



Scottish Older People's Assembly
Scottish Charity Number SCIO 46520

Trustees Report

For the Year ended 30 June 2019

Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 30 June 2019

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with a financial statement for the year ended 30 June 2019.

Reference and Administrative Information

Scottish Older People's Assembly SCIO

Charity No 46520

Address

Eric Liddell Centre, 15 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 4DP

Current Trustees

Diana Findlay - SOPA Chair, Borders Older People's Forum, Regional Ambassador for Age Scotland

Alan Sidaway – SOPA Vice Chair, Unite Retired Members Association Dumfries

Samuel Gibson, Unite Retired Members Association Lanarkshire

Betty Milton - A City for All Ages Advisory Group, Edinburgh

Eileen Wallace - Public Partnership Stirling Forum

John White - Dumfries & Galloway over 50's Group and Public Partnership Forum

Alan Spinks - National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP)

Christine Wilson - Human Development Scotland

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The Charity is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (a SCIO). It was registered in its current legal form on 29 April 2016. The Scottish Older People's Assembly was delivered by the City of Edinburgh Council from 2011 until March 31, 2016 and changed its form to become a SCIO on 29 April 2016.

Appointment of trustees

The Constitution states that the Full Members of SOPA may elect any Full Member (unless he/she is debarred from appointment to the Board of Trustees) to serve as a charity trustee with effect from each AGM.

There must be a minimum of eight and a maximum of 18 trustees.

Election of New Trustees

SOPA currently has 8 Trustees and at the Trustees meeting on 22 May it was agreed that 10 Trustees would be an optimum number for the organisation. All members were written to and one member noted interest in becoming a Trustee. A

supporting statement has been circulated with the AGM papers for the following SOPA member:

- Chris Grant

Re-election of Existing Trustees

In line with section 87.2 of the Constitution one third of all Trustees (those who have been in position the longest) are asked to stand down at each AGM. The following Trustees have noted their wish to be re-elected as a Trustee:

- Diana Findley
- Alan Sidaway
- Eileen Wallace
- John White

All full members are asked to vote on the election and re-election of the above Trustees. Those who will not be in attendance at the AGM can submit their vote by mail, email or telephone call to Caroline Clark.

Membership applications

There are two categories of membership:

- Full membership – open to organisations involved in any aspect of promoting the voice and experience of older people
- Associate membership – open to other bodies (whether public sector or private sector) and to individuals

During the year we have granted 14 new applications for full membership and 7 for associate membership.

Objectives and activities

Charitable purpose

SOPA will advance human rights and the interests of older people, the equality and diversity of older people and of citizenship and community development for older people in Scotland. SOPA will influence legislation, policies and services applying to older people and organise a national assembly of older people.

Activities

As part of the Scottish Government's programme to promote equality and cohesion, the Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA) was awarded £20k during 2018/19. This was the second year of a significant reduction from previous Scottish Government funding and the organisation is still adjusting to this change in capacity.

The 2018/19 award was to deliver effective engagement with older people to enable them to have direct communication with and influence decision makers to ensure older people are better informed, empowered, and able to contribute as part of civic society.

Achievements and Performance

The last 12 months have been a busy time for SOPA, with a change in Co-ordinator in November 2018, time was needed for the new worker to learn about SOPA and the role, and to embed working practices. The volume of work is higher than anticipated and this is a challenge given current funding levels. Attracting new funds is being progressed, but this is also a time-consuming task. We are hoping that by widening membership, members could assist with more tasks such as fundraising, communications and responding to consultations.

Some highlights of SOPA's activities over the last year include:

1) Engagement activity – Identity, Connection and Choice

In October 2018, SOPA was invited by the Scottish Government, as a member of the Older People Strategic Action Forum (OPSAF), to undertake consultation to feed into the development of a National Framework for Older People.

The engagement work undertaken was entitled "Identity, Connection and Choice" and included:

- an event on 4th February held in central Edinburgh with 28 participants, including SOPA members and other older people, from across Scotland
- an online and paper questionnaire which received 422 responses.

