**Active Members Sub Committee (AMSC) meeting- 28th June 2014**

**Draft Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Hannah Perry – Chair (HP)

Ruth Breddal – Vice-Chair (RB)

Susan Mew (SuM)

Ade Couper (AC)

Liesbeth Ten Ham (LTH)

Barrie Hay (BH)

Sophie Chambers (SC)

Kerry Moscogiuri (KM)

Andy Hackman (AH)

**Apologies:**

Sameena Matthieson

Rachel Statham

Katy Fattuhi

Catherine Dubhill

Hannah Shaw

Daniela Manske

1. **Introductions and welcome**

The AMSC received apologies from Sameena Matthiessen, Rachel Statham, Catherine Dubhill, Hannah Shaw and Daniela Manske.

A welcome by the Chair and brief review of the agenda of today’s meeting. It was agreed to re-order the agenda to enable discussion of Members at Heart / Connecting People to Human Rights Struggle foundation papers to set context for agenda items through the meeting.

1. **“Members at the Heart” / Connecting People with Human Rights Struggle strategy ‘foundation papers’**

**Purpose:** The Chair asked for feedback on the two strategy papers to support the Board’s review at its July meeting.

 The following feedback was provided:

**Relationship between staff and activists – and the cultural/ behavioural shift indicated by the strategies**

* There was recognition that the papers represent a change in mind-set at AIUK and will require change in the way we (staff and activists) behave and operate with one another.
* It was noted that the implementation of this strategy would require an ongoing series of small steps over time rather than one big change.
* One route to successful implementation is clarity on the roles of staff and members as they work together.
* Another was for our organisation to demonstrably value and utilise the skills that exist throughout the 200,000-strong membership of AIUK.
* We need to ensure people can engage with the organisation in a variety of ways and at different stages at their lives.
* The organisation needs to demonstrate the role of activists’ voices and participation. We need to look at the roles that we want people to play and where they fit in.
* There was a suggestion that members needed to be clear what they can and can’t expect from staff – and what might change as a result of the implementation of these strategies. For example, would certain types of support increase?
* There was recognition that we are already making tangible progress in relation to some aspects of the issues identified in the papers and we are beginning to build closer relationships and better understanding between staff and members.
* It was also noted that the changes we need to make relate also to relationships between governance structures and the membership and a recommendation to amend papers to acknowledge this.

**The word ‘Connect’**

* One AMSC member recommended caution / clarification about use of the word ‘connect’ as this word was included in the ‘role statement’ that was used at the outset of CAPP and was part of a review being conducted by the Governance Task Force (GTF).
1. **Updates from activist representatives**

**Purpose:** the Chair asked for the regular meeting updates on the activity of activist representative bodies in the support of the health, growth and impact of our activism.

**Student group update**

* A survey for students has been developed and fielded.
* Two members of the Student Action Network (STAN) Committee went as Amnesty delegates to the End Sexual Violence Conference (ESVC) – hosted by Hague and Angelina Jolie. They were two of 20 delegates, got very good access and enjoyed the experience.

**Local group update**

* Good meeting of Regional Reps Forum 21st June.
* New reps are contacting their groups but have found it difficult to get responses from some groups – estimate that 1/3 of groups don’t get back to reps.
* Regional Reps are working on developing an ‘intervention programme’ to look at putting in place systems to help support struggling groups. Staff support will be provided for this.
* Reps have also started discussing options for exploring new style groups to fit in more with life style of potential members – e.g. parent and toddler groups to meet in daytime (see regional conference discussion later).
* Feedback from regional reps on need for Activism survey for local groups was not that positive – it was felt that regional reps would be able to provide answers without having to ask groups.

**Action:** AMSC agreed to ‘fold’ activism survey work into and consider all survey requirements in context of work to be done by the project group described in ‘Members at the Heart’ paper.

**Adult trainers and school speakers update**

* The Adult Education Officer presentation to the Regional Reps Forum was well received.
* After the recent difficult time with the training programme the increasing alignment with the HRE programme and eg sharing of materials offers good future opportunities and appears to be progressing well.
* There will be a draft work plan for the training programme by end July.
* HRE and Training team will visit Manchester for an informal gathering of speakers, trainers and local group members w/c 30th June.

