

**Activism Sub Committee**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> September
<b>Paper no</b>	<b>ASC/Sep15/02</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Minutes of the last ASC Meeting (June 13 2015)</b>
<b>Purpose of the Paper</b>	To provide the minutes of the last meeting for review for accuracy and progress on actions identified
<b>Key points</b>	
<b>Options and Decisions Required</b>	ASC members are asked to review the draft minutes for accuracy and to feedback on any matters arising allocated to them
<b>Risk considerations</b>	None
<b>Any next steps or actions</b>	Any actions arising from the discussion.
<b>Author's name and title</b>	Eilidh Douglas, Chair of the ASC



**Activism Subcommittee**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June  
10am – 4pm**

**Room S1  
Human Rights Action Centre  
17-25 New Inn Yard, London, EC2A 3EA**

**Present:**

Hannah Perry (HP)  
Eilidh Douglas (Chair) (ED)  
Ruth Breddal (RB)  
Jerry Allen (JA)  
Barrie Hay (BH)  
Liesbeth Ten Ham (LT-H)  
Malcolm Dingwall-Smith (MD-S)  
Melanie Thienard (MT)  
Sameena Matthiessen (SMa)  
Susan Mew (SMe)  
Ade Couper (AC)  
Simon Ware (SW)

**Apologies:**

Samidha Garg (New TUNC representative) (SG)  
Rachael Palmer (RP)  
Dave Beynon (DB)

**Staff attending:**

Kerry Moscogiuri (KM)  
Andy Hackman (AH)  
Gemma Hoskins (GH)  
Lydia Parker (LP)

**Minutes by:**

Lydia Parker

<b>Housekeeping</b>	
<p><u><b>Welcome</b></u>  <b>ED welcomed Committee and Staff members to the meeting.</b></p> <p><u><b>Apologies</b></u>  <b>ED noted apologies had been received from SG and RP.</b></p> <p><u><b>Announcements</b></u>  <b>ED thanked KM, AH, and GH for their preparation of the papers for the meeting and expressed the Committee's appreciation for their work.</b></p>	
<b>Item No. 1</b>	<b>Agenda Topic:</b> Review and approve minutes of the last meeting
<p><b>The Committee noted the following amendments by BH to the draft minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> March 2015:</b></p> <p><b>Item 2:</b>  The question was asked if the AGM would be <del>extended again in length</del> <b>returned to its previous length</b>. A discussion followed as to the advantages and disadvantages of an extension.</p> <p><b>Item 6.1:</b>  After Barrie presented the feedback, it was suggested that it might be helpful to ask for a £5 nominal fee for conference attendance in future, as only 50 out of the 150 who had registered for the Conference actually attended. Could ask for contribution for lunch provided. There were 25 evaluations <b>all of</b> which were very positive.</p> <p>The Committee APPROVED the minutes with these amends.</p>	
<b>Item No. 2</b>	<b>Agenda Topic:</b> Matters arising
<p><b>AGM Stall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It would be helpful to know how much room the ASC will be allocated at next year's AGM ahead of time.</li> <li>- It would be more effective to have fewer papers</li> </ul> <p><b>Human Rights Act</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (KM) In response to the web-issues – information has been sent around. There is no further information to give regarding quality assurance, although the general feeling is that it is improving.</li> </ul> <p><b>Shoomi – Education Officer (Adults)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shoomi will be attending a future ASC meeting – this has had to be deferred to allow for other agenda items</li> </ul> <p><b>Amnesty UK Staff names document</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This has been updated and emailed around.</li> </ul> <p><b>ASC meetings in general</b></p>	

- LT-H felt that in general there needed to be more flexibility in ASC meetings for items that arise from committee members for discussion.
- HP noted that it is difficult to balance planning the meeting's agenda items and supporting papers as well as leaving sufficient time for new items that may arise on the day of the meeting. If members can provide feedback and request their own items when they first receive the agenda, c.10 days before the meeting, then this would enable that desired flexibility. There is also the alternative to let new items that arise on the day spill into a Skype call that could follow the meeting, but that items already on the agenda and that everyone has had the chance to prepare for, should take priority on the day. There was understanding within the meeting that this can be difficult, as members have other priorities outside of the ASC.

