

Scottish Parliament
Cross Party Group on Poland AGM and Meeting
Wednesday, 27 September 2017, 1.00-2.30 pm, Committee Room 1

MINUTES

In attendance:

Co-Conveners

Claire Baker MSP, Scottish Labour

Maree Todd MSP, Scottish National Party

MSPs

Ivan McKee MSP, Scottish National Party

Members

Dobrawa Jezior, Secretary

Sylwia Spooner, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland

Krystyna Szumelukowa, Brexit and Beyond

Archie Mackay, General Stanislaw Maczek Memorial Trust

Prof. Karin Friedrich, University of Aberdeen

Lidia Krzynowek, Polish Cultural Festival Association

Katarzyna Jajszczok, Fife Free Press

Dorota Peszkowska, Emito.net

Pawel Kopeć, Polish Cultural Festival Association

Olivia Willis, Polish Professionals Forum

George Rubiński

Robert Hodgart

Zofia Wierzbowicz-Fraser, Polish Education Committee

Dr Andrew Roach, Polish Education Committee

Dr John Bates, Polish Education Committee, University of Glasgow

Sylwia Kiro Żabinska-MacIntyre, Process Walk, Feniks, Scottish Polish Cultural Association

Keith Mullins-MacIntyre, Scottish Polish Cultural Association

Michael Borland, Scottish Polish Cultural Association

Sacha Ponniah, Police Scotland

Martin Stepek

Pawel Bladocha

1. Welcome from the Co-Convenor, Claire Baker MSP

Claire Baker MSP welcomed Members to the meeting and informed them that the AGM would be held once the second Co-Convenor arrives.

2. Apologies

Anna Ruszel, Polish Professional Forum

Grazyna Fremi

Dr David Worthington, University of Highlands and Islands

Aileen Orr

Katie Fraser, General Stanislaw Maczek Memorial Trust

Bartlomiej Kowalczyk, Polish Business Link

Czeslaw Kruk

Joanna Zawadzka, Polish Cultural Festival Association

Violeta Ilendo, Fife Polish Education Trust

Grant Robertson, Police Scotland

3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of last meeting of CPG on Poland were approved by the group.

A number of issues raised after the last meeting were discussed:

- 1) sufficient time to be given at the beginning of each meeting so that everyone should be able to introduce themselves;
- 2) times of the meetings to alternate between lunchtime and evening meetings;
- 3) speakers to have limited time for their presentations; meetings to be more balanced to allow everyone to participate, Q&A to have restricted time as well;
- 6) report from the Polish Consul General: Claire to speak to other Conveners to find out how they work with their respective Consuls.

Annual General Meeting

Co-Conveners Report

The Group has had good attendance with many guest speakers attending the meetings over the last year.

Election of Office-bearers

Co- Conveners stated they are content to remain Co -conveners of the group.

Claire Baker MSP and Maree Todd MSP were nominated by Ivan McKee MSP and re-elected.

Dobrawa Jezior informed the group she would be standing down as secretariat of the CPG on Poland.

CPG proper meeting was resumed.

4. General Stanislaw Maczek Memorial Trust update

An update on the campaign to commemorate General Stanislaw Maczek in Edinburgh was provided by Archie Mackay. The campaign is moving forward and the Trust is close to signing a contract with the Polish artist who will produce the statue.

5. Sub-committees

a) Update from the Brexit and Beyond group, Krystyna Szumelukowa (full report attached)

The group has not met since the last CPG on 21 June as the UK-EU negotiations have not made sufficient progress evidenced by the PM's Florentine speech on 22 September.

The three principal issues of EU citizenship, the financial settlement and the Irish border question still require details to be agreed.

The Scottish Government has responded in detail to the publication of The European Union (Withdrawal) Bill which was published on 13 July and there has been an extensive discussion to promote these concerns in Scotland.

The dates for your diary

The Rally for Europe, Saturday 14 October, 2pm to 4pm, The Mound, Edinburgh. Organised by the Young European Movement Edinburgh and the European Movement in Scotland (EMiS).

