Activism Subcommittee

Saturday 5th March 2016
10am – 4pm

Room F1
Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard, London, EC2A 3EA

Present:
Eilidh Douglas (Chair)
Ade Couper
Liesbeth Ten-Ham (morning only)
Katherine Walton
Jerry Allen
Hannah Perry
Rose Bennett (morning only)
Barrie Hay (via Skype)
Dave Beynon

Apologies
Hannah Perry
Chris Moss
Andy Hackman

Staff attending:
Kerry Moscogiuri
James Baggaley
Sam Strudwick (part)
Berry Cochrane (part)
Lydia Parker (part)
Alice Simms (part)

Item No. 1	Agenda Topic: Minutes of the January meeting and Matters arising

Introduction
The committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 30th January.   These will now be posted on the website as final.

Matters Arising

Action: Kerry to ask Andy to feedback on any outstanding actions not covered on the agenda for March 5th meeting.

Item No. 2	Agenda Topic: AGM Planning

2.1 Online proxy voting system

Eilidh briefed the ASC on the issue that had arisen over the communication of online proxy voting login codes for members with multiple votes.   The email sent by ERS had not clarified which login applied to the group/affiliate vote and which to the individual vote. Eilidh briefed the ASC on the remedial action that had been taken which was to send an email to all those affected clarifying the login code for the group/affiliate vote and that staff would be ringing round all groups starting week commencing 7th March to talk them through AGM preparation and logistics and to pick up any concerns that might exist.
The ASC welcomed this approach.

Liesbeth informed the ASC that 3 groups in her region had contacted her to say that they weren't sure what to do and Liesbeth had asked them to get in touch with the Supporter Care Team for advice. This accounts for 20% of the groups in the East Anglia region.

Rose reported that so far no concerns had been raised by Student Groups but that could be because their engagement so far with the AGM had been relatively low.

Kerry confirmed that if anyone is at all worried that they might have used the incorrect login code that they can contact the Supporter Care Team who will put them in touch with ERS to check and a change can be made with the group if required.

2.2 Information to members on the AGM resolutions

Rose brought to the attention of the ASC an email from Chris Ramsey which included some information from three former GTF members relating to the Special Resolutions at the AGM. Liesbeth confirmed that this paper had also been circulated to all leading activists via the Chair's email earlier week commencing 29th February along with a paper from the Board on their work in improving governance which provides the context for the Special Resolutions.

Kerry noted that the Board paper had been produced in response to a request from the Regional Reps for such a paper providing context and that the paper from the 3 former GTF members helped to fulfil the request from the Regional Reps that information providing a counter-argument to the Board's proposed resolutions also be available.

The ASC welcomed the fact that this request from the Regional Reps had been actioned in this way.

Eilidh noted that the Board's background note to the Special Resolutions is a factual piece, signed off by the SOC and so does not provide the arguments for the Special Resolutions but does provide a summary of the process, the results of the consultations and the GTF position on each where applicable.

Action: ASC members are encouraged to bring these three papers: the Board background note, the 'improving governance' context paper and the paper from the 3 former GTF members to the attention of their constituencies in order to inform their preparations for the AGM.

Ade reported some concerns from members that people exercising their proxy votes would do so without the benefit of hearing the debate at the AGM. This concern was echoed by Liesbeth who stated that online voting is a good thing because it facilitates more people being involved but that people need access to the arguments for and against in order to inform their vote.

Eilidh suggested that ASC member should try to seek feedback from their constituents on what information would have helped them this year in making up their mind on how to vote in advance of the AGM to that we can learn lessons for future years.
Action: ASC members to ask constituents about the kind of information that they would find useful to help inform how they will vote in advance of the AGM.

Jerry and Ade both reported a degree of governance fatigue from some group members, having taken part in 2 consultations on this, there is a feeling that AIUK just needs to get on with it and so engagement in this issue is limited amongst some people.

Liesbeth informed the ASC of how local groups prepare for the AGM – often by holding a special session to go through each of the resolutions to arrive at an agreed position on each.

Rose felt that student groups could be encouraged to take the same approach, perhaps starting with the human rights resolutions first where engagement might be higher.
Action: Rose to reach out to student groups to encourage their participation in the AGM

2.3 AGM Attendance
Kerry reported that registration for the AGM is going very well and that on paper we are now at capacity.   We need though to assume that 30% of those people who have booked a free place are not likely to attend and that in any case an overspill room will be made available if we exceed the plenary room's capacity.