<b>Item No. 3</b>	<b>Agenda Topic: Learnings and challenges</b>
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**HP presented paper ASC/Jun15/02 to the Committee.**

**Regarding the paper itself**

- It was also noted that for the effectiveness of the meeting it was important to get an idea from committee members of any key issue that would be raised before the meeting occurred.

**Discussion on Committee members' findings**

- Discussion focussed on students and thematic network activities which led to broader discussion across the group.
- The Committee were delighted with the growth in all of the thematic networks, particularly the significant growth in the LGBTI network (LGBTI network membership up from 4104 in quarter 1 to 6990 in quarter 2, Childrens Human Right network up from 14819 (Q1) to 15198 (Q2), Women's Action Network up from 16478 (Q1) to 16901 (Q2)
- MT noted that the Student Action Network committee had struggled with getting up to speed with their roles. It was felt that an induction handbook would benefit not just STAN but all those holding representative body posts.
- General feeling from Committee members' that there needs to be more collaboration across the networks and groups– this will make them more effective (and feeling that ASC members should encourage and facilitate more collaboration across all activist constituencies)
- There is a desire amongst thematic and student networks for more formalised training for representative body members on things like social media.
- There is an issue with information on the website not being up to date for groups – networks need current contact information made available in order to be able to work directly with them.
- BH noted that the Country Coordinators' blog posts aren't getting much traffic. HP noted that the Digital Team had been in touch with the Country Coordinator steering group contact about this and shared some advice.
- LT-H noted that there continues to be an issue of continuity of Regional Reps and also that some regions do not have a rep at present – this makes the dissemination of information to groups difficult.
- Suggestion that we create an anti-death penalty network

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>2.1</b> Data protection issue - GH is looking into the issue of how contact data can be shared amongst activists and will update next meeting.	<b>GH</b>	<b>Next ASC meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> September</b>

<b>2.2.</b> Audit of the quality of content on the website relating to activism and activist constituencies	<b>GH / LP</b>	<b>Next ASC meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> September</b>
<b>2.3 Preparation of an induction handbook for representative body post holders</b>  <i>All send GH examples of good induction handbooks from other organisations + HP / RB / AC to send new AIUK Board induction to Gemma. Gemma to review for next meeting</i>	<b>Gemma</b>	<b>Next ASC meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> September</b>
<b>Item No. 4    Agenda Topic: Sharing information from ASC</b>		
<b>Item deferred</b> -		
<b>Item No. 5    Agenda Topic: Activist Code of Conduct review</b>		
<p>The Committee considered paper ASC/Jun15/03</p> <p>The Activist Code of Conduct was included in AGM papers in and then raised at the AGM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The existing version of the Code of Conduct was slightly amended ahead of last AGM, to make it relevant to the new structure of the organisation e.g. “CORE Team” replaced “Activism / Youth and Student Team”</li> <li>- ASC had previously agreed to review the document in more detail post AGM</li> <li>- The Code of Conduct is there to provide guidance in the event of a transgression.</li> </ul> <p><b>Feedback from ASC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was noted that the document is obviously very valuable, and useful for staff and activists to refer to but that limited activists are really aware of what’s in the Code of Conduct document.</li> <li>- The tone of the document is quite negative, with lots of jargon – there was a general feeling from the committee that it should be made easier and more accessible as well as framing in the positive behaviours and environment we expect all activists to help create and maintain.</li> <li>- The committee agreed that it would be helpful to have a one page summary of the document, that was easy to hand out and give to activists groups. More easily digestible.</li> <li>- This document could be as an accompaniment to the longer full policy document The summary / wider document should explain a little more about the Nolan principles to place in wider context of ‘good practice in NGO sector.</li> <li>- It was also felt that the draft document should go to activist groups and networks so that they could also have input.</li> <li>- It was suggested that we remove the requirement for ‘selflessness’ and rename as ‘no material gain’.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion also arose regarding AIUK’s child protection policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was noted that there is a child protection policy, but that vulnerable adults were not included in this.</li> <li>- It was noted that there is a gap in terms of the advice we give to local groups and networks on child protection should there be children joining or attending their events.</li> <li>- It would also be helpful to have a shorter one-page document on this, as well as a clear place on the website where to find it.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion regarding debate at the AGM</b></p>		

