



Inaugural meeting APPG on Get Refusal

Weds 4th September 2024 1230hrs

Location: TV Interview Room (in person only)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

ATTENDEES

Julie Minns MP
Baroness Deech
Rebecca Scott Harris MP
Lord Mendelsohn
Baroness Dianne Hayter
Baroness Thornton
Luke Akehurst MP
Jo White MP
Lord Polak
Baroness Ramsay
Baroness Sarah Ludford

APOLOGIES

Lord Walney
Dr Rupa Huq MP
Baroness Altmann
Lord Austin of Dudley
Ruth Cadbury MP
Baroness Janet Whitaker
Alex Baker MP
Lord Palmer of Childs Hill
Charlotte Nichols MP
Matthew Patrick MP

The quorum of 5 members was reached so the meeting was opened.

1. Welcome

Lord Mendelsohn opened the meeting as a longstanding member and thanked everyone for attending and for their support to enable the work of the group to continue.

He introduced the background to the APPG, explaining it was originally established in 2022 by a group of peers to raise the issue of malicious withholding of a certificate of Jewish religious divorce as a form of coercive and controlling behaviour and domestic abuse.

This was raised in debate on the Domestic Abuse Bill during its parliamentary stages and accepted as such by Government and enshrined as part of the statutory guidance to the Act. Subsequently the group has been working to look at other ways the religious divorce process can be made to better protect and support women to achieve their get and to look at the border between civic and religious law.

It was also noted that United Synagogue has begun the process of reviewing its practices with regard to women going through a religious divorce and this reflects the benefit of raising such issues.

It was also noted that Tracey Allen, from Lord Mendelsohn's office would continue to provide the Group's secretariat and be the main point of contact on its activities.



Lord Mendelsohn, as temporary Chair, then proceeded to conduct the formal process of electing the new Chair of the group.

2. Election of Officers

The proposed new chair and registered contact is Julie Minns MP.

Proposer: Baroness Hayter

Seconder: Lord Polak

AGREED

Thank you and I am now going to hand the Chair over to Julie.

Julie Minns

The new Chair thanked the Group and expressed delight in the opportunity to support its work on domestic abuse in the Get process. She noted the background briefing that was circulated providing the background detail and laying out the Group's strategy going forward

She introduced herself as the new Member of Parliament for Carlisle who though not Jewish supports strongly the concept of allyship and believes it is vital to support the community.

Recognising this is a business meeting and only scheduled for a very short time, she proposed to proceed with business and looked forward to further discussions on the activities of the APPG in the year ahead.

Three officers were proposed and AGREED

Baroness Altmann as co-chair in absentia

Proposer: Baroness Ramsay

Seconder Lord Polak

Baroness Deech

Proposer: Baroness Hayter

Seconder Lord Mendelsohn

Rebecca Harris MP

Proposer: Lord Polak

Seconder Baroness Ramsay

The Chair expressed thanks to the new officers and will look forward to working with them on this important issue.



Tracey Allen from the Office of Lord Mendelsohn will continue to be Secretariat for the group and will circulate the full list of members with the minutes of the meeting for your information.

It was also NOTED that funding for the group would come from Lord Mendelsohn personally and this would cover the costs of research and other projects and the group thanked Lord Mendelsohn.

3. Any Other Business

Suggestions were proposed by members:

- inviting speakers including Batei Din representatives.
- more focussed sub-group to look at parliamentary opportunities in both Houses, including possibility of using select Committees such as: Women & Equalities to review the effectiveness of the statutory guidance to the DAA and the roles and influence of state and religious law. The Joint Committee on human rights could also be an option.
- Look at new chairs and members of relevant Select Committees as area for future activity

The Chair thanked members and closed the meeting