

SOPA Committee Meeting
Wednesday 25 May 2016 11.30 – 15.30
Hayweight House, 23 Lauriston Street Edinburgh EH3 9DQ

Note of Meeting

Participants

Tom Berney	Chairperson & U3A Scotland
Alison Clyde	Generations Working Together
Diana Findlay	Age Scotland and Borders Seniors' Networking Forum
Mike Lynch	Orkney Voices
Betty Milton	A City for All Ages Advisory Group Edinburgh
John Parkhill	Learning in Later Life Students' Association, University of Strathclyde
Rohini Sharma Joshi	Trust Housing Association
Alan Sidaway	National Pensioners Convention Scotland & Vice Chair of SOPA
Alan Spinks	National Federation of Occupational Pensioners
Rob Snodgrass	Grey Matters
Eileen Wallace	Stirling Reference Group for Older People
John White	Dumfries and Galloway Over 50's Group
Kay Wood	Make It Happen Forum, Falkirk

In attendance

Glenda Watt	SOPA Co-ordinator
Rosa Ardia	SOPA Administrator

Apologies

Barbara Barnes	Alzheimer Scotland
Mary Benson	West Lothian Senior Peoples Forum
Donald Macleod	Highland Senior Citizens Network
Bill McDonald	Renfrewshire Seniors Forum
Sandra McGregor	Make It Happen Forum, Falkirk
Bashir A Malik	Interfaith Association Edinburgh and Scotland
Tim Puntis	LGBT Age, Scotland
Christine Wilson	Scottish Human Development

1. Welcome and Apologies

Tom welcomed members to the meeting. He noted resignations from Jimmy Miller, explaining that, despite being supportive to SOPA, Jimmy had some differences with his group. Tom noted that no communication had been received by SSA or SPF regarding their intentions.

2. Chair's remarks

Tom reported that OSCR has registered SOPA as a SCIO and new office accommodation is established at Scottish Council Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), Hayweight House. In

terms of the new constitution, Tom invited all group representatives to complete a SOPA membership form as a register of all full and associate members will be maintained. Tom also stated that as signatories to the application initially he, Alan Sidaway and Diana Findlay would be SOPA's Trustees and that further discussion on the constitution, Trustees and their roles and responsibilities would take place at the next meeting.

Tom gave a resume on the meetings he had attended along with other Committee members, highlighting SOPA's continuing profile:

- Meeting with Mhairi Black MP, Bill McDonald and Glenda Watt on a Westminster reception to be held at the end of the summer. This will be the first Mhairi has hosted.
- 31 March 2016 Holyrood conference on Telehealth Care which included Tom and Alan Sidaway as speakers, plus a SOPA film featuring a grandson talking about his grandmother's use of Telecare.
- Holyrood conference on Funeral Poverty April 21 2016 – Tom Berney speaker. John Birrell, Chair of the event and the Scottish Working Group on Funeral Poverty gave SOPA credit for its role in initiating the review on funeral poverty.
- Meeting with the Commissioner of Wales and representatives from England and Northern Ireland 11 April 2016. This meeting has prompted a more coordinated approach on issues concerning older people as having wound up UKAFA, the Westminster Government doesn't have any interface with older people.
- Letter to Presiding Officer on SOPA in the Parliament
- Thank you letter to Alex Neil MSP, who stood down from Cabinet. He replied thanking SOPA.
- Introductory letter to Angela Constance MSP, who has been appointed as Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities. In the letter Tom expressed his concern that 'Pensioners Rights' has been dropped from the Ministers title.
- Article featuring Chair of SOPA in the Scotsman prior to Scottish election
- Learning in Later Life Students Association, University of Strathclyde and AGM – speaker Tom Berney
- Poppyscotland – Glenda Watt, Jimmy Miller, John Richardson and Tom Berney attended a meeting in Edinburgh on 5 May 201. Poppyscotland is leading a portfolio bid for £5m and is inviting organisations to make submissions.
- North Ayrshire Sheltered Housing Annual meeting May 2016. Speakers, Tom Berney and Jimmy Miller
- Honour for Glenda. Tom Berney, John White and Betty Milton will coordinate a supported application.

3. Draft Note of Meeting on 3 March 2016 and Matters Arising

The Note was accepted, subject to minor changes on the Participants list on page 1 and a date error on page 5. An update was provided on Matters Arising:

- SOPA Constitution, SCIO status and role of SOPA Trustees

John Parkhill highlighted two minor errors on the Constitution agreed by OSCR. Amendments have been inserted and sent to OSCR. The Charity Trustee Handout, sent by OSCR, will be circulated to all SOPA members.

