

# Women's Platform

**Annual General Meeting**  
**Thursday 8 December 2022, 5.00pm**  
**Via Zoom**



## Minutes

### Present:

Louise Kennedy (Chair)  
Alexandra Brennan  
Jennifer Campbell  
Louise Coyle  
Karen Devlin  
Siobhán Harding  
Liz Law  
Alexa Moore  
Emma Osborne

Danielle Roberts  
Jeanette Thornton

### Apologies:

Anne Carr  
Anne McVicker  
Robyn Scott

### In attendance:

Jonna Monaghan, Director (minutes)

Agenda item	Discussion	Agreed action
<b>1. Welcome and apologies</b>	Louise Kennedy, as Chair of Women's Platform, welcomed everyone to the 2022 AGM of NIWEP.	<b>Apologies were noted.</b>
<b>2. Minutes of AGM 2021</b>	Minutes were reviewed and agreed.	<b>Minutes proposed by Emma Johnston, seconded by Louise Coyle.</b>
<b>3. Annual report</b>	<p>The Chair provided an overview of the year and highlighted a positive and productive year, despite challenging circumstances. The Chair focused on the secure position of the organisation, as a new core grant was successfully secured from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, and highlighted the successful roll out of the new identity of the organisation as Women's Platform as a key achievement over the year.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Committee for their commitment and the Director for her focus on delivery.</p>	<b>Annual report to be shared on the Women's Platform website.</b>

	<p><b>Year highlights</b></p> <p>The Director provided an overview of highlights during the year. The Director highlighted in particular the strong and positive collaboration across the sector, and stressed that the focus of Women’s Platform is to further strengthen its support to the sector on effectively using international human rights standards in policy advocacy.</p> <p>The Director thanked the Committee for their support and strategic direction, and noted that the new strategic plan launched alongside the new identity in February 2022 provides a clear framework that enables a strong focus on delivery. This will continue to be a focus over the coming year, with a particular emphasis on strengthening diversity and embedding intersectional practice, alongside improving communications. The Director also emphasised that the secure financial position of the organisation, and clear governance arrangements, offers a positive outlook for the next three years, with a particular focus on creating new platforms for women to make their voices heard, locally as well as internationally.</p> <p><b><i>Policy advocacy</i></b></p> <p>The Director reflected on a year of heavy policy and legislative consultations, and commended the collaborative spirit of the sector. The Director emphasised that this work has contributed to crystallising clear shared messages, and has also contributed to creating a clear role for Women’s Platform in the sector.</p> <p><b><i>CSW</i></b></p> <p>The Project Coordinator highlighted the opportunities to engage internationally as a key area of development over the year. Through participation in CSW66, relationships with international organisations were created, which can be further developed to enable information sharing and learning, as well as solidarity with women across the world. Women’s Platform has also increased focus on capacity building on international mechanisms, in order to better support the sector.</p> <p><b><i>Women, Peace and Security</i></b></p> <p>The Project Coordinator underlined working with the APG on UNSCR 1325, Women,</p>	
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	<p>Peace and Security as a highlight of the year, continuing from the previous year. This work has helped build dialogue between decision makers and the sector, and will be developed further over the next year.</p> <p>The Director highlighted the successful Women’s Spaces project application as a key highlight of the year, which demonstrates funders’ trust in the organisation’s expertise and capacity to deliver. Women’s Platform acts as lead partner in this project, which is a consortium including Northern Ireland Rural Women’s Network, Women’s Resource and Development Agency and Women’s Support Network, and will focus on building capacity among women in Northern Ireland to engage in peacebuilding and policy making. The Director noted that this investment enables a systematic focus on women, peace and security, which is to be welcomed, as this is long term work and women are too often overlooked.</p> <p>The Director connected this project to a Women’s Platform project on women, peace and security, which has engaged women and young women across Northern Ireland in identifying a vision and priorities for a Northern Ireland that works for women. This has been an instructive and important process for the organisation, which has highlighted how deeply sidelined women feel in public debate, while also demonstrating women’s creativity and expertise in identifying solutions that will improve life for all in Northern Ireland. The Director confirmed that while the project will formally be concluded and launched in January 2023, it will significantly inform the future work of Women’s Platform, in relation to both ways of working and cementing a commitment to creating platforms for women and girls to make their voices heard.</p>	
<p><b>4. Annual accounts</b></p>	<p>The Chair introduced the Women’s Platform accounts 2021-22 and thanked funders for ongoing support. The Chair also confirmed that independent examination was undertaken in 2020-21 rather than full audit, as company law enables Women’s Platform as a small organisation to do this.</p> <p>The Chair noted the accounts confirm that the organisation is in good financial health, and also demonstrate trust in the organisation from funders. In addition to the three year core grant from Joseph Rowntree</p>	<p><b>Danielle Roberts proposed adoption of annual report and accounts. This was seconded by Emma Osborne.</b></p> <p><b>Director to relay thanks to Sarah Greene.</b></p>

	<p>Charitable Trust, which secures the organisation to 2025, the 2021-22 financial year included successfully securing Women's Spaces as a three year Strategic Partnership with the Irish Government's Peace and Reconciliation Fund. In addition, a process seeking a grant to support communications development from Dormant Accounts was initiated, which was confirmed as successful in May 2022. These grants will enable a focus on delivering the strategic plan, and strengthening support to the sector through enhanced communications.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Sarah Greene as finance assistant for excellent support and record keeping, which has enabled smooth running of finances.</p> <p>The accounts were commended for adoption.</p>	
<p><b>6. Election of directors</b></p>	<p>The Chair thanked the Committee for their commitment and support, and confirmed she is stepping down following the AGM. The Chair thanked Ruth Galwey, Emma Johnston and Liz Law as directors also stepping down. The Chair commended Emma's long commitment to the organisation, and her contribution in ensuring young women are considered in the work of the organisation.</p> <p>The Chair expressed the full Committee's gratitude and thanks to Liz Law, who is one of the founder members of the organisation, and has shaped the organisation throughout its existence, in all roles including Chair, and as lead for multiple projects over the years.</p> <p>The Director confirmed nominations received by the nomination deadline, who under Women's Platform Articles are deemed elected, as nominations did not exceed vacancies.</p> <p>Oral nominations were submitted to the meeting for Alexandra Brennan, by Liz Law as a representative of NI Women's Budget Group, and for Karen Devlin, by Sonya McMullan by Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland. Both were approved by all members present and voting.</p> <p>The 2023-25 Committee will consist of:  Alexandra Brennan  Louise Coyle  Karen Devlin  Siobhán Harding</p>	<p><b>The nomination of Alexandra Brennan was proposed by Emma Johnston and seconded by Jeanette Thornton.</b></p> <p><b>The nomination of Karen Devlin was proposed by Liz Law and seconded by Jeanette Thornton.</b></p> <p><b>Director to organise induction for new Committee members.</b></p> <p><b>Director to ensure new Directors registered with Companies House and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.</b></p>

	<p>Anne McVicker  Alexa Moore  Emma Osborne  Jeanette Thornton</p> <p>Co-option of additional members remains an option during the year. Ms Johnston confirmed that YouthAction would like to remain involved with Women's Platform and explore this option, when a new lead for work with young women is appointed. This was noted.</p>	
<b>Close of AGM</b>	<b>The AGM was concluded at 5.30pm.</b>	