

Cross-Party Group Annual Return

Name of Cross-Party Group
Cross-Party Group on Bangladesh
Date Group Established (the date of establishment is the date in this parliamentary session that the Group held its initial meeting, where the office bearers were elected and not the date that the Group was accorded recognition. All Groups should hold their AGMs on, or before, the anniversary of this date.)
12/01/22
Date of Most Recent Annual General Meeting (AGM)
19/12/2023
Date Annual Return Submitted
19/01/2024
Date of Preceding AGM [this date is required to aid clerks in verifying that the most recent AGM has taken place within 11 to 13 months of the previous AGM]
30/11/2023
Group Meetings and Activities Please provide details of each meeting of the Group including the date of the meeting, a brief description of the main subjects discussed and the MSP and non-MSP attendance figures. Details of any other activities, such as visits undertaken by the Group or papers/report published by the Group should also be provided.
Annual Report published by the Group provided

CPG Meeting on 15th November 2023:

Attendance: Foyso Choudhury MSP, Colin Smyth MSP, Evelyn Tweed MSP,

Apologies:

Pam Maxwell, North Ayrshire Fair Trade Group
Anne Walsh, West Lothian Fair Trade Group
Sarah Boyack MSP
Miles Briggs MSP
Mercedes Villalba MSP

Agenda item 1

- Colin Smyth MSP, Convenor, Cross Party Group on Fair Trade, welcomed people to the meeting including those attending online and those attending in person.
- He noted that as this was a joint meeting, no minutes from either CPG were being presented for approval but that those minutes would be referred to the next meeting of the relevant CPG.

Agenda item 2

- Colin Smyth MSP introduced the first guest speaker: Prof Aziz Islam, Chair in Accountancy and Professor in Sustainability Accounting & Transparency at the University of Aberdeen Business School.
- Prof Islam outlined some of his research on the practices of UK high street retailers buying textile products from Bangladesh. He highlighted the importance of the textile industry to Bangladesh; how workers in the industry can be poorly paid and exploited and commented that legislation so far had not resolved these issues and highlighted Transform Trade's campaign for a Fashion Watchdog.

Agenda item 3:

- Mr Mohammad Ghayas Uddin, Community Crafts, Saidpur, Bangladesh spoke; highlighted issues raised by Prof Islam along with problems caused by climate change for the workers in the Bangladesh textile industry and their communities.
- Mr Ghayas set out his personal on how he had been involved with Fair Trade for over 40 years to assist textile workers to get fair treatment and payment and purpose of his visit to Scotland and the UK.

Agenda item 4:

- Foyso Choudhury MSP and Colin Smyth MSP then chaired a discussion on the presentations. There were questions and discussion on how best to support Fair Trade; problems for public bodies in implementing the Modern Slavery Act and that the CPG delegation who visited Bangladesh from 17th-26th November would raise issues around the behaviour of the unfair practices of buyers from major retail businesses.

CPG Meeting & AGM on 19th December 2023:

Attendance:

MSP Members

Foyso! Choudhury MSP
Miles Briggs MSP
Sarah Boyack MSP
Evelyn Tweed MSP

Non-MSP Members:

Saida Muna Tasneem, High Commissioner of Bangladesh to the UK
Kazi Ziaul Hasan, Assistant High Commissioner of Bangladesh (Manchester)
Bangladeshi Students association of Scotland
Bangladesh Catering Association Scotland
ELREC
Greater Sylhet Development and Welfare Council in Scotland
Bangla Scot Trust

Other Non-Member individuals/organisations:

Prof. Mozammel Huq – Department of Economics, University of Strathclyde
Scottish Youth Parliament
Department of Economics, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow
Charity Education International (CEI)
UN World Food Programme (London)
Milan
Aberdeen City Council
JMN Scotland Ltd
CP

And other Individual Members of the Scotland's Bangladeshi Community

Members of the public: approx. 45

Apologies:

Ivan McKee MSP
Kaukab Stewart MSP
Lord Provost of Edinburgh City
Consul General of Pakistan

Agenda item 1: Welcome

Foyso! Choudhury MSP welcomed and gave thanks to members and friends of CPG on Bangladesh for attending the meeting along with a warm welcome to guest speaker Saida Muna Tasneem High Commissioner for Bangladesh to the UK (London).

Agenda item 2: Guest Presentation

High Commissioner of Bangladesh (London) gave an overall update on Bangladesh covering Economy, Transport, Manufacturing, Climate Change and Climate Finance, Gender Equality, Refugee Crisis, Bangladesh-UK Relations, Diaspora, Education, Trade, Culture and provided some suggestions for the CPG.

Agenda item 3: AGM

Convenor: Foyso! Choudhury MSP
Co-Convenor: Miles Briggs MSP
Secretariat: High Commission of Bangladesh to the UK

Agenda item 4: Visit to Bangladesh Debrief in November 2023

- CPG Delegation Members gave a debrief of their first visit to Bangladesh where they met with the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, government officials, business leaders, organisations and academics in Dhaka, Cox Bazar Refugee Camp, Sylhet and Nabiganj.

Agenda item 5: Open Discussion

- CPG Delegation Attendees discussed on medical equipment and facilities needs in rural districts in Bangladesh; education – academic connections between Scotland and Bangladesh; women empowerment; holistic health and collaboration on plant medicine; encouragement for Glasgow Bangladeshi communities; proposal for Cultural MOU between Scotland and Bangladesh focused on disabled people and improvements in theatre links.
- Convenor concluded with thanks and re-affirmed CPG's commitment to work with Scotland, UK and Bangladesh to build bridges and focus on the positive

Agenda item 6

- Date and Time of Next Meeting to be confirmed.

MSP Members of The Group

Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group.

Foyso! Choudhury MSP

Miles Briggs MSP

Sarah Boyack MSP

Evelyn Tweed MSP

Kaukab Stewart MSP

Ivan McKee MSP

Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP

Non-MSP Members of The Group

For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.

Individuals	
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Organisations	<p>Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)</p> <p>Bangladesh Association Glasgow</p> <p>Bangladesh Samity Edinburgh</p> <p>Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Edinburgh City Council</p> <p>Police Scotland</p> <p>Central Scotland Racial Equality Council</p> <p>Bangladesh High Commission</p> <p>Central Scotland Regional Equality Council</p> <p>Grampian Regional Equality Council</p> <p>West of Scotland Regional Equality Council</p> <p>East Lothian Council</p> <p>Midlothian Council</p> <p>West Lothian Council</p> <p>Lothian and Borders Police</p> <p>Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p>NHS Lothian</p> <p>Bangladesh Catering Association Scotland</p>
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Group Office Bearers

Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.

Convener	Foysoil Choudhury MSP
Deputy Convener	Miles Briggs MSP
Secretary	High Commission of Bangladesh to the UK (London)

Treasurer	NONE
<p>Financial Benefits or Other Benefits</p> <p>Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) the Group anticipates receiving from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.</p>	
<p>The group receives no annual support that amounts to more than £500.</p>	
<p>Convener Contact Details</p>	
Name	Foyso! Choudhury MSP
Parliamentary address	Office of Foyso! Choudhury MSP for Lothian Region The Scottish Parliament Edinburgh EH99 1SP
Telephone number	0131 348 6761