**Country Coordinators update**

* Met on 21st June. AMSC representative unable to attend so requested written report.
* The Advocacy Outreach officer provided a short presentation and explained her role as aiming to support enhanced advocacy with CCs, regional reps and members.
* There are plans for a skillshare on 4th October themed around the Torture campaign. This is targeted for and organised by regional reps, local group members, country coordinators and other activists supported by staff.
* There have been suggested themes for the CC conference planned for end of November. Themes/talks will be held to promote good practise. Suggested themes are use of social media, Events, Advocacy, work with local groups, Outreach / links to non-Amnesty organisations.
* CC Annual Survey will also be sent out in November – to be returned by December - which will produce next year’s report.
* CCs also talked about building wider links with further networks.
* One member at the recent meeting had highlighted some concerns around research coming from Brazil and India Sections in context of Moving Closer to the Ground.

**Action:** AMSC agreed to clarify the source of concerns regarding the research from Brazil and India sections before identifying any follow-on actions.

**LBGTI, Women’s and Children’s Rights networks update**

* **LGBTI network** working well with the new Community Organiser for Networks on the Pride project.
* Much progress on the formulation of the committee for the network. Now have a network committee secretary.
* Contributed to a Huffington Post blog and took part in a panel discussion on Prides in Europe with support from staff.
* Another LGBTI network member has produced a Q&A document for local groups etc.
* The first "Chair's meeting" was held with members of the **Children’s Rights Network, LGBTI network and Country Coordinators** (although unfortunately WAN unable to attend on Skype).
* This was a positive meeting, sharing ideas and promoting cross-network working.
* Positive feeling for joint workshop in autumn on setting up representative committees, distributing roles etc.

**Human Rights Action Centre update**

*Successful activism case study - Merian Ibrahim (Sudan)*

* In May 2014, Meriam Ibrahim from Sudan was sentenced to death for 'apostasy' and faced 100 lashes for adultery.
* We created massive international attention and achieved record breaking numbers of action taking. Amnesty supporters took over a million actions worldwide, and over 250,000 came via AIUK.
* 222,000 online actions had been taken at time of meeting with approximately two-thirds of these coming from Facebook activity – organic and paid for.
* This is unprecedented. The average is c. 200 actions per Facebook post. A further 32,000 SMS actions were taken, both via Pocket Protest (18,000) and in response to press ads (14,000).
* We had fantastic media coverage on her case, including Sky, Channel 4 news, LBC and Good Morning Britain

*Activist coverage in the media*

* The Media team has a KPI of having four ‘splash factors’ annually. A story is a ‘splash’ if it’s generated by Amnesty i.e. not responsive to events. It must receive coverage across three out of four of the following:
	+ Three national newspapers;
	+ Three regional papers;
	+ Three online news outlets;
	+ At least one TV and one radio piece

*Integrated working with activists*

* HRAC is working on a more integrated approach e.g. TU Network and Student and Local group officers together with Regional reps and STAN working together.
* The aim is to conduct joint actions between local union branches and university groups in autumn.
1. **Sub-committee reform – Terms of Reference, composition and name of AMSC**

**Purpose**: the Chair asked for discussion of a paper proposing reformed Terms of Reference for the sub-committee, a name change and the composition of the committee. The finalised paper would be taken to the next Board meeting for review and final agreement.

**Name of the committee**

* Proposal to change the name of the committee from Active Members Sub- committee (AMSC) to Activism Sub-Committee (ASC).
* The key reasons for this included:
	+ The need to focus on the goal of the committee i.e. successful activism rather than *who* is contributing to it i.e. active members.
	+ The change also shows recognition of the fact that successful activism depends on a range of contributors – not just ‘active members’ and that that success will occur where there is joint working and focus on all contributors not just active members.
* There was a unanimous vote to change the name of the committee from Active Members Sub- committee (AMSC) to Activism Sub-Committee (ASC).

**Action:** ASC to propose change to the Board at their next meeting before this is formally approved.

**Terms of Reference**

* Proposal to reform the Terms of Reference. Key change is to focus the language on a key objective for the committee i.e. to support the health, growth and impact of Amnesty UK’s activism on behalf of the Board.
* There was a unanimous support for the update to the ToR.

