

**Date:** 30/03/2022

**Venue:** Online via Google Meets

**Present:**

MH, FBP, CC, CFB, MN, JG, AmC, RA, NAP

**Chaired by:**

Gabi Calleja

**Absent:**

JC, DA

**Minutes**

Started at 19:10

**Agenda**

Appointment of chairperson

Statutes

Annual report

Presentation of MGRM Workplan 2022

Nomination

Election of candidates

Appointment of auditor

Appointment of lawyer

**1. Appointment of Chairperson**

CC nominated Gabriella Calleja as chairperson. JG seconded Calleja's nomination. Members approved unanimously.

**2. Presentation of Annual Report 2021**

The Annual Report was introduced by CC and respective members of the committee who contributed to the writing of the report presented the various sections and subsections.

JG pointed out rates of HIV are rising

- Our points are being held but we don't have an active consultative role in this area
- Our HIV testing kits have been popular, with 92 kits being sold during 2021. Only 1 person tested positive from our kits, and was offered and given support by our counsellors.
- Funding from ViiV remain on hold until COVID19 restrictions are lifted

**Blood donation ban**

- JG pointed out that we keep insisting that the blood donation ban is discriminatory, and pointed out that lifting the ban was part of Partit Laborista's manifesto.

### **Social Media**

- JG pointed out we have plateaued when it comes to interactions in HIV Malta's facebook page, assuming that numbers will not increase this year.

### **Equality Bill**

- JG highlighted that progress slowed down during 2021, however, it remains MGRM's priority. In the last meeting we had with Owen Bonnici, main concern that was raised was around the commission, and that the act can be challenged on a national level. Neil Falzon & other lawyers have said that if there's constitutional challenges, it should not be successful, because if everything is followed, everything should be constitutional. Due to the election, work was dropped, but work has to be commenced following the appointment of the new minister. The elected party promised the equality act, and we need to ensure that the equality act is in place by the next election.

### **Financial**

- Had higher income as a result of more donations, and a better PSP agreement for the year.  
Surplus of 2700E compared to a deficit of 46E last year. MGRM does not aim to make excessive surplus, and we make sure that every cent we make is given back to the community.

### **RFN**

CC: RFN was affected by the pandemic, however in October we organized the first meetup, and a second one in November. Both events were well attended. Towards the end of 2021, we started planning new events for 2022.

### **Youth Group**

RA: Youth Group was also affected by the pandemic in the first part of the year, but restarted in May, with safety measures and regulations taking place, and has been happening every fortnight since then. Faye Theuma & Robert Busuttil also joined the team as youth leaders.

### **Awareness Raising on 16 Days of Activism**

RA: Published a call for local LGBTIQ activists and artists to submit their art with this year's theme of "Your Voice Can Set You Free", and we received 4 poems & illustrations.

Additionally we shared a questionnaire amongst members of the local community, to gather anonymous information on local experience of same sex intimate partner violence, and we received 6 responses, that we shared excerpts of throughout the campaign.

AmC also represented MGRM for the demonstration organized by MG, YPB & WRF.

### **Rainbow Support Service**

CFB: We saw an increase on the number of requests/referrals, we were supporting individuals and families both face to face and online, and in general it was about identities, coming out, family relationships & dynamics after coming out. We had some dealing with HIV, which were mainly dealt with by Ryan from HIV Malta. A big chunk were related to trans related issues and coming out. As we have seen in 2020, there were high rates of anxiety &

mental health issues in 2021, with many people feeling isolated with limited social interactions. Team members are: BAG, CFB, MF, EG, GB & RB. This was our second year covering the PSP, and 2022 will be the final year of our second PSP. We are currently waiting for the ministry for them to get in touch with us to start working on a new PSP agreement, which we hope we continue to expanding on. We envision the expansion of the additional member of staff to be able to support DQ in it's operations.

Throughout the service agreement, we were able to offer the one to one RSS, youth group support & legal consultancy.

