

Cross-Party Group on Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Date and Time 17th November 2021 at 6.00 pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Fulton MacGregor, Convener, Collette Stevenson, Brian Whittle

Invited guests

None

Non-MSP Group Members

Emma Bryson, Speak Out Survivors, Lynn Burns, Break the Silence, Ellie Forgan, Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project, Sheila Gaul, Retired Social Worker, Alexa Green, Student, Ewan Law, Fife College, Anne Macdonald, Co Convener, Janine Rennie, Co-Convener, Wellbeing Scotland, Dr Eric Swanepoel, Writer & Researcher, Rachel Tullo, Stop It Now Scotland, Carol Willson, Student

Apologies

Sandra Brown, Treasurer, Moira Anderson Foundation, Andrew Campbell, Student, Katy Clark, MSP, Dr Javita Narang, International Consultant on Trauma, Malcolm Roger, QHSE Advisor and Survivor

Agenda item 1

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of Meeting 14th September 2021 Approved:
Emma Bryson, Seconded: Janine Rennie

Agenda item 2

Matters Arising: Letter to Mr Swinney on Covid issues for survivors. Fulton has sent the letter and is awaiting reply. Once we have Mr Swinney's response it will be sent out to the membership. Action Fulton

Invitation to the Scottish Government Redress Policy Team to update the group on the Redress Scheme. We will agree a date to suit the Team and hold a meeting with them in the New Year. Action Fulton

Write ups from group members on issues for future discussion and sub group on work on website. Anne wrote to the members who had raised these issues. Speak Out Survivors and Carol have responded and their papers were distributed to the membership. Anne, Alexa and Emma have worked on the development of the website and a link was sent to the membership.

Agenda item 3

Updates on Covid and its effects for survivors and agencies

Janine provided the following update. There has been a meeting with the Scottish Government and Survivor Organisations due to the unprecedented demand for services as well as expanding and waiting lists. Scottish Government have provided some additional funding to

meet some of the demand, and whilst it is a welcome move this is an ongoing issue and feels as if untenable to be able to meet demand. The combination of survivors feeling trapped in their homes is triggering experiences from the past when they were trapped with their abuser. They feel so isolated; there is increased suicidal ideation and suicide attempts and vicarious trauma for counsellors and staff working under such pressures.

Agenda item 4

Update on Redress Scheme

Janine has met with the Chief Executive of Redress Scotland. Wellbeing Scotland will become a partner on access to records rather than going through a third party. There is no idea of what numbers of survivors will come forward. Wellbeing Scotland has already worked with 3,080 clients, so we need to see what this looks like in reality. There are still serious concerns about the Waiver. In Northern Ireland there is a Legal Test Case and their Scheme is unravelling. A Civil Action has resulted in a payment of £1.3 million.

We discussed in depth the issues that survivors experiencing and navigating the legal system and how destructive and re-traumatising this is. Everyone in the group, including MSPs, has witnessed this. It was agreed we need to map out how it should ideally work and what the system should look like to support the victim/survivor and their barriers to justice. The system is catastrophically failing them. Nothing we have put forward has translated into action and real change. This

is the time to be raising awareness and need for change. Although the system has been broken for decades Covid has thrown it into sharp focus. We agreed that initially Fulton, Anne and Janine would meet (virtually) to discuss where we go next and map out a proposal for the membership to feed into for taking it forward to the relevant bodies. **Action: Fulton, Anne and Janine**

Agenda item 5

Applications for membership of the group

Georgiana Bugeag, United Nations of Scotland and David Whelan, Former Boys and Girls Abused in Quarriers (FBGA) contacted the group requesting membership. The group agreed and approved their membership. Anne will contact them with this agreement and include our Terms & Conditions. **Action Anne**

Agenda Item 6

Issues for discussion by the group

Website: Update by Alexa, Emma and Anne

Alexa, Emma and Anne spoke to the design and content of the CPG website. The members present at the meeting thought it looked excellent and thanked Alexa in particular for setting the technical aspects and Emma for proposing it as a useful means to let survivors know about the group. The content was provided by Anne

using approved wording we have used in other documents. The finalised site needs approval by Fulton as Convener and we can then send it to Standards for their approval. We need to ensure that we look at the ethics of having links to external sources as we are not able to provide advice or recommend any particular path for survivors to follow.

It was agreed that a link would be sent out to the membership to enable them to comment on any suggestions to Alexa, Emma and Anne. **Action: Alexa and Anne**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Update by Andrew. As Andrew had to give his apologies this was not covered.

Not Proven Verdict: Update by Emma, Speak Out Scotland. Emma provided a paper which was sent out to the membership.

Trauma Informed Curriculums: Update by, Ewan Law, Fife College. Due to time constraints this was not covered in detail. Take to our next meeting.

Sexualisation of Children: Update by Carol Willson. There was insufficient time to address this issue. Anne and Carol had discussed how this could be raised with those agencies with particular responsibilities for children.

AOCB

None

Date of next meeting

26th January 2022 6.00 pm