

Date: 24 March 2021

Venue: Online via GoToMeeting

Members Present - JG, BM, CC, AmC, JC, DA, Z, RP, AC, SI, GC, NF, GV, CM, MR, MC, C, M, HI, KF, CFB, CAL

Agenda

- (1) Appointment of chairperson;
- (2) Minutes: Report from the minutes and approval;
- (3) Statute: Proposed amendments and approval;
- (4) Annual Report;
- (5) Presentation of MGRM Work Plan 2021
- (6) Nomination and presentation of the candidates for the new Committee;
- (7) Election of the candidates for the contested roles;
- (8) Appointment of auditor;
- (9) Appointment of lawyer;
- (10) Decisions with regards to the motions presented by the Committee or other MGRM members.

Minutes

Meeting started at 7.15pm

1. Appointment of Chairperson

CC nominated Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane as Chairperson. JG seconded Dr Azzopardi Lane's nomination. Members approved unanimously.

2. Reading of Minutes of 2020 AGM

The minutes of the 2020 AGM were read by CC and approved unanimously.

3. Presentation of the Annual Report (Administrative and Financial) 2020

The Annual Report was introduced by Cynthia Chircop and respective members of the committee who contributed to the writing of the report presented the various sections and subsections. During the reading of the report discussions around respective areas arose.

CC highlighted challenges of COVID-19 and struggle to support the community. Results of Paceville survey were published, and meetings held with authorities to discuss the results. Renewal of PSP with Ministry of Family for a further 3 year allows RSS to continue its services. All in person meeting had to be halted and RSS social service work was shifted online, with limited in-person service and meetings held when restrictions were lifted. Gender Wellbeing Clinic was closed which resulted in a backlog. Some instances of online abuse were reported. Educational toolkit was launched and distributed to schools. Rainbow Bridge asylum seekers project is being launched.

HIV work intensified as GU CLinic services were restricted. Medication shortages were alarming in December 2021 and HIV Malta intensified its work. In November, the first rainbow library was launched in Malta. MGRM's proposal for housing was accepted and work has started.

AC presented the RFN section, and spoke about a development day seminar held covering schools in early junior and senior schools. MGRM contracted Ms Elaine Micallef Avallone to contribute to the organisation of the RFN and support services. She contributes to training programmes.

With respect to the LGBTIQ Youth Group, the RSS continued to offer a safe space for youths. The service is supported by a youth worker, social worker and MGRM's community outreach officer. The pandemic led to suspension of the service but alternatives were used to ensure continuation. Some meetings were held with necessary precautions when lockdown measures were lifted.

On Trans Health, CC communicated that RSS support continued, with liaison with the GWC. CFB explains that sometimes RSS acts as a springboard.

CFB reported on the work of the Rainbow Support Service. The team of 5 social workers remained from last year. This year 71 cases (individuals and family members) were seen by RSS. The amount of interventions carried out were 588, an increase from 2019 by around 200 interventions. CFB spoke about the need for support services due to the difficulties of lockdown, which brought some feelings of loneliness and anxiety. Online sessions took place and some face-to-face sessions were held only during Summer. Legal consultation has continued, including registration of children who were assisted by aditus on legal gender change, and there were a number of persons who benefitted from subsidised support in accessing therapy services. A number of sessions (c. 30 sessions) were held with other professionals and educators. Supervision sessions resumed with both Marceline Naudi and Charlotte Busuttill acting as supervisors. The trans support group at CCF could no longer be held because of pandemic restrictions. No further follow-up could be done. CFB was personally in contact with some of the individuals so once the pandemic restrictions will be lifted, this work will hopefully resume. Student support was important in order to help students and researchers. The Helpline is being diverted to MGRM, which AC handles.

HIV - TO INCLUDE

Projects - AC presented the projects that MGRM finalised in 2020:

- **Safe and Seen** - Through VOPS, MGRM worked on Safe and seen which consists of a board game, and two videos on acronyms and the gender bread person, all in Maltese with English subtitles and sign language. The project was very well received by educators
- **Rainbow Bridge** - Through VOPS, MGRM worked on a project which will be launched next week. The original idea of a 3-day seminar was abandoned, and instead a documentary was created which features LGBTIQ asylum seekers. DA added that the project was intended to empower the community. Social groups that receive support from RSS will be created, to share experiences and move on with difficulties in asylum procedures or any other admin/application difficulties. Meeting physically was not possible due to the pandemic, and due to lack of technological tools or access to internet and language difficulties, online meetings could not be held. Instead one-on-one meetings/personal chats were preferred. This year around 15 individuals joined the group.