The focus for both the event and questionnaire was chosen following discussions with the Equalities Team at the Scottish Government who were leading the development of the new Framework. The activities focused on:

- providing inclusive opportunities for older people to share their ideas and experiences
- identifying and gathering examples of the positive contributions made by older people
- identifying barriers faced by older people in a range of different aspects of life and ideas of how to break these down
- gathering ideas of how to combat negative perceptions and stereotypes commonly held about older people.

Given the very short timescales to deliver the work (all activity had to be completed, written up and submitted by the end of February 2019) along with the timing over the Christmas period, winter weather often restricting older people's engagement and the limited capacity of SOPA staff (also very new in post), we were extremely pleased with what SOPA delivered. The number of responses to the questionnaire far exceeded our expectations and demonstrates the powerful reach of SOPA's networks.

Positive feedback was received about the event, providing people with a positive experience to engage and give their views. The final report was also well received eg "I found this report quite excellent and very revealing (as a participant) I would like to forward this to others, specifically my offspring (one of whom is GP in palliative care)".

A report was submitted to the Minister for Older People and Equalities, to feed into the development of “A Fairer Scotland for Older People; A framework for action”. Through the Older People’s Strategic Action Forum, the SOPA Co-ordinator and Chair were provided with draft versions of the Framework for comment, the following two key themes that were raised through our engagement activity were noted as absent from the draft:

- Food and nutrition for older people
- Sensory impairment

The Co-ordinator was able to feed this in to the draft framework and was pleased that both issues were then included in the final draft. This is an example of how people who took part in the SOPA consultation directly influenced Government policy.

A full report of the work is available at

<http://s3.spanglefish.com/s/31982/documents/final-version-sopa-report.pdf>

2) SOPA Reception

SOPA held a Reception at the Scottish Parliament on 5 March 2019, with over 60 attendees including members of SOPA, partner and other older people’s organisations, interested individuals and MSPs. The event was hosted by Christine Grahame MSP and Christina McKelvie MSP, Minister for Older People and Equalities provided a key note speech.

Key speakers included SOPA members Jimmy Miller and Elaine Thornton-Nicol who provided insights into their roles of Older People’s Champions (for North Ayrshire and Scottish Borders Councils respectively) and the work that they do to try to ensure that the views of older people are part of all discussions and decisions made by their Councils. They recommended that all local authorities should have an older people’s champion and that all attendees should go back to their local areas to find out if they have one – and if not, ask why not!? SOPA is keen to help connect older people’s champions from across the country, as this would broaden our reach, increase the diversity of views and strengthen the voice of older people across Scotland.

The reception also provided an opportunity for partner organisations to hold stalls, network and share information.

Further information and pictures from the Reception were featured in SOPA’s April newsletter <http://s3.spanglefish.com/s/31982/documents/050419-sopa-newsletter-april-2019.pdf>

3) Voice of Veterans

SOPA was invited by Unforgotten Forces, to hold a joint engagement event for older veterans in Bathgate on 13th June. The aim of the event was to provide an opportunity for older veterans to be able to share their views on what is important to them.

There was a great turnout on the day, with 44 attendees, including around 34 older veterans along with spouses, SOPA members and others working in the veterans' field. Diana Findlay, Chair of SOPA provided a welcome followed by an informative presentation from Glen MacDonald, Co-ordinator of Unforgotten Forces about the project, a collaboration of 15 organisations, led by Poppy Scotland, who have joined forces to enhance the support available for veterans over the age of 65 and their families in Scotland.

Participants then broke into discussion groups and following introductions, were asked about what being a veteran meant to them, what advantages did it bring and what challenges they faced as they got older?

Key themes arising from the discussions were recorded under the following categories: Identity, Community, Accessing Services and Financial Security. A report was produced summarising the issues raised and feedback on the event itself <http://s3.spanglefish.com/s/31982/documents/consultation-events/the-voice-of-veterans-summary-report.pdf>

Feedback was very positive, for example:

“It was good to have the opportunity to put our views forward as veterans. The event was very successful and helpful, and there was a great deal of information given to us about the services available for older veterans through Unforgotten Forces.”

