

Cross-Party Group on WASPI

MAY 16 2023 6pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Katy Clark
Beatrice Wishart

Invited guests

Peter Aldous MP
Bryn Davies (Baron Davies of Brixton)

Non-MSP Group Members

Catriona Melville
Susan McKellar
Lynne Craighead
C Houston
L Paterson
M Eley
W Millar
F Brown
L Carmichael
R Dickson
L Welsh
Sandra Gibson
Pat Whyte
Catherine Scott
Susan ?
Chris ?
Anne?
T Connolly
E Loch
Anne Potter (Secretariat)

Apologies

J Baillie
M Dawson

Joyce Stevenson
A White
M Grierson
G Moran
L McColl
Liz D Daly
K McDonald

Action Points

AP 2/5 KC confirmed she is still hoping Prem Sika will attend CPG. He is Professor of Accountancy & has past experience of working on WASPI issues mainly relating to compensation for 2019 Labour manifesto. KC may also manage to have Brynn Davis an Actuary & Pensions expert attend a future meeting. DISCHARGED 16/5/23

AP 2/6 Meeting with WASPI 2018 Steering group postponed. ONGOING

AP 3/6 WASPI motion to be refreshed with CPG MSPs working on the rewording together. ONGOING

AP4/6 Members debate to be discussed by CPG MSP's. ONGOING

AP7/6 Updated Politician challenge to be circulated for use. DISCHARGED 16/5/23

WASPI Groups Update

Katy Clark welcomed all & explained Siobhian Brown now a minister & no longer able to take part. Maggie Chapman MSP has agreed to take over but was unable to attend. Katy also welcomed Bryn Davies & Peter Aldous. Katy explained Bryn's background in Pensions, Labour Manifesto 2019 & sits in HOL.

Prior to group update Bryn went on to confirm he was heavily involved with Labour general election manifesto 2019 which he felt was clearly detailed regarding compensation for 50's born women but recognised it did not please everyone. He stated we are not anywhere near manifesto planning but perhaps will take place in next few months. He went on to say the WASPI issue may not figure in 2024 manifesto & realised that would be disappointing to our campaign, which is currently in the hands of PHSO. Bryn went on to say the issue now is "How do we avoid this situation happening in the future? Increase in SP age is always on the agenda despite longevity not improving" He also posed the question "How do we handle increases in SP age? How do we ensure protection of NI based pensions? There should be a proposition for next GE to protect an individual's accrued rights."

RD went on to say she had worked on the Labour package as part of a team leading up to 2019 GE. She has recently been to Scottish Gov office in Edinburgh with a petition which the gov did not accept. RD also felt the SP needs a revamp though UK gov not committing to doing so. BD commented that we must ensure we look to future generations, in particular retaining Triple Lock.

LC made it clear we have been informing younger generations as part of our lengthy campaign maintaining politicians try to pitch generations against each other, which is not the case in our experience. Younger people are supportive & think about their future given the position 50's born women find themselves in. BD suggested a SP be a legal contract with an understanding of what to expect year on year similar to private pensions which have been revolutionised, & we need to have that "Gilt Edged" pension. PA commented that BD has the advantage of working on manifestos. PA

went on to say he could not speculate anything specific for Tory party & this may depend on PHSO recommendations, which the Gov have a duty to honour. PA went on to say if reselected at the AGM of the APPG he will personally write to PHSO. PA feels there are flaws in SP system that need addressed. The judicial review came as a complete, but positive surprise to him & PA will continue to communicate with WASPI.

RD stated she was disappointed most parties not showing an interest in our campaign as poverty affects all ages & will matter when it comes to the ballot box, requesting all parties take 1950's issues seriously. PA confirmed he will raise these issues with Tory party & APPG. BW of Lib Dems said she appreciated BD & PA frankness & agreed politicians need to do more to raise our concerns.

WM went on to report on the many events attended, including SWC, London & Edinburgh rallies, NASUWT National & Scottish conferences & only recently a Senior Fayre in Glasgow. All attracted a great deal of interest & helped spread the word. RD confirmed she had attended UNISON & UNITE meetings & has been emphasising that "68 is too late" & connecting with young people. LC attended IWMD, May Day rally plus NASUWT Scottish conference all in Aberdeen.

Refresh/Motion Update

SG reported on the progress of the Refresh Group considering how to engage with politicians, particularly for those with little or no experience in doing so. A template has been developed for WASPI women when meeting or writing to their MP with a list of points to simplify the WASPI message. LC stressed a lot of work & effort has gone into this & mentioned the use of the "Challenge to Politicians" document to highlight local economic benefits of successful compensation being awarded.

The Holyrood WASPI motion still being updated. The Members debate to be discussed by MSP's.

AOB

KC thanked all for attending & closed meeting.

Future meetings will be on Tuesday evening at 6pm.