

# CROSS PARTY GROUP IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ON CONSTRUCTION

13.00 Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024  
Committee room 3

## AGM Minutes

### Present

### MSPs

Monica Lennon MSP  
Graham Simpson MSP  
Lorna Slater MSP

### Non-MSP Group Members Present

Elaine Ellis,	Skills Development Scotland
William Crowe,	Institute of Structural Engineers
Stephanie Lowe,	Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF)
Grahame Barn,	CECA Scotland & CPG Treasurer
Gordon Nelson,	Federations of Master Builders (FMB) & CPG Secretary
Chris Pateman,	EPIC (Engineered Panels in Construction Limited)
Lauren Pennycook	Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
Lillian McDowall	Scape Scotland
Peter Reekie	Scottish Futures Trust
Paul McGirk	Hub South East
Angeline Robertson	Hub South West
Richard Park	Hub North
Jocelyne Fleming,	Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
Alan Wilson,	SELECT
Yvonne Wilson	SELECT
Steven Dillon	Unite the Union
Steve Fawcett	Homes for Scotland
Fiona Harper	SELECT

## **Others present**

Brian Berry,	FMB
Alastair Raitt,	HM Raitt & Sons Ltd
Robert Wilson,	Wilson Decorators Ltd
Graham Jackson,	Thorntons Law
John Ferguson	Sisaltech Ltd
Jenna Wayth	Gillespie Macandrew
Rwayda Al-Hamd	Abertay University
Stephen Slessor	Ross-Shire Engineering

## **Apologies**

Alexander Burnett,	MSP
Ben Macpherson	MSP
Alex Rowley	MSP
Stefan Szymoszowskyj	NHBC
Stuart Tennant	University of the West of Scotland
Brett Amphlett	Builders Merchant Federation
John Kane	
Robert Sutherland	McLaughlin & Harvey Construction Ltd
Karen Stevenson	Scottish Futures Trust
Ann Marie Waugh	Glass and Glazing Federation
Ryan Murphy	Evolution Fasteners (UK) Ltd
Fiona Hodgson	Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF)

## **1. Welcome and apologies**

The Convener, Monica Lennon MSP (ML) welcomed everyone to the Parliament and confirmed that we will change the running order for today and hold the AGM before the ordinary meeting. ML noting that Graham Simpson MSP (GS) is having to leave early.

ML reminded those present that this Cross-Party Group (CPG) will be the forum for Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), construction industry stakeholders and interested parties to engage directly with each

other in order to raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges facing the sector and to better inform the development of policy.

## **2. Notes from the 2023 AGM of the CPG on Construction held in the Scottish Parliament on 25th October 2023**

No comments or clarifications, the 2023 minutes were proposed by Alan Wilson (AW) and seconded by William Crowe (WC).

## **3. Accounts for the period to 30th September 2024**

The Group's Treasurer Grahame Barn (GB) presented the audited accounts up to 30 September 2024. The current balance of £1,796.37 meaning that no invoices for group subscriptions will be issued to members ahead of the 2025 AGM. All the expenditure of the Group is on catering for in-person meetings of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament.

GB noted that the last time invoices were issued to members was in late 2022/early 2023.

## **4. Election of Office Bearers**

### **4.1. Convener (currently Monica Lennon MSP)**

With no other MSP having put their name forward, Graham Simpson MSP proposed ML for the position, with Lorna Slater (LS) MSP seconding. ML confirmed as the CPG's Convener.

### **4.2. Deputy Conveners (currently Alexander Burnett MSP & Gordon Macdonald MSP)**

ML noted that the Deputy Conveners are currently Alexander Burnett (AB) MSP & Gordon Macdonald (GM) MSP. Neither AB nor GM could make it today.

ML proposed AB and GM as our Deputy Conveners. All present approved. AB and GM confirmed as joint Deputy Conveners.

### **4.3. Election of a secretary for the CPG**

The current Secretary, Gordon Nelson (GN) confirmed at the 2023 AGM that he would be stepping down at the 2024 AGM. ML thanked GN for

his work and support as the Secretary since he was elected at the 2018 AGM.

GN confirmed that he has had discussions with some members regarding the role of Secretary. At the AGM, Yvonne Wilson (YW) of SELECT nominated herself for the role.

ML asked all present if there were any other non-MSP members who would like to put their names forward. No other candidates came forward, ML welcomed YW as our new Secretary. All members present confirmed acceptance of YW as the Secretary of the CPG on Construction.

GN confirmed that we would arrange a handover with YW in due course.

#### **4.4. Treasurer (currently Grahame Barn)**

No other proposals received from non-MSP members. GB confirmed that he is willing to continue as Treasurer. All present approved. GB confirmed as the Treasurer.

### **5. Discussion on topics for the CPG to discuss in 2025**

ML noted that we have one prior suggestion from Elizabeth Halliday of Morgan Sindall for the group to discuss the skills shortage the construction industry is facing. Elaine Ellis proposed a focused discussion on construction skills: given that skills is a huge topic.