“My first visit to such a gathering. Very informative and useful!”

“This was a great day – very informative, welcoming and professional. It was very good, and, to be honest, very much needed.”

4) Assembly Preparation

Preparation is underway for the 2019 Assembly. Final approval of a date (5th October 2019) was made by the Scottish Parliament on 27th June 2019.

Preparations have included:

- Break out groups were held at the SOPA meeting on 22 May to ensure SOPA Members could discuss and contribute to the planning of the event
- Key Parliament Committees have been contacted and work is underway to refine themes for the Assembly that align with anticipated committee business for October.

Further work to finalise a programme with workshops, speakers, promote the event and open registration will be a focus for SOPA over the next few weeks.

5) Other activities

Ongoing work to develop partnerships and participate in key groups to ensure that SOPA is connected into relevant policy work for older people.

Participation in Older People's Strategic Action Forum meetings (and contribution to the development of the draft Older People's Framework), Older People's Development Group and Cross-Party Group for Age and Ageing. These forums are

important as they provide opportunities for SOPA to highlight priority issues for older people, to learn about and inform action being taken by the Scottish Government, Parliament and other bodies and to make connections with other organisations.

We are working more closely in partnership with other Older Peoples organisations, e.g. Age Scotland (our Chair and another member are Age Scotland Ambassadors which helps strengthen links with the very relevant work of this organisation) and Scottish Pensioners Forum are invited to our events.

New members

SOPA continues to expand its membership to ensure that it can represent the views of older people from diverse geographic areas, communities of interest and protected characteristic groups. In the last year, SOPA has approved fourteen new applications for full membership and 7 for associate membership. This includes 4 Older People's Champions, as noted above.

Members have been asked to complete a form with information about their networks, how they can disseminate and feed into the work of SOPA and areas of specialist interest and expertise that SOPA can utilise.

Other relevant work

SOPA has been involved in discussions and meetings on the following:

- Work by the Poverty and Inequality Commission - looking at the extent to which people with lived experience of poverty are treated with dignity and respect in public services.
- An Australian Research Council funded project examining the enforcement of age discrimination law in Australia and the UK
- Transport Scotland's work on an accessible travel framework and how this can support older travellers
- Age, Home and Communities Working Group
- Social Security Scotland: What We've Done and What's Next

Attending conferences, consultation events and working groups – the capacity of the Co-ordinator and Chair is limited so we are trying to involve other members wherever appropriate and relevant. A standard form has been created for providing feedback from events to ensure that all members are kept up to date.

Conferences and events where SOPA has been represented over the last year include:

- Festival of Ageing held at Glasgow Caledonian University in May 2019
- Legion Scotland Conference, Stirling, June 2019
- Scottish Pensioners Forum Parliamentary Reception May 2019
- Age Friendly Communities Conference, Liverpool March 2019

Communications – work has been underway to review and refresh the SOPA website. A working group was established with 5 SOPA members to provide

feedback on the current site and to suggest improvements. A volunteer was recruited to assist with the work which is ongoing.

The SOPA newsletter is an important way to engage with a wide audience (over 1,000 subscribers). The template has been improved and newsletters have been published in January, April and July 2019.

Financial review

The Scottish Government Promoting Equality and Cohesion Fund has provided our main source of funding. However, we have received additional funding to support the Assembly and local meetings from B&Q and National Federation of Occupational Pensions.

Reserves policy

Our policies are to ensure proper accounting records are kept in accordance with all applicable statutory requirements. As the trustees are mindful to retain three months' worth of normal running costs to meet commitments and to cover any unexpected expenditure they will work to achieve this during the forthcoming year.

Plans

The trustees and members intend to continue to develop the charity and its activities by advancing a fund-raising strategy and seeking new Trustees and members.

Thanks

Sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to Glenda Watt, Caroline Clark, Avril Crossley, and all volunteers, partner organisations and sponsors who have contributed to SOPA's development and activities.

Diana Findley



Scottish Older People's Assembly Chair 7 August 2019