- Role of SOPA staff

Prior to the Committee meeting Glenda had issued an email on Tom's behalf regarding the possibility of Rosa Ardia, who previously worked on SOPA Administration, to return to her administration role on the basis of a short, part time contract. No one on the Committee objected to the proposed arrangement and Rosa's return was welcomed.

Glenda added that Val Bissland is willing to continue her work on the website and the newsletter. No one objected to this arrangement, also.

Glenda referred to Gordon Fraser, an ex-colleague at the City of Edinburgh Council and qualified accountant who has offered to be a volunteer overseeing SOPA's finances. This means that SOPA will have an added layer of financial governance but Gordon will not take responsibility for SOPA's financial position as this lies with the Trustees. The Committee welcomed Gordon's input.

Glenda provided an update of recent activities which are listed below:

- SOPA has a one year contract with SCVO to rent two desks and two computers, this includes IT and financial support, use of telephones and meeting rooms
- SOPA's membership of SCVO is accepted
- Next steps for palliative and end of life care: access, delivery and integration – seminar 2 June 2016 concessionary cost £80. As SOPA contributed to the development of this policy, the Committee agrees that complimentary tickets should be given to one or more SOPA members. Glenda will enquire.
- Care Inspectorate – joint work to develop a standard on SOPA's campaign action - connecting to the community. Meetings arranged with HSC Network and LGBTI. Beside Tim Puntis and Donald McLeod, two other members declared their interest to be connected to the Care Inspectorate's work on standards development: Eileen Wallace, Older People's Reference Group Stirling and Alison Clyde, Generations Working Together.
- Funeral poverty review – exploration of welfare payment – ongoing meetings with Scottish Government
- Scottish Poetry Library – launch of *Whatever the Sea* – poems by older people about ageing – all the poems have a link to the SOPA campaign actions. Possible event on 22 September 2016 or at the same time as SOPA 2016
- Age in Mind, Stirling has established a network across Scotland and will be looking at discrimination and stigma towards older people raised through discussions/ questionnaires/ focus groups. Betty Milton and Rosa Ardia will attend a meeting of the network on 31 May in Edinburgh to ensure a link to SOPA campaign actions
- Administration of Cross Party Group Older People, Age and Ageing – currently no proposed CPGs
- Centre for Research on Families and Relationships – seminar on technology and older people in April 2016, Val Bissland was a speaker
- Unite member - Sam Gibson suggests a motion on high utility charges and a meeting about pensions in Edinburgh / East Lothian. Alan Sidaway will liaise with Glenda to develop the suggestions.
- PhD (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) on the investment of the strengths of (young) ageing adults in society. Young elderly people (55-70) are not motivated to become

member of the traditional elderly organizations. I am looking for good practices and methods to persuade those young elderly to participate in elderly organizations. Guido Cuyvers, Ceylonstraat 12 2490 Balen Belgie Tel.: 0032 14 812683 E-mail: gcuyvers@skynet.be

- Planned meetings with local groups to promote and exchange information on campaign actions – East Lothian – 15 Aug 2016, Make it Happen Falkirk - tbc, Seniors Together, South Lanarkshire – 23 August 2016, Borders Older People's Services Forum – 14 June 2016 and Fife meeting tbc
- Provisional booking for SOPA 2016 at Edinburgh International Conference Centre Monday 3 October 2016 – Older People's week
- SOPA Communications – website and Newsletter: Glenda invited the members to submit information about the work of their groups that they want to be included in the newsletter. She also encouraged everyone to put the SOPA logo on the communications issued by their groups and a link to SOPA website on their organisations' websites.

4. Alan Spinks, National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP)

Alan Spinks, Regional Organiser for Scotland for NFOP, gave a brief presentation on the organisation he works for and his role.

NFOP was set up by retired members of the General Post Office (GPO) in the 1930s, with the aim of establishing a friendly and social society that provided support to fellow ex-GPO staff during retirement. As more and more local GPO depots became part of the society it soon grew into a national Federation of GPO pensioners with thousands of members. A Welfare Fund was set up in order to provide financial support to members in need. This was completely funded by fellow members and still exists today.

As GPO became the separate entities of the Post Office and British Telecom the name evolved to become the National Federation of Royal Mail and BT Pensioners. Continued support and help post-work was something that other occupational pensioner groups were looking for, which led to the Federation merging with the National Association of British Steel Pensioners. As other occupational pensioners continued to show interest and join the organisation, the name was changed to reflect this continued growth, and it is now known as the National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP).

