



Activism Subcommittee Minutes

**Saturday 5th September
10am – 4pm**

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

Present:

Eilidh Douglas (Chair)(ED)
Barrie Hay (BH)
Melanie Thienard (MT)
Ade Couper (AC)
Simon Ware (SW)
Rachel Palmer (RP)
Dave Benyon (DB)
Jerry Allen (JA)

Apologies:

Hannah Perry (HP)
Ruth Breddal (RB)
Liesbeth Ten Ham (LT-H)

Staff attending:

Kerry Moscogiuri (KM)
Andy Hackman (AH)
Gemma Hoskins (GH)

Minutes by:

Amber Grant (AG)

	Housekeeping
<p><u>Welcome</u> <i>ED opened the meeting and welcomed SG to present paper ASC/Sep15/03</i></p> <p><u>Announcements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>ED was taking over the role as Chair from HP and thanked her for her hard work in the role previously</i> <i>The committee introduced themselves for the benefit for the guests (SG and AG)</i> <p><u>Apologies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>ED gave apologies for HP, RB and LT-H</i> <i>ED also apologised for late papers and agenda but noted the papers were short and intended for open-ended discussion</i> <i>The committee noted the constitution consultation was circulated by RB before meeting</i> 	
Item No. 1	Agenda Topic: Review and approve minutes of the last meeting (13 June 2015)
<p>The Committee reviewed the minutes: Page 1: ED noted that Jerry Allen was to be added to the list of attendees. Page 2: BH noted that the date of the last meeting should be added to Item 1 (7th March 2015). Page 3: AC queried the action 1.1. ED noted that although people had seemed interested but they could not confirm a new candidate as yet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officially ASC is still looking for someone to attend the AGM review group. SG noted that it was a really exciting time to join the group and influence (the change that's happening). ED reminded the ASC to email her or RB if interested. <p>The ASC then APPROVED these minutes with the above amendments.</p>	
Item No. 2	Agenda Topic: Matters arising
<p>ED led the review of the actions from the last ASC and the committee noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 3 Action 2.1 Data Protection: ED noted that GH had bought the matter to the Data Protection Steering Group. There had been queries put out about this and the matter still is ongoing Action 2.2 Content of the website audit: This has been completed and will be taken forward by James (AIUK staff) Action 2.3 Induction Handbook: This is still in progress but the brainstorm has happened and this will be worked on by activist groups <p><i>These good examples were noted:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Activist (SG) - Board Induction pack (AH) - <i>It was also noted that STAN had been working on one but had been delayed (MT) and that CC's want one (BH)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 5 Action 3.1 Activist Code of Conduct: ASC should have this soon Action 3.2 How to debate: Is also coming to ASC soon 	

Action 3.3 Best practises for working with young and vulnerable people: AH noted this is currently with Rowena (AIUK staff) and will be ready soon

- Item 6:
Action 1.1 AGM Review Group: (Covered in AC's query of the minutes) and is ongoing
Action 1.2 Regional Conferences: 5 Regional Conferences booked (GH)
Action 1.3 Develop and present paper on development of the AGM/NC: This is delayed but paper in development by end of September
- Item 8 and 10:
Action 1.1 and 1.2 (Communicate summary of the survey and bring back feedback, Create document with key themes and goals of the survey): Incorporates into Learning and Challenges (to be discussed later on)
Action 1.3 Circulate the regional survey: This was sent by GH for comments. Next ASC to have a summary to report back on
Action 1.4 Supporter care briefing: Completed
- Item 11:
Action 1.1 and 1.2 (KM to report recommendations to Karen Wagstaff and KM to feedback to the Board): Completed
- Item 13:
Action 1.1 and 1.2 (GH to write proposal on enhancing activist collaboration and presentation about the philosophy of the proposal): Completed
- Item 14:
Action 1.1 Network TOR's: Will be presented later at this meeting
- Item 15:
Action 1.1 Papers and meeting planning: Cover sheet and timed agendas were noted by all as helpful

Actions arising:

2.1 SG and ED will liaise on the Board and International Activist handbooks

2.2 MT will send STAN one to GH

2.3 AH will send ASC 'Outlining best practise for working with young or vulnerable people' once ready

2.4 ASC is asked to circulate any good examples of the above documents (to aid this process)

2.5 GH to produce summary of regional survey for next ASC

Item No. 3	Agenda Topic: Supporting Activists
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This item was moved forward from item 9.

