

## SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT – CROSS PARTY GROUP ON GAELIC

**Minute of the meeting & AGM of the Cross Party Group on Gaelic**, held in Committee Room 3, Parliament Building, Holyrood on Wednesday 15th May 2013 at 2pm.

Present: *Angus MacDonald MSP, (Convener); Jamie McGrigor MSP; Dave Thompson MSP; Bill Walker MSP; Donald MacNeill, (Secretary); Dòmhnall Caimbeul (MG Alba); Iain Aonghas MacAoidh (Bòrd na Gàidhlig); Ceitidh Mhoireach; Ashley Powell (Oilthigh Obari-Dheathain); Kirsty MacDonald (Alba Aosmhor); Bria Mason (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann); Iain MacLeòid (An Comunn Gàidhealach); DJ Mac an t-Saoir (CLÌ Gàidhlig); KA Murray (The Highland Council); Mata MacIver (UHI); D Laing (BBC ALBA); Diane MacIntyre (Scottish Parliament); John Newton (Falkirk Gaelic Forum); Kenny Smith (Falkirk Gaelic Forum); Rosemary Ward (Comhairle nan Leabhraichean); Donald Morrison (Stòrlann); Wilson MacLeod (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann); Jamie Wallace (Comunn nan Oileanach, SMO); Alasdair MacLean (Scottish Government); S Pescodd (Scottish Government); Carole Henderson; Anne Dessey. Coinneach Combe (Comunn na Gàidhlig – simultaneous interpretation)*

### **1. Welcome & Apologies**

Apologies had been received from: John Finne MSP; Rhoda Grant MSP; Hamish Fraser (The Highland Council); Calum Ailig MacLeòid (Fèisean nan Gàidheal); Fiona Dunn (Oilthigh Ghlaschu).

### **2. Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting, held in the Scottish Parliament Building, Holyrood, Edinburgh on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at 5pm were approved. Proposed by Bill Walker, and seconded by Carole Henderson.

### **3. Matters Arising.**

There were no ‘matters arising’ from the Minutes of the previous meeting.

### **4. Appointment of Office Bearers:**

This being the Group’s AGM it was necessary to select office bearers for the 2012/13 Session.

#### Convener

Angus MacDonald was proposed for the Convener’s position by Bill Walker MSP, seconded by Carole Henderson. Mr MacDonald welcomed the nomination and accepted election to the post of Convener of the Group.

#### Vice-Convener

Dave Thomson was proposed for the Vice-Convener’s position by Bill Walker MSP, seconded by Anne Dessey. Mr Thomson accepted the nomination and, there being no other nominations, was duly elected by the Group.

#### Secretary

Donald MacNeill was proposed by Angus MacDonald MSP, seconded by Iain MacLeòid. Mr MacNeill accepted the nomination and was elected to the position.

This concluded the Appointment of Office Bearers.

## **5. Annual Report of CPG 2012/13**

A draft Annual Report, completed within the required Parliamentary template had been completed and circulated.

This was approved by the meeting.

## **6. “Public Attitudes to the Gaelic Language in Scotland” Research findings**

John Angus MacKay briefed the Group on the outcome of this research, including the success to date of the ‘Gaelic Week in the Scottish Parliament’ programme. In the discussion that followed the following key points were made:

- That the conclusions of the study simply re-affirmed what many knew already; that there was strong support for Gaelic development work within the Scottish population as a whole
- That the findings should be used as part of the ‘Census reaction’ responses;
- That more detailed briefings, including more localised information and content, could be sent to all MSPs.
- That the survey findings accorded well with increased viewing figures for BBC Alba, and the opportunity presented by the channel to ‘convert up’ peoples attitudes on a continuum from rejection to apathy; apathy to valuing; valuing to supporting; supporting to learning; etc.
- The issue of BBC Alba being a ‘Scottish’ rather than ‘Gaelic’ channel - with supporting and counter views to this position.

## **7. Year of Scottish Languages Proposal**

There was no further information available on this and the matter was not discussed.

## **8. A.O.C.B**

The issue of the Gaelic content within the Referendum Ballot paper was raised and discussed. (The Convener of the Cross Party Group had previously written to Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon on this matter). Disappointment was expressed at the apparent lack of support for the inclusion of Gaelic on the ballot paper. It was reported that the issue may be raised with the Parliament’s Petitions Committee.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 5pm, intended to coincide with the Finals of the BT Schools Gaelic Debating Competition.