- It would also be useful to have a document outlining the proper way to debate in a respectful way at the AGM, Regional Conferences and group meetings.
- It would also be useful to have training for Chairs on how to moderate debates effectively and deal with discussions where disagreement and, occasionally, conflict arises particularly when tackling sensitive topics e.g. abortion policy.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>3.1</b> Positively worded one-sheet summary of the code of conduct to go out to constituencies	<b>AH</b>	<b>Before 4<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>3.2</b> One-sheet policy on how to debate – respectful debating	<b>AH</b>	<b>Next ASC meeting - 5<sup>th</sup> September</b>
<b>3.3</b> One-sheet document outlining best practice when working with young or vulnerable people – in consultation with Rowena (Human Rights Education Manager)	<b>AH</b>	<b>Next ASC meeting - 5<sup>th</sup> September</b>
<b>3.4</b> If you've seen any good codes of conduct, have any examples, please email around to the rest of the committee	<b>All</b>	<b>Before 4<sup>th</sup> July</b>

#### **Item No. 6    Agenda Topic: AGM evaluation**

##### **AGM Review Group**

- AC, the ASC non-board member and AGM Review group is now a board member and so a non-board member is needed on the review group.
- It was recommended that an activist who isn't necessarily an ASC Committee member take on this role to widen participation in this group
- It was suggested that a student activist take on this role given some of the feedback regarding the AGM and lack of accessibility for students.

The Committee considered paper ASC/Jun15/04.

##### **AGM Evaluation and Recommendations – a brief overview (AH)**

- Feedback suggests we are struggling to do too much in one event (the AGM 'business' to fulfil governance requirements alongside "National conference elements - skillshare, networking, workshops, inspiring speakers / panels etc.
- The programme is broadly the same as it was for two nights / three days (we're just trying to squeeze it in to 1 night / 2 days.
- There appeared to be limited time for people to network because the agenda was too packed.
- A lot of feedback saying that the event was too governance heavy.
- Some complaints from the younger members that they felt that the event was geared towards more experienced members.
- A question arose from the feedback about how we can properly invest in both the National Conference and AGM – this brought up the possibility that it might be better to split them up .

##### **Feedback from ASC**

- It was noted that through the governance survey data, undertaken by NCVO, there was an interesting split between those that wanted the AGM to be shorter v those that wanted it to be longer. Longer standing members are those that feel it should be longer

- There was a suggestion that separating the National Conference and the AGM could be a good option for dealing with issues of time, and for those people who aren't interested in governance.
- However, there was also a feeling that this would mean that only core, very active members would then take part in governance matters.
- Surprising how many local groups haven't been to or didn't go to the AGM – would be useful to get feedback from them about why they don't attend – Is this something regional reps could do?
- There are groups that only go every other year – or only go when it's close to them.
- There was a general concern within the meeting that too big a change to the structure of the AGM would not be a good idea e.g. streaming it rather than people attending it live.
- The general feeling from the committee was that AGM and National Conference shouldn't be an event designed to recruit new members (it should rather be focussed on inspiring, enabling and informing existing members).

### Regional Conferences

- It was felt that planning for regional conferences should be considered together with the national conference. Perhaps regional conference should play a greater role?
- It was felt important that we ensure regional conferences are happening within each region and that they are inclusive of all activist constituencies. At the moment, students and youth groups are rarely involved.
- In general, it would be good to look at how to create a space for groups and Networks to work closer together and network better with each other.
- The issue with trying to do more with the regional conferences is to create an effective balance of local and national/global Amnesty
- Focus support from the office on the regions where there is no regional rep and so no regional conference has taken place

### Negative feedback from younger members

- MT reported negative feedback from younger members at the AGM. STAN will meet on 28<sup>th</sup> June, where this will be discussed further. MT fed in some points:
- Some of the discussions felt patronising to younger members.
- It is an expensive event to attend.
- It happens at an incredibly busy time in the student calendar when many students are focussed on exams etc .

