



SMP Annual Gathering and AGM 2021
Saturday 9th October 2021
Digital Meeting, on Zoom
Minutes

200 SMP members and key partners joined us for our 2021 AGM, which included special live addresses by President Dr Lazarus Chakwera and leading Malawian artist Prof Samson Kambalu, as well as a pre-recorded speech by Deputy First Minister, John Swinney MSP.

[Full details, papers and recordings of this digital event are available here.](#)

Introduction, welcome and administration

Heather Cubie: Chair, SMP

The Chair welcomed Members and guests to the meeting

Address by the Deputy First Minister of Scotland

John Swinney MSP

The Deputy First Minister gave an inspiring speech, giving the continuing support of the Scottish Government to the SMP and its members.

"In the 17 years since it was established, the Scotland Malawi Partnership has played a vital role strengthening the ties between our two nations. So I want to start by thanking everyone, the individuals, the community groups and charities who have helped to make our partnership such an outstanding success...One of the things which I find most impressive when I reflect on the last year is that a time when Malawi and Scotland's relationship could have grown more distant, it has actually grown stronger."

Watch the Deputy First Minister's speech in full [here](#).

Briefing for the President from the SMP:

David Hope-Jones: CEO, SMP

The CEO gave a briefing from the SMP, for H.E. The President of Malawi (who was joining live from State House), on SMP activity in the last year and progress against the President's three priorities for the Scotland-Malawi bilateral relationship, which he shared with members at the 2020 AGM.

Watch the briefing [here](#).

Address by the President of Malawi:

**H.E. Lazarus Chakwera MP,
President of the Republic of Malawi**

The President of Malawi gave a speech, live from Malawi, as *ex officio* Hon Co-Patron of the SMP, celebrating the unique people-to-people links between Scotland and Malawi, and thanking the Scottish Government for its continuing and longstanding support of these wider civic links which are the life-blood of the bilateral relationship, through the SMP and MaSP.

"This bilateral relationship goes beyond government-to-government links. The countless civic, people-to-people links between our nations are an integral part of our partnership ... The more the peoples of our countries interact in these sectors, the stronger our partnership becomes."

"I wish to thank the Scottish Government for always honouring the fact that the bond between our two countries extend wider than the framework of partnership between our governments."

Read the President's speech in full [here](#).

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Following His Excellency's speech, there was a live Q&A, with Members able to ask the President questions:

- Dr Charles Howie in Edinburgh asked "How do you expect climate change to effect Malawi?"
- Rachel Cameron in Aberdeen asked "What is the President and his government doing to help more young people in Malawi gain access to further and higher education?"
- Davie Luhanga in Edinburgh: asked "What does he think is holding Malawi back in terms of development in comparison with the neighbouring countries?"

Meet the Team:

SMP Staff Team

Each of the members of the SMP's small but effective staff team were able to introduce themselves briefly to members and give a highlight from the last year:

- David Hope-Jones, CEO
- Stuart Brown, Deputy CEO
- Craig Docking, Member Admin Officer
- Jade Stein, Media and Communications Officer
- Luisa Brown, Youth and Schools Officer
- Alan Laverock, Finance Officer
- Rachel Cameron, Youth Committee Member

E-Networking:

Members broke into digital break-out groups, which they could move freely between, to discuss key topics, share learning and make new contacts.

Core Business:

Heather Cubie Chair, SMP

[Watch the Core Business here](#)

- (i) **Approval of minutes:** The [Minutes of the 2020 AGM](#) were approved by members.
- (ii) **Annual Report:** The Chair presented the [2020-21 Annual Report](#) and gave a brief summary of key events in the last year.
- (iii) **Update on becoming a SCIO:** Claire Martin, Chair of Audit and Finance Committee, gave a brief update on the SMP's progress of transitioning from a Charity and Company Ltd by Guarantee, to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), as agreed at the last AGM and EGM.
- (iv) **Election of Trustees:** A [briefing](#) was given to members about the Board elections this year. The elections were officiated by Claire Martin, as the Chair was standing for re-election. In keeping with our constitution, six trustees stood down from the Board: Charlie Bevan, Moira Dunworth, Gillian McMahon, Denis Robson, Heather Cubie and Fiona Anderson. Following a transparent recruitment and election process, four new and two returning trustees were elected: Jeremy Bagg, Davie Luhanga, Tracy Morse, Emma Wood, Heather Cubie and Fiona Anderson.
- (v) **Presentation of Annual Accounts:** Claire Martin, Chair of Audit and Finance Committee, presented the [2020-21 Annual Accounts](#). The accounts were approved by Members.
- (vi) **Appointment of Independent Examiners:** It was noted that in 2021, the Scotland Malawi Partnership put its Independent Examination out to tender, in line with internal procedures to ensure best value was being obtained. The incumbent independent examiners, Martin Aitken & Co, decided not to bid and, following a competitive process, [Wylie & Bissett](#) were appointed to conduct the independent examination for the year ended 31 March 2021. It was proposed that for the first year of the SCIO accounts, for the year ending 31 March 2022, that we continue to use Wylie & Bissett. This proposal was passed by members.

Strategic Plan and Upcoming Activities:

David Hope-Jones: CEO, SMP

The CEO gave an update on the [SMP's 2021-23 Strategic Plan](#) and key upcoming events, giving an opportunity for members to feed in to the coming year's work.

Member Discussion:

Members again broke into digital discussion groups framed around the below 12 questions. There were some technical challenges at this point in the meeting but most people were able to take part.

No.	Group	Facilitator
1	What should the SMP be doing to support climate action , at COP26 and beyond?	Linda Dembo
2	After 19 months of almost no Malawi-Scotland travel what does the future of the bilateral relationship look like - should the SMP be rushing back to in-person events/engagements or sticking with digital?	Barry Klaassen
3	How best should the SMP be engaging key contemporary topics like decolonizing development and Black Lives Matter?	David Hope-Jones
4	What is the best way for the SMP to really bring to life its Partnership Principles and support its members to work within these?	Ruth Maluwa
5	Having completed a major podcast series , what new major digital project should we embark on to reach new audiences, explore key themes in novel ways, and amplify voices that otherwise aren't heard and support respectful dialogue?	Luisa Brown
6	With recent policy and political changes in both the UK Government and the Scottish Government what should be the SMP's priority in engaging and influencing governments ?	Heather Cubie
7	Is " aid " part of the solution or part of the problem for Malawi, and where does the Scotland-Malawi relationship sit in this debate?	Stuart Brown
8	How do we strengthen governance – both here in Scotland, within the membership, and with our partners in Malawi?	Susan Dalgety
9	What does Scotland need to do to really deliver on Malawi's priorities , including the President's three challenges for the bilateral relationship?	Stella
10	How does the SMP engage and inspire schools and young people in the next five years?	Rachel Cameron
11	What is the role of the SMP in the next chapter of the Covid-19 pandemic ?	Rachel Phillips
12	How do we better engage the Malawian diaspora community in our next chapter, ensuring the SMP is as diverse and inclusive as possible?	Matthews Mtumbuka

Prof Samson and Susan Kambalu talk and Q&A:

The inspiring Malawian artist Samson Kambalu and his Scottish wife Susan, spoke to members on their own Scotland-Malawi partnership, and Samson's success with his statue 'Antelope' of John Chilembwe and John Chorley, which will be installed on the fourth plinth of Trafalgar Square 2022-24. [Watch here](#).

Members were able to ask questions of Samson and Susan.

Closing remarks:

David Hope-Jones: CEO, SMP

The CEO gave some brief closing remarks, capturing key takeaway points from the day.