We had contact with 113 cases through our social work, including adults coming out later in life & opposite sex spouses. 760 interventions, increase of another 150 interventions from 2020. We work closely with the gender clinic & several other entities such as schools. In terms of legal consultancy, we've had aditus.

### **Migrants**

30 members of LGBTIQ migrants, meetings to provide information about information, asylum procedures & sexual health. DA liaises with RSS on those who need further support, and the group is an informal way of how people socialize. A workshop to the translators in IPA was provided.

### **Students**

RSS continues to provide support to students focusing on research, issues, guiding them with knowledge linked to their needs.

### **Helpline**

CFB Been directed to RSS.

### **Training**

CFB: We worked with Richmond, Karl Vella Foundation & psychosocial staff from private, public & church schools.

### **Trans Health**

CFB: Continuous liaising between RSS, MGRM & GWC through referrals & liaising on particular service users, as well as referrals from GWC back to us for the youth group & RFN. We are interested in learning and obtaining feedback from the community to continue to advocate and improve trans health services.

### **Projects**

CC: We concluded Rainbow Bridge in early 2021, which ended with the documentary. 20 Years of Trailblazing – This year we celebrated our 20<sup>th</sup> year, with an exhibition during Pride Week with a curated photographic history & timeline alongside a display of Katya Saunders' clothes. The second part of the project happened in 2022, and will be covered in next years AGM.

### **Rainbow Library**

RA: The library saw an increase of 50 members throughout 2021, and an increase of 527 book most of which were donations. Opening hours remain every Tuesday & Thursday from 3-6pm excluding public holidays. No events were held due to COVID19 restrictions.

## **Dar il-Qawsalla**

Clearance obtained from Lands Authority. Permits obtained from Planning Authority.

## **International Relations**

CC: We attended ILGA Europe AGM

MH: Everything related to TCEN was relatively busy, meeting happened online in January. In February we participated in the government review.

Statutes were presented at the AGM in November, where MGRM stopped being a member of the MB but remained a TCEN member. We approached Kostas of Cyprus, however, they weren't in a position to do so.

## **Media**

CC: A lot of articles on: statements or comments, HIV, migrants, condemning homophobic & transphobic comments, as well as media appearances.

## **Advocacy & Lobbying**

CC: MGRM continued working on the Consultative Council & CC for Womens Rights, and we have worked with MG, BETAPSI etc.

## **Sex Work Reform**

CC: No progress was reported as when the bill will be presented to parliament.

## **Constitutional Amendments**

CC: No lobbying in 21.

## **Marketing**

CC: Merch keep being sold online & during events.

Memberships remain 3 types of members.

This year we also saw newsletters being sent throughout the year. 39 bronze, 16 silver, 7 gold.

## **Social media**

RSS kept being promoted through social media, due to the restrictions of the office, Kafe mill-Ufficcju was still not organized. Page likes increased by 269 likes.

MGRM's website keep being updated with our projects & resources, latest being with Youth Packs. Site visits were consistently over 1000.

Facebook, variety of posts, including studies being carried out locally. As of 12/21, page likes were over 8900, an increase of 555 from the beginning of the year.

Daily updates keep the page on peoples newsfeed & help increase followers.

## **Events**

CC: Rainbow Bridge documentary was held online.

“Kelmtejn” for TDoV, we held an online discussion between 2 trans activists & a Q&A. Webinar to close off Trans Visibility Month .

20YOT

Il-Pozittivi, we worked on it with Culture Venture, part of a project called AMASS, acting as gatekeepers & researchers. Production was released online in May 2021.

Open Mic: Pride Open Mic, activity with KitbaQueer.

BPM Screening with MG.

Drag Race UK Viewing Events, hosted by a selection of Maltese Drag artists, with a total for 217.42.

Surviving Voices w/ MG, Udjenza & Checkpoint Malta.

