

APPG STATE PENSION INEQUALITY FOR WOMEN

Regular Meeting – May 2025 – **APPROVED** Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: 13 May 2025, 14.00

Location: Room M PCH

Attendance

Rebecca Long Bailey MP

Member of staff from Rebecca Long-Bailey MP's office

Bryn Davies (House of Lords)

Grahame Morris MP

Julian Lewis MP

Ruth Jones MP

Mary Glendon MP

David Smith MP

Mary Foy MP

Wendy Chamberlain MP

Ian Byrne MP

Jodie Gosling MP

Josh Newbury MP

Member of staff from Apsana Begum MP's office

Member of staff from Julia Buckley MP's office

Member of staff from Cat Eccles MP's office

Member of staff from Kirsteen Sullivan MP's office

Apologies: Alex Brewer MP (received by email after meeting)

Minutes

- *AOB from Sir Julian Lewis (moved to start of meeting due to meeting commitments): Draft article provided*
ACTION: To be reviewed by Co-Chairs
- Welcome and approval of last in-person meeting (January 2025): moved they are correct. Approved.
- Business from the March meeting agenda:
 - Update on debate in House of Commons 17 March 2025: Thanks from various campaign groups to all members who have participated.

- Updates on responses to APPG and APPG Co-Chairs' letter to DWP, PHSO and Select Committees
 - DWP Select Committee: Took evidence at a one-off inquiry, but concerns were raised by external campaign groups that they only engaged with WASPI.
 - Women and Equalities Select Committee: Unable to action an inquiry on this for now.
 - PACAC Select Committee: Have been chased, haven't received a holding response.
 - PHSO: Holding response received, full response pending, but the Ombudsman has stood down and now waiting for the new Ombudsman to be installed – follow up sent this week.
 - Minister: Initial holding response received but no reply received, pressure at the 17 March debate has resulted in him offering to meet with the APPG Co-Chairs, which is scheduled to happen tomorrow (14 May)
- Update on application for Backbench Business Debate:
 - Advised that the motion needed to be more direct and divisible which may not have been intention of some colleagues when they submitted application – colleagues will consider but there has since been a long Westminster Hall debate granted by the Back Bench Business Committee which has heavily subscribed so this will likely bar any future applications unless new positions emerge.
- Updates and requests received from external groups – briefings have been circulated to all members:
 - WASPI – judicial review
 - WASPI 2018 – support WASPI group
 - WASPI Scotland - support WASPI group
 - CASPI – open to all resolutions, see the APPG as a unifying group, have produced a critique of the referenced survey statistics
 - 1950s Women of Wales – mediation, would prefer avoiding a long, expensive litigation process
 - CEDAWinLAW – mediation; had a meeting with Co-Chairs; submitted a series of requests to be considered by APPG
- Discussion of next steps for APPG
 - 1. Request from one campaign group for the APPG to take a specific position on what the Government should be doing, and put out a statement, with respect to the positions of the different major 1950s women led campaigns' asks
 - At the moment, national campaigns were not all agreed on what the Government should be doing
 - Need to build a strong consensus – don't want to alienate any of the campaign groups – campaigns are too far apart currently and need to co-ordinate with each other
 - Notwithstanding the belief from many campaign groups that the PSHO report did not go far enough or consider all of the relevant issues, the way the Govt has responded to the PHSO has been poor – cannot let that rest
 - Ignoring Ombudsman recommendations still an avenue APPG members can take forward as a tool to push forward the wider campaign.
 - Detrimental impact of not having an Ombudsman in the interim noted
 - 2. Request from some campaign groups for the Co-Chairs, and APPG members, to collectively and individually express their support for the Pensions Minister meeting with a variety of major external campaign groups
 - Co-Chairs would be advocating for this at their meeting with the Pensions Minister scheduled for 14 May
 - Co-Chairs encouraged all members to be mindful of citing specific campaign groups in their own correspondence and speeches when discussing issue of 1950'S women generally unless specific reason to do so. This is so that groups do not inadvertently feel alienated as some groups have expressed to the Co-Chairs that certain interventions by members have made them feel excluded from the APPG.

- No members expressed that they felt prevented or silenced from speaking in favour of any specific campaign or position, when it was also mentioned this was a concern one of the campaigns had raised.
 - Members expressed that they felt the major campaigns needed to engage with members, including take up the offer of presenting to the APPG when offered, if they wish to encourage members to support their position – it was noted that one campaign had been offered an in person briefing session to present in person to the APPG members (as previous online sessions were not suitable), which had been scheduled, but the campaign had requested that this be paused last minute in favour of their other requests being considered by the APPG members first. Members were happy to consider requests but felt that it would also have been helpful if they had presented.
 - **ACTION: APPG to reinvoke this campaign to present in person**
- 3. Request from two external campaigns for the APPG to host a meeting with all campaign groups at the same time, possibly with mediation teams too, in person
 - Some members expressed they were personally happy to support the notion of mediation as a means to achieving adequate redress which is the aim of some of the campaign groups but not others but on organising a meeting to facilitate one shared campaign position for all campaigns felt it is not the APPG's role to referee or dictate the interactions between the campaign groups
 - Several members agreed it was up to the campaigns to organise to engage with each other
 - Members felt the campaigns are not speaking with one voice, there are significant points of discord, which makes it difficult for the APPG members or others to know what to support to best support 1950's women.
 - Members wanted all campaigns to feel that the APPG is an avenue to get their voice heard
 - The Co-Chairs would ask the Pensions Minister to meet with all campaign groups, potentially at one meeting but this would be up to the Ministerial team to decide and facilitate
 - **ACTION: Co-Chairs to ask the Pensions Minister to speak with all campaign groups, and host a meeting with them**
 - **ACTION: APPG to continue engaging with all campaigns**
 - 4. Substantive motion for the Backbench Business Committee Debate application
 - Could get a debate but only if a divisible motion which may cause issue for some colleagues meaning they can no longer support the application.
 - Since the application however the Back Bench Business Committee granted a long Westminster Hall Debate on this issue which was well attended. This will likely affect the success of any future applications made.
 - 5. Co-Chairs to meet with the minister - will provide feedback to APPG – it was agreed the APPG need to see how that goes tomorrow first before deciding what further campaigning actions to take
 - **ACTION: Revisit at next meeting**
 - 6. Question from member: What data/evidence is available on the impact of the decision on voting intentions?
 - **ACTION (proposed): APPG admin to see what she can find on this for members to review**

Next meeting

- Next meeting is due in July – date TBC