LS suggested that the group discuss the Heat in Buildings Bill, GS suggested that the Housing Bill merited a discussion. Peter Reekie confirmed he would be happy to provide updates at a later date on the Transformation Action Plan and the Scottish Construction Accord.

Alastair Raitt suggested a discussion on the impact of non-construction bureaucracy on the industry. Graham Jackson proposed that the CPG discusses the cladding remediation programme.

ML thanked everyone for these suggestions and noted that our CPG should look at a joint session with another CPG: if feasible. ML will consult with our new Secretary YW in planning future topics.

## **6. Date of the next AGM**

With Parliamentary rules dictating that all CPG AGM's must be within 11-13 months of the previous one, our 2025 AGM will be held sometime between early October and early December 2025.

ML thanked everyone and closed the AGM and we immediately started the ordinary meeting of the CPG.

# **Minutes of Ordinary Meeting**

## **1. Welcome, introduction, and apologies from Monica Lennon MSP.**

With the 2024 AGM concluded immediately before this meeting ML noted that the Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Construction has met online and in person to hear insights on and discuss a range of topics including:

- The materials and supply chain challenges impacting the construction industry.
- Scotland's apprenticeship system: and current training provision for the construction industry.
- The challenge and opportunity for our industry in de-carbonising our built environment.
- And last time we met, we heard from Richard Park, Paul McGirk and Angeline Robertson about the Scotland-wide Hub programme which achieves policy outcomes in place, net zero, wealth creation and affordable housing through community infrastructure investment.

## **2. Matters arising**

Notes of the meeting held on 9 May 2024. No comments or clarifications raised, the notes were proposed by Grahame Barn (GB) and seconded Chris Pateman (CP).

## **3. New member proposals**

ML asked the outgoing Secretary Gordon Nelson (GN) for the details of the 4 new proposed members of the CPG. These are:

i. Lorna Slater MSP.

ii. Ryan Murphy of Evolution Fasteners (UK) Ltd: who manufacture and distribute premium quality, high performance fasteners for the construction industry.

iii. John Ferguson of Sisaltech Ltd, who produce sustainable building insulation made from sisal and wool.

iv. McLaughlin & Harvey who are main construction and civil engineering contractors.

GN confirmed that he had spoken with Robert Sutherland of McLaughlin and Harvey earlier in the month: Robert sending his apologies for today.

There were no objections from CPG members present to any of the proposed new members becoming members. ML welcomed and confirmed Lorna Slater as our new MSP member and Evolution Fasteners, Sisaltech and McLaughlin & Harvey as our three new non-MSP organisational members.

#### **4. Licence to Build: a pathway to license UK Construction**

Presentation from the Federation of Master Builder's (FMB) Scotland Director, GN. ML welcomed the CPG's outgoing Sectary GN as our presenter for today.

GN presented on FMB's campaign on licensing UK construction, sharing developments on the FMB's work in Scotland on raising standards and across the UK. With the recent publication of the phase 2 report of the Grenfell tower inquiry, GN noted some of the key recommendations from the report.

The presentation is attached separately. A question-and-answer session followed the presentation with comments covering the scope of a proposed licensing system. FMB's CEO Brian Berry (BB) noted that he will meet with Mark Garnier MP later in November on the principle of licensing construction.

Stephen Slessor (SS) asked if licensing ought to be focused on building and builders rather than all construction works. Alastair Raitt (AR) suggested that licensing should apply for all construction works needing

planning permission and/or a building warrant.

Alan Wilson (AW) noted SELECT's campaign to regulate electricians in Scotland and protect the title of electrician. AW noted the parallel's with FMB's campaign and asked MSP's present for their support.

Chris Pateman (CP) voiced that consumers needed to be more informed and empowered. William Crowe (WC) picked up a point made by GN that the pre-emptive building standards system in Scotland, given WC's knowledge of the SER scheme (Structural Engineers Registration would be conducive for a licensing system.

Paul McGirk (PMcG) of Hub South East supported efforts made to raise standards for domestic builders with licensing being a likely solution. Angeline Robertson (ARo) of Hub South West shared the challenges public sector clients are having in sourcing accredited contractors to deliver retrofit works. ARo adding that local authorities would support licensing.

Robert Wilson's (RW) view is that licensing would help the consumer and there were questions from Grahame Jackson and updates from BB on how the FMB is engaging with the UK Government's Construction Minister on Licensing Construction.

ML thanked everyone for their contributions and questions and noted that our CPG has a lot to think about. ML suggested that the CPG could write a letter as one follow up action. ML will discuss with GN and the new Secretary Yvonne Wilson (YW).

#### **4. Any other business**

Nothing raised.

#### **5. Date of Next Meeting**

ML will consult with YW, but we anticipate that this will be in January or February 2025.

ML closed the ordinary meeting.

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