

**Minutes of UKPAC Meeting held on Saturday 7 November 2020**  
**Zoom Platform**

**PRESENT**

Chairman	Liz Dominey
Vice Chairman	Lindsay Green
Secretary	Maureen Maguire
Treasurer	Rhona Bowler
Website/Communications	Kathy Warrick
Cheshire, North Wales & the Wirral	Esther Roberts/Gillie O'Rourke
London Anglia	Sharon Richardson
London Chilterns	Pamela Robertson
Midland Chase	Ann Dawson/Edna Schafer-Hughes/ Zena Lear/Christine Corless
Midland East	Helen Everett
Midland Arden	Denise Carson
North West England & Isle of Man	Anne Jackson
Northern England	Karen Alexander
Northern Ireland	Rita Allen
Scotland North	Janice Wilson
Scotland South	Brenda Kay
South East England	Yvonne Freeman
South Lancashire	Sriya Kulupana
South West England & Channel Islands	Di Hill
Southern England	Eleanor Evans
Wales South	Bobbie Sheldrake
Yorkshire	Julie Westwood
Programme Director	Kay Richmond

**OBSERVERS**

Federation President Elect	Cathy Cottridge
Northern England	Christine Lowthian
Republic of Ireland	Mary Courtney
South East England	Penny Robbins

**APOLOGIES**

London Chilterns	Jackie Paling
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<b>1</b>	<p><b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liz opened the meeting by welcoming everyone especially the new members of Committee, Federation President Elect Cathy and observers to the meeting.</li> <li>Liz paid tribute to those members who had left the committee and wished to put</li> </ul>	
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	<p>on record her thanks to Glenys for her years of service as Vice Chair, UKPAC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maureen noted the members attending and apologies were noted.</li> </ul>	
2	<p><b>MINUTES FROM MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE &amp; 01 AUGUST 2020</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minutes from the meeting held on 20 June and 01 August 2020, having been circulated on Dropbox, were taken as read.</li> <li>• Both sets of minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.</li> </ul>	
3	<p><b>OPENING REMARKS AND REPORTS</b></p> <p><b>3.1 Chairman Remarks and Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liz spoke to the fact that she had been quite busy as had many UKPAC members who have been innovative and determined to keep going in spite of these uncertain time.</li> <li>• She advised that she has attended many meetings and continues to raise the profile of Soroptimist International in the UK.</li> <li>• She continues to work in partnership with other organisations – UN Women, National Association of Women (NAWO) and the UK Civil Society Women’s Alliance (UKCSWA)</li> <li>• Liz advised that due to COVID 19, many of the personnel in the Government Equalities Office (responsibility for women) have been moved to other positions and this has weakened the communication link with these organisations.</li> <li>• She requested that someone volunteer to represent UKPAC at the Centenary Action Group – currently working on campaigns about online abuse of women, addressing barriers for women with disabilities, making politics more family friendly and promoting equal power and more diversity of women’s cohort in politics – Fawcett Society is running free online training course <a href="http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/free-online-equal-power-workshops-for-women">www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/free-online-equal-power-workshops-for-women</a></li> <li>• Liz has attended a meeting of 6 “O” Group – Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland, Business and Professional Women UK, National Federation of Townswomen’s guild, The British Federation of Women Graduates the National Council of Women of Great Britain and the National Federation of Women’s Institute. Liz had written to these groups to ask them to support the amendments that UKPAC were advocating on to the Domestic Abuse Bill.</li> <li>• Liz has on UKPAC’s behalf added our name to petitions and written to the Prime Minister and other members of Parliament on our behalf with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Istanbul Convention,</li> <li>- increase provision for women suffering from domestic abuse</li> <li>- child marriage</li> <li>- immigration and refugee status,</li> <li>- the indefinite detention of EU and Swiss nationals in detention centre,</li> <li>- signing petitions – adding amendments re-making coercive control a statutory defence in cases where women commit offences for fear of domestic abuse and making non-fatal strangulation a separate offence (Dame Vera Baird). It was suggested that all of this should be added to the UKPAC website page but in easy to understand language.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Liz reminded members of the 16 Days of Action from November 25 to December 10 and the excellent Toolkit that has been put together and is available via the SIGBI website.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.2 Secretary’s Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maureen spoke to her report which is on Dropbox.</li> <li>• Maureen referred to the Role Specifications for the position of Secretary and Treasurer which had been attached to her report. She asked for approval by</li> </ul>	