- The need to organise activist support was discussed:
 - It was agreed that the current scenario didn't optimise the skills and power of the membership
 - We need to support our groups campaigning across local, regional and international areas
 - We need to grow our network of activists and utilise available technology to achieve these goals
- The structures of AIUK's activist groups was discussed in relation to Community Organising models in other organisations:
 - If the roles defined in these models do not match with roles in AIUK groups then it may be hard to cross match them
 - The need to increase campaign effectiveness was discussed and widen the reach of support
- There was a need to clarify our Community Organising model and identify best practise in the sector to provide the support that groups want

- **AC noted that Trainers are missing – GH also noted the missing School Speakers as well**
- The key functions are identified in Model 1 were:
 - Digital and social media
 - Media
 - Advocacy
 - Fundraising
 - Recruitment
 - Retention
- **JA asked if this will affect the regional rep role and RP asked how these roles/functions will be recruited: (GH said in a similar way as Regional Media Support Officer)**
- **BH asked if the people who fill these roles will have to meet physically; (GH replied that Skype etc. would be fine)**
- **SW noted that there is a risk these skilled individuals leaving gaps in their groups to fill these regional roles**
- **MT asked how many students had applied for Regional Media Support Officer roles (2 have GH)**
- Model two was the pod model:
 - Roles would be plugged in to AIUK staff
 - Model is scalable to a point
- **BH noted that Campaigns Officer may be too broad as there is lots of different campaigns that may get lost within the one role**
- Layer Model – managerial style and acts on a regional level:
 - This model creates a hierarchy which may lead to an uncomfortable feeling but will formalise support lines
 - This model is comparable to best practise in other NGO's as it aids lines of communications but is bureaucratic
- **AH noted that Regional Co-Ordinator will sit in the middle and not Director**
- **BH noted this depends on those holding key roles and resources available**
- **SW noted that communications need to go directly to activists**

Where we are now:

- The Regional Media Support Officer roles are really enthused by response; induction being planned
- The potential for an Advocacy role to support the HRA campaign
 - **AH noted that the trend is towards localisation and to impact local media and MP's**

General Comments:

- **ED noted that three categories have been recognised and need to be reconciled; interest based roles, demographic based roles and skills based roles.**
- **AG asked do bookshop reps exist; as they are included in all three models**

Conclusion:

ASC recognises GH's great piece of work and closes the discussion

Actions arising:

3.1 Brainstorm ASC's thoughts on these models by setting up a Google Doc by 12th September (ED) – deadline will be reviewed in 2 weeks.

3.2 ASC would like a summary of the recruitment plan for the Regional Media Support Officer (and potential Advocacy Officer) and list of the roles we have in groups to review at next ASC (GH)

Item No. 4	Agenda Topic: Constitution Consultation
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ASC considered paper ASC/Sep15/03

- ASC formally welcomed SG to the meeting for the presentation of this paper

- SG introduced the paper and the consultation process noting that this is the first significant overhaul in governance in AIUK's 50 year history
- The aim of this consultation is to bring AIUK in line with best practise as we hold other organisations to account so it is important we meet the standards too
- There could be legal and reputational risks should we not meet these standards
- This has been a long process which has already been delayed and the deadline for a new constitution was extended by this year's AGM
- The entryism discussion (around the minimum period of time that people can be a member to vote and attend the AGM) is not being proposed as a change until post-consultation phase

Some initial points were raised:

- **BH and DB noted that some of the questions seemed leading and did not explain why the Board and the Governance Task Force (GTF) disagreed on some of the proposals – SG replied that this (paper) is the Board's thinking and there was a lot of work done to keep it as accessible as possible; also that the GTF have minutes relating to all the work on this**
- **KM noted that these minutes are on the website for transparency**
- **AC noted that the membership may feel "consultation fatigue" from all of the current consultations – SG replied that this is important so that the Board are not met with an un-consulted membership (at the next AGM)**
- **MT asked if student groups are going to receive this and SG replied that it is going to all individual members, groups and regular supporters.**