Dragula

Happiest Season

Queer Pub Quiz

### **Questions & Comments on AR:**

MN: Why didn't we mention the LGBTIQ Symposium which was done with the Department & the Institute of European Studies & HRD.

CFB: Symposium, we promoted it besides the organization in collaboration with the entities that MN mentioned, and we had the opportunity to have it online, and we had a good number of people attending. MGRM's contribution was mostly related to promoting the call for participants to submit their research, and the distribution of the publication which was launched in 2022.

### **3. Presentation of MGMR Workplan 2022**

CC presented the Work Plan of 2022

Focusing on:

- Equality Act, Conversion of civil unions to marriage, Sex Work Teform & the Child Protection Act.
- Equality of LGBTIQ individuals in relation to healthcare
- HIV Malta
- Access to reproductive & sexual health services
- Advocate for establishment of inclusive policies
- Marriage equality for asylum seekers w/ aditus
- Policies on treatment of trans & intersex people by gov institutions & documents
- Safe & inclusive school climates for LGBTIQ students & educators
- Social security & housing provision that is inclusive to LGBTIQ individuals and families
- Effective implementation of hate crime legislation & monitoring of hate crimes.
- Raising visibility of LGBTIQ elderly
- Provide support & assistance to LGBTIQ individuals & families
- Develop leaflets, booklets & resources, with Rainbow Families Leaflet about LGBTIQ families & people

- Commemorate on bisexual visibility & awareness

### **Questions**

GC asked CFB if we resumed contact with CCF, suggesting it's a good idea to continue now that it's under a new leadership.

GC, as a point of reflection, mentioned ILGA Europe are dealing with Ukraine Crisis. Asked if MGRM wants to discuss with ILGA Europe on how we can do to help the situation, aside from donations.

CFB stated that through Appogg, the foundation has been highlighted as one of the main spaces where one can get support. Ukrainian nationals are also clients of the foundation, and will highlight it with management to see if there are any ways we can support, if there are any LGBTIQ persons among those coming to Malta. The Consulate for Ukraine is a bit skeptical about the numbers that some entrepreneurs & business have been volunteering to take, as its very likely that it happens for a few months, but doesn't keep the momentum. He's advising the government to be cautious on what numbers the country will be able to take in. GC suggested for MGRM to start thinking of what our contribution to EuroPride will be.

## **Nomination & Presentation of the Candidates**

### **Appointment of Co-coordinator**

CFB nominated Cynthia Chircop as co-coordinator, seconded by JG.

No objections.

Approved.

### **Appointment of Co-coordinator**

CC nominated Colette Farrugia Bennett as co-coordinator, seconded by JG.

No objections.

Approved.

### **Appointment of treasurer**

DA nominated Joe Grima as treasurer, seconded by CC.

No objections.

Approved.

### **Appointment of Administrator**

MH nominated Kirsty Farrugia as administrator, seconded by JG.

No objections.

Approved.

### **Appointment of committee member**

JG nominated Amanda Cossai as committee member, seconded by CC.

No objections.

Approved.

### **Appointment of committee member**

AmC nominated Julian Chircop as committee member, seconded by JG.  
No objections.  
Approved.

**Appointment of committee member**

CC nominated Mark Harwood as committee member, seconded by JG.  
No objections.  
Approved.

**Appointment of committee member**

KF nominated Mohamed Ali Aguerbi as committee member, seconded by CC.  
No objections.  
Approved.

**Appointment of committee member**

CFB nominated Fredrick Bartolo Parnis as committee member, seconded by CC.  
No objections.  
Approved.

**Appointment of Accountant**

Cynthia Chircop nominated Marisa Xuereb, seconded by CFB.  
Cynthia Chircop nominated Fernando Mercieca as external accountant, seconded by Robert Attard.  
No objections.  
Approved.

**Appointment of Lawyer**

CC nominated Neil Falzon, seconded by MF  
No objections.  
Approved.