	<p>Regional Representative so that both posts may be advertised via the SIGBI News Briefing. Members gave their approval.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b>  <b><i>Maureen to send the Role Specifications and Applications forms to SIGBI HQ for inserting in the SIGBI News Briefing.</i></b></p> <p><b>3.3 Vice Chairman</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liz welcomed Lindsay to her first meeting as Vice Chair.</li> <li>• Lindsay thanked everyone for their welcome and advised that new members could order their UKPAC badges from her. Cost is £5 + P&amp;P.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.4 Website and Communications Officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kathy advised that her report was on Dropbox.</li> <li>• She thanked all Regions and Club who have kept the communication through virtual meetings and emails.</li> <li>• She advised that the top three posts are the Domestic Abuse Bill Campaign for an offence of not-fatal strangulation to save lives; The Winners of the Poems in the Pandemic Competition and the #StepUpMigrantWomen</li> <li>• She referred to the “Orange the World – 16 Days of Action Campaign” and the International Day of Abuse on 3 December.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION</b>  <b><i>Members to review the UKPAC page on the Website and continue to check Twitter, FB etc. for their clubs</i></b></p> <p><b>3.5 Federation Programme Director</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FDP Kay in referring to the Federation Programme Action Event, congratulated Liz and Yvonne Gribben for their presentation, including those country representatives who were also involved.</li> <li>• FPD Kay advised that all of the presentations would be available as pdf. on the Federation website.</li> <li>• FDP Kay was congratulated by committee members on the excellent event and asked if this could be a way forward as so many more members were able to join the virtual meeting. She noted that due to time constraints, the Q &amp; A session was limited.</li> <li>• FPD Kay advised that it could be a blended programme in the future – this is being looked at as to whether it would be feasible? She also hoped that in future, because Programme Action and Membership are the two pillars within the SIGBI Strategic Plan that both if these could be joined at Conference.</li> <li>• Liz took the opportunity to formally thank FPD Kay and Conference Chair Ann Dawson for having produced an excellent event.</li> <li>• FPD Kay advised that she hoped to produce with the help of Ruth Dodds - an Easy Guide to produce video presentations. Members agreed that this would be very helpful.</li> <li>• Susie suggested that virtual meetings were the way forward especially if we want to encourage younger women to join.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>FINANCIAL MATTERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhona spoke to the Financial Statement (unaudited) for the year ended 31 March 2020.</li> <li>• She advised that the surplus has increased from that given at the June meeting from approximately just under £8,000 to that of £9,676. This was an additional</li> </ul>	

