

Scottish Older People's Assembly
Planning Group Meeting Wednesday 28 November 2018
Refreshments from 11.00 am for 11.30am – 15.00pm
Glasgow City Chambers, 82 George St, Glasgow G2 1DU

Notes

Attendance

Alan Spinks - National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP)
Christine Wilson - Human Development Scotland
Diana Findley - Borders Seniors Networking Forum, Regional Ambassador Age Scotland
Eileen Wallace - Stirling Public Partnership Forum
Jimmy Miller - GMB Union Retired Members
John Thompson - LGBT Age, LGBT Health & Wellbeing
Matt Hamilton - Retired Police Officers Association Scotland (RPOAS)
Sandra McGregor - U3A Falkirk
Tom Berney – U3A Scotland

In Attendance

Caroline Clark – Coordinator
Avril Crossley – Administrator
Glenda Watt – SOPA
Elaine Thornton-Nicol - Borders Older People's Forum

Apologies

Alan Sidaway - Retired Members Association Unite Dumfries
Alison Clyde - Generations Working Together
Allister McKillop - Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC)
Anne Munro - Pilmeny Development Project
Archie Noone - Scottish Dementia Working Group
Bashir Malik - Interfaith Association Edinburgh and Scotland
Betty (Elizabeth) Milton - A City for All Ages Advisory Group, Edinburgh
Bill (William) McDonald - Renfrewshire Seniors Forum
Brian Rapley - Action on Elder Abuse Scotland
Donald Bulloch - Seniors Together
Graham Reece - Clackmannanshire Older Peoples Forum
Jo Cowan - Highland Senior Citizens Network
Maureen O'Neill – Faith in Older People
Rohini Sharma Joshi - Trust Housing Association (Equality Scotland)
Samuel Gibson - Lanark Unite Retired Members Association
Sandra Wilson - RNIB
Willie MacFayden - Deaf Scotland

Jim McBrierty – Retired Police Officers Association Scotland (RPOAS)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Diana as new Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Caroline Clark as the new coordinator, and Avril as remaining with us for the rest of the funding period.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts arising

3. Draft Notes of Meeting on 14 September 2018

Two amendments for organisational names of representative

- Eileen Wallace – Stirling Public Partnership Forum
- Sandra McGregor – U3A Falkirk (University 3rd Age)

Note of Meeting agreed by John Thompson and seconded by Alan Spinks

4. Matters Arising from the Draft Notes

a) Minister of Older People and Equalities (Christina McKelvie) invitation to attend SOPA Planning Group meeting

Glenda invited the Minister to the November meeting, but this was declined due to diary commitments. Diana will send her a list of future SOPA meeting dates once confirmed. Members noted that the Minister has expressed that she is keen to be connected to groups of older people. Glenda reminded members of the history of the Older People's Strategic Action Forum (OPSAF), which is chaired by the Minister, and provides an opportunity for SOPA, along other organisations funded from the same funding stream, to discuss relevant projects and issues. Diana and Caroline will attend future OPSAF meetings on behalf of SOPA.

b) Changes to SOPA staffing and office address.

Updated leaflets with new contact details were circulated.

5. Chair's Report

Meetings and activity of the Chair were outlined, no comments on report.

6. Update from Members re attendance at meetings, committees and networks

a) Oral Health project (DB, SMacG, JMcB)

Sandra MacGregor has a conference call next week. An outline of the project has been received by participants and responses given, however details of the actual role are yet to be confirmed. Looking to distribute to older people at risk of poor oral health.

b) Highland Senior Citizens' Network 1 Nov (JC)

No one available to respond

c) National Pensioners' Convention 1 Nov (SG circulated)

Notes and materials from this event were previously circulated to SOPA members. The reluctance of the NPC to organise a campaign in Scotland and the overwhelming focus on issues south of the border was highlighted. A suggestion was made to invite Neil Jordan to a future meeting of SOPA.

d) Age Scotland 6 Nov (DF –chair's report)

Included in Chair's report.

e) Falkirk Third Sector Meeting 14 Nov (EW)

Eileen noted her frustration in the low turnout at this meeting organised by CVS and Age Scotland (7 people). There is a lack of people willing to take on committee roles so it is difficult to develop plan to support older people's activities in the area.

f) Social Care for Older People: A sustainable future 16 Nov (DF,CC)

This event was organised by the Futures Forum at the Scottish Parliament, on the topic of social care reform. Sessions were set around scenarios in the future, with different levels of people living at home and in residential care and varying levels of independent/ state funding. Whilst interesting discussion, it is clear that concrete action is required in relation to future funding of social care.

g) Fuel Poverty 21 Nov (CW, TB, CC)

The Local Government and Communities Committee of the Scottish Parliament held a number of evidence sessions looking at the Fuel Poverty Bill. SOPA were invited to observe a meeting and have a further discussion with ministers over lunch. Only three SOPA representatives attended, and whilst the numbers were disappointing, this was a useful engagement as part of the prelude of SOPA working with the committee prior to the Assembly.

