

## West of Scotland Racial Equality Council

### *Minutes of Annual General Meeting – 23 JUNE 2005*

**Chair :** Councillor Hanzala Malik

**Present:**

Onkar Singh Jandu	Bob Chadha	Allison Brady
Haleema Malik	Nancy Buney	Hanzala Malik
M H Mirza	Anne Currie	Edelweisse Thornley
Morag Stirling	Elish Angiolini	Chris Orman
Asif Bashir	Peter Bain	Judith Tankel
Liz Corbett	A Paton	Tom Leggate
Safdar Din	M Malik	Dan Gunn
John Neilson	A Aziz	R Singh
Ghzala Khan	Vincent Chudy	K Z Ansari
M Akhtar	J Asghar	Mohammed Rafiq
Harriet Campbell	Shahin Naz	Jim Creelman
O P Khanna		

**Staff:**

Mohammed Razaq	Farrah Rashid	Bushra Iqbal
Stewart Lyell	Joni MacKay	

**Apologies:**

Mohammed Zahid	Ghulam Haydur Virk	Robert Queen
Maggie Chetty	Radha Chetty	Hugh O'Neill
Rahat Syed	Rosemarie McIlwhan	Dorothy Neoh
Gordon Vallely	Jayne Gallagher	Ali Jarvis
Lorna McNiven		

### **Welcome from Councillor Hanzala Malik**

Cllr Hanzala Malik formally welcomed everybody present and thanked them for their attendance. He also welcomed Elish Angiolini, Solicitor General, and thanked her for agreeing to be the keynote speaker.

### **Speakers**

The meeting commenced with Elish Angiolini giving a detailed presentation on the role of the Procurator Fiscal Service in line with Racial Equality. She thanked Razaq for the kind invitation to speak at the AGM and stated that the Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) has a very good relationship with WSREC and welcomes the opportunity to encourage and develop this relationship.

Elish reported that Racial Equality is at the very heart of what COPFS strives to achieve. The function of the COPFS is to enforce the rules and regulations set down by Society to

regulate its behaviour and this is the only way diverse communities can have confidence in the investigation and prosecution of crime in Scotland. Elish then went on to report that as of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2005 2.3% of COPFS workforce were from ethnic minority communities and they are continuing to build on this.

Elish concluded by saying that she believes COPFS has come a long way in promoting racial equality in the recruitment policies and practices and also in the investigation and prosecution of crime however, she assured everybody that COPFS will never become complacent about what that have already achieved as they know there is still a long way to go.

Judith Tankel thanked Elish for her presentation.

### **Apologies**

The list of apologies is detailed above.

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the AGM held on 24 June 2004 had been distributed previously. The minutes were approved as a correct record of last years meeting.

### **Matters Arising**

Everyone was satisfied that all matters had been dealt with by the Executive.

### **Presentation of the Annual Report 2004/2005**

Mohammed Razaq gave a detailed report on the Annual Report as follows:

He stated that the annual report presented today is the culmination of a year's hard work for WSREC. Razaq directed everyone's attention to the photograph on page 37 showing some of the young participants of this year's poetry competition receiving their awards. The end result of the work produced by young people has been published as a book called 'divers roots'.

This is the work of the PAREF education group made up of the 12 unitary authorities with the support of other partners, logos can be found on the back page. The poetry entries are received from schools all over Strathclyde.

WSREC Consultancy and Training Unit has delivered a lot of training around Race Equality Schemes and training on the RRA Act 2000. Training has been delivered to a number of public, private and voluntary organisations including: local authorities (South Ayrshire Council & West Dunbartonshire Council) British Transport Police, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Motherwell College, Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre, Glasgow University and Procurator Fiscals Inspectorate. Training income this year has increased from £14k last year to £21K this year.

Razaq gave his sincere thanks to all staff and external trainers in particular Maggie Chetty who has provided the major part of the training for the unit. He is glad to say that

the income generated has increased the capacity to assist with all aspects of WSREC work.

WSREC member's of staff have been assisting in providing the training. This is on top of their casework/project work and many other achievements this year. Razaq thanked Bushra Iqbal, Shahana Noor Vivien Caldwell, Rob Hastings, Jim Creelman, Dean Pennington and the office management team which comprises of Farrah Rashid, Lovetta Williams, Stewart Lyell and volunteers.

Razaq reported that this year as in previous years the secondments with Strathclyde Police, Scottish Prison Service and Procurator Fiscals Service have been very successful. This year a very senior personnel member of the SPS has been seconded and the secondment from Strathclyde Police being further developed with yearly instead of six monthly secondments.

Razaq then went on to discuss case work statistics on pages 10 - 20 of the Annual Report, which show that WSREC casework continues to spread. He stated that the statistics show again this year that there are more private sector cases, including financial, logistics, hotels, and the retail industry and more.

Razaq drew everybody's attention to page 10 of the report which states that WSREC received 117 enquiries (68 last year) for assistance under the Race Relations Act as Amended 2000 which is an increase of 58%. It is interesting to note that enquiry from people of Mixed Heritage has doubled from 6% to 11%.