Kerry confirmed that we would like as many members to attend as possible and so ASC members should still encourage their constituents to attend if they have not already registered.

Action: ASC members to encourage constituents to attend the AGM if possible

2.4 AGM debate
ASC noted that the format of the AGM debate can exclude some people from taking part.   Rose suggested the possibility of members being able to raise questions about the resolutions in writing.
Action: Liesbeth to raise with the AGM review group the possibility of members submitting written questions on the resolutions

2.5 AGM review

Eilidh suggested that at the next ASC meeting after the AGM the ASC should hold a review session to pull together thinking on what worked well and less well in terms of AGM preparation and how could it be improved for future years
Action: ASC members to prepare thinking on this for the next meeting

2.6 ASC stall

The ASC confirmed its decision at the last meeting that the stall should be informal and participative. Ade is coordinating it.

ASC decided that the stall will seek feedback from activists on post-it notes organised into the following headings:
Health
Growth
Impact
Engagement

It was suggested that Ade explore either a video loop or slideshow showing activists feedback on their motivation and also that he explores the option of a whiteboard with a hashtag which activists can use to share their motivation at the event and capture on camera.
Action: Ade to follow up

Action: ASC members to email a picture of themselves to James in order to create a photo gallery of ASC members.

2.7 ASC report to the AGM

Eilidh suggested that the ASC report should be structured along the same lines as the ASC stall, therefore allowing Eilidh to add content gathered at the AGM to the presentation.

ASC members made the following suggestions:

Health: include broad statistics on the numbers of activists and by constituency
Growth: focus on networks and on digital
Impact: include innovation, for instance the asylum project and the Regional Media Support Officers
Engagement: include the planned work on digital community spaces

Action: Kerry to inform ASC of the production timeline for this report and to include a stage for the ASC to review the draft presentation

Item No. 3	Agenda Topic: Digital Communications

The ASC welcomed Sam, Berry, Alice and Lydia to the meeting to discuss how the staff team are developing digital communications and for ASC members to feed into that work.

3.1 Search Functionality

Berry reported on the work that had been done to improve the search functionality on the website with help from Dave, Chris Ramsey and Caroline Butler. The search functionality is now powered by Google. It is much improved now and the team are continuing to refine it.
ASC welcomed the improvements to the search function.

3.2 Resources

Lydia and James reported on the work they are doing to improve access to resources on the website, moving away from PDF lists which very quickly become out of date.

Alice reported on the development work she has been doing on online training resources, which will include filmed pieces with AI staff leads talking about a subject to camera.   She has filmed a staff member introducing the Syria 360 website project.
ASC welcomed this initiative, and felt it would be very valuable. Rose in particular felt that students would find this very useful to help increase their knowledge of particular issues.

Lydia reported on how she is working to make offline resources more visible on the website so activists can more easily access them.

Liesbeth asked if it would be possible to provide a list of out of date materials for activists to check against.
Action: Lydia to find out if this is possible or find an alternative solution to provide a way of knowing if a resource is in or out of date.

Barrie asked if it was possible to include activist-generated materials in the list of available resources, using the example of Pride materials which are held by the LGBTI network.
Action: Lydia to follow this up with Jeni Dixon and the rest of the Community Organising Team

Eilidh asked if we could have a link to specific available resources for each campaign area on each campaign page. This suggestion was welcomed by the ASC.
Action: Sam and Berry to follow this up

Katherine suggested that links to specific networks could be provided on the relevant campaign area. This suggestion was welcomed by the ASC.
Action: Sam and Berry to follow this up

Ade suggested that a link to book a trainer could be provided on the relevant campaign area. This suggestion was welcomed by the ASC.
Action: Sam and Berry to follow this up

Liesbeth raised that there is sometimes a challenge of finding suitable offline actions to take from the website.   Berry clarified that this is usually because those actions don't exist rather than them being excluded from the website, as is currently the case with the Stop Torture action.   Liesbeth felt

that it would be useful for there to always be the option of an offline action available in priority areas as activists need this for their stalls and events.

Action: Kerry to follow up with the Priority Campaigns Team the request that we have both online and offline actions available on key issues and also if we could pull in links to relevant UAs.

3.3 Feedback

The team reported how they have started to use Wufoo forms to get feedback from activists on Write For Rights.   They reported that getting feedback in this timely way is very useful for the Individuals at Risk programme and the Advocacy team.