- **Rainbow Library** - in November 2020 MGRM launched the rainbow library. AC expressed his thanks for volunteers who have contributed to this project. Access to the library is available to all members or specifically through payment of a fee
- **Housing** - AC reported that winning the Sustainable Communities Competition was a big satisfaction for MGRM. Dar il-Qawsalla will be house whereby services users will be given a programme of supported accommodation and host those who encounter housing difficulties. Work should start around April 2021.

MH presented the International Relations work by MGRM. Malta acts as a European Regional Representative on the Commonwealth Equality Network. MGRM was present at the London AGM. CHOGM meetings in Rwanda were postponed due to the pandemic. Throughout the year several participations took place, including at general meetings. MGRM sat on the selection board for consultants who are reviewing TCEN's constitution in order to revamp the organisation.

On IGLYO, MGRM participated fully. CC stated that MGRM participated at the ILGA-Europe AGM. AC presented MGRM's participation at TGEU General Assembly.

CC presented the Media section and explained the nature of the media articles in which MGRM participated or was quoted. Some media appearances also took place, with social distancing measures during the pandemic.

AC presented the Advocacy & Lobbying section, explaining that in terms of Education MGRM still managed to reach several teachers especially due to the availability of the board game. This created a space to discuss issues at schools.

CC presented the Local Networking section, and underlined the organisations to whom MGRM provided support or collaborated with. A coalition of six LGBTIQ+ NGOs was created during the pandemic.

AC presented the Marketing section. New merchandise was launched on the 9th December, and was advertised only on social media.

AC continued to present the membership sections. Three types of memberships remain available, bronze, silver and gold. Library access was added to silver and gold memberships.

CC presented the Social media section. On the RSS Social Media page, some activities stopped being promoted due to COVID-19 restrictions. Studies carried out locally were promoted on the RSS social media page. Page likes increased but not by the same rate of the previous year.

MGRM continued to be updated, attracting several thousand visits. International and local news constitute the major part of content shared on MGRM's facebook page. Other content includes studies, HIV medication and pandemic-related work. There was a 758 increase in likes, and daily updates contributed in improving engagement.

HIV WEB PAGE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

AC presented the Events page. These were very limited due to the pandemic and were held mainly online. Two online events were a reading of A Seat at the Table and an Online Open Mic both of which were held in April. DA presented the gathering events held in June to commemorate the life of Sarah Hegazi. CC presented the Film in the City event held in July when the pandemic measures were relaxed. Kim Cauchi also held a Tattoos for Pride event,

FINANCE

4. Presentation of MGRM Workplan 2021

CC presented the Work Plan for 2021

5. Candidates for the MGRM Committee

The positions that need to be filled are those of two Co-Coordinators, one Administrator, one Treasurer and five Members. The nominations received were the following:

Cynthia Chircop was nominated by CFB and seconded by JG for the post of Co-Coordinator. The post was uncontested, and her election was confirmed by a vote of confidence by the members.

Colette Farrugia Bennett was nominated by CC and seconded by JG for the post of Co-Coordinator. The post was uncontested, and her election was confirmed by a vote of confidence by the members.

Kirsty Farrugia was nominated by MH and seconded by JG for the post of Administrator. The post was uncontested, and her election was confirmed by a vote of confidence by the members

Joe Grima was nominated by DA and seconded by CC for the post of Treasurer The post was uncontested and his election was confirmed by a vote of confidence by the members

Five nominations were received for the post of Member.

1. Mark Harwood nominated by AC and seconded by JG
2. Frederick Bartolo Parnis nominated by CFB and seconded by JG
3. Mohamed D'Ali Agrebi nominated by KF and seconded by JG
4. Amanda Cossai nominated by FBP and seconded by JG
5. Julian Chircop nominated by AC and seconded by JG

All five nominations for the five posts were uncontested and the election of the nominees was confirmed by a vote of confidence by the members.

6. Appointment of Internal Accountant and External Auditor

Marisa Xuereb, was nominated by CC and seconded by JG as Internal Accountant. Camilleri Galea Limited was nominated by CC as external auditor, and seconded by JG. Ms Xuereb and Camilleri Galea Limited's appointments were approved unanimously.

7. Appointment of Lawyer

Neil Falzon was nominated by CC and seconded by CFB as Lawyer to MGRM for 2021.
Approved unanimously.

**8. Decisions with regards to the motions presented by the Committee or other
MGRM members.**

No motions were received

Meeting ended 20:30