Annual General Meeting 2019

Friday 17th May 2019 | Dovecot Studios, Edinburgh | 10:30am - 13:30pm

1. Welcome

Jackie Irvine (outgoing President of Social Work Scotland) welcomed all to the 2019 Social Work Scotland Annual General Meeting. Jackie reflected on a year of change (with many staff changes in the team) and progress, with completion or start of many exciting projects. Of special note over the past year was the celebration of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, and the new high-quality research which flowed from it; giving us pause to reflect on developments over the past fifty years, and the challenges ahead. The 2018 SWS Conference was also the best attended ever, with great feedback from delegates. New projects on health and social care prisons began, as well as research into social work perspectives on the children's care system; a piece of work co-owned with the Independent Care Review. These projects reflect, Jackie noted, the effort which SWS members and the team have made to build and strengthen relationships with partners. Jackie extended her thanks to all the members of Social Work Scotland who contributed to our discussions and activity over the past year, and made a special thank you to those who have volunteered to represent Social Work Scotland on national groups and reviews, and in discussions with Scottish Government or other national partners. The contribution has been excellent, and without it social work in Scotland is unlikely to have had a voice in the relevant discussions. Jackie also looked ahead to an exciting year, acknowledging the work already begun by the Executive Committee, reviewing the organisation's purpose, membership and governance. She thanked all for their support over the past year, and wished Kathryn Lindsay the best of luck for the year ahead.

Members attending the AGM extended their thanks to Jackie for her work as President over 2018/19.

2. Highlight reports from Standing Committees

- **Justice:** Lillian Cringle and Jane Martin
- **Children and Families:** Alison Gordon and Jacqui Pepper
- **Adult Social Care:** Robert Leslie (standing in for Joanna McDonald)

Summaries of the reports provided can be reviewed in the accompanying presentation. A full report from the Justice Standing Committee is also available to download.

All presenters thanked the members of the Standing Committees, and noted the particular contribution of Vice Chairs, Sub-Group Chairs and Practice Network Chairs.

A discussion was prompted around communication within Standing Committees, following observation that (a) many more people are on Committee distribution lists than regularly attend

meetings, and (b) email, although the preferred mode of communication for many, does not facilitate mass engagement from members. Suggestions of using WhatsApp and other platforms was made, and the Social Work Scotland team agree to trial, with various Committees and group, different approaches to see which had merit.

There was also acknowledgement of the challenges faced by colleagues based far outwith the central belt (such as Islands), in respect of engagement in Social Work Scotland business. Social Work Scotland team will be working with relevant areas and members to find cost-effective approaches to resolving these challenges.

3. Election of Office Bearers

Ben Farrugia restated the requirements for Social Work Scotland Office Bearers, as set out in the company's Articles of Association.

For Office Bearer roles which are, or will soon be, vacant:

> **Vice-President**: Alison Gordon's (North Lanarkshire Council) nomination was confirmed.
> **Justice Standing Committee Chair**: James Maybee's (Highland Council) nomination was confirmed.
> **Organisational Development Hub Chair**: Iain Ramsey's (Aberdeenshire Council) nomination was confirmed.

The following Office Bearers remain in their roles for 2019/20:

> **Treasurer and Company Secretary:** Mike Brown (Independent)
> **Adult Social Care Standing Committee Chair:** Joanna Macdonald (Argyll and Bute HSCP)
> **Children & Families Standing Committee Co-Chairs:** Alison Gordon (North Lanarkshire Council) and Jacqui Pepper (Perth & Kinross)

Following amendments to the Articles of Association made in 2018, Jackie Irivine will also remain an Office Bearer in the role of 'Past President'. It was also noted that a process will begin to find a new Co-Chair for the Children & Families Standing Committee, to accommodate Alison Gordon's move to the Vice-Presidency role; she will remain as Co-Chair until a replacement is found.

4. The Year Ahead

Kathryn Lindsay (incoming President of Social Work Scotland) extended her personal thanks to all who had contributed to Social Work Scotland's work to date. It is her hope that in the year ahead Social Work Scotland will continue its focus on relationships, compassion and social justice, ensuring the voice of our members, and social work in general, is heard and understood. She highlighted the strengths of the profession, relevant more than ever today, but also noted the need for us to maintain our identity, confidence and relevance, as budgets across the sector continue to tighten and public sector reform progresses. The upcoming conference is a valuable opportunity for us to explore these challenges and celebrate our successes. As is the organisational review, which should help Social Work Scotland find the

structure and processes it needs to be effective and efficient in its work. Kathryn welcome the new Office Bearers, and extended her thanks to those members standing down from Office Bearer roles.

5. Organisational Review: Initial Thoughts

Ben Farrugia (Director, Social Work Scotland) summarized the work undertaken to date, noting that the core focus was on clarifying the organisation's **Purpose, Membership, Governance**. No changes were being put to members at this stage, but the AGM marked the beginning of wider consultation with members on proposals. *For further detail, please see the relevant slides of the AGM presentation.*

Jane Kellock (Head of Strategy and Development) and Iain Ramsey (Chair of Organisational Development Hub) introduced proposals for the re-forming of the Organisational Development Hub and Resources Standing Committee as a single '**Workforce and Resources Standing Committee'**. *For further detail, please see the relevant slides of the AGM presentation.*

The AGM's attendees discussed the proposals. In general members were content with the proposed direction in each area, and while suggestions were made on wording and emphasis, there was no objection raised to this work moving to next stage (i.e. wider member consultation).

6. Keynote Address

Social Work Histories: Learning from our past, Informing our future, Emerita Professor Viviene Cree, University of Edinburgh

Please see the relevant slides of the AGM presentation for further detail.

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