An extension has been offered until 12 December for SOPA to provide a written submission to the Committee. Caroline will circulate a briefing note that she has already prepared and ask SOPA members for further views to be included.

h) Funeral Poverty Reference Group (DB)

Donald gave apologies for the SOPA meeting and no update was provided.

i) Poppy Scotland 31 Oct/ Unforgotten Forces 15 Nov (DF)

Diana noted that this was an interesting meeting. Caroline, Diana, Jimmy and Graham are due to meet the Unforgotten Forces Co-ordinator Glen MacDonald 14th

December to find out more about the project and the role for SOPA as a partner. Diana noted that she had raised a question about veterans being targeted for war crimes and the fear that veterans may have about being held accountable for actions within war time, however, this issue was noted as out-with the remit of the project.

Jimmy noted that all veterans should be recognised in the National Census 2021 as this would help identify veterans who could then be offered better support.

Jimmy also noted an important issue for many veterans who do not qualify for an army pension. The rules changed in April 1975, and even though a mandate was given from government to inform personnel, they did not and service people lost out on pensions. Jimmy will continue to raise this matter with elected representatives and relevant organisations.

j) Democracy Matters 20 Nov (DF)

Diana distributed information about this series of events.

k) Self-Directed Support 23 Nov (DF, GR, CC)

SOPA were invited by the Scottish Government to discuss Self-Directed Support arrangements. Key issues were briefly discussed including the low take up of Direct Payments by older people, the risks and responsibilities of becoming an employer and the support that might be available for this. The Scottish Government team are keen to hear SOPA's views – please send any relevant information or stories from member organisations to Caroline who will pass on.

l) Others - (U3A – TB circulated)

Palliative Care - Eileen gave an updated on her ongoing involvement in this work. Developments include trying to have a palliative care team in every hospital. Next meeting 29th January. A final submission of a plan is due to go to Parliament in March.

Audiology – Tom noted a local initiative where libraries are distributing hearing aid batteries.

7. Invitations to future meetings/ consultations and committees

- a. Let's Talk About Brexit 5 Dec – Circulated
- b. Palliative Care 11 Dec (EW) - As above
- c. Others - for information
 - 4th Dec, Glasgow, Social Care Alliance, Social Security Experience Panels
 - 10th December - Social Security Scotland, High Street Glasgow,

LUNCH

Afternoon Session

8. Update on Assembly and Reception

a) Reception - booked Tuesday 5 March 2019 18.00 - 20.00

Christine Graham MSP to Chair, we will ask Christine for her thoughts.

The Planning Group were asked for any specific themes, the following were raised:

- Funeral Poverty, keep pressure on that
- isolation, proposed charges for TV Licence for people over the age of 75 will have a negative impact
- local councils fund activities that prevent us being vulnerable and cuts are having an impact
- vulnerability is a general theme that can apply eg cybercrime, scams
- continuity of care services visiting throughout day, access to community services for someone coming out of hospital. Care packages were discussed and Elaine noted that Scottish Borders have moved to minimum 30 minute visits from April 2019.

The balance between the reception as a celebratory event to raise awareness of SOPA whilst also a chance to highlight important issues to ministers was discussed.

Glenda noted that previous receptions have been celebratory events, but issues raised have had an impact eg Tim from LGBT Age spoke at a previous Reception and it was heard by Jeanne Freeman who had not been aware of the project.

Glenda also noted the important distinction between MSPs and Government; MSPs hold government to account. This distinction is relevant to how SOPA engage with both.

b) Assembly – provisional date 4 October 2019

Glenda, Caroline and Diana met with Douglas Miller from the Parliament Events Team on 26 Nov. It was agreed that we would work towards the date of 4 October 2019 for the Assembly – 10 years of SOPA, 20 year anniversary of the Scottish Parliament and International Older People's Day on 1 October.

