTI+ issues, including legislative programme

It was noted that the group should keep abreast of both the government and parliamentary programmes throughout the year, for LGBTI+ relevant issues. The group secretary has already made a start with this.

It was agreed that members would share by email any updates to the timeline document, once the group email is established.

6. Decision on work programme for the next 12 months

PH suggested that the group could encourage MSPs to lodge relevant motions and/or ask parliamentary questions. He also suggested the possibility of the group hosting events relevant to the legislative programme, and inviting external speakers. He pointed out that CPGs can hold inquiries and produce reports.

JG supported PH's suggestion and said he would be happy to lodge suitable motions and questions in parliament. Motions for members business debates could also be an opportunity.

TIE campaign noted that they will be pushing their pledge and encouraging MSPs to sign up in early 2017, and suggested that the theme of the group's April meeting be education.

PH supported TIE's comment, although suggested addressing education may be difficult to do before the local elections in May.

Stonewall Scotland noted that they will be producing an organisational manifesto for the local elections, including a collective call to action which the group could promote.

TIE and HIV Scotland raised the issue of mental health, and suggested we work collaboratively with the Mental Health CPG, providing an LGBTI+ perspective. The Group might want to invite the Minister for Mental Health to a meeting.

LGBT Youth also noted the importance of including mental health as an LGBTI+ issue and highlighted the work their organisation does around this.

LGBT Youth raised the topic of LGBT History Month. In Scotland, next year's theme will be heritage. LGBT Youth suggested using this as an opportunity to lodge a motion in parliament and/or push the TIE campaign and LGBTI+ inclusive education in history lessons in school.

PH suggested that the February meeting could be themed around LGBT History Month, and look at issues around age and heritage. We might also have an exhibition stall at the Parliament in February.

SX Scotland suggested LGBT History Month might also be a good opportunity to focus on LGBT aging, inequalities in care homes for LGBT people, etc. We could invite LGBT Health and Wellbeing's LGBT Age group to the meeting that month.

LGBT Youth highlighted Purple Friday on Friday 24 February 2017 as a good social media opportunity for the group. We could issue a press release for this date to raise awareness of both the day itself and the work of the LGBTI+ CPG.

HIV Scotland and SX both raised PrEP as an issue the group may want to address, although it was noted this issue was more in the remit of the Sexual Health CPG. KD, who is also a member of the Sexual Health CPG, said we should have open channels of communication between the groups, with the possibility of having a joint meeting at some stage next year.

It was noted that the deadline for people to make submissions to the Scottish Medicines Consortium in response to their consultation on Gilead's application to approve PrEP for NHS Scotland funding, is Feb 4th.

SX suggested the group undertaking a mapping exercise of services for LGBT people across Scotland, as well as possibly linking in with the work of the Rural Policy CPG.

More generally it was suggested that the "wish-list" developed at the 28th September meeting could be mapped against existing CPGs to see where there is synergy.

LGBT Health and Wellbeing suggested hate crime being the focus of one group meeting, especially given the recent work the Equality Network have done on hate crime.

PH asked the scope of the Equality Network's work on hate crime, and their recent LGBTI hate crime survey was discussed. It was confirmed that a report of their findings is due to be published in March 2017.

There was then some discussion around the likely repeal of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012. Most external members of the group would rather see reform of the Act than repeal, as well as a review of wider hate crime legislation.

MSPs to find out if there is going to be a meeting to discuss the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 before Stage 1 commences.

Equality Network raised the issue of online hate crime, citing their recent survey findings as well as the Report of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion, which called for the Scottish Government to review online hate crime.

Equality Network to share said report with the group once the mailing list is up and running.

PH suggested incorporating global LGBTI+ issues into the meetings in the future, perhaps when the group is more established. It was noted there has been more international interest since the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

JG supported PH's suggestion, and said MSPs could incorporate an LGBTI+ perspective into meetings with visitors from other countries, as well as when MSPs visit other countries themselves. We should not be afraid to ask difficult questions.

