

**National Social Work Services Forum
Minutes of Meeting held on 9 September 2008**

Present:

Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years - Chair

Alan Baird, ADSW

Lisa Curtice, SCLD

Annie Gunner Logan, CCPS

Nigel Henderson, Penumbra; Co-chair, Service Development Group

Andrew Lowe, Scottish Borders, Chair, Practice Governance Group

Marie McArthur, Association of Scotland's Colleges

Sylvia Murray, CoSLA

Catriona Renfrew, Health Board Chief Executives

Ruth Stark, BASW

John Stevenson, UNISON (representing Stephen Smellie)

Carole Wilkinson, SSSC, Chair, Workforce Development Group

Bryan Williams, IRISS

David Wiseman, Care Commission (representing Jacquie Roberts)

Scottish Government Representatives

Ian Davidson, Workforce and Capacity Issues

Andy Bruce, Workforce and Capacity Issues

Gwen Smith, Workforce and Capacity Issues

Mike Martin, JIT

Mark McSherry, Criminal Justice Department (representing Valerie McNiven)

Sandra Murray, Workforce and Capacity Issues (Secretariat)

Apologies

Joanne Atkinson, South Ayrshire NHS Board

Janet Birks, Co-chair, Service Development Group

Sandy Cameron, Scottish Government; Chair, Performance Improvement Group

David Crawford, Chair, Leadership and Management Group

Norma Graham, ACPOS

Peter Hay, Director, Personnel and ITC

Ramon Hutchinson, South Lanarkshire Council

Alexis Jay, SWIA

Ronald McColl, CoSLA

Gail McNamara, College of Occupational Therapists

Shona Stephen, Communities Scotland

Liz Willetts, Social Care Association

Graeme Dickson, Health

Mike Foulis, Housing and Regeneration

Welcome and Introductions

1. Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years welcomed everyone to the meeting. In particular, Alan Baird, who was attending his first Forum since taking over as ADSW President from Bernadette Doherty.

Minutes of the meeting of 29 April and matters arising

2. The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed subject to the following change:

- It was noted that Adam Rennie attended the meeting representing Graeme Dickson (Health), and not Paul Gray, as stated in the minutes. Graeme Dickson took over from Paul Gray in January.

The ADSW perspective on *Changing Lives*

3. Alan Baird delivered a presentation on the ADSW perspective on *Changing Lives*. As President, he was determined that ADSW create a momentum for taking forward the work of *Changing Lives*, which must be owned and managed by the sector. Alan also set out the progress that had been made to date, such as appointing Professional Development Managers, reinvigorating Local Practitioner Forums and arranging a series of seminars. In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Whilst recent engagements with practitioners had demonstrated a tangible sense of enthusiasm around *Changing Lives*, the BASW and UNISON representatives reported a continuing degree of frustration among their members. It was hoped that the emerging *Changing Lives* Products would help address this, along with the initiatives being taken forward by ADSW. A key issue for ADSW was ensuring its members had clear lines of communication with front-line staff.
- One area where confusion remained was around personalisation. The National Practitioners Conference held in June revealed that there was still a great deal of confusion among practitioners about exactly what was meant by personalisation. This confusion was shared by users and carers who remained unsure about how personalisation would affect the services they received.
- The Minister asked about the barriers to taking forward the Personalisation agenda. There was a view that some current tendering and commissioning practice acted as a constraint to personalisation, as did the need to maintain crisis response services which made the transition to preventative services more problematic. One solution to this was ensuring that personalisation was fully enshrined within Single Outcome Agreements.
- Alan informed the Forum that ADSW would be hosting a Seminar “Personalisation: challenges and solutions for implementation” on 25

September 2008. The purpose of the event is to try to bring some clarity to the issue of “personalisation”. They will be considering what “personalisation” means in the Scottish context; raising awareness of issues for service users and providers; identifying options and solutions through sharing practice experience and development; contributing to an ADSW position statement.

Alan distributed a DVD produced by ADSW “A Life Changed”. He invited members of the forum to use it in their organisations for training purposes and as a professional development tool.

Development of a R&D Strategy for the social services in Scotland

4. Bryan Williams gave a presentation on the Development of a Research and Development Strategy for the social services in Scotland. In the discussion that followed it was agreed research in the past had been weak and a new research strategy would improve the competence and confidence of social work staff. It would also strengthen the input of service users and carers to the research process which would, in turn, lead to better outcomes. In discussion, it was agreed that research should be of relevance to both policy and practice and, as such, a key challenge was ensuring that new research was given due regard in the development of policy and practice.

Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Work Officer

5. Andrew Lowe provided an overview of the draft guidance on the role of the Chief Social Work Officer. In the discussion that followed the following points were raised:

- It would be useful for the guidance to reference the codes of practice for both employers and employees.
- It was noted that there was a potential tension between the managerial role of the Head of Service and the professional leadership role of the Chief Social Work Officer, particularly where the two roles were performed by a single individual.

An update was also provided on progress with seeking Cabinet approval to go out to consultation on the guidance. Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning has approved the draft guidance and circulated it to Cabinet colleagues with portfolio interests. Helpful comments have been received from the Cabinet Secretaries for Finance and Sustainable Growth, Health and Wellbeing and Justice, supporting the guidance and offering suggestions on how it might be strengthened further. These changes have been made to the paper and Cabinet approval to proceed with a 12 week formal consultation is expected shortly.

AOB

6. No other business was reported. The Minister thanked everyone for attending and brought the meeting to a close.

Date of next meeting

9 December 2008, 12.30 to 14.30, in Conference Room 3, Scottish Government, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.