

**Scottish Older People's Assembly Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015**  
**1.30pm - 3.30pm**  
**The City of Edinburgh Council, Waverley Court**

**Note of Meeting**

**Participants**

Tom Berney	Chairperson & U3A Scotland
Glenda Watt	Co-ordinator & City of Edinburgh Council
Diana Findley	Borders Elder Voice
Bill Johnston	Scottish Seniors Alliance
Alan Sidaway	National Pensioners Convention Scotland
Alison Clyde	Generations Working Together
Bashir Malik	Interfaith Association
Jeanette Pieper	Scottish Pensioners Forum
Ian Glover	Scottish Government, Equalities Unit
Helen Biggins	Seniors Together South Lanarkshire
Helen Reeves	Celebrate Age Network, Dundee
Christine Wilson	Human Development Scotland
Tim Puntis	LGBT Age, Scotland
John White	Dumfries and Galloway Seniors Forum

**In attendance**

Marjory Kenny	SOPA Communications Advisor
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**Apologies**

Barbara Barnes	Alzheimer Scotland
Tommy Brennan	Scottish Trades Union Council
Donald Macleod	Highland Senior Citizens Network
Val Bissland	Centre for Life Long Learning, University of Strathclyde
Rohini Sharma Joshi	Trust Housing Association
Trevor Owen	Scottish Government, Equalities Unit
Mike Liddle	Scottish Government, Reshaping Care
Eileen Wallace	Stirling Reference Group for Older People
Betty Milton	A City for All Ages Advisory Group, Edinburgh

**1. Welcome, Apologies and Opening Remarks**

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested that outline information on the work of all representative organisations be submitted to Glenda. This would be included in future SOPA Newsletters.

**2. Draft Note of Meeting and Matters Arising**

The Draft Note was accepted and an update provide on the following items:

- **SOPA 2015 Business Plan & application for funds to the Scottish Government.** Ian Glover said that applicants will hear from the Scottish

Government, which is still processing the applications, by the end of February 2015.

- **SOPA Committee Development Event:** Glenda outlined the purpose and content of the event. It had been a worthwhile occasion that had formed the basis of all local SOPA meetings. Tom suggested that similar development meetings could be held at least twice a year. Donald McLeod and Trevor Owen were thanked for their contributions.
- **Holyrood Conference:** Tom remarked on the large number of specialists and professionals talking to older people at the event. His contribution to it was mostly about what older people give to the community, the work of SOPA and the concept of empowering older people.
- **Local SOPA Meetings:** around 200 people had attended meetings held in Dalkeith, Livingston and Irvine. The local Provost attended each one to provide an introductory welcome. Following Tom's presentation on SOPA, participants were given the SOPA action plan and invited to discuss the statements in groups and prioritise each one. Participants were then asked to consider "How can SOPA work with you?" and "How can you work with SOPA?" Contributions were lively and constructive from mostly older people with professionals and politicians in attendance too. Helen Biggins congratulated Tom and Glenda on their recent work.

### **3. SOPA Action Plan 2015**

Committee members were invited to consider statements in the SOPA 2015 Action Plan and identify ways to progress each.

#### ***Communication and Information***

**1. Dedicated Internet access for older people** - as there are different kinds of projects across the country run by libraries, voluntary organisations and community education centres, including the provision of tablets and training older people: SOPA could identify best practice, gaps and publicise the information. This issue will be taken to the Cabinet Secretary. Bill Johnston said he will attend the symposium "Information Literacy in Scotland: challenges & opportunities" at the Scottish Government on February 13<sup>th</sup> in Glasgow, organised by the Scottish Library and Information Council. He will make sure older people's interests get a mention and also have a word with his fellow organisers about the benefits of developing links to SOPA. He will enquire about any extant 'maps' of provision for Internet access and so forth in the public libraries, with Amina Shah who is CEO of the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC)

**2. Intergenerational engagement** – Alison Clyde, Generations Working Together will help with this item and SOPA will publicise information in its newsletter GWT.

**3. Minority ethnic and LGBTI communities** - Tim Puntis said he will take more responsibility for raising the profile of SOPA and the LGBT issues in the LGBT Age newsletter.

