

The Scottish Older People's Assembly Committee
Thursday 9th July 2015
11.30am - 3.30pm
Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh

Note of Meeting

Participants

Tom Berney	Chairperson & U3A Scotland
Glenda Watt	Co-ordinator & City of Edinburgh Council
Barbara Barnes	Alzheimer Scotland
Mary Benson	West Lothian Senior Peoples Forum
Helen Biggins	Seniors Together South Lanarkshire
Alison Clyde	Generations Working Together
Diana Findlay	Borders Elder Voice
Ian Glover	Scottish Government, Equalities Unit
Bill Johnston	Scottish Seniors Alliance
Mike Lynch	Voluntary Action Orkney
Bill McDonald	Renfrewshire Seniors Forum
Sandra McGregor	Make It Happen Forum, Falkirk
James Miller	Joint North Ayrshire Elderly Forum
Jeanette Pieper	Scottish Pensioners Forum
Tim Puntis	LGBT Age, Scotland
Eileen Wallace	Stirling Reference Group for Older People
Christine Wilson	Human Development Scotland

In attendance

Alasdair Hutchison	SOPA Communications Advisor, PAGODA
Rosa Ardia	SOPA Admin Support

Apologies

Val Bissland	Centre for Lifelong Learning, University of Strathclyde
Donald Macleod	Highland Senior Citizens Network
Mike Liddle	Scottish Government, Reshaping Care
Betty Milton	A City for All Ages Advisory Group, Edinburgh
Catherine Hewitt	Scottish Government, Equalities Unit
Rohini Sharma Joshi	Trust Housing Association
Alan Sidaway	National Pensioners Convention Scotland & Vice Chair of SOPA
John White	Dumfries and Galloway Seniors Forum

1. Welcome new members, Apologies and Opening Remarks

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Mary Benson, Mike Lynch, Bill McDonald and Sandra McGregor who attended for the first time.

2. Draft Note of Meeting on 7th May 2015 and Matters Arising.

The Note was approved.

3. Action Points from SOPA Strategy Development Meeting

There was discussion on and agreement for the action points listed below to be implemented:

- Building relationships between SOPA and Scottish Seniors Alliance/ Scottish Pensioners Forum/ STUC: Glenda remarked that in promoting the voice and experience of older people, SOPA will work with other organisations in a complimentary way. Jeanette Pieper said that the next SPF Committee meeting will be on 28th July and a meeting with SOPA and Scottish Seniors Alliance could be arranged for August.
- Meeting with STUC: Tom said that SOPA wants to establish a link with trade union organisations to build a working relationship. Jimmy Miller informed the Committee that STUC is proposing another delegate for the SOPA Committee and that person would be representing the trade union organisations. Jimmy suggested that perhaps the new representative would consider Tom's suggestion of a SOPA meeting with trade union representatives.
- Probus: Although Tom remarked that this is mainly a male only organisation of professionals, Mary Benson said there's a Probus women's group in West Lothian. Tom agreed to contact Probus.
- Age Scotland: Tom and Glenda informed the Committee about their meeting with Paul Adams, Chair of Age Scotland who proposed an agreement and a partnership statement. Tom said the two organisations are different; Age Scotland gives advice and provides services to people, while SOPA is a lobbying group interested in policy setting, implementation and campaigns. However, while both organisations engage with older people, it was agreed not to have a formal partnership arrangement but to work together for the good of all older people in Scotland.

Barbara Barnes pointed out that Alzheimer Scotland is similar to Age Scotland in terms of providing services as well as engaging with older people.

Sandra McGregor asked if a scoping of all older people's organisations in Scotland had been done. Glenda answered that a list did exist but it was not comprehensive and through SOPA's local meetings this is under development. Tom suggested that in the future organisations could have an affiliation to SOPA.

Jimmy Miller expressed his vision for the future that SOPA would continue to develop and be the umbrella organisation that promotes the voice of older people in Scotland.

- Glenda and Tom provided an update on past and future meetings. More detail can be found on the SOPA website www.scotopa.org.uk

Past meetings

Tom was invited to speak at The Active Wales Annual Conference which represents older people in Wales. He had received a very positive response from the delegates about SOPA, particularly as SOPA had a direct link to the Ministers.

Tom and Glenda met with representatives from the Pensioners Parliament in Northern Ireland where they have more resources, an office, provide publications, have regional groups called Parliaments and an annual Assembly. A Commissioner for older people also exists and has a similar role to the Commissioner in Wales. It was suggested that a joint lobbying arrangement could be considered at Westminster with SOPA to include Wales and Northern Ireland during late autumn 2015.

Future local meetings:

15 July 2015: meeting with Independent Living Scotland to exchange information on who we are and what we aim to achieve in terms of older people with disabilities. A number of Committee members agreed to attend this meeting in Glasgow.

18 July: Older Women's Conference, Glasgow - Glenda and Val will attend

13 August: LGBT Age and SOPA Glasgow

27 August: Interfaith Association Scotland

18 August, Brunton Hall, Musselburgh and **21 August,** North Berwick, Marine Hotel. The Deputy Provost of East Lothian will attend the meetings.

29 August Helensburgh

11 November: Oban

4. Feedback from Committee members on local activity

U3A - Tom Berney described the presentation of a project called RITA, Responsive Interactive Advocate at the recent AGM of U3A Scotland. The project intends to revolutionise how an individual's personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs are understood and met. RITA will create a digital companion, in the form of an on screen humanised avatar, providing a friendly interface between the individual, family, friends, professions and services.