EMiS Annual General Meeting, Friday 27 October, 6pm-9pm, Royal Overseas League, 100 Princes St, Edinburgh. David Martin MEP and Alyn Smith MEP will address the EMiS AGM this year.

UK/Poland Belvedere Forum reception to be hosted by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) will take place in London on 17 October. The FCO has extended invitations to a wider representation from Scotland and the reception will be followed in 2018 by the full forum meeting planned to take place in the UK.

Cases of practical discrimination against EU citizens in Scotland were discussed.

Action point: Claire to write to Michael Russell highlighting the illegality of such actions and invite him to the future CPG on Poland meeting.

b) Update from the Business group, Olivia Willis, Polish Professionals Forum

Recent PPF activities have included networking events, mentoring and workshops by Polish and Scottish business experts on cyber security, mortgage and property.

c) Update from the Culture group

Pawel Kopec, Scottish Polish Cultural Association

Young Talents concert was held on 24 of September. The concert promotes musically talented children aged 10-18.

The Scottish Polish Tartan Festival: Scottish Tartan for Krakow project's final phase will take place in Krakow next weekend. The winner of the competition has been selected by the people of Krakow, who voted for their favourite pattern in June. The winning design has been woven into fabric and presented to a representative of Krakow.

Lidia Krzynowek updated the group on the Kite and Trumpet Festival of Polish Art for Children taking place on 12-22 October in Edinburgh <https://kiteandtrumpet.com/>.

Krystyna Szumelukowa: The Zielony Balonik: Scottish Polish Book Club has now launched its new web site: <https://www.zielonybalonik-bookclub.org.uk/>.

The club's next reading is History of a Disappearance: The Story of a Forgotten Polish Town by Filip Springer and translated by Sean Bye. The book club will be discussing this at The Saltire Society from 2pm on Saturday 7th October.

A special event celebrating the work of Joseph Conrad is to be held on St. Andrew's Day, Thursday 30th November at St Augustine's Church on George IV Bridge, Edinburgh. Further details will be circulated shortly.

Prof. Dr. Karin Friedrich

Exhibition celebrating Polish WWII resistance fighter on display at Aberdeen University. An exhibition celebrating the life and achievements of Polish World War II resistance fighter and Georgetown University professor, Jan Karski, has gone on display at the University of Aberdeen's Sir Duncan Rice Library: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/news/11234/>

Home Abroad: lost and found - a series of talks on the heritage and identity of Polish and Lithuanian migrants to Scotland. The event will take place in two parts: 'Heritage: lost, found and reclaimed', Tuesday 21 November, 7:00pm-9:00pm, Aberdeen Science Centre; 'Never home abroad? Identity and citizenship in a post-Brexit UK', Friday 24 November, 7:00pm-9:00pm, Aberdeen Science Centre <https://beinghumanfestival.org/event/home-abroad-lost-and-found/><https://beinghumanfestival.org/event/home-abroad-lost-and-found-2/>

d) Education - update from the Education group, Zosia Wierzbowicz-Fraser

The campaign to introduce the Polish language into mainstream Scottish school is moving forward.

APPLA has been working on infographics with Polish language information which can be now downloaded from their website: <http://www.appla.org/>.

During October/November there will be training courses for Polish teachers run by the Catholic University in Lublin.

On 4th November in Glasgow at the SALT (Scottish Association for Language Teaching) Conference Dr Elwira Grossman will present information on the 'Wojtek' material to be piloted at L3 level in Scottish schools.

More and more schools are presenting pupils for the AQA GCSE and A level exams in Polish.

A series of workshops for parents on the role of Polish Saturday Schools and after school clubs in promoting the Polish language and culture will be run across Scotland in November and December.

The group is exploring the format of starting a petition regarding Polish becoming available as an exam at Higher/Advanced Higher level within the curriculum in Scottish schools.

e) Update from the Support group, Kiro Żabinska-MacIntyre

A project dedicated to tackling depression among members of the Polish community will be held in November. Further details TBC.

6. AOB

Hate Crime Awareness Week to be held in October.

Events diary to be introduced to facilitate exchange of information.

7. Date of the next meeting in December: TBC