It was noted that there are CPGs on for example Russia, Malawi and Taiwan which various group members are engaged with.

Equality Network highlighted the international perspective of their Equal Recognition campaign, and suggested best practice in international gender recognition legislation is a topic we can possibly look at in a future meeting.

JG suggested inviting an intersex speaker to one meeting to raise awareness of intersex issues. This was followed by some discussion on the difference between intersex and trans.

Equality Network noted that they could potentially arrange an intersex activist speaker.

It was agreed that the February group meeting will focus on LGBT History Month (including age and heritage), the April meeting on education issues (TIE campaign) and local government asks, and the June meeting on mental health and/or gender recognition (including trans and intersex awareness). It was noted however that we

might have to push back looking at gender recognition if the Scottish Government consultation hasn't launched by then.

7. Initial discussion (subject dependent on work programme!)

It was agreed that the group's first focus will be on blood donation. There was general consensus that the recent parliamentary debate on blood donation was very good but had received a disappointing response from the minister.

It was agreed that a letter from the MSP members of the LGBTI+ CPG to the Scottish Government would be a good idea.

HIV Scotland and SX agreed to work on a first draft of the letter, and circulate to group members.

It was noted that MSPs who spoke in the blood donation debate might also be interested in signing the letter, as well as members of the CPG on blood-borne viruses.

8. Any other business

TIE asked if a similar collective letter/ statement from the group could be produced on inclusive education. It was agreed that this business would be resumed at the next meeting in February, when TIE can update the group on their new year campaign push and we can assess the level of support. There was a discussion about ways of taking forward the education inclusion campaign. Suggested were circulating the pledge to MSPs to sign up to, asking an MSP to submit a motion for a member's business debate, holding a press event, and having a stall in the Parliament.

LGBT Youth highlighted the current Governance Review 'Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve excellence and equity in education', which is open for consultation until 6 January 2017. LGBT Youth have a concern that the focus on the attainment challenge could to some extent sideline LGBTI issues – we need to demonstrate the negative effect on attainment of LGBTI exclusion. For this, we need data on educational outcomes for LGBTI people. LGBT Youth and Stonewall Scotland are working on a paper on this. It should also be remembered that HBT-phobic bullying in schools doesn't only affect LGBTI people – it also affects families, people who are perceived as gender non-conforming, etc.

Stonewall Scotland asked if group members could promote the 'Stonewall Survey 2017' through our various networks. The survey is looking at life for young LGBT people across Britain, and Stonewall Scotland will extrapolate the Scottish data.

LGBT Youth circulated briefing on LGBT History Month Scotland.

JG asked Stonewall Scotland about the timeframe of their Rainbow Laces campaign. In Scotland, the focus is on grass roots clubs, and encouraging people to wear the laces whenever they want, and this has gone well.

PH raised the issue of other organisations/ groups who should be part of the LGBTI+ CPG, but who may have been overlooked. It was agreed that all group members would think about this before the next meeting.

JG suggested reaching out to rural LGBT groups, and PH said we could have a CPG meeting outside of the parliament if it enabled more people to attend.

There was a brief discussion of sports issues and it was agreed to invite LEAP Sports to join the group.

The convener thanked everyone for participating.

9. Dates of the next two meetings

Wednesday 1 February 2017, Committee Room 3, 6-8pm

Wednesday 19 April 2017, Committee Room 5, 6-8pm

AGREED ACTIONS

- Group secretariat to invite LGBT Health and Wellbeing's LGBT Age group to February's meeting.
- MSPs to find out if there is going to be a meeting to discuss the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 before Stage 1 commences.
- Equality Network to share the Report of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion with the group via the group mailing list.
- The February group meeting will focus on LGBT History Month (including age and heritage), the April meeting on education issues (TIE campaign) and local government asks, and the June meeting on mental health and/or gender recognition (including trans and intersex awareness).
- The group's first focus will be on blood donation. HIV Scotland and SX agreed to draft a letter on behalf of the group to the Scottish Government, urging them to reconsider the issue.