

Cross Party Group on Human Trafficking 13th June 2013 5.30pm, The Scottish Parliament

In attendance:

Hazel Watson – Action on churches working together in Scotland (ACTS)

Iain Whyte – Anti-Slavery International

Ruth Weston – Edinburgh City Council

Sean Bell – Edinburgh City Council

Katarina Zborovianova – Crossroads Youth and Community Association

Any Hogarth – Stop the Traffick

Catriona Brockett – Stop the Traffick

Euan Fraser – Stop the Traffick

Mei-Ling McNamara – Film maker, Human Trafficking/Forced Labour

Neil McCulloch - Scot-Pep

Andy Bevan – International Justice Mission

Karen Wylie – Robert Gordon’s University

Charlie Ager – Scotland Malawi Partnership

Lucy Cowpland – International Justice Mission

Christina McKelvie MSP

Jenny Marra MSP (Chair)

Ross McKenzie – Office of Jenny Marra MSP

Rebecca Wallace – Robert Gordons University, Professor of International Human Rights and Justice

Karen Ciantar – Barnardos

Ruth Weston – Edinburgh City Council

Graham O’Neill

Ann Fehilly –TARA

Jenny Marra MSP welcomed attendees and opened the AGM.

AGM – Election of Office Bearers.

Jenny Marra MSP and Christina McKelvie MSP were proposed as Co-Convenors of the Group. The nomination was seconded and agreed.

Members were asked to consider nominating themselves for the position of secretariat. Members agreed to email their interest in the position to Ross McKenzie.

The AGM was brought to a close.

Jenny Marra MSP moved to, an update on actions from the previous meeting:

Jenny Marra MSP distributed parliamentary question S4W – 15246 in relation to the group's request to find out when the government's proposed statutory aggravation for human trafficking will come in to force.

Jenny Marra MSP indicated she had an acknowledgement from the Law Society of Scotland on the group's request to find out what guidance was available to solicitors in Scotland when dealing with potential victims of human trafficking.

Jenny Marra MSP indicated no response had been had from the European External Action Service on what role they have in formulating human trafficking policy,

Jenny Marra MSP indicated that Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission had responded to the group's request to review convictions against suspected trafficking victims.

A discussion followed on the Government's intention to introduce a statutory aggravation. The group discussed the implications of the aggravation, and the difference between the statutory aggravation and a change in the criminal definition of human trafficking. The question was raised as to when the aggravation would come into force. Jenny Marra MSP indicated this would not be until 2014, as the Bill in which it features is large and complex.

A question was raised regarding the EU directive, and whether the UK had fully ratified the directive. Christina McKelvie MSP indicated she believed the UK had not.

Jenny Marra MSP moved the agenda on to a presentation by Ann Fehilly on the campaign for a human trafficking rapporteur.

Ann discussed the campaign being brought forward in conjunction with ECPAT on the campaign for a human trafficking rapporteur (Commissioner).

Ann outlined the main problem with current approach-trafficking, with the inter-departmental ministerial group as the current national rapporteur, government is essentially assessing its own progress. She detailed that the campaign is calling for independent oversight of the Government's anti-trafficking efforts. Ann noted that Wales have recently appointed an anti-trafficking rapporteur.

Ann went on to refer to a newly published Anti-trafficking Monitoring Group Report 'in the Dock' and relayed some of the main arguments from that report, including that front line staff were trained appropriately to recognise and work with victims of human trafficking; that police had a standard framework for policy for interactions with victims of human trafficking.

A general discussion followed on the recommendations of the ATMG report and the campaign for a national rapporteur. In particular, the group focussed on the criminalisation of victims of human trafficking. The group asked if a copy of the ATMG report could be circulated, Ross McKenzie agreed

to take this forward.

Graham O'Neill raised the Council of Europe's GRETA analysis of the UK's anti-trafficking efforts. A general discussion followed with the group requesting a copy of the GRETA Evaluation. Ross McKenzie agreed to take this forward.

The group then agreed to postpone the final agenda item, on a discussion on using the private sector to tackle human trafficking because it felt the main authority on the issue, Kiril Sharapov should be in attendance to present.

The meeting concluded with the next meeting being scheduled for the 4th of September 2013 at 5.30pm.