- Membership is now open to anyone with a company pension by paying an annual subscription of £20.40
- They have 80,000 members across the UK with 5,000 in Scotland.
- Staff consist of 10 people working at HQ in Luton and two Regional Organisers in Northern Ireland and Scotland.
- There are 10 branches in Scotland who meet regularly, locally, as well as having days out and annual holidays.
- The Scottish Area Committee meets twice a year in Edinburgh, at which branches are represented.
- Being a Company Limited by Guarantee, they have to have an AGM
- Annual income is £1.6 million, which covers the costs of the HQ staff and two Regional Organisers.
- Branches receive £3.60, per member, each quarter for the running of the branch.

Members have access to a number of benefits including legal and tax advice, help with computer and IT problems, an Accident Aftercare service, 6 NFOP magazines a year, and a travel club. There is also the opportunity to be part of a local group, where they can meet and socialise with fellow members. The NFOP Welfare Fund is a charity that can provide some financial support to members in need.

A recent development for the magazine is "The View from Scotland" which provides Scotland-based members with information on issues such as Scottish Government consultations, SOPA news and other "local" info. Currently looking at how legal advice can be provided for Scotland members, where the issue may well be in relation to Scottish law rather than UK law.

A new organisation, The Retirement Income Alliance Ltd. (RIA), made an agreement with NFOP. RIA aims to build a new, membership based, online community and to provide its members with information on options for the generation of income in later life. The information RIA will provide to its members will complement perfectly what NFOP already does for those who have retired and all RIA members will have access to NFOP benefits.

5. SOPA Business Plan 1 April to 30 June 2016 – accepted by Scottish Government

SOPA's business plan to the end of June 2016 was submitted to the Scottish Government. Activities to be completed are listed below:

- SOPA Committee strategy meetings to improve its capacity
- Four local SOPA meetings will be delivered to raise awareness of the SOPA campaign actions in areas not previously covered by SOPA
- Specific meetings will be held with existing local groups of older people to enhance their connection to SOPA and delivery of campaign actions: we have to continue to work with underrepresented groups, e.g. black minority, disabled, LGBT, veterans etc.
- Identify date and venue for the annual assembly
- Questionnaire completed by SOPA Committee
- Report and financial statement delivered to Scottish Government in June 2016

6. Financial Report

Glenda Watt spoke to the financial aspects of the SOPA business plan stating that Scottish Government funds of £16,250 had arrived in the SCVO account in mid-May. From this amount public liability insurance and catering for this meeting was paid.

7. Proposed SOPA Business Plan 1 July to 30 June 2017 – awaiting acceptance

An application was submitted to the Voluntary Action Fund for funding from 1 July 2017 to 30th June 2017. Proposed activities are listed below:

- Using external expertise 2 capacity building sessions will be held for the SOPA Committee on human rights, inclusion and mitigating the impact of discrimination.

- Through local media, networking and the use of relevant communication technology, we will ensure that older people from underrepresented groups participate in 6 local SOPA meetings on the 2015 SOPA campaign actions before the national assembly.
- Committee meetings dealing with governance, planning and delivery of SOPA meetings lasting up to 4 hours will be delivered every two months with an induction programme built into the meetings.
- Through the national Assembly older people will be supported to raise their achievements and concerns around their experience of discrimination.
- 4 Newsletters will be disseminated to all the members of SOPA during the year
- Website is updated and maintained
- Using relevant communication technology 6 new local SOPA meetings, lasting 2 hours will be delivered across Scotland.
- Through specific meetings, Committee members will organise, deliver and evaluate local and national meetings that address the 2015 campaigning actions.
- 4 representatives of the local SOPA meetings will have the opportunity to present their experience during the 2016 SOPA annual assembly.
- Committee members will contribute to national policy development meetings dealing with the 2015 SOPA campaign actions.
- The Committee will prepare and deliver its annual report by June 2017

8. AOCB

Glenda and/ or Tom would be delighted to meet with the Committee's local groups to discuss the campaign actions or anything else. Please contact Glenda to arrange a meeting.

Date of future meetings to be held at Hayweight House, Edinburgh from 11.30 – 15.30: Wednesday 20 July 2016, Wednesday 7 September 2016, Wednesday 16 November 2016, Wednesday 18 January 2017, Wednesday 15 March 2017 and Wednesday 17 May 2017.