The formal consultation process was explained:

- An online survey where there is one response per login (with membership number) and the link is delisted
- Groups can log in and complete one group response
- The survey is also going into the latest edition of the magazine
- **SG asked for a reminder note to be included in the Chair's email going out this week (Wed) (KM)**

SG then talked through the key proposals:

- Question 1 and 2 are in relation to entryism – the current feeling is not to propose a change at the moment
- Question 3 relates to the chairing of the AGM; due to the blurring of the NC and the AGM this can lead to uncomfortable feeling on the behalf of the Board who have a legal responsibility to the business – perhaps two different Chairs?
- This will impact on the resolutions. It was also noted that the SOC's role is usually carried out by company secretaries. Also some passed resolutions may not be considered lawful under external scrutiny; Example given of the antisemitism resolution.

The discussion moved on to the voting at the AGM including both voting in person and proxy voting:

- **MT noted that student groups found it hard to understand how to vote and getting the information late meant that they did not have much time (to consider voting)**
- **AG noted that proxy voting was hard as voting on the resolutions as printed may not have been what the resolution turned into after the debates – AC had similar feedback**
- **SG noted that voting is an issue and different options (like electronic) are being considered – John Pescel and KM team**

Question 5 was then discussed in isolation (resolution deadline increased from 60 to 90 days):

- **SG noted that 90 days is less than other organisations and the current 60 days is a challenge (KM agreed); also SOC want more time to work with proposers**
- **Emergency motions will stay as emergency and will improve with the 2016 AGM**

Communication was noted as an issue with encouraging participation in governance:

- MT highlighted students as a key area as some did not realise they had to be individual members to vote; ED suggested to recruit individual members at Student Conference
- ED proposed that if communication were fixed would that affect the qualifying period debate and MT agreed but added the current situation needs fixing
- ED suggested there be a middle ground membership which allows an individual to register as a speaking stakeholder that cannot vote but can participate in the debate – as a visualizer of those who would try to register just to influence votes.
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Conclusion:

- SG asked for a formal ASC response to the consultation
- ED added that not just ASC members but their constituents should be noted too – also individual responses to the survey would be helpful
- Deadline for the consultation is the beginning of November
- ED suggested producing a PowerPoint of the outlined proposals and questions in group meetings and having the Board contactable if needed for help would be useful
- AC wanted to run this past the Regional Representatives
- ED also noted that as ASC members we are available to help (motivate groups and if more information is needed)

ED formally thanked Sarah for her hard work and taking the group through the consultation.

Actions Arising:

4.1 SG asked for a reminder note to be included in the Chair's email going out this week (KM by Wednesday)

4.2 ASC formal response to the consultation if possible (ASC by the beginning of November if possible)

4.3 PowerPoint containing the consultation proposals and questions in summary for use in group meetings (Owner and deadline unknown)

The ASC then broke for lunch from 12:45 – 1:45pm

**Item No. 5
and No. 6**

Agenda Topic: Learning and Challenges; Sharing Information

This item was combined due to the overlapping nature of the responses.

The representatives of the activist groups replied one by one starting with RP.

RP consulted YAG 2013/14 and 14/15:

- Challenges included being fairly inactive over summer; feeling disconnected; stigma with AIUK (especially over Sex-workers); parental complaints about school speakers can make it harder
- A plan over summer and a refresh when back would be useful
- Discussion about how to increase the numbers of school speakers but the feeling was that it was very quiet at the moment and that it is often down to the school to reach out to the speakers
- Lots of events recently (Youth Awards etc.) gave opportunities for networking but it can be challenging to talk in Amnesty spaces – noted the Scottish contingent find it hard to get in touch with the Edinburgh offices
- Positives include creative actions; Amnestea's are popular and occupational hazards campaign had a wide reach included the local news
- Sharing information happens over social media with old and new YAG; AGM was governance heavy and they wanted a chance to meet the ASC/Board

ED noted that the Edinburgh office has had a high turnover recently so email ED if the Scottish contingent needs advice