## ***Community Empowerment***

1. The scope and width of the opportunities provided by the Community and Empowerment (Scotland) Bill could be more clearly communicated, particularly as there seems to be no mention of SOPA's contribution to the Bill on the Parliament website. Glenda Watt will liaise with Parliament staff.

## ***Community Safety and Housing***

**1. Housing in rural and urban areas available for older and disabled people -** The Scottish Government produced a housing strategy for older people in 2012 called Age, Home, Community. Details of this are at: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/365373/0124256.pdf>. SOPA will seek progress on the implementation of this strategy from the Cabinet Secretary.

**2. Police officers and community safety –** Glenda Watt will liaise with Police Scotland to ask for a representative to meet SOPA.

**3. A fair and transparent choice of energy suppliers -** SOPA will raise the issue with the Cabinet Secretary.

## ***Health and Social Care***

**1. Respect to the humanity and dignity of people who are cared for as well as paid and non - paid carers -** as SOPA has already lobbied Ministers to recognise the status and pay of professional carers, it will liaise with the Carers Parliament via Donald McLeod to identify areas of mutual support and campaign.

**2. National standard for care at home -** as the Scottish Government called for a review of the National Care Standards in June 2014, SOPA will seek progress on the implementation of the standards through the Cabinet Secretary.

## ***Retirement, Pensions and Money Matters***

**1. Concern that the Westminster Government's intention to introduce a new flat rate pension -** although SOPA has already raised this issue with the Government, it seems there are anomalies regarding the LGBT community. Glenda Watt will gather information for the SOPA Newsletter.

**2. Financially recognise the savings all carers make -** as there is a benefit for carers under 65yrs but not for people over 65, Glenda Watt will liaise with the Carers Parliament via Donald McLeod to promote this concern.

**3. Rising costs of funerals –** the results of Citizens Advice Scotland investigation into the rising costs of funerals, burials and cremation are at this web site <http://www.cas.org.uk/news/many-scots-unable-pay-rising-funeral-costs> . This issue will be raised with the Cabinet Secretary.

## ***Transport, Travel and Environment***

**1. Integrated transport system**

**2. Closure of public toilets**

Since 2006 Edinburgh has followed the WHO guidance on Age Friendly Cities. Glasgow and many other cities south of the border are undertaking similar approaches which recognise a holistic way to improve the quality of life for older people. SOPA will raise these issues with the Cabinet Secretary

### **3. Meeting with the Cabinet Secretary on 26 February 2015 13.00 – 14.00**

Tom Berney, Glenda Watt, Helen Biggins, John White and Bill Johnston will meet at 11.00 on the same day at the City Chambers, Edinburgh for a pre meeting. Subjects to be covered include:

- Dedicated internet access for older people
- Implementation progress on the Housing Strategy for Older People
- A fair and transparent choice of energy suppliers
- Rising cost of funerals, burials and cremation
- Implementation progress on the National Care Standards
- Integrated transport system
- Closure of public toilets
- Feedback from the Smith Commission.

#### **AOCB**

### **Scottish Government Consultation on a Bill relating to funerals, cremation and burials**

Further detail of this consultation can be found at the website below. Everyone is requested to forward information on the consultation to their groups and seek a return of comment to Glenda Watt by 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/01/2869/17>

### **Draft Cervical Screening Letters**

NHS Scotland has drafted letters for people on the cervical screening programme now including women aged 65+ and asked SOPA for help to improve the correspondence. Glenda will forward the information so that people return comments directly to NHS Scotland.

### **Scottish Government's Older People's Development Group 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

Tom Berney and Glenda Watt reported on their attendance at the Scottish Government's Older People's Development Group. An organisation called Snook, has developed a computer software-based advocacy and companion service that represents a friendly face, encouraging communication and interaction. It is capable of understanding and responding to the psychological needs and emotional welfare of the user. The project named RITA is s at the early stages of development. More information is available at [www.rita.me.uk](http://www.rita.me.uk).

**Dates of future meetings - Venues tbc and all meetings on a Thursday from 1.30 - 3.30pm** 2 April 2015, Mandela Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh May 7<sup>th</sup> 2015, July 9<sup>th</sup> 2015, September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2015, January 21<sup>st</sup> 2016, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016