### General feedback from ASC

- The feedback document needs to be anonymised so that those performing specific roles cannot be identified.
- It would be helpful to have a paper that looks at the broader factors surrounding the AGM/NC – not just feedback from this one event.
- There seems to be an ongoing issue regarding the communication of proxy vote and people knowing they could use it.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>1.1</b> Declarations of interest to be part of the AGM review group in Ade's place (before next meeting)	<b>Everyone</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> June</b>
<b>1.2</b> Report back on the development of the Regional Conference Programme	<b>LT-H/GH</b>	<b>Next ASC meeting 5<sup>th</sup> Sept</b>

			Final Minutes
1.3 Develop and present a paper on the broader development of the AGM/NC		AH	Next ASC meeting 5 <sup>th</sup> September
Item No. 7	Agenda Topic: Supporter Feedback		
The Committee considered paper ASC/Jun15/05.			
Feedback report (KM)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- No easy trend to pull out from the report, although it is useful to see what supporters are saying.</li><li>- This information is fed back to the leadership team, who pick it up and disseminate it to relevant teams.</li><li>- In light of Olive Cooke situation, media reports of a donor who had felt harassed by charities for donations, it is important to note that AIUK are very careful with the way that we fundraise, and processes are in place to ensure that we deal with members' of the public fairly and ethically.</li></ul>			
Feedback from ASC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Would like to register thanks to the Supporter Care Team.</li><li>- <b>AGM Resolution C3</b> – Overview of the Board's position on our work on anti-Semitism is available in the recent Chair's letter.</li></ul>			
Item No. 8&10	Agenda Topic: Insight from the activism survey		
The Committee considered paper ASC/Jun15/06.			
The Committee further noted their thanks to GH for the excellent piece of work.			
Overview of the survey (GH)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Noted that the survey was quite long, as a lot of baseline information was needed in its first year.</li><li>- Gives good information on what support all types of groups need.</li></ul>			
Positive insight from the survey:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Overall very positive</li><li>- Groups are very active – meeting at least once a month</li><li>- They feel that having distinctive roles within their group is useful</li><li>- They are growing</li><li>- They are attracting new members</li><li>- IAR is a strength</li><li>- Would like help with creativity in campaigning</li><li>- Need more recognition</li><li>- Want more actions and resources</li><li>- More regional support</li></ul>			
There are areas for improvement – GH will outline these in her document on key themes from the survey.			



**Going forward:**

- It was noted that it was important to communicate the results of the survey to groups, as they did a lot of work on it.
- Important to keep telling groups that they're doing a good job.
- It's clear from the survey that groups have a strong appetite to grow – this is a great incentive for us to reach out now and help them do this.
- It was disappointing that so few youth and student groups took part in the survey - (although also noted that response rates for youth and student groups broadly in line with industry standards (and high for local group response rates)– but it's important to look at why, many more local groups responded so we can get more feedback from other groups in future.
- We need to take these findings and create a strategy and processes to deal with groups that aren't doing so well.
- Could we do a group exchange or mentoring schemes for these groups?
- Important to establish indicators to know we are achieving goals.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>1.1</b> Communicate the summary of the survey findings and bring back feedback	<b>Everyone</b>	<b>Share summary over the summer, report back next ASC meeting</b>
<b>1.2.</b> Create doc with key themes that come out of the survey, with short, medium and long term goals	<b>GH</b>	<b>By 19<sup>th</sup> June</b>
<b>1.3</b> Circulate regional survey	<b>LT-H</b>	<b>By end of June?</b>
<b>1.4</b> Supporter Care and HR to be briefed to include activism opportunities in response to requests about volunteering in the office	<b>KM</b>	<b>By end of July</b>

**Item No. 11      Agenda Topic: Consultation Planning: constitution, strategic planning and pro choice policy**

The Committee considered paper ASC/Jun15/07.