	<p>net surplus of £1,589, due to £1739 levy income received later in 2020 but she had also shown a £150 increase in provision for 2020 Audit Fee given that the Audit would be carried out by James Cooper Preston – SIGBI Auditors as recommended by the Finance Director at Conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhona spoke to the Financial Statement for the year projected to 31 March 2021.</li> <li>• She again forecasted that there would be a surplus. At present this forecast surplus is projected to be £6,404 but may be higher if some of the expenditure does not get incurred due to COVID restrictions.</li> <li>• She asked for suggestions to consider how best to utilise this surplus.</li> <li>• Members suggested a range of ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a fee holiday for members in 2021-2022 – no charge</li> <li>- Reduction in the fee that members pay in 2021-2022</li> <li>- Reduce the fee for Study Day in 2021</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Discussion ensued on whether a Study Day would be able to be held or whether there should be consideration given to a virtual event. Ann Dawson offered to help with a virtual event.</li> <li>• There was discussion about whether this could be combined with a Development Day which is always held on alternate years but would be due to take place in 2021. Liz advised that the SIGBI Ltd Board had given their permission for the Study Day to take place in 2021.</li> <li>• Rhona advised that she would be bringing the 2021-2022 budget for approval to the next meeting. She agreed to circulate this at least 2 weeks in advance of the January meeting so as to give members time to consider the detail.</li> <li>• Rhona asked members to speak to their Regions and she would be happy for the incoming Treasurer to shadow her in the current financial year.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION</b>  <b>Members to consider and suggest ideas on the use of the underspends, and send these to Liz and Maureen</b>  <b>Members to speak with their Regions re taking on the role of Treasurer.</b>  <b>Rhona to prepare the 2021-2022 Budget and add to Dropbox by mid-January 2021.</b></p>	<p>ALL ALL RB</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>REPORTS FROM STRATEGY SUB-GROUPS</b>  <b>5.1 COP26 and Recycling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Esther advised that her report had been put on Dropbox.</li> <li>• The Clubs in Cheshire, Nr Wales and the Wirral collect plastic bottle tops that may be made into garden furniture.</li> <li>• It had been suggested that this was a project which should be brought to the attention of those attending COP26 by having a piece of furniture displayed together with Soroptimist logo somewhere that delegates could view.</li> <li>• An amazing response from across the region and a company called Plastecowood has been found. They produce garden/outside furniture planters, fencing and decking etc. for a wide range of commercial and private clients. The range of high endurance, long-life products produced is called ‘Smartawood’ and every ton made saves 700kg of carbon from landfill.</li> <li>• Janice advised that Scotland North and South do something similar but the product goes to “Lush”.</li> <li>• Di advised that South West England &amp; Channel Islands do the same.</li> <li>• Yvonne commented that she had a problem with the recycling of plastic coat hangers and would welcome some direction as to who will use them.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION</b></p>	<p>ALL</p>

## ***Members to advise Clubs of this initiative***

### **5.2 Specialist Domestic Violence Courts**

- Christine advised that 58 members of Midland Chase and Midland Arden had carried out observations at court over a 9 week period.
- All observations had been electronically emailed to the Police who are to analyse the forms and prepare a report.
- Progress has been delayed due to the pandemic.
- A “thank you” and debrief meeting will be held virtually on 19 November for one member from each club
- Dame Vera has spoken at a number of Regional meetings and information and the relevant materials have been circulated to those who requested same.
- Several are hoping to commence once the courts are sitting again and lockdown eased.
- Liz asked members to consider how all of the information gathered by all Regions across the UK could be collated into one document. Suggestion was to engage a student to take this on.

#### **ACTION**

***Members to consider how this data collation could be effected and bring suggestions to the next meeting.***

### **5.3 Prison Reform**

- Lindsay thanked members for contributing to the proposed amendments to the Domestic Abuse Bill
- She advised that because the Transforming Lives project is drawing to a close – Katie Swaine Williams and Jenny Earle are leaving the Prison Reform Trust.
- Referring to the spreadsheet attached to her report, she advised that a total of 36 reports had been submitted when she searched the database using Prison Reform or Prison and Justice as the search titles.
- She feels that there are 2 areas that Soroptimist could continue their work
  - Sustainable funding for women’s centres – the words and actions that had been outlined by government had not become reality.
  - Women leaving prison – homeless – the system is failing some women who leave prison with just £46, a plastic bag, nowhere to live and the threat of a return to custody if they miss their probation appointments.
- Members agreed that there is an overlap between domestic abuse, prison reform and women’s centres and that getting the balance would create the most impact.
- It was agreed that these are areas that Soroptimist could support, so Lindsay agreed to contact Emily Evison to see how these issues affecting women could be taken forward. She will report back at the next meeting.
- Gillie O’Rourke advised that she would be interested in working with Lindsay on this.
- Southern England are holding a Zoom event with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner on 3 December from 4.00pm – 5.30pm. Contact to be made with Liz Batten, S I Salisbury - [lizmbatten@gmail.com](mailto:lizmbatten@gmail.com)
- SI Weston – Super-Mare are working with the Created Forum –(see link) <https://mailchi.mp/interlawdiversityforum.org/the-created-forum-2689288> , who are holding an on-line event on non-fatal strangulation on 22 November 2020

