

Cross Party Group on Men's Violence against Women and Children

23rd April, 18.00-19.30 via Zoom

Minute

1 Present

MSPs

Rona Mackay (RMack), MSP
Audrey Nicoll (AMcN), MSP

Invited guests

Evie Donaldson (ED), Victim Support Scotland

Non-MSP Group Members

Mariam Ahmed (MA), Amina The Muslim Women's Resource Centre
Dawn Brennan (DB), Wise Women
Hannah Brisbane (HB), Engender
Amber Cully (AC), Financially Included, GEMAP
Ann Fehilly (AF), ASSIST
Nicola Gilbert (NG), Scottish Women's Aid
Angela Graham (AG), Central Advocacy Partners Falkirk
Elisabeth Loose (EL), Individual
Kallia Manoussaki (KM), Individual
Rebecca Mason (RM), The Young Women's Movement
Melanie McCarry (MMcC), Individual
Susan McKellar (SMcK), The Scottish Women's Convention
Anne Robertson Brown (ARB), Angus Women's Aid
Catherine Robertson (CR), Zero Tolerance
Linda Rodgers, Edinburgh Women's Aid
Linda Thompson, Women's Support Project
Marsha Scott, Scottish Women's Aid
Claire Thomson (CT), Rape Crisis Scotland
Davy Thompson (DT), White Ribbon Scotland
Colette Wormleighton (CW), City of Edinburgh Council, Community Justice, Domestic Abuse Services

Apologies

Beatrice Wishart, MSP

Lily Greenan

Vikki Kerr, City of Edinburgh Council Community Justice, Safer Families

Nancy Lombard

Chris Ringland, The Evangelical Alliance

Richard Whitecross

2 Theme: Updates on Current Justice Legislation

A. **Updates on Current Justice Legislation**

Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill – Briefing – Claire Thomson, Rape Crisis Scotland

- CT presented the Rape Crisis Scotland Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill: Stage One Report briefing.
- CT then took questions from the Group and there was some discussion about the areas of concern around some of the proposals in the bill. There was further discussion about the vote on stage 1, and the task ahead, as the Bill proceeded to stage 2, where the amendments would be considered. It was likely that amendments would be considered after summer.
- It would be a lengthy process, with the Bill unlikely to be in force before 2028.

B. **Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill – Evie Donaldson, Victim Support Scotland – Evie Donaldson, Victim Support Scotland**

- ED spoke to the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill, where a vote was to take place on stage 3, highlighting a number of issues:
 - There was concern about the erosion of victims' rights and the effect on women and girls who have experienced gender-based violence.
 - The removal of support for young women and girls, aged 16-18 could lead to a 2-tiered system for victims.
 - There had been accounts of victims/survivors having to change schools to accommodate the abuser.
 - A result was victims and survivors disengaging from support.
 - The introduction of a single point of contact could bring significant improvements.
 - Training would need to be more robust.

- Briefings had been sent by Victim Support Scotland to all MSPs, ahead of the debate.
- 92 amendments were to be debated on 24th April.

3 Cross Party Business

A. Approval of 23rd January 2024 Meeting Minute

The minutes of the CPGMVAWC meeting held on 23rd January 2024 were will be approved as an accurate record – proposed by Marsha Scott (MS) and seconded by Ann Fehilly (AF).

RMack also confirmed she would be able to update on some items from the January meeting at the meeting in June.

B. New Member Applications

A. There were no new applications on this occasion.

4. Member Updates

A. Member Spotlight: Engender, Hannah Brisbane

- HB delivered a presentation on the work of Engender and took questions following her presentation.

B. Misogyny in the Music Industry Report

Presentation of Findings by Kallia Manoussaki

- KM presented findings from the Misogyny in the Music Industry report. Findings included:
 - 96% of all women who took part in research for the report, had been harassed and had been seriously sexually abused at least once.
 - 69% of all men, who took part in research for the report, had been harassed and had been seriously sexually abused at least once.
 - Women of colour and women with disabilities were especially represented in the figures of people who had been harassed and sexually abused at least once.
 - All non-binary people who had taken part in the research had been a target of sexual abuse.
 - 80% of perpetrators had been men, in a position of power.
 - There was evidence of women leaving the industry specifically as a result of their experience of misogyny or sexual abuse.

- There was some discussion about the role the Musician's Union could play in improving the situation, along with a need to introduce regulation into the music industry.

5. Any other Business

- The Group agreed to MS's suggestion that Laura Paton, HM Chief Inspector of Prosecution in Scotland, and Emma Forbes, Senior Procurator Fiscal Depute, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service be invited to the next meeting of the Cross Party Group.
- RMack suggested that Professor Jurasz, a Professor of Law at the Open University, who leads its Observatory on Online Violence against Women, could be invited to a Group meeting.
- MA spoke of the passing of the Rwanda Bill and the impact it would have on women, including migrant women. MA confirmed she would be happy to forward information to RMack, who could submit a motion in the Scottish Parliament. RMack would also share information with colleagues in Westminster.
- LT highlighted a survey, looking at the needs of migrant women and cse, and asked that the survey be circulated by organisations.
- The following organisations/individuals said they would be happy to take the Member Spotlight slot at future meetings of the Group:
 - Amber Cully confirmed that Financially Included GEMAP.
 - Rebecca Young, The Young Women's Movement.
 - Anne Robertson Brown – Girls who have experienced domestic abuse in their relationships.

6. Date and Time of next Meeting

- Tuesday 18th June, 18.00-19.30, via Zoom.