Our work has to be linked into the work of the committees. The next step is for Caroline to contact all the committees to see which topics might be relevant for the Assembly. Suggestions discussed by the Planning Group (including those at a) above):

- Fuel Poverty
- Poverty and its impact on older people, food banks, food pricing.
- Rise in crime, fear, isolation, eating, transport - all relate to poverty.
- We may have left Europe and other aspects of that too.
- Sharing ideas with other councils (eg all houses in North Ayrshire built must have solar panels).
- How older people are engaged (community engagement committee is a new committee). Community Councils have the potential to do an amazing amount of work if understood their role.

Top priorities consistently raised by older people were discussed:

- Health and Care
- Transport
- State Pension – all depends what you have to spend
- Loneliness
- Rural issues – not well insulated homes, transport

9. Financial update

B&Q agreed to fund some out-reach meetings and come along if available. The Dundee event and Basic Citizens Income Event in Glasgow in June were supported by them. However, SOPA still needs to provide an invoice for the Glasgow event as the invoice received was incorrect. Glenda will contact B&Q re changed staffing arrangements and hopes that the remaining funding will continue to be available in 2019.

PEC Fund (Scottish Government funding) – an underspend from 2017-2018 was taken off of this quarter, hence the reduced amount of income received.

NFOP - £2500, used by end of December, £600 on Nairn and Dingwalls, rounded down to £1800. Alan noted that carry forward has been approved for 2019. Diana thanked Alan for arranging this.

The Planning Group agreed that Tom and Glenda would be removed as signatories for the SOPA bank account and Eileen and Caroline would be added.

10. Funding bids

a) Big Lottery – Awards for All

Glenda and Sandra submitted a request for £10K which would support this group and build its capacity and learning opportunities and some rental office accommodation, but despite positive conversations prior to a decision being made, the request was declined. Feedback suggested that building the capacity of the group was ok, but we need to make sure there is a connection to the communities as well. A further request can be made.

Diana asked Sandra to lead a small funding group, to look at funding, and Glenda as a volunteer has offered her help also. Glenda to forward the latest big lottery application to Sandra, and changes will be made to focus more on out-reach and impact on local areas that have little coverage with SOPA eg Angus.

Other suggestions for fundraising were discussed including crowd funding. Glenda and Sandra to consider.

Major issue with funding to support the group and the work that we do, about making sure there is money there for staff. A lot of work is done on an ad hoc basis. Needing funds that are not reserved but many sources of funding are restricted to particular project outputs.

b) Older People Strategic Action Forum – planned engagement activity

£50k was made available through the Older People's Strategic Action Forum to undertake consultation to inform the development of a new framework for older people. SOPA applied for and secured £5k - see paper circulated.

The extra activity was beyond the scope of the coordinator, and funding has agreed for additional staffing to arrange and report on the consultation. Caroline made enquiries with three people, one of whom was willing and able to support SOPA with this work, Rebecca Armstrong.

There will be one engagement event in Edinburgh at the end Jan/ early Feb, alongside a questionnaire that would broaden the number of people able to take part. All the work has to be completed and reported back to Government by end of February 2019.

We are aware that many issues have been heavily consulted on eg Health and Social Care, Isolation and Loneliness (strategy soon to be published). What has been suggested by the Scottish Government as topics for the work is a focus on reducing stigma and the barriers they face in daily life, along with celebrating the valuable contribution people make to society.

A more structured programme has to be put together in a quite short timescale. Committee asked for thoughts and suggestions, and what the Planning Group members can do.

Next steps are to pin down a venue and catering which will determine how many to invite within the budget. Planning group members and their broader networks will be invited, and then first come, first served.

The intention is to develop a questionnaire to send more widely, firstly online but printed copies will also be made available. If members have meetings in January where some questionnaires can be filled in that would be helpful. If members could also arrange for the link to the online questionnaire to be circulated by email or in newsletters etc that would be good.

The importance of a centralised meeting venue with good access from the train station and bus station was highlighted.

The suggestion of a 'world café style' was received positively, noting that other events like this encouraged everyone to take part.

Links have been made to the Retired Queens Nurses who will be invited.

The results from this work can link into the SOPA Reception and Assembly.