The team also reported that the Groups Planning Form is now online which speeds up the process for planning work on Individuals at Risk cases.

3.4 Layout

James and Lydia reported on how they are planning to improve the layout of the activist pages.

3.5 Showcasing activism digitally

It was suggested that it would be great to be able to click to see what activists are doing on a particular campaign. This idea was welcomed but the challenge was raised, acknowledged by all, of getting activists to supply images for use.   It was suggested that if activists understood that their images would be used on the AIUK website they would be more likely to supply them and therefore that we could try that approach.

Action: Sam and Berry to follow this up

Barrie reported that the tags on the groups websites are out of date. Berry said she would get that fixed urgently.

Action: Berry

Katherine suggested that we could have a 'motivations/inspirations' button on the campaign pages where activists could click to see what other activists are doing on the issue

Action: Kerry and Sam to follow up

Liesbeth suggested that there should be more representation of activism on Twitter and Facebook so that we share the energy of the Amnesty community.   Berry suggested that this would work best when it is a coordinated day of action and so there is a real sense of community and energy.   Berry suggested that we could use the upcoming April activity on the HRA to do this.

Action: Berry, Sam and Kerry to follow up

Dave suggested that Facebook would be more effective that Twitter in sharing general activist activities and that it could be targeted to a particular region at specific points to target the content more effectively

Action: Berry and Sam to follow up

3.5 Groups Monthly Mailings

James reported that the monthly activist mailings are now going out via the PURE email system and so look like other major email communications.

ASC welcomed the new approach and format.

Liesbeth suggested that groups need to be given more notice of upcoming activities.
Action: James to take forward

3.6 Communicating digital developments to activists

Liesbeth congratulated the team on the work they are doing to improve communications for activists and asked if the team could supply a regular monthly update email to activists on improvements that are being made.
Action: Berry and James to take this forward either through a specific email or via the monthly mailing

3.7 Digital Roadmap

a. **UA's Online**

Sam informed the ASC that UA's are now online, starting with the 5 that were released this week. As more UAs are issued the number on the site will build.
The ASC welcomed this development**.**

b. **Community Space Project**

Berry reported that work will start during this year in response to the brief to address the stated need for a community space.   Berry will produce a tender and appoint someone to work with the digital team and activists to gather requirements for this important piece of work.   The requirements gathering phase is likely to take place between April and June 2016. The project will consider what is needed for both existing and new audiences. Eilidh asked that ASC members start to think about this now and bring any key questions and feedback to the next ASC meeting.

Action: ASC to start thinking now about getting views on requirements and bring questions to the next ASC
Rose and Berry to liaise to fix a time in STAN's calendar to feed into this.
Berry to supply Ade with information for the ASC stall on this.
Sam or Berry to attend the death penalty meet up at the AGM as this might lead to the need for a community space of some kind

The ASC thanked the staff team for their presentation and all of their work on all of this.

Item No. 4	Agenda Topic: Regional Reps Terms of Reference

Liesbeth presented the draft regional reps terms of reference to be approved by the ASC and then submitted to the Board.

Eilidh requested that the terms of reference need to be more consistent with the network terms of reference and frame these as the terms of reference for the local groups network whose elected committee are the regional reps. She also reported that Hannah had suggested she also had some comments to make on this.

Liesbeth confirmed that these terms of reference were based on the networks template.

Action: Liesbeth, Eilidh and Hannah to form a sub-group to discuss and finalise these terms of reference for approval at the next ASC.
Action: Barrie to email Liesbeth his comments.

Item No. 5	Agenda Topic: Feedback from constituencies

The ASC thanked those who had prepared feedback reports in advance.

5.1 Country Coordinators' Report

Barrie reported improvements in information coming from the Americas. He also reported that there would be a workshop at the AGM suggested by CC's concerning how work on stop torture could be continued after the global campaign had finished. He also reported the value of Regional conferences in introducing new people to Amnesty. He reported that action was still required on enabling country coordinators to more effectively interact with MASCOT so that the records that they hold on groups sign ups to countries is accurate.
Action: Kerry and Barrie to follow up minimum dataset

Jerry reported significant frustration with the lack of information coming from the IS on South Asia. The only information being received currently is from AI India. Despite the significant human rights issues and the scale of the region, South Asia is currently the regional least supported by AIUK local groups.
Action: Kerry to follow up directly with the IS

5.2 Networks' Report

Katherine presented the networks strategic plan which was welcomed by the ASC.