SG noted she would like to meet YAG and other Board members have discussed meeting it YAG too

KM will pull up Scottish Office on out of date information

BH then responded:

- Reporting (back to ASC) was confusing
- Challenges on the Global Transitioning Programme as CC's write in English but with communication to the South Africa and Brazil are harder as they only write in Spanish and unverified translations are otherwise the only options
- Elsewhere improvement with Hong Kong Office but not much change in the 13 sub regions
- New hubs in Nepal; India and Mexico – question on how they will research Pakistan and Mexico's lack of staff
- Accolade for Thailand and 'The Look of Science'
- 4 vacancies for CC's and annual CC conference 22nd or 21st November – need help finding speakers and having the annual survey finalised for the end of November

Currently quarterly reporting on MASCOT but would like feedback in the inter-meaning period before the annual report

SW then responded:

- WAN has a new network committee which is looking at how it works with AIUK; working on MBMR with Sara and how they will work with CC's
- CHRN is working on how they share information (with closed and open meetings) and are happy with ICM results; event with Creative Writing Group Nov 13th
- LGBTI network was pleased to have 15/20 local prides hosted with 7 in the last few weeks; resignation of the prides and events officer during pride season was hard but there is a new recruit

Things that are working well:

- E-Zines and Blogs work well; CHRN using Instagram and all are growing on Facebook and Twitter
- LGBTI are developing database on prides and getting banners signed and sent to Europride which was successful

If CC's have actions for networks then please make contact

Need to help some groups have confidence in promoting LGBTI rights

Lots of thinking about more joint events with groups and networks to build links for instance LGBTI to link with FSU region

Other networks would like the papers sooner if possible – ED suggested outline agendas and key questions

MT then responded:

- Very quiet time
- Challenges; feeling like they have to change the structure of STAN to help; communication is hard and some groups do not know what STAN is let alone ASC; then it makes it hard to engage them in the wider movement
- Would like a regional STAN committees to support the main STAN to work nationally and engage with more groups
- STAN feels disappointed that they have not been able to achieve this year and they feel like token students who are consulted then ignored
- They can feel patronised and as they have no idea what they have to support them; they are unsure if they have a budget but are working on that information

A re-organisation of STAN to help support the groups over the UK

AC then responded:

- Rebuilding the network – training the trainers in July was very well attended by 18 high calibre applicants
- Working with Schoomi to establish a network that can then link in with others

- School Speakers now have a digital platform to share information on and so are more cohesive and more of a network
- Want to work more at Regional Conferences and network conferences

Actions Arising:

5.1 ED noted that the Edinburgh office has had a high turnover recently so email ED if the Scottish contingent needs advice

5.2 Arrange a chance for YAG to meet the Board sometime if possible

5.3 KM will pull up Scottish Office on out of date information

5.4 CC's to have feedback in the intervening period before the annual report

5.5 If CC's have actions for networks then please make contact with SW

5.6 LGBTI network to link with FSU region

5.7 Outline agendas and key questions to be sent in advance of the ASC to give networks more time to plan responses

5.8 A re-organisation of STAN to help support the groups over the UK

General Actions:

6.1 Share the CHRN template for sharing information with Google Group activists (SW)

6.2 Organising Student Conference with a marketplace of stalls so if you would like to take part let MT know

6.3 Send calendar of dates of events round to the ASC

**Item No. 8
and No. 9**

Agenda Topic: Strategic Planning

KM presented the next phase of the strategic planning which is going from the pinning down approach to opening up:

- The plans will include campaigns on: UK Human Rights; the global campaigns (People on the Move and The Shrinking Space for Human Rights Defenders); priority campaigns (IAR and Crisis work) and aim to get the whole plan crisper and clarify things
- The programme work will align with the priority campaigns (pending Board approval)
- AIUK's strength has always been its breadth as well as its depth and activists will be able to interact with Strategic Planning
- It will also look to escalate up key issues where necessary like prides and CHR
- Growth in action taking targets in order to ensure we are harnessing the power of the movement and that it is empowered and enabled
- This will involve being innovative; using technology to its best as well as a culture change at AIUK that will involve skilling up staff to the new plan

Members at the heart:

