

The Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Poland

Meeting date: 26 March 2014,

Time: 6.20pm

Location: Scottish Parliament, Committee Room no 5

Chaired by: Jean Urquhart MSP

Secretary: Joanna Zawadzka (taking minutes)

Attendees: Aleksandra Witkowska, Joanna Ulatowska, Grazyna Kaczor, Katarzyna Jajszczok, Izabella Brodzinska, Anna Martowicz, Eliza Dabrowska, Anna Smykla, Marlena Beczek, Andrew Roach, John Bates, Kinga Plich, Malgorzata Lachowicz-Jachim, Justyna Sroka, Pat Glacklen, Zosia Wierzbowicz-Fraser, Violeta Ilendo, Anna Ruszel, Sylwia Kiro-Zabinska, George Rubiński, Lewis Ritchie, Marek Straczynski, Maciej Wiczynski, Martin Stepek, Bartek Kowalczyk, Raymond Raszkowski-Ross, Ewelina Kurek, Michael Dembinski, Anne McTaggart MSP

Apologies- Agnieszka Karaskowiak, Suzanne Hayat, John Lamont, Elaine Smith, Lukasz Napieraj, Lidia Krzynowek, Claire Baker, Richard Simpson.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Attendees introduced themselves and Apologies noted above. Jean welcomed members and thanked everyone for coming. Copies of the document from the Electoral Commission on Voting Rights for Polish Citizens living in Scotland was circulated.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Zosia Wierzbowicz-Fraser approved the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2013 as a true and accurate record.

4. Reports (as applicable)

a) Business sub group – Update from business sub group & Michael Dembinski – British Polish Chamber of Commerce

Members of the business sub group gave an update on their activities:

1. Business subgroup had 3 meetings with following organisations:

- Business Gateway, Hugh Lightbody

Meeting was to encourage Business Gateway to support Polish Entrepreneurs, publish brochure about available support for Polish SMEs and encourage Polish firms to set up business in Scotland.

- SDI, Mark Hallan

Aim of the meeting was to encourage SDI to run set of events for Scottish exporters interested to expand in Poland

- Mazovia Development Agency, Krzysztof Szulc, Piotr Popik

They were interested in contacting various Scottish government organisation: Scottish Water,

Parliament, Highland and Islands Development Agency, promoting Mazovia Region among UK-businesses and meeting was to introduce our activities.

2. According to Centre of Entrepreneurs Research 1 in 7 entrepreneurs have migrant background. There is 22k Polish Directors and 65k Polish self-employed.

Michael Dembinski from British Polish Chamber of Commerce gave a short presentation on the activities of this organisation, which has a proactive role in supporting British SME's i.e. export development to Polish market. He highlighted importance of the involvement of the Scottish businesses in getting support from BPCC

b) Education sub group – Update from Zosia Wierzbowicz Fraser & Presentation by Fife Polish Education Trust – Violeta Ilendo

Zosia Wierzbowicz-Fraser presented her report (attached on this email) and ask for the group to support for the following :

For CPG Action

- A “Freedom of Information “ request from the CPG be sent to all local authorities in Scotland requesting numbers of Polish children in all primary ,secondary schools, colleges and universities

Later –when data is available

- CPG to invite Language co-ordinators from SQA to explain the current lack of provision of Polish courses
- CPG to invite a representative of the GTC to explain lack of registration of qualified Polish teachers

All of the above points of action have been approved by the group.

Education sub-group invited business sub-group members for the meeting to explore possibilities for cooperation. Joanna will forward the details to business-sub group members to Zosia.

John McLaughlin gave a presentation of the activities of newly formed Polish Fife Education Trust (please see the attachment)

Dr Anna Martowicz presented the activities of the Association for the Promotion of the Polish Language Abroad. It has also been suggested to contact NHS Service/Minister for Public Health to ask for help with distribution of the leaflets to Antenatal Clinics around Scotland.

APPLA – clarification

We have not been planning any formal/official opening of the organisation. What we plan to do is a series of information campaigns revolving around the issues of learning/teaching/maintaining of the Polish language. We hoped to launch them on 10th April but, yet again, there is delay due to discussions with our potential honorary supporters. I will send an email to all of those who signed up for receiving information on membership/our activities once everything is in place (very soon, hopefully).

c) Culture –Joanna Zawadzka- Polish Scottish Heritage / Tomek Borkowy Universal

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Joanna gave an update on progress of the Polish Scottish Heritage Project and thanked Jean for agreeing to sponsor the Polish Scottish Heritage Celebration Event on the 18th June 2018. Members of the group were invited for this event and more information will follow. Joanna also asked members of the group for the ideas to contribute to the project and asked for donation of the books on Polish –Scottish history/culture/heritage for the pop-up library.

Tomek Borkowy gave a short update on the Polish contribution to this years Festival Fringe, more information will be forwarded to the group.

5. Polish Ex-Serviceman Club update.

Marek Straczynski gave an update on the situation with the Polish Ex-Serviceman Club and thanks to collaborative action of the group of Polish organisations the club will not be sold. There is a work in progress to set up an organisation that will manage the club.

7. AOB

Sylwia Kiro-Zabinska suggested to create another sub-group for the organisations interested providing mental health support and development services for Polish nationals. Group approved.

Joanna raised an issue of Polish Community not being represented well enough in Scotland and not contributing to the work of local councils, policy making and supporting organisations and asked for the support from the group on how to find the appropriate solution.

Jean raised concerns over not many MSP's being involved in work of the group.

Date of the next meeting 10th June 2014 5.30 for 6pm