A request was made for SOPA members to assist with Facilitators/Scribes for the day – Sandra, Christine, Eileen, and Matt agreed to assist and Sam and Alan Sidaway were also suggested as likely to help with these roles.

It was noted that SPF have received £7500 from the same funding stream for two meetings.

11. SOPA Staffing and Office

The SOPA office has moved to the Eric Liddell Centre, a building on Holy Corner, Edinburgh. Buses 11,15,16 and 36 up Lothian road, or 23 up the Mound. (Instructions will be circulated with the agenda for the next meeting).

Glenda noted that at the last meeting it was agreed that SOPA would move premises with EVOC, however as the new coordinator is already based in Eric Liddell Centre, it was agreed that desk space would be available at a reduced rate.

Glenda noted that she is really pleased that Caroline accepted employment and is confident Caroline has the right skills to be able to take SOPA forward in a very efficient way.

The last few weeks have been busy in moving from the office, Glenda and Avril packed up, meetings over the last few weeks, and Diana and Caroline are now taking things forward.

Caroline said Glenda has devoted so much time and energy to the organisation, what can we do with the resources we have going forward will not be 24/7 but is sure all members appreciate what Glenda has done for SOPA.

The Planning Group accepts Caroline Clark as the new coordinator after a process of interviewing.

Confirmed Avril will continue as administration. Avril and Caroline to sign new contracts.

12. SOPA Planning Group – new and leaving members

Tom is leaving SOPA and the new chair of U3A (Kath Payne) to join as representative on Planning Group. Her expertise is in health care, medical sociology, life-long learning and CPD. The new representative of U3A Scotland was approved. Tom will continue to support SOPA with the website (as Val no longer doing it) until January meeting. A new volunteer will be sought to manage the website (hosted with Spanglefish, fee paid annually). Tom has provided Val's briefing note to Caroline who will put out to the wider planning group and will place an advert in the Volunteer Centre Edinburgh in the New Year.

Jimmy currently represents GMB union retired members, but is also the Older People's Champion for North Ayrshire Council (representing 40k older people). Jimmy suggested that he would be keen to represent this latter role on SOPA and felt that increasing the membership of Older People's Champions would help to extend SOPA's reach (Jimmy seeking a list to invite). Caroline to write to the Chief Executive of North Ayrshire Council to seek approval for Jimmy to attend as the local Older People's Champion. Jimmy will ask GMB to nominate someone else. Planning Group agreed above.

Mary Benson has stood down and awaiting replacement, end of last meeting. Office linked into work, but she is retiring, so need to make contact with group to see if able to send representative. Glenda to forward email to Caroline.

13. SOPA newsletter

Caroline asked about the frequency of newsletters. It was noted that Val used to do via mailchimp. Tom is happy to help draft a PDF newsletter, if material given? Aim to do in the new year, notifying of the changes and events coming up.

14. Future meeting dates

Planning Group meeting before March Reception, and Consultation meeting,

Date: Tuesday 22nd January 2019, Eric Liddell Centre, 15 Morningside Road, Edinburgh, EH10 4DP

Planning Group meeting first to be followed by Trustee meeting.

15. AOCB

It was noted that the Scottish Senior Alliance are in the process of winding up. It was expressed that this was due to a number of reasons including a failure to get people to step up and take positions and funding.

Glenda is moving on, but still working on a voluntary basis regarding funding. Diana and Tom thanked Glenda for her work; almost since the conception of SOPA Glenda has been the backbone and driving force, producing a huge amount of work. Glenda has spent most of her life fighting for older people's causes and she deserves the recognition, and Tom thanked for personal help and friendship during his term of office

Glenda responded, noting that she has worked with older people for a very long term, since the 1980s, she has really enjoyed it and learned so much, and taken her to many different parts of the world and many agendas. Whilst SOPA nearly disappeared in 2010, luckily within her work in Edinburgh Council was able to keep it going. She noted that her time to move on has come and for the organisation to grow, people have to know when to move on and for others to take on. She is very happy handing over to Diana and Caroline and will continue to be involved from the sidelines, supporting Sandra to work on securing more funding. Glenda wished all the members well and thanked them all.

CLOSE

16. Date of Next Meetings -

- a. 22 January 2019 – Edinburgh
- b. 22 May 2019 – Ayrshire (Irvine – Council Chambers?) TBC Jimmy to try to secure venue
- c. 7 August 2019 – Perth?
- d. 13 November – Eric Liddell Centre – Edinburgh