- This plan has always aimed to bring members back in
- However articulating the message was hard due to the 'what is a member debate'
- The move is towards a yes culture from a no one; staff will enable activists to campaign on what they want more
- **AC noted that he liked what he was hearing as groups can feel it is very 'them (the AIUK office/staff/committees) and us'**
- **AG noted that you can do it if you have the right communication strategy and find the right people (AC added the comms have to be meaningful to make this the most useful tool it can)**
- **BH noted that knowing who to contact can be hard and how we connect internationally**
- **SG noted caution as this new approach will not have extra staff capacity**
- **JA noted that local groups need to link to this regional strategy presented earlier by GH (Item 3)**

The discussion then moved to how using activists and their skills to run campaigns may be more risky to the Amnesty brand but may also be great for bringing more people to Amnesty. The perception of Amnesty in the wider public was raised and the group discussed how the AIUK brand is perceived:

- **AH noted that the brand is informed by the research and the changes we are able to make**
- **AG noted that Amnesty does not celebrate its successes enough and ED agreed that we need to let people know about how our petitions etc link to the good news that we hear; SW noted that we do not tell our activists our successes let alone the public**
- **Action: to brainstorm a way to share our positive human rights stories (using actors if necessary) to show the press that we do not just do stuff we succeed at it (ASC)**

The discussion then moved on how to get this new plan out there and reach our activists on a wider scale so that at AGM 2016 this can be presented.

There will be meetings throughout the end of this year before going to the Board in December as well as using the website and emailing members.

- The risk of consultation fatigue was raised and there was some discussion about the best time to reach out to the membership without clashing with other consultations; seems to be November as chosen

Actions arising:

9.1 KM asked if Strategic Planning can be on the agenda for Student Conference

SG left at this point

Item No. 10	Agenda Topic: Network TOR
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ASC is invited to review the AIUK Network Terms of Reference for omissions and resolve to approve these in their current form/ pending amendments.

- **SW noted that Network Committees had worked with Jeni on these and have signed off on them**
- **AG noted that in the CHRN TOR's it specifies 'in 4.3a to stand for election a candidate must be an individual member of The Section' where as the others only state a 'member can stand for election'. This differentiation is key as we have different types of members and we should keep the terms the same for all or you risk leaving people out**
- **Action: 10.1 to remove the Individual from 4.3a of the CHRN TOR's to align them with the other TOR's**

The discussion then moved to reserved places on the Networks for people of the specific representation of the network.

- The discussion formed around the diversity of networks and the unlikelihood of having a unbalanced committee
- There was a wariness of asking people to disclose personal information for the LGBTI committee in particular but networks such as CHRN and WAN would be easier to monitor
- Overall the sense was to ensure diversity maintains with committees

Conclusion:

The ASC approved the Network TOR's with the amendment of the CHRN (see in Actions Arising).

Moving forward the ASC would like the chance to monitor diversity and equality in Network Committees if possible.

Actions Arising:

10.1 to remove the Individual from 4.3a of the CHRN TOR's to align them with the other TOR's

Item No. 11	Agenda Topic: AOB
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RP noted that the decision for the next youth representative of ASC is being made by ED, HP and Anne Montague (Community Organiser for Youth).

At this moment ED took the opportunity to recognise RP's contribution to the ASC and thank her for her participation and hope to see her at other things.

Item No. 12 **Agenda Topic: Agree key messages to share with activists**

This reviewed the decisions made at this meeting and added some extra discussion in to the conclusion of the meeting – see tables on overleaf:

Item	Key Message
Constitution Consultation	Let others know it is there and get as many people to complete it as possible between now and November.
Feeding items back from members and constituencies on Supporting Activists and Harnessing the Power of the Movement	ED will make a Google Doc which will be circulated and act as a tool to gather the feedback.
Network TOR's	Have been signed off by ASC.
Pro Choice Consultation	Questions are being directed to Supporter Care Team first and the consultation will follow on from the constitution one. Karen Wagstaff will give MT and ED an update. (Potential to consult at Student Conference)

And that concluded the ASC of 5th September 2015 early.

Date of next meeting

The date for the next meeting is TBC.