There are three consultations coming up:

**(Pro-choice) Abortion**

- **Technicality of wording:** ED noted that in reference to the document "AIUK consultation overview" in the row indicating who will be consulted in each, for the abortion consultation it says 'Individual members (as per AGM resolution)'. The other consultations, by contrast, include Local, Student, and Youth Groups as consultees. ED suggested that limiting this to individual members would not be a correct reading of the resolution, as Local, Student, and Youth Groups (and also Affiliates) are members of Amnesty UK.
- There was a general feeling from the committee that the consultation on abortion would be a contentious one and therefore would be difficult for many to debate.
- It was therefore generally accepted that there should be an online survey, while also allowing room for discussion within groups if they wished to debate the issue.
- It was also acknowledged that there was a risk of that people from both sides of the debate may attend group meetings and influence the discussion as some groups had experienced this in the past. It is important to give guidance to groups on how to handle this.

- Important that there was an option to vote as an individual or as a group – as with the AGM.

Recommendation: Consultation should be done via an online form with the option of group debate if they wish. (Quantitative)

### Constitution Review

- The committee felt it was important that there should be a strong consultation document that could go back to groups.
- There was concern that the Board need to be aware of the views of those constituencies who are likely to vote at the AGM as well as targeting as having a broader focus.

Recommendation: This should be a survey – emailed out with the one on abortion. (Quantitative). The data should be able to be split by supporter type.

### Strategic Planning

Recommendation: ASC agreed with the suggestion of the regional meetings on this and that regional conferences would be used for this if possible. Otherwise specific meetings would be required. (Qualitative)

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>1.1</b> KM to report recommendations back to Karen Wagstaff	<b>KM</b>	<b>End of June</b>
<b>1.2.</b> KM to feedback to the Board	<b>KM</b>	<b>July 11th</b>

### **Item No. 12**    **Agenda Topic: GTF: ASC recommendations to the Board**

ED presented paper ASC/Jun15/08 to the Committee.

The Committee AGREED the paper reconfirming decisions made so far.

### **Item No. 13**    **Agenda Topic: Enhancing activist collaboration**

GH spoke about the meetings she had at the AGM with different networks: TUNC, STAN, YAG, Regional Reps

- Appeared to be consensus on the need for more defined roles within groups and at a regional level.
- Also a need to look at how to better support activists e.g. many have asked for social media training – this again indicates a need for more formality of structure.
- There is a desire for more integration – getting people working more closely at a regional level – sharing skills.
- Noted that it is important within the structure to keep it organic and that it was also important that the suggestion was for a big change, so important that everyone feels they are on board and that we develop a clear engagement plan.

### ASC Feedback

- There was a strong indication from the committee that they agreed with the philosophy behind the proposal for more integration and a more formalised structure of roles etc.
- They felt it was important to have a clear action plan – For GH to write a proposal for this.
- It was noted that the size of regions should be taken into account.
- Use the regions that have already implemented / exploring these kinds of structures (eg North East) as good examples and as a pilot scheme for the rest.
- It was felt that it would also be useful to have a presentation on the philosophy of the changes to present to regional reps and disseminate through to groups – keeping a positive message.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
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1.1 Write a up a proposal on enhancing activist collaboration		GH	Verbal conversation on 4 <sup>th</sup> July – No D/L for written proposal.
1.2. Create a presentation about the philosophy behind the proposal		AH/GH	Next ASC meeting or before if possible
Item No. 14	Agenda Topic: Agree process for agreeing Network terms of reference.		
Draft terms of reference to be circulated to ASC ahead of September meet. ASC to feedback ahead of the September meeting so that ASC can formally sign off recommendations , in time to allow the Board to sign off ahead of Network Day in December.			
Actions		Who	Deadline
1.1 Draft Terms of Reference – including process for electing network reps to ASC - to be signed off		ASC	By next ASC meeting 5 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Item No. 15	Agenda Topic: AOB		
Actions		Who	Deadline
1.1 Feedback on papers and meeting planning to be shared by email. Eilidh to facilitate and consider when planning the September meeting		ED	By end of July
Item No. 16	Agenda Topic: Agree key messages and information to share with activists		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Activism survey (summary)</li><li>- Code of conduct</li><li>- Insight on activism survey</li><li>- Minutes available on the website.</li></ul>			
Actions		Who	Deadline
1.1 Complete draft minutes in time for July Board Meeting		LP	By June 25th
1.2. Disseminate the other key documents to constituencies		Everyone	
	Date of next meeting		
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2015			