

**Meeting of Yes Highland Groups  
Spectrum Centre, Inverness on Saturday 12 November at 10am**

Chair Keith opened the meeting with a request for another Yes group to chair the next session (March 2017) to ensure collective approach of the meetings.

6 August was an extensive meeting and the minute taken correctly recorded the considerable exchanges of information for future use and ensuing discussion. Minutes should now record important new information and decisions taken at the meeting rather than discussion.

Minutes from 6 August  
Jim Farquharson  
Graham Bell seconded

**Matters arising**

Page 3 (Keith)

Discussion on Yes – meeting notes that Dave’s guidance was correct with regard to Yes/No question

Page 4

Third para re UK military bases  
Fort George closure  
Yes Inverness will reflect in this

Feedback from Inverness Rally

Short analysis of comments from Inverness rally  
No voters and the defeated are key  
Importance of Yes2 platform

**Group reports**

Inverness (Alison)

17 September Saturday  
Street stalls RIC, Greens, Ross & Sutherland, Christians for Yes, SNP and selves  
Anti austerity leaflet (Keith and Graham)  
Very successful 700 of 1000 taken up  
Badges, flags, generally positive feedback  
Offer of premises via WGD  
Danny Alexander's previous site  
Huntly street

Skye & Lochalsh (Carole)

Yestival main focus  
Raised £4000  
YSL now constituted with bank account  
Will now reconvene winter talks

First up is Paul Kavanagh on 19 November

#### Yes Ross and Sutherland (Graham Bell and Peter)

Joined with stall at Inverness street rally

Leaflets again 700 uptake

German passers by dismayed by Brexit

Marius great asset

Yes registry brilliant tool

#### Yes Ross and Sutherland

Inc Ullapool, Easter Ross, Dingwall etc with local groups in each area

NYR suggest national constitution but will put to next meeting

Dingwall 150 turned for WGD

Profitable evening for a dreich Tuesday evening

London Calling (film from Phantom Power) very convincing for soft nos

Can use MP4 via laptop

Social Media presence is building.

#### Common Weal Moray? (Doug)

Monthly events

Peter Bell – was excellent

Thoughtful considered answers and managed Q&A well

Gordon Macintyre Kemp – standing ovation

Paid expenses and accommodation £80 plus fish supper

Best response via by Facebook (approx 50)

Wee Ginger Dug talk – approx 60 – again excellent

Working on SWOT analysis of referendum

#### Yes Nairn (?)

Hired theatre

I, Daniel Blake (award winning Ken Loach film) DVD for £80

Donations raised *over £150?*

#### Yes Forres (Jim)

Not much happened since big success of WGD

Excellent speaker

Held raffle – too many raffle prizes!

50 attended

#### **Update on Referendum Bill (Dave Thompson)**

The White Paper

- White Paper now published
- Referendum bill per SNP manifesto pledge
- Important difference ie likely to be more engagement from 16 & 17 and EU nationals
- Electoral commission will again oversee process
- 100% postal vote verification this time

- Active campaigners will not be allowed to man a polling station
- Will still be able to act as polling agents

#### Consultation

- Deadline for consultation 11 January
- Helpful if people respond – even if you say in principle I agree with this bill
- Likely presented to parliament March/April 2016
- Committee will vote after proposed amendments
- Final stage 3 final bill before parliament mid 2017
- Will be sitting ready to go - possibly May/June
- Legislative competence devolved v retained issue
- Section 30 was key last time – David Cameron (Edinburgh Agreement)
- Will Theresa May give consent?
- Presiding officer (Labour's Ken MacIntosh) will decide on the competence
- Lord Advocate will advise Scot Gov
- Could be thwarted in many ways even once on statute book
- EU court of justice is final destination if challenges
- Best outcome is Westminster agrees

#### Best options for commenting on White Paper

- I support, I'm against or I have unanswered questions
- Important to add your name (carries more weight) to consultation document
- Encourage EU nationals to contribute – their views will be important
- Don't use copy/paste as organised comments are considered lower value
- Mention postal vote concerns

#### Brexit impact on next independence referendum

- Could be a multiple choice
- Devo max, yes or no, if yes should be member of EU (possible, but not wanted)
- Opponents might try that to muddy the question
- Bill coming, council elections (GOTV for pro-indy candidates)
- If Labour was pro-indy, would be a 70% win for independence
- Westminster will sell fisherman down the river again
- Also farmers, crofters will soon see Common Agri policy impact
- Timing of all things coming together autumn next year
- Potential for all to come together for referendum in 2018

#### Other comments

- Polls showing growth by next year esp if Tories start to show the reality of Brexit
- Regain sovereignty was 'raison d'être' but action since is not allowing sovereignty
- No mention of exit polls – SNP could commission one
- No bar code on ballot paper (Monica) – need info to voters on process
- ?????? lady who left early acting as polling agent checked - all were barcoded
- Standard that polling station agents don't view polling cards – can we check this out

### Postal Votes report (Jim) *MAYBE BETTER TO ATTACH JIM'S REPORT?*

- Needs radical overhaul
- Second homes review – by nature, will be anecdotal
- Propose that if you apply for PV, must be sent to the house in constituency only
- Only a 20% legal requirement check
- Moray postal vote was sent to London
- Scots tax codes should help
- Increase penalty? At least act as deterrent
- Discussion of PV form – section 3 enables PV for life!
- Section 5 Any reason acceptable to electoral office for sending to another address
- Section 6 Farcical declaration which states that you **think** your statement is correct
- Proxies would be better than postal - covers most situations
- 30 to 35% postal votes not returned

### Postal Votes (Dave)

- White paper – use as vehicle to request changes to postal vote application
- Probably unrealistic to address PV form if indyref2 timescale is 2018?
- Unlikely Electoral Commission will move position re postal voting (eligibility)
- More traction in tightening where vote is sent to eg not outwith constituency
- Postal Votes should be in line with 1983 Representation of the People Act
- But does not reflect this on the form
- Anyone who had asked for vote, will already be getting one - that's a big worry
- Student vote – timing critical – we have to look after them and cultivate vote

### St. Andrews Night – Kay

- National Newspaper on tour event tie in with 4 page coverage
- Editor Calum Baird and Stewart Paton content manager at National
- Promoted on Facebook, Eventbrite, Twitter
- Loads going on - music for start, stalls, Wee Black Books on sale
- Paul Kavanagh is key speaker, then Q&A
- Need help with raffle. Suggestions include start with best prize first.
- Raffle and tombola stall (stick winning tickets on as they are won)
- Consider auctioning high value donations eg Scottish Parliament painting

### AOCB

- Indy app up and running, looks good but needing content (coming)
- Jason Baird will be sending out info re populating Yes registry app
- Yes2Hub App – noone sure if still live
- Marius sent apologies – will ask Marius back next to meeting
- Book or organise room horseshoe style

Date of next meeting      Proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday 11 March 2017