

West of Scotland Regional Equality Council Ltd
85th Meeting of WSREC Board on 9th September 2021 at 6.00pm_Via ZOOM

MINUTES

PRESENT

Board of Directors

1. Hanzala Malik Chair
2. Anne Mactaggart (AM)
3. Dr Malcolm Green (MG)
4. Dr. Harriette Campbell (HC)
5. Haroun Malik (HM)
6. Rashid Hussain (RH)
7. Sharon Schlesinger (SS)
8. Sheela Mukherjee (SM)
9. Sheereen Razaq (SR) 1st Mtg
10. Vince Chudy (VC)

Observers

None in attendance

In attendance

Mohammed Razaq (MR)

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for get well cards for Antony Kozowski and Syed Jafri as they are both unwell.

Action: It was agreed on behalf of the Board to send get well cards to both Antony Kozowski, Syed Jafri, and Dr. Javed Gill.

1. APOLOGIES

Board of Directors

1. Onkar Singh Jandu (OSJ)
2. Antony Kozowski (AK) unwell
3. Syed Jafri (SJ) unwell
4. Dr. Javed Gill (JG) unwell

Observers

None

2. PRESENTATION

Presentation was provided by Mohammed Razaq, Executive Director, new project Minority Ethnic Human Rights Project (MEHRP)

Project is funded by Scottish Governments Equality and Human Rights Fund (EHRF) with a 3-year grant of £436,227 (1st October 2021 to 30th September 2024).

(Previously 60 organisations were funded by Promoting Equality and Cohesion Fund (PECF), with new EHRF that replaced PECF fund only 17 organisations funded by PECF were successful and WSREC was one of them also with the PECF fund WSREC was receiving £60k per annum however, the new fund we will receive £145k per annum that is an increase of 141%).

Project Outcomes

1. Bespoke activities for disadvantaged minority ethnic communities in the West of Scotland through the provision of information and advice on welfare reform, housing, financial entitlements
2. Employability pathways, training to wider services
3. Encouraging civic participation.
4. To research and provide direct support to those suffering the impact of COVID19
5. To research and provide direct support in relation to EU Exit and contribute our findings into the national and international frameworks.

After a number of questions including the breakdown of numbers of existing and new staff for the project, the Chair on behalf the Board thanked Mohammed Razaq for the very informative presentation.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of 84th WSREC Board meeting were approved as a true and accurate record with the following changes. *Agenda item 5 'Co-options' add name of Antony Kozlowski*

4. MATTERS ARISING

a. *MR reported that a letter had been written, and response received dated (20/04/2021) from Martyn Evans Chair of the Scottish Police Authority about situation in relation to the non-availability timeously of hate crime figures. After some discussion, the response was deemed unsatisfactory/unhappy/disappointing, and it was agreed to re-write to the Chair of SPA with the views of the Board. MR reported that a letter had been written and response is being awaited.*

5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were none

Action: It was agreed that this item be moved straight after apologies in future agenda's

6. FOR DISCUSSION

Reports

a) Finance – Variance statement for month of August 2021

Expenditure: actual **£39,553** and budgeted **£21,663** with a variance of **£17,889 overspend**

Income: actual **£31,912** and budgeted **£8,255** with a variance of **£23,657 over budget**

The Board was content with explanations provided for under/over budget expenditure/income and noted the report.

b) Executive Director

MR pointed to the report that had been forwarded to Board of Directors and asked for any questions. SS asked about the Refugees mentioned in his report and what WSREC will be doing about Afghan refugees. MR advised that the mention of refugees in the report was about the funding applications to 'New Scot Refugee Fund' and success of these to work with all asylum seekers and refugees, he advised that Afghan refugees will be arriving in Glasgow imminently and WSREC is in a position to support them too. SS advised that the Jewish community had already started gathering cloths, toys and other items for the arrival of the Afghan refugees to Glasgow. A number of Board members including SM and MG spoke about the asylum seekers and refugees arriving in Glasgow from different countries in the past and the positive roles Glasgow City Council and WSREC had played in integrating them into Glasgow society. It was also discussed the varying need for ESOL for Afghan Refugees as some of them spoke good English as they had been interpreting for the British and other forces there in Afghanistan.

The Board noted the report

c) Partner Reports

No reports were received, and no partners were in attendance.

FOR DECISION

7. CORRESPONDENCE

There was non

FOR INFORMATION

8. UPDATE: (Shuna Street Repairs and Move)

The Chair reported that he with MR visited the office and noted that work had started by the contractor and was impressed by the amount work staff had carried out outside within the perimeter of the building including cutting the shrubbery and getting ready for the erection of the scaffolding by the contractor. The chair also reported that along with MR, City Building were visited and a request was made to them to assist with Shuna Street, they are considering a number of items including the painting internal walls and ceilings of the ground floor.

WEST OF SCOTLAND REGIONAL EQUALITY COUNCIL

MR advised the Board of the splendid work staff had been carrying out from getting everything packed up for the move to Shuna Street, disposing of unwanted documents and materials after separating boxes of documents awaiting to be shredded due to their confidential nature. The Chair indicated arranging a visit for Board members to Shuna Street when it was safe to do so. The Board noted that report

9. Covid 19 (return to the office)

MR reported that Shuna Street office will not be ready till November 2021 for service delivery however, any clients that request a face-to-face meeting are being accommodated at Napierhall Street however, most of the service provision is still being provided online and virtually via email, WhatsApp, Teams and Zoom.

10. Funding Report

MR reported that he had not managed to complete the report to be tabled but referred members to the Executive Directors report which contains aspects of the funding report.

The Board were happy with this and looked forward to fuller report at a future meeting.

11. REPORT SAREC

MG (Chair of SAREC) reported that SAREC had been unsuccessful with the application to Scottish Governments Equality and Human Rights Fund (EHRF) and the CEO's will be working SAREC strategy in view of this and look for resource elsewhere to continue the work. MR added that he along other CEO's were in a feedback meeting with the funders and the information provided will be used for future applications. The Chair suggested that a quick meeting of the CEO's should take place with SAREC Board then meeting to hear the outcome of the meeting.

12. A.O.C.B

There was some discussion about the merits of having this agenda item however, and a decision was made to discontinue it.

SM brought about the question of community facility closures by Glasgow City Council and in particular the Couper Institute and the negative effect that will have on ethnic minority organisations. There was some discussion on the affect on the Bangla Community who utilised Couper institute for many years and now face an issue even with alternative venue due to the needs of the Bangla community and the specific positive aspects of the Couper Institute that was able to support them. MG provided some background and suggested that the Chair may wish to take up the issue with Glasgow City Council officers in his role as City Councillor in relation to the Bangla Community and their needs in the context of the Couper Institute.

The Chair asked SM to provide him the Bangla Community needs/requirements so that he can discuss the issue with officers in view to resolving this at least for this year.

HC asked about 'Sheereen Razaq' name and her background the Chair suggested a meeting with her out of the Board meeting.

Action: It was agreed by HC that Chair would forward information requested.

13. DATE AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

All meetings at 6.00pm WSREC offices (meeting room Ground Floor)

Monday 22nd November 2021

Monday 7th February 2022

Monday 25th April 2022

Please note that all Board of Directors meetings take place Via Zoom during the lockdown and social distancing rules.