LGBT Age - Tim Puntis said that LGBT Age had started in Edinburgh and recently moved to Glasgow. Social activities are going very well. He invited Committee members to send to the group any LGBT people they might have in their organizations. Tim added that LGBT Age took part to the LGBT Pride in Edinburgh parade providing a bus for people with disabilities. The next event is LGBT Pride in Glasgow.

Stirling Reference Group for Older People - Eileen Wallace updated the committee on the development of the Care Village within the site which was Stirling Royal Infirmary. The Care Village will have hospital and social care beds within the facility open 24 hours. 4/5 GP practices will be located within the old site together with a new ambulance depot. The site has been cleared and phase 1 building should start late autumn.

Scottish Seniors Alliance - Bill Johnston reported that SSA had their annual conference at the end of May. Tom had been invited to attend. Jimmy Miller stated that this was the best SSA meeting he had attended.

West Lothian Senior Peoples Forum - Mary Benson explained that the Forum is well represented and great support is provided by West Lothian Council.

Make it Happen Forum Falkirk - Sandra McGregor said there was a dementia friendly event in Falkirk last week and there will be a series of meetings next winter regarding the cost of funerals. The group will also explore Fife's arrangements for the public to use toilets in local bars.

Borders Elder Voice - Diana Findlay informed the Committee that, due to increasing pressures of obtaining funding and lack of recruiting new volunteers, the group will close down at the end of July. However, she has been invited to chair the Older People Services Forum and would like to represent this group on the SOPA Committee. The Committee approved Diana's request.

Generations Working Together (GWT) - Alison Clyde reported that GWT had successfully recruited a new Development Officer for the Highlands & Islands. GWT now supports 32 local intergenerational networks across Scotland. Alison mentioned that there was still a gap in representation from older people's groups and organisations at local network meetings and asked SOPA members to circulate information to their own colleagues and members regarding meetings etc. GWT will deliver 12 intergenerational training courses around Scotland between September and March and work has begun to connect and support protected characteristic groups. More details on www.generationsworkingtogether.org

Alzheimer Scotland - Barbara Barnes talked about the Dementia Friends Programme that Alzheimer Scotland is promoting. Work is underway with many local authorities and the NHS.

Voluntary Action Orkney - Mike Lynch referred to the meeting SOPA organised in Orkney in February. He said that they are trying to stimulate interest by asking people about their concerns: the biggest concern for people in Orkney is transport.

Seniors Together South Lanarkshire - Helen Biggins spoke of the closure of public toilets. The local authority has produced a map to identify public toilets and toilets provided by local businesses. Programmes to ensure more accessibility such as hand rails for steps, etc, sensitivity for people with dementia and World Heritage are also underway. However, difficulties continue in respect of the direct inclusion of the voice and experience of older people in the Integration and operational service arrangements of the local authority and NHS board.

Scottish Pensioners Forum - Jeanette Pieper highlighted the SPF annual conference in Kilmarnock on 9th June where Ken McIntosh MSP, Scottish Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, spoke about abolishing charges for non-residential care charges by local councils. Tim Weir from Thompson's solicitors spoke on power of attorney. The provost of Kilmarnock Jim Todd also attended the conference.

Joint North Ayrshire Elderly Forum - Jimmy Miller spoke of local campaigns to tackle the closure of public toilets.

Renfrewshire Seniors Forum – Bill McDonald referred to the suggestions made by participants at the SOPA Paisley meeting and how he is determined to do what he can as the elected representative on the SOPA Committee, including attending all local forums in Renfrewshire to share information about SOPA.

Human Development Scotland - Christine Wilson said that they are developing a counselling service for older people.

5. SOPA Scottish Parliament reception Wednesday 9th September 2015

The event is sponsored by Christine Grahame and will be held in the Garden Lobby from 6pm to 8pm. The purpose of the event is for older people to connect with politicians. The organisations and forums can have a stall with leaflets, posters, pop-ups, etc. The format will include music, a welcome by Christine Grahame MSP and presentations by Nicola Sturgeon MSP First Minister (TBC), Tom Berney, Chair of SOPA and SOPA Committee Members. All Committee members and their organisations are invited to hold a stall.

6. SOPA in the Scottish Parliament Monday 5th October 2015

Glenda stated that the Assembly is sponsored by Christian Allard, MSP and will be held in the Members Room and six Committee Rooms. Workshops will deal with SOPA topics in the context of Social Justice and Cabinet Secretary Alex Neil MSP has accepted an invitation to attend.

7. SOPA's Business Plan

- **SOPA Business Plan:** the Plan is based on SOPA's vision and the successful application for funds of £65k to the Scottish Government. The work programme covers developmental and campaign actions, communications and research, regular Committee meetings, the annual Assembly and meetings with Ministers, MSPs and public officials through the year.
- **SOPA Communications Plan:** Alasdair Hutchinson, Pagoda Porter Novelli, outlined his suggestions; -

1. That the SOPA current newsletter be reduced into a bite-sized format to be sent to all MPs, MSPs, local councillors, and relevant media via Mailchimp so that responses can be tracked. The Mailchimp version can be compatible/ complimentary with the actual version in PDF.
 2. Alasdair asked the Committee to provide 'case studies' to attract media attention and to show an ongoing year round presence. This approach will make the most of SOPA's local events and suggest proactive activity to raise the Assembly's profile, in addition to publicising its parliamentary events.
- **Cross Party Group Age and Older People:** Glenda informed the Committee that at the AGM of the CPG SOPA was awarded the secretariat of it. This group is convened by Sandra White MSP and the next meeting will be on the 9th September, same day of SOPA Reception at Scottish Parliament.

Dates of future meetings - All meetings will take place from 11.30 – 3.30pm with a light lunch in the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh 3rd September, 5th November, January 21st 2016, March 3rd 2016.