**Action:** ASC to propose update of the ToR to the Board at their next meeting before this is formally approved.

**Composition**

Proposal to formalise composition and process of appointment to the committee to the following:

* The proposal is that the role of the member of ASC changes to being one of two types:
	+ A formal representative of their member type
	+ An advisory capacity in as far as they represent their own expert opinion OR it is not possible to seek the views of the member types they represent (in the case of the individual member
* Connected to these role types, the process of appointment would be one of three types:
	+ Formally appointed by the representative body in order to represent it on the ASC i.e. a country coordinator is appointed by the CC steering committee to represent the CCs
	+ Appointed by the Nominations Committee (where that person is an advisory capacity representing their expert opinion)
	+ Co-opted by the ASC Chair, where there are gaps, but through an interview process

The proposed composition included:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School speaker and adult trainer representative | Appointed via Nominations Committee with staff assistance  |
| Youth groups representative | Appointed via Nominations Committee with staff assistance |
| Student groups representative | Appointed via their representative body |
| Local groups representative | Appointed via their representative body |
| Country coordinators representative | Appointed via their representative body |
| CHRN, LBGTi, Women’s and Trade Union Network representative | Appointed via Nominations Committee with staff assistance |
| Expert and individual member | Appointed via Nominations Committee |
| Expert and individual member | Appointed via Nominations Committee |
| Board member (Chair) | Appointed by the Board |
| Board member (Vice-Chair) | Appointed by the Board |
| Director of Supporter Campaigning and Comms | Staff member |
| Head of Community Organising, HRE, Events & Artist Liaison | Staff member |
| Head of Community Organising Unit | Staff member |

* The discussion centred on the proposal to have one seat for a representative of local groups or whether there should be both a local group representative and regional rep seat.
	+ After wide-ranging discussion of relative merits, it was agreed not to recommend an additional role for a local group member (i.e. a non-regional rep) with the acknowledgement that we need to clarify that one of the roles of a regional representative is to ensure a regular and effective feedback channel to and from local groups to governance structures (including the AMSC).
* The creation of a seat for an adult trainer and school speaker representative was supported
* The position for a ‘thematic networks representative’ i.e. LBGTi, Women, CHRN was supported
* The proposal that ‘representatives of students, local groups etc.’ should be appointed by their own representative body i.e. STAN committee, Regional Reps forum etc. was supported. It was agreed that the representative body would determine how to appoint.
* There was also a wide-ranging discussion on how we can further utilise the skills of the membership to support the work of AMSC and other Amnesty UK bodies by looking at creating a 'skillsbank' of the AIUK membership. We would ask members to describe skills they have to offer the movement and call upon these skills to inform / advise on particular issues / projects as the need arises.

**Action:** ASC to propose composition as described above to the Board at their next meeting before this is formally approved.

**Action:** Ruth Breddal to investigate the set-up of a ‘Skills Bank’ with other parties including Nominations Committee.

1. **Next steps for Strategic Goals consultation**

**Purpose:** provide feedback on shape of next stages to strategic goals consultation

Governance and Planning officer, Karen Wagstaff, provided a quick background to phases 2 and 3 of strategic goals consultations. Phase 2 will run in August to October 2014. Phase 3 will run in Jan 2015 - April 2015.

* The I.S. is now compiling feedback from Phase 1 from all sections, structures, individual members and partners.
* The I.S. will issue a series of options for strategic goals at start of August 2014. Global membership will be asked to comment and vote.
* The AMSC has the role of facilitating wide consultation with AIUK membership for phases 2&3. The IISC will play role in providing the content to enable informed consultation.
* It was widely acknowledged that there was not enough time for most groups and members to participate in phase 1 of the consultation.
* It was also noted that the timing of phase 2 won't allow for any meaningful input from student / youth groups and we need to plan well to enable local groups and other activists and members to input.
* It was reported that the facilitated Skype meetings had worked well for country coordinators in Phase 1 and this will be repeated in Phases 2 & 3.

**Action:** Governance and Planning officer to work with Regional Rep Chair on planning local groups' input into Phases 2 and 3.

