

**Cross Party Group on Volunteering AGM
Minute
Wednesday 4th June 2019, 12.00-1.00pm
Committee Room 3, Scottish Parliament
Convenor: Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP**

Attendees

MSP members of the Group

Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP – Scottish Liberal Democrat Party
Jeremy Balfour MSP - Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party
Aileen Campbell MSP – Scottish National Party

Non-MSPs Members of the Group:

Margaret Starkie – Volunteer Scotland, Rosie Abernethy – Volunteer Scotland, Sarah Gardiner – Volunteer Scotland, Paul Okroj – CHSS, Sarah Latto – Shelter Scotland, Sarah Van Putten – Befriending Networks, James Jopling – Samaritans, Morven McLean – CHAS, Cat Campbell – Children 1st, Paul Reddish – Project Scotland, Kim Atkinson – SSA, Louise McGinty – Quarriers, Lucy Higginson – Homestart UK, Ruth Hutton – SG Third Sector Unit, Helen Webster – SG Third Sector Unit, Gail Cassidy – Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire, Jenny Snell – Youth Link Scotland, Ellie Snape – Project Scotland, David Maxwell – Volunteer Glasgow, Joanne Rae – SVE, Kirsty MacDonald – Volunteer Centre Western Isles, Jennifer Reston – Aberlour, Helen Fleming – Dyslexia Scotland, Bill Wylie – Impact Funding Partners, Brian Lawson - VC Borders, Briana Pegado – Voluntary Arts Scotland, Daryl Cuthbert – Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland, Diane Waugh – Macmillan Cancer Care, Neil Henry – Camphill Scotland, Erin Fulton – PAS, Fiona Inglis – Impact Funding Partners, Gail Cassidy – Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire, Janis McCulloch – Scouts, Jason Wallace – Scottish Drugs Forum, Jonathan Christie – The Wood Foundation, Kelly MacKay – Project Scotland, Kelly McKnight – Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Lisa Taylor – NHS Healthcare Improvement, Liz Green – Youth Link, Louise Andree – Lead Scotland, Martha Roger – Machan trust, Mike Melvin – ACVO, Natalie Burnside – Volunteer Midlothian, Pat Scrutton – Intergenerational National Network, Paul Wilson – Volunteer Edinburgh, Racheal Hatfield – Project Scotland, Robert McGeachy – Camphill Scotland, Rona Mackenzie – CHSS, Tracey Stone – Volunteer Glasgow

Apologies

MSP members of the Group

Pauline McNeil MSP – Scottish Labour Party
Johann Lamont MSP – Scottish Labour Party
Fulton MacGregor MSP – Scottish National Party
Gordon Lindhurst MSP - Scottish National Party

Non-MSPs Members of the Group:

A considerable number of apologies were received for this meeting.

1. Welcome and introductions

The Convenor, Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP welcomed everyone to the Volunteers Week themed meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Volunteering. Alex thanked Ms Aileen Campbell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government for taking time out of her schedule to come along and meet volunteers and to highlight the importance of volunteering across all Govt. directorates.

The convenor highlighted that this was a one of the most dynamic and well attended CPG within Scottish Parliament which emphasises the importance of Volunteering across Scotland.

All agreed it was a fantastic turn out of volunteers for this meeting and a

2. Minutes of previous meeting held on 30th January 2019 (March meeting was cancelled)

The minutes of the last meeting held on 30th January 2019 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Paul Okroj, CHSS, seconded by Sarah Latto – Shelter Scotland.

3. Minutes of previous AGM meeting held on 7th June 2018

The minutes of the last AGM meeting held on 7th June 2018 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP, seconded by Margaret Starkie – Volunteer Scotland.

4. Election of office bearers

Paul Okroj thanked the Convener and Vice Convener for their continued support throughout the year including out with CPG meetings.

It was agreed that Alex Cole Hamilton MSP would stand again as Convener; proposed by Kim Atkinson – Scottish Sports Association, seconded by Jennifer Reston – Aberlour

It was also agreed that Jeremy Balfour MSP would continue as Vice Convener; proposed by Kim Atkinson – Scottish Sports Association, seconded by Jennifer Reston – Aberlour

The Convener thanked the Secretariat, Paul Okroj – Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland and Margaret Starkie – Volunteer Scotland for all their hard work and support in the last year and for creating one of the most functional and largest Cross-Party Group meetings.

Paul Okroj- CHSS announced he was stepping down from the secretariat as he was no longer chair of the Scottish Volunteering Forum. The Convener proposed Margaret Starkie – Volunteer Scotland continue in the role of secretariat, Margaret agreed. This was seconded by Morven McLean - CHAS.

The convener and CPG members thanked Paul Okroj for the contribution he has made to starting the CPG on Volunteering and hopes will continue to attend the meetings.

5. Reflection on CPG meeting over last year – Paul Okroj – Secretariat

The Convener highlighted that volunteering provides the answer to social needs and changes in society throughout the world and is thankful to be working with the CPG on Volunteering to make significant changes in Scotland through volunteering.

This CPG continues to be the most successful and best attended by members and cross-party representation than other Cross-Party Groups and given the convener sit on 45 cross party groups the reflection is with evidence. The group has helped increase the profile of Volunteering within Government and has created strong relationships with its members and across parliament and government.