Katherine reported that the networks days had been very good and had helped to build greater communication and collaboration between the networks.

The networks are thinking about proposing that groups have a networks link person to facilitate communications between the networks and groups.
Action: Katherine to take forward
Action: Katherine to send round the calendar that the networks have devised.
Action: James to make the link to networks in future annual planning packs

Eilidh asked Katherine to provide an update from the networks on how the google groups are working at the next meeting to help inform ASC thinking on the community spaces
Action: Katherine to follow up

Katherine reported on the potential usefulness of regional conferences and the opportunities there could be there to promote the networks to members.

Action: Kerry to talk to Liesbeth about when the ASC will have the opportunity to review the recent round of regional conferences in order to help shape planning for the next round.

Ade and Andy have been talking about introducing a conference in Wales informed by the success of the Scotland conference.

Action: Ade and Andy to follow up

5.3 Trainers' Report

Ade presented the report from the Trainers and Speakers.

He reported some of the main challenges as:

Some trainers were feeling quite isolated.

Need to make groups more aware of the training support that is available, some concern that groups are not taking up training

Need to look at trainers working better together as a collective

How do we best promote trainers and school speakers to groups and others

Action: Ade to feedback on the number of training sessions that were delivered to groups in 2015 and any notable trends

Action: Kerry to take up the challenges raised with Ade with Andy and team, including the idea of a one day speakers and trainers conference

Katherine suggested that it would be good to build the link between the children's rights networks, speakers and trainers. This is idea was welcomed.

Action: Katherine and Ade to take forward

The ASC discussed how best to get feedback from schools and groups on trainers and speakers.   An new online system is in place. Eilidh asked that at the next meeting Ade report on the difference this has made.

Action: Ade to report back at next meeting

Eilidh suggested that we can think more about how we offer training as part of continuous professional development (CPD) for specific professions.

Action: Kerry to feed that back to the team

Ade reported that we need new training on the People on the Move campaign.

Action: Kerry to take that forward with the team, including setting targets for the number of groups and activists we will reach

5.4 YAG report

Eilidh presented Chris's report from YAG in Chris's absence and reported the following:

- the youth information on the website needs to be updated.

- youth members have asked if Amnesty packs can be sent directly to them rather than via their teachers.

- we need a more visible way of reminding youth groups to renew their membership

Action: James to take forward with the Community Organising team

Ade suggested that we could have a link on the youth section of the website to school speakers
Action: James to investigate

It was also suggested that we should be able to see a list of all groups (ie youth, student and local) by locality
Action: James to investigate

It was suggested that it would be useful to reissue the booklet on how to lobby your MP
Action: James to investigate

Item No. 6	Agenda Topic: Activism Surveys and Insight

Substantive discussion on this was deferred until the next meeting.
Action: ASC members are asked to feedback on the existing activism survey by the next meeting.

Item No. 7	Agenda Topic: Membership policy

Eilidh introduced the idea of AIUK introducing a membership policy which had emerged during the work of the Governance Task Force. Barrie reported that the Membership Appeals Committee are in the process of creating one.
Action: Barrie to present the draft policy membership policy for approval by the ASC at the next meeting

Item No. 8	Agenda Topic: Global governance reform

The ASC noted the work being done on global governance reform.
Action: Kerry to send round to ASC the AIUK's response to the consultation document

Item number 9	Key Messages and actions

- ASC members to speak to constituents about the AGM, encouraging people to attend and pointing people to the Supporter Care Team if any questions about proxy voting.

- In the run-up to the AGM, ASC members are encouraged to reflect on how you are engaging with and discussing the resolutions and what information you would like to have to hand for the future.

- The ASC welcomed the work being done by the staff team on developing our digital communications and should give a pre-warning to constituents that we will be gathering requirements for a shared communications place for activists in April to June and to start thinking about that now.

- A subcommittee of Liesbeth, Eilidh and Hannah will review the Regional Reps Terms of Reference in the context of the Networks Terms of Reference.

- Barrie will bring the draft membership policy to the ASC from the work he is doing as part of the Membership Appeals Committee.

- ASC members are encouraged to pass any key items to Eilidh for inclusion. Kerry to share the production timetable.

- Kerry to arrange a meeting of the ASC to take place at the AGM

- James shared the Marsh Awards criteria in order for ASC members to encourage people to apply.

- **Date of next meeting: Saturday June 18th**