

Cross-Party Group on Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Date and Time

27th June 2023 Virtual Business Meeting 6.00pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Fulton MacGregor MSP
Brian Whittle MSP

Invited guests

Marc Jones, Constituent

Non-MSP Group Members

Anne Macdonald, Health & Social Care Adviser, Co Convener, Secretariat, Sharon Belshaw, Break the Silence, Andrew Campbell, Student, Ewan Law, Fife College, Fay Maxted, Survivors Trust, George Scott, Campaigner, Abuse in Private Schools in Edinburgh, Dr Eric Swanepoel, Writer & Researcher

Apologies

Stuart Allardyce, Director, Stop It Now! Scotland, Suzy Angus, Speak Out Survivors, Whitney Barrett, Wellbeing Scotland, Sandra Brown, Moira Anderson Foundation, Treasurer, Emma Bryson, Speak Out Survivors, Ellie Forgan, Campaigner/KASP, Thomas Hall, Survivors Space, Leigh McFarlane, Thirtyone:eight, Dr Javita Narang, International Consultant Trauma Care, Dr Sarah Nelson, Researcher, Edinburgh University, Joy Patrick, KASP, Janine Rennie, Campaigner, Philip Walker, Survivors Trust

Agenda item 1

Welcome and apologies

Fulton welcomed everyone in attendance and read out apologies. He welcomed Fay Maxted and Philip Walker from the Survivors Trust as new members, as well as Marc Jones, a constituent who is interested in the work of the CPG.

Agenda item 2

Approval of Minutes 28th February 2023: Approved: Dr Eric Swanepoel

Agenda item 3

Matters arising

Response on Redress and Time Bar in Private Schools. Mr Swinney had responded prior to his stepping down as Deputy First Minister, however the issue of older survivors who were abused in private schools in Scotland not being eligible due to Time Bar was not fully answered. Fulton will write to Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Justice who is overseeing the Redress Scheme as part of her portfolio.

Action Fulton

Agenda item 4

Sibling Sexual Abuse Sub Group

A short briefing paper was sent to the membership. Anne highlighted that some changes were not made to the paper in error to include a deeper reflection on the devastating consequences of SSA to survivors. Anne, Andrew and Sharon, who are members of the sub group, spoke to the need for this group to continue its work for longer term than initially planned. Other members shared their concerns of the stigma and lack of knowledge and understanding of the scale of SSA in society and need for training as well as long term help and support for the survivor as well as the family and the sibling who has perpetrated the sexual abuse. The model of Maggie's Centres was discussed as a useful model. The sub group will be meeting again over the summer and will keep members up to date on their progress. Fulton thanked the group for their commitment.

Agenda item 5

Application for new membership

Thomas Hall, founder of Survivors Space, a voluntary organisation that supports survivors of historic child sexual abuse in East Lothian. Their aim is to provide advocacy, guidance and support, counselling, peer support, outreach recovery,

partner and parent groups. The group agreed membership. Anne will let Thomas know and send our Terms of Reference for information. **Action Anne**

Agenda item 6

Trauma awareness and training on CSA by health practitioners for intimate medical procedures and general health procedures

The group has received several personal experiences of survivors being re-traumatised whilst being referred to or undertaken medical examinations and procedures. We had a long ranging, and at times, distressing and heartbreaking account of the reality that survivors experience, with some personal examples from those present as well as those who support survivors. It is known that survivors of CSA and other forms of child abuse do not attend screening programmes, or approach their GP, so they are being actively disadvantaged from receiving health care.

It was suggested that this is discrimination. One agency had developed trauma cards with survivors that have been further developed; however, it was felt that whilst this is really helpful, survivors should not have to initiate trauma informed care. There should be agreed protocols such as with other conditions within NICE or other guidelines. There are obvious gaps in trauma training within different Health Boards and the NES Trauma Training Programme is not sufficient, and indeed, many are not happy with its model.

It was agreed that although we have looked at this before as a CPG, we must bring it back to the attention of the Cabinet Secretary for Health & Social Care, Mr Matheson, who fortunately is aware of survivor's issues as he was Health Minister when Survivor Scotland Strategy was in place. It was also agreed that Fulton write to all the Health Boards across Scotland and copy the CS in. Anne will make a first draft and send it to some of the membership for comment and additions. **Action Anne and Fulton**

Agenda item 6

AOCB

CPG meetings in future, will there be an opportunity for hybrid model as opposed to virtual or in person? Fulton said this could be undertaken in the next session.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse: Currently under consultation in Westminster. We asked if there are any plans to instigate such a consultation and debate in the Scottish Parliament. Fulton will check and let us know if there are any plans. **Action Fulton**

Fulton introduced Marc, who approached him in his constituency office as a survivor of childhood abuse and his wish to find out the work of the CPG. Fulton read a short testimony from Marc on his experiences and problems in achieving any justice. Members of the group, particularly survivors, commended Marc for his courage and how we all appreciate his coming forward. Anne and Fulton agreed that we could meet with Marc to provide further detail on the history and work of the CPG as time constraints with such a busy agenda meant we would not be able to provide sufficient time to Marc. **Action Anne and Fulton**

Date of next meeting: TBC following summer recess