1. **Review of AMSC actions, recommendations and objectives**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Update** | **Status** |
| Trainers’ mailing list | Reported that HRE team had searched and tried to contact all people on available trainers’ lists and we are now building a new ‘master’ list. | ORANGEOngoing – update once master mailing list in operation |
| Timelines on Torture campaign and involvement of Country Coordinators | Reported that all relevant Country Coordinators now embedded in Torture campaign processes.  | GREEN - remove |
| AGM planning – stalls for CCs | All stalls needed were provided at the AGM | GREEN – remove |
| Greater embedding of activists in advocacy planning and roll-out where advocacy is a component of a campaign. | Reported that new role is already in place in new structure that is designed to support activists in their work on advocacy. This will help activists to engage and help building relationships with MPs and tactics for lobbying.  | ORANGEUpdate when clear how this fits in campaign planning and roll out process |
| Common approach to campaign paper - tools for activists | Head of Campaigns is working with HRE officers on making training available to activists | ORANGEUpdate needed |
| Sharing campaign calendar with activists | Reported that work ongoing on taking campaigns calendar online e.g. via a Google calendar | ORANGEUpdate needed |
| Advice for activists on pursuing partnerships at a local level | Not yet actioned | REDKM made action owner |
| Risk assessment to include activist related risk | Not yet actioned | REDNeeds further discussion on how activist related risks should be recorded/ owned |
| Activist and staff relationship building | Planning staff attendance at regional conferencesPlanning activist presentations at staff and vols meetnigs | ORANGE – ongoingAH to updateSMatt to update |

1. **The 2014 AGM and National Conference**

**Purpose:** Chair requested that members provide feedback on their understanding of perspectives on the AGM and National Conference from those who attended.

This session was limited due to time constraints but two specific points raised.

* Concerns were raised regarding entryism at the AGM i.e. those who join Amnesty UK in order to participate in the AGM and gain voting rights. It was recommended by some members that members should not gain voting rights until 3-6 months after joining.
* Concerns were also raised regarding the lack of a clear decision at the AGM regarding Amnesty UK’s position on the proposed policy regarding sex work. This was based on the AGM supporting two conflicting resolutions

**Action:** HP to share this recommendation with the Board when discussing AGM evaluation i.e. that the Board needs to clarify whether it is satisfied with this outcome or whether it would seek to make changes to prevent this from happening again.

**Action:** AC to share this feedback with the AGM Review Group.

1. **Regional conferences**

**Purpose:** Chair of the Regional Reps forum reported on the plans for regional conferences in 2014-2015.

* There are seven conferences planned between November and February.
* Dates for regional conferences will be released 3 months before they take place
* There are some regions with no conferences, where we are missing regional reps e.g. Scotland and Wales.
* The AMSC discussed whether members/ staff should support the planning of conferences where there are gaps in certain regions.

**Action:** LTH and AC to work towards interim solution to plan a conference in Scotland and Wales where there were currently gaps. Both to keep AMSC updated on progress.

* AC suggested the AMSC lead the design of a specific workshop which could then be run at regional conferences, student conference and/or AGM focused on ‘the impact of active participation’.
* LTH reported that a one hour slot has already been agreed at Regional Conferences for the Strategic Goals consultation and that it was important not to book up regional conference agendas with too much imposed/ top-down content
1. **Reform of Board subcommittees**

**Purpose:** for information

The Chair reported on a piece of work currently underway where the ‘ways of working’ of subcommittees of the Board was under review with a view to making recommendations for improvements. She highlighted a number of recommendations which will be discussed by the Board at their next meeting:

* A Code of Practice for all Board sub-committees
* The creation of an annual plan for each sub-committee and an annual report for the Board’s review
* An Agenda Map for each of the sub-committees – to assist the planning of the year and ensure there are no gaps or duplication
* A template for minutes – so that these are consistent across sub-committees and therefore more accessible to members for review
* A role description for chairs, staff support and staff admin roles of sub-committees – to assist their performance and review of it
* Templates for Terms of Reference for sub-committees
* The creation of a standard induction pack for subcommittee members
1. **AMSC reports and the quarterly activist report creation**

Item deferred due to time constraints

1. **Farewells and thanks**

AMSC noted thanks to the following members of the sub-committee for their contribution to the committee as they came to the end of their term:

* Ade Couper
* Katy Fattuhi

The Vice-Chair of the committee led the group in thanking the Chair for the positive impact she has had in leading the AMSC since taking on the role. The Chair thanked everyone else for their efforts throughout 2013-2014.