

THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT
CROSS PARTY GROUP ON ADULT SURVIVORS
OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

Meeting Minutes, 28 January 2015

PRESENT

Margaret Mitchell MSP; Elaine Smith MSP; Felicity Hollands, Scottish Parliament; Marianne Paton, Scottish Parliament; Sarah Nelson, University of Edinburgh; Javita Narang, University of Edinburgh; Dr R. Eric Swanepoel, Writer & Publisher; Sandra Brown, Moira Anderson Foundation; Anke Kossurok, University of Edinburgh; Sharon Guest, Barnardo's; Muriel Mowat, Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance; Lorraine Sorley, Health in Mind; Anela Anwar, Roshni; Sandie Barton, Rape Crisis Scotland.

APOLOGIES

Dr. Sandra Ferguson, Royal Edinburgh Hospital; Traci Kirkland, Open Secret; Martin Henry, Stop it Now; Andrew Campbell, Bravemouth; Anne Macdonald; Irene Edgar, Sue Hampson, Safe to Say; Jen Stewart, RASAC P&K; Dawn Fyfe, SAY Women; Janine Rennie, Open Secret

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting (November 2014) were agreed as a correct record. Proposed by Sarah Nelson, seconded by Dr R. Eric Swanepoel.

MATTERS ARISING

Events circulation by and to CPG members: Margaret Mitchell shared that recently there have been a number of requests for circulating information and invites, through the CPG mailing list, of events being organised by the CPG members. Recently, invitation of the evening reception for celebrating Matthew McVarish's homecoming was approved for circulation to the CPG members on Sandra Brown's request. In addition, there was a request from Sue Hampson for circulating invitation of a Film Screening. It was discussed and agreed by members present that such requests for advertisement and circulation of non-CPG events should not be made in the future, as it takes away from the core work of the Group. It was advised that such information can be shared and decided upon directly at the CPG meetings.

Finally, it was agreed that the invite for the film screening (by Sue Hampson) would be the last one to be circulated through the CPG emailing list. As a policy, no further event(s) information would be advertised and circulated to the CPG on behalf of its members.

Sandie Barton added her apology for circulating information about their event directly to the members without approval of the office bearers of the CPG.

ACTION PLAN 2015

The following activities were agreed to be taken up by the CPG in the year 2015:

- **Review of the achievements of the National Strategy for Survivors of Childhood Abuse**
CPG has been working on this since 2014 and activities have been proposed by the sub-group for taking this forward (more details in the section below on the National Strategy).
- **Public inquiry on Historical Child Abuse**
This matter has already been taken up by the CPG. A response has been received from the Cabinet Secretary to the concerns raised by the CPG, and Andrew Campbell has raised some concerns on this (details reported below in the Correspondence section of the minutes). This is on the agenda already for the CPG action plan.

- **Female Perpetrators of CSA**

At the January 2014 meeting, Ilene Easton had raised an important issue regarding lack of adequate reporting and programmes on female perpetrators of CSA. A presentation and discussion on this issue was planned for the year 2014 however could not be taken up, either due to the lack of time in some meetings, or unavailability of Irene Easton at other meetings. This could be kept as a possibility to be taken up on the agenda at future CPG meetings.

- **Renewed Backlash against Revelations of Sexual Abuse - Historic and Current**

Sarah Nelson raised this concern and proposed to provide an update on this matter based on a research undertaken by the University of Edinburgh. She shared that this is a significant issue, which is raising a number of concerns that the CPG should be aware of. Sarah Nelson would provide an update on this matter at the next CPG meeting.

- **Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse (CSA) from the Scottish Ethnic Minorities (SEM):** Javita Narang suggested that there is lack of information about CSA among the SEM including data on its prevalence as well as services available. She has been doing research on this issue and working on a documentary on this with Roshni. There is a need for more research and work in this area. It was agreed to take up this issue and a presentation can be considered at one of the CPG meetings this year.

PROGRESS ON THE REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILDHOOD ABUSE

Margaret Mitchell read out the summary prepared by Anne Macdonald on the background and key components of the National Strategy. The proposal of the sub-group (Anne Macdonald, Martin Henry and Sandra Brown) for celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the national strategy for survivors of childhood abuse was also shared. Copies of the summary were also circulated to the members. It was agreed to take forward proposal 1 i.e. to invite a representative from the Survivor Scotland team at the next CPG meeting to receive information on the current status, content, and achievements of the National Strategy, and to discuss the Scottish Government's future plans for meeting the aims of the Strategy and the Development Fund. As an outcome, representative(s) from Survivor Scotland would be invited at one of the next meeting of the CPG.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Reply from the Cabinet Secretary Angela Constance regarding the public inquiry into historical child abuse in Scotland
Margaret Mitchell read out the response received from Angela Constance in response to the letter sent to Angela Constance to share the concerns of the CPG over such a public inquiry. The letter sent to her on behalf of the CPG was circulated to all CPG members by email prior to the meeting. The copy of Angela Constance's response would also be emailed to the members as a follow up of this meeting (it was later emailed to the members by the Secretary of the CPG).
- Correspondence from Andrew Campbell
Since Andrew Campbell could not attend the meeting, he emailed his concern to be shared at the meeting. Margaret Mitchell read the correspondence received from Andrew Campbell. The two points that he raised are: i. Given the latest judicial review announced in December, he questioned that how many judicial reviews are required for historic looked after children?; ii. His second ongoing concern is that as previously there appeared to be a bias towards females survivors that was brought into light, there is a current bias towards historic abuse of looked after children. He shared that, speaking to a few survivors organisation in December, it appears that only 20% of people are seeking support. His concern was that as a harmed child, their voices were not heard and even as an adult they are asked to wait. He urged the CPG to look into this matter and actively communicate to the government to not only focus on looked after children, but focus their attention to other adult survivors as well out of residential care.
- Scottish Government's response to the Human Rights Commission on historic child abuse cases in the looked after care. Scottish Government Survivor Scotland Team have expressed their desire to come along to one of the CPG meetings to discuss their plan. It has already been agreed to invite

them at the next meeting for the National Strategy discussion. This could be handled at the same time.

- Evening Reception invitation on Wednesday 4th February
It was clarified that this was the event to celebrate Matthew McVarish's homecoming. It had nothing to do with the CPG.

AOCB

- Sarah Nelson informed about a project of the Centre of Child Protection, University of Edinburgh and NUJS for sensitising the media about better, sensitive reporting on underage pregnancy. This is to address the concerns about media reports on underage pregnancy and underage sexual activity. Underage pregnancy in majority of cases is due to rape and child sexual abuse, which is not reflected in media reports.
- Participation and Membership request from an organisation called Women Supporting Women to attend the CPG meeting was received by Javita Narang. This email would be forwarded to Margaret Mitchell for review and approval.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, March 4 at 13:00