#### **ACTION**

***Lindsay to contact Emily Evison to ascertain how Soroptimists could assist in these areas.***

	<p><b>5.4 Modern Day Slavery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was agreed that Janice should attend the Human Trafficking Foundation Forum on behalf of UKPAC.</li> <li>• Janice advised that victims of modern slavery are at risk of Covid-19 because of their living and/or working environment may expose them to the virus without the necessary protection, labour exploitation appears to have increased since the start of the pandemic.</li> <li>• She further advised that the UK had 12,123 registered victims compared with the second largest number in France of 2,846.</li> <li>• Clubs are continuing to work on raising awareness, supporting victims with items, signing petitions and lobbying MPs. 33 Reports were submitted in 2019-2020.</li> <li>• Janice asked members if they wanted to continue working on Modern Day Slavery and if so what would be the emphasis, perhaps a UK wide project.</li> <li>• It was suggested that many of the areas outlined by Dr Alison Gardiner at Conference could be taken forward, looking at farms, fishing industry, trafficking of unaccompanied children, and signage on lorries.</li> <li>• Di suggested that Janice speak with Irene Hockin, SI South West England &amp; Channel Islands Regional President.</li> <li>• FPD Kay suggested that Janice contact KimAnn – APD who may be able to assist.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION</b>  <b>Janice to make contact with KimAnn Williamson.</b>  <b>Members to consider the way forward for Modern Day Slavery sub-group</b></p>	
6	<p><b>SPEAKER – UNCONSCIOUS BIAS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liz advised that due to unforeseen circumstances, the speaker was not able to make the meeting.</li> </ul>	
7	<p><b>FUTURE MEETINGS AND STUDY DAYS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liz advised that the Regional Reports would be taken at the Zoom meeting planned for 30 January. Regional representatives to identify one project report number to Maureen, three weeks in advance of the meeting.</li> <li>• She advised that the Ramada Hotel is currently booked for our March meeting and as yet, it is too early to agree to meet face to face.</li> <li>• 26 June had been identified as a possible Study Day date, and a decision on what to take place will need to be arranged. It will not be possible to hold this in Durham as refurbishment is being undertaken at the University. Further discussion to take place.</li> <li>• 7 August has been noted as a possible zoom meeting.</li> <li>• 31 October will be the first meeting of the 2021-2022 meetings and will be held following conference in Llandudno.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION</b>  <b>Maureen to contact all UKPAC Regional Representative to submit their Project number three weeks in advance of the meeting</b>  <b>Liz to consider the holding of a face to face study day or an online event.</b></p>	
8	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lindsay raised the issue of “Empowering Girls in Nepal” project and asked if there was any further information for clubs. FPD Kay advised that the SIGBI Ltd are currently discussing the matter and information when known will be circulated to all Clubs via the Club Briefings.</li> <li>• Members were reminded that ECOSIA is a search engine that when you use this, you are in effect contributing to tree planting. See link</li> </ul>	

<https://sigbi.org/soroptimistcentenary2021/a-brilliant/planting-trees-for-a-brilliant-future/>

- Members were reminded of the webinar on Saturday 21 November on tree planting.
- Liz in referring to the passing of Barbara Dixon, previous Federation Programme Director and Federation Vice President spoke of her dedication and passion for improving the lives of women and girls. She said that Barbara had sent her UKPAC brooch. If anyone would like to have it, please get in touch with her.

**ACTION**

***Members to note the next zoom meeting will be held on Saturday 30 January 2021.***

There was no other business and the meeting closed.

Signed .....

Date .....