

Yes Highlands & Islands Zoom Meeting.

Saturday 15th August 2020

Minutes / Meeting Note.

Present: Carole Inglis (Skye &Lochalsh) , Alison Fraser (InverYess), Amanda Fraser, Jim Ferguson(Badenoch & Strathspey), Ian Sinclair, Patsy Sinclair(Yes Caithness), Jim Farquharson (Yes Forres), Doug Reid, Colin Watson (Yes Elgin / Moray), Ruth Barratt, Colin Morrison (Grassroots Oban), Sheila Wiseman, Pearl Paul (Yes Speyside &Glenlivet), Alistair Macdonald (InverYess & SIC), Ian MacEchern, SharonTrish (PIN), Peadar Morgan (YRS), Derek Durkin, Dave Hewitt (Yes Craigmillar&Niddrie), John Roberstson, Iain Bruce (Yes Nairn), Jim Ramsay ((Aye2Aye Lochaber)

Apologies: Lorraine Carson, Erik Sullivan, Brian Hill.

Ian Sinclair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Previous Minutes: There were two amendments to the minutes. It was pointed out that Yes Ross & Sutherland are not leafletting and they are still considering posters and banners. The money that Nairn received was from SIF not SIC. It was also pointed out that the minutes posted online are Draft Minutes and we should read them and make amendments as appropriate. Otherwise the minutes were approved.

Contribution from Craigmillar &Niddrie. Derek Durkin& Dave Hewittpraised the work done by Yes Highlands & Islands in producing the map of Yes groups and also the very effective letter sent to MPs and MSPs. He said that this had inspired them to do something similar and they had contacted their own MP. They were also inspired by Lesley Riddoch's encouragement to link up with other Yes groups and become more active. However, it appears that the Yes groups in the central belt are less well connected than Yes Highlands & Islands and asked if we can try to contact groups in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee as these are the main population centres and must have large Yes Group memberships.Derek and Dave are also working with Trade Unions to encourage their support in a future campaign.

Believe in Scotland.SharonTrishexplained that they had now moved to Crieff and are part of the activist group Perthshire Independence Network (PIN) which coordinates the regional Yes groups in the area. She attended the Believe in Scotland Zoom meeting organised by Gordon Macintyre Kemp and

was very impressed with the idea. Several other present at the meeting had also taken part in that Zoom meeting and there was general agreement that **Believe in Scotland** is a great concept.

It was pointed out that while the **YES** movement is very effective, the other side have an effective answer to Yes(which is NO). However, there is no credible argument against **Believe in Scotland**. When asked if Believe in Scotland are planning to take a lead role in the next referendum campaign, Gordon Macintyre Kemp implied that they would. They are planning to run a series of Zoom meetings culminating in a 3 day Zoom Conference in September. There is a strong feeling that the Grassroots movement of all the Yes Groups in a united front will win

Other points on Believe in Scotland included the idea that Zoom meetings can be useful in bringing all the various Yes groups together, including the Central Belt. This is particularly important considering the suggestion that the next referendum campaign may be quite short. Possibly 6 weeks? So we need to get ourselves organised urgently. We should therefore increase the frequency of Yes group Zoom meetings and also Yes Highlands & Islands and other groups. Believe in Scotland are effectively providing a roadmap. Strategy & campaign, economic considerations, Brexit in Jan 2021, 60% in the Polls, Protecting our Parliament, Autumn 2021 Referendum.

There was some concern regarding Business for Scotland supporting the now discredited Growth Commission Report. However, it was pointed out that this is not the case.

There was general agreement that the booklets and leaflets supplied by BfS are very well designed and of high quality. After considerable discussion it was agreed that **Believe in Scotland** is a suitable organisation to supply information and support to the Yes movement in a future campaign.

Update on Banners and Slogans. Various groups have been displaying banners in suitable locations. There has been some disruption by unionists trying to damage or remove banners. In one case banners were removed by two men in Hi-vis jackets believed to be from Bear Scotland.

Ruth and her son have designed and produced a series of very effective banners which are now available to all Yes groups for £30 +£10 postage from

Edinburgh Banners. One of the most popular is Wind, Wave, Water: We Have the Power. There was some discussion about the final design. Ruth is also keen to get a high quality photo of the Glenfinnan viaduct for a future poster.

Several very good suggestions for slogans were put forward on WhatsApp. The winner was “ Yes to a Better Future “

Code of Conduct. This is being considered by a working group and is near completion. It was decided not to discuss further at this meeting but to distribute the final document for consultation.

Jack Badging. Alistair Macdonald brought up a concern expressed in Iain Lawson’s blog regarding the increased appearance of Union Jack badges on all our supermarket produce. He suggested that some sort of concerted action could be taken against offending supermarkets such as Morrisons, Tesco and Asda. Lidl seems to be better and frequently displays saltires although it also displays some union jacks.

We could write to them and let them know that Independence supporters (over 50% of the population) will boycott their stores if they do not cease this political interference.

However, it was decided that we could complain but not cause disruption as that could possibly be counter-productive.

Douglas, who has family in Colchester, pointed out that there seems to be no union jacks on packaging in England, only in Scotland. Strange?

Reports. Most groups are limited in what they can do at the moment because of the pandemic. However, the following activities are ongoing:

Yes Elgin / Moray have regular Zoom meetings, **InverYess** have regular Friday Zoom meetings, **Yes Forres** are hoping to have Zoom meeting shortly also planning street stalls with masks, **Grassroots Oban** have monthly speakers, 25th August Clean Currency, September, Holyrood & Independence Parties with Keith Brown, Dave Thompson, John Curtice, Alison Johnstone also I-Spy childrens books. **Yes Speyside & Glenlivet**, meeting with Dave Thompson, **InverYess** are having Collette Walker of ISP, **PIN** have weekly meeting to plan campaigning, possible tannoy system, **YRS** discussing banners, **Yes Nairn** promoting car stickers, **Aye2Aye Lochaber** are refurbishing their Hub which is open to visitors, also a monthly Zoom meeting, **Yes Caithness** have had several

Zoom meetings including Lesley Riddoch and Dave Thompson also planning one with Alex Ross.

Date of next meeting Considering the speed at which events are unfolding it was considered wise to increase the frequency of Zoom meetings. Therefore the date of the next meeting is 5th September at **10 am**. Ruth from Oban Grassroots has agreed to chair the meeting.