On pages 18 and 19 out of the 36 racial discrimination cases 19 were employment related. These cases are very complicated and take a lot time and effort from staff. Razaq once again thanked all colleagues for their hard work.

Razaq reported that this year again the Commission for Racial has reduced WSREC's funding from the previous year. This is the third year running the grant has been reduced 66K to 50K.

The Education Project which is in its second year and was initially funded by two local authorities was joined by a third, funding a part-time Education Officer providing support for the anti-racist work of the Public Authorities Racial Equality Forum Education Group. It is hoped that other authorities will join and support the excellent work being carried on by Shahana Noor.

The Stress Management Project funded by Lloyds TSB has been successful in obtaining further funding from CRE to work with Asylum seekers and refugees in the coming year 2005/06. Vivien Caldwell has to be congratulated for her efforts in this regard. This project offers counselling for WSREC clients who have been victims of racial harassment or racial discrimination.

Razaq was pleased to report that WSREC was successful in obtaining three year funding from Comic Relief to work with asylum seekers and refugees facing racial harassment by providing; - representation, signposting, referrals outreach and local surgeries. The project is called Glasgow Refugee/asylum seeker and Information Project (GRIP). The North West and The North Area Committees of Glasgow City Council have also supported the project.

Finally, Razaq reported that our Incorporation as a Ltd Company by Guarantee is in its final stages. The only task left to do is to provide details of all would be WSREC Directors and the fee to Inland Revenue to be registered.

The Chair asked if anybody would like to ask Razaq any questions on the report.

Question 1:

Peter Bain of the Scottish Refugee Council asked how the SRC and WSREC could work together with regards to asylum seekers.

Razaq stated that both organisations can set up a referral system and also WSREC can assist with cases.

Question 2:

Abdul Aziz, West Dunbartonshire Minority Ethnic Association, stated that in the past he has visited schools to deliver presentations on race equality issues. He has felt that this has assisted in changing the children's perspective around these issues. He asked Razaq whether WSREC had anything like this in place.

Razaq reported that each year the Public Authorities Racial Equality Forum Education Project hosts an anti-racist competition which encourages children from all schools in the West of Scotland to take part.

The chair commented on the fact that WSREC has dealt with cases from White/Scottish communities and also New Zealand. He stated that this is a reminder that WSREC is providing services to all communities.

There were no further questions and at this point the chair welcomed Mr Khanna to deliver his presentation of the Accounts.

### **Presentation of Treasurer's Report**

Mr Khanna reported that he was elected as treasurer in November 2004 after the resignation of Dr Nazir Chaudhry due to health reasons. He stated that through the year WSREC has been able to maintain a healthy working income. WSREC has maintained financial stability through securing funding for additional projects and training work. The training programmes have brought additional resources which have assisted to deliver better services to clients.

Mr Khanna reported that WSREC has been successful in obtaining funds from Comic Relief to work with asylum seekers and refugees and also received a grant to produce literature . WSREC is now also in the process of devising a five year business plan.

Mr Khanna thanked colleagues and partners in the Prison Service, Police and Procurator Fiscal Service for their financial support and commitment to the work of WSREC.

The chair asked members if they would like to ask any questions. There were no questions. The chair thanked Mr Khanna for his report.

### **Appointment of Auditors 2004-2005**

It was put forth that the auditor, BDO Stoy Hayward, be used again next year. This was approved.

### **Chairs Remarks**

The chair explained that Judith Tankel, Chair of WSREC has been involved with the organisation for a few years and has always assisted with the work beyond ones expectations. He thanked her on behalf of all staff and committee members and asked her to say a few words.

Judith reported that when the AGM met last year WSREC was in anxiety due to the CRE cutting back on funding. However, with staff on hand and Glasgow City Council's assistance with funding WSREC managed to continue with its hard work.

Judith said that staff morale is excellent and staff members are supporting one another.

Judith thanked Jim Creelman, former Strathclyde Police Seconded, for all his hard work during his time at WSREC and for still keeping in touch with staff and also attending events.

Judith reported that Harriet Campbell, Mohammed Razaq and she had attended the conference organised by the British Federation of Racial Equality Councils. She found this to be very useful and well organised.

Judith also reported that WSREC is keen to set up a forum of all Racial Equality Council's which will work together to secure funding which can be shared between the REC's.

Judith thanked all members of staff for all their hard work through out the year.

### **Announcement of New Board Members**

New members are as follows:

Mr Vincent Chudy, Mr Atif Naim, Ms Harriette Campbell and Mr Shahin Naz.

**Nominations for the Membership Panel**

Mohammed Razaq explained that there were no nominations for the Membership Panel. He explained that if anybody was interested then they were to make contact at WSREC offices.

**A.O.C.B**

The chair notified members that Glasgow City Council is giving young people the chance to apply for apprenticeships in different areas. All the information is available on the website.

**Vote of Thanks**

Judith thanked Elish Angiolini for her presentation. She thanked Mohammed Razaq and staff for the annual report and hard work through the year. She thanked Cllr Hanzala Malik for chairing the AGM, and finally thanked everybody for their attendance.