It is the aim of the convener, secretariat and members to continue to strengthen the work the CPG does and to ensure the group takes a lead in volunteering matters/issues and consultations.

6. Youth VIP Team – Recommendations from the Year of Young People 2018

Racheal and Kelly were recruited as Youth VIP ambassadors (YOYP 2018) through Project Scotland and Young Scot of which 20 young people were recruited to lead on a programme of activities and consultations to identify recommendations in which more young people are supported to volunteer and contribute their perspectives, skills and talents to their local communities.

- **Training for voluntary organisations on youth inclusion** – a standardised programme of training available to all voluntary organisations would aim to upskill organisations to enable them to be more inclusive of young people. The training would involve a combined ‘in-person’

and e-learning approach and would be aimed at those who work directly with volunteers, as well as senior staff responsible for strategy and policy, and trustee board members.

- **Local area network meetings** – these meetings would serve a dual purpose; the first is to provide an opportunity for training and skills sharing for volunteer managers within each Local Authority, giving volunteer managers an opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge about working with young people, supporting young people while volunteering, and promoting volunteering to diverse groups of young people online and offline. The second purpose is to provide a local forum for moving forward strategic ideas and developing the implementation of the YouthVIP recommendations and outcomes from the National Volunteering Framework. The involvement of young people and young volunteers in these meetings would be encouraged.
- **Legacy group of young people to oversee implementation of recommendations** – a group of young people from across Scotland should be convened to ensure a continue youth voice in the implementation of the recommendations, and to support the delivery of Scottish Government's National Outcomes Framework. The membership of the group would change over time, and new members provided with training and support. The overall group would also need administrative and logistical support. The legacy group would be responsible for convening an annual summit to review the progress different organisations have made against the recommendations and would themselves work on implementing the recommendations in collaboration with key organisations and stakeholders.
- **Annual volunteering summit** – this summit would be organised by the legacy group and would be a chance for the volunteering sector to come together and review what progress has been made against the objectives set out in the volunteering framework and the recommendations from the YouthVIP group.
- **Review of quality assurance marks for voluntary organisations** – review current quality assurance marks like the Volunteer Friendly (VF) Awards and Investing in Volunteering (iV) with a view to introducing criteria which focus on supporting young volunteers, and criteria, or more weight to existing criteria, which focus on the volunteer experience, rather than policy and strategy.
- **Local area volunteering advisory scheme** – this scheme would aim to connect young people both at school, college and university, and those not in education, training or employment, with volunteering opportunities in their local communities. Each Local Authority area would have dedicated staff putting this scheme into practice, using their professional experience and contacts to connect with schools, training providers and employers, as well as the local third sector.
- **Youth Volunteering Champion schools** – develop a set of principles, criteria and guidelines for schools to work towards becoming a Youth Volunteering Champion (YVC) school. To become a YVC school, the school would have to adopt volunteering into the school ethos and working practices and would need to commit to fulfilling a set of defined outcomes. Each school would be given considerable freedom to decide how to achieve these outcomes, whether that be through offering Youth Achievement Awards, through embedding volunteering in the curriculum, or by other means. In a similar vein to UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award or LGBT Youth Scotland's School's Charter Mark, the YVC achievement could be staged from Bronze to Gold, and last 3-4 years before reassessment is due.
- **Create a framework to support young people not in education, employment or training, to gain work-based skills and personal development through volunteering** – many young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) could benefit from the development opportunities that volunteering affords and can give them valuable experience in a new context to support their future. A framework aimed at getting as many NEET young people into volunteering roles as possible would set out a series of methods for achieving this goal.
- **Roadshows to promote volunteering in local communities** – voluntary organisations would come together to deliver a volunteering event, similar to a Skills Scotland event, getting young people to come and talk to charities and not-for-profits, discover how to find and apply for volunteering roles, and generally promote the benefits of volunteering.
- **Develop guidelines on supporting young volunteers** – as young volunteers frequently have different needs and experiences to adult volunteers, a set of guidelines accessible by voluntary organisations can provide a guide to best practice in dealing with young volunteers.

These guidelines would be co-written with young people to highlight areas of specific concern and provide practical advice on how to attract and keep young volunteers.

- **Access fund for voluntary organisations** – this access fund could be applied to by any charity who fulfils a set of criteria and used to support volunteer accessibility by providing money for transport, child care, additional needs support, or removing other barriers to access. The criteria for the applying charity should take into account annual turnover, favouring charities who currently struggle to provide volunteer expenses due to tight budgets. The access fund should be monitored on a regular basis to ensure funds are being spent correctly. The fund should be available to all not-for-profit organisations, not just registered charities.
- **National forum for businesses and the third sector** – this forum would bring together the business and third sectors every quarter to jointly develop the integration of volunteering into the private sector. This integration can cover topics such as staff volunteering times, corporate social responsibility, volunteering as access to employment, volunteering for staff development, and volunteering as equal to work experience for young applicants.
- **Pilot scheme to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to enable staff to take volunteering days** – many SMEs are unable to give their staff days off work for volunteering due to the loss of work hours involved. This pilot scheme would aim to use experts to consult with SMEs to support them to adapt their working practices to reduce the impact of staff taking time off for volunteering days.

7. Any other Business

No AOB was discussed.

8. Date of next meeting

To be confirmed