

**Minutes of Changing Lives Practice Governance Group
Held on 24 March 2009**

Present: Andrew Lowe (Chair)
Liz Bohan
Alexis Jay
Ruth Stark
Michelle Miller
Peter Gabbitas
Sandra Nutley
Geraldine Doherty

Scottish Government
Catherine Rainey
Gwen Smith

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair expressed his appreciation to Andrew Bruce for his contribution over the last year which had been very helpful. Catherine Rainey was welcomed back to the Group.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 20 January 2009 and Matters Arising

The minutes of meeting held on 20 January 2009 were approved.

It was noted that the Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Work Officer had been issued on 27 February 2009 and published on the Scottish Government website. Feedback received from the recent Chief Social Work Officer Conference was very supportive.

Samples of possible print, colour and layout for the suite of practice governance documents were discussed and agreed would reflect the same approach adopted by the Service Development Group.

3. Chairs Update

It was noted that the Chair was actively promoting the Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Worker in various talks, papers, etc.

Andrew had prepared a short article on the Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Work Officer as a contribution to a Guardian imprint publication sponsored by SOLACE/SWIA. An article will be published in the SWIA June newsletter.

Andrew had attended the second North of Scotland Learning Network event on *Changing Lives* and spoke about Practice Governance. Approximately 100 people attended from various backgrounds including practice learning and academics. Useful contributions were given by the Chairs from the other Change Programme. There was good feedback from the audience who had engaged with the idea of Changing Lives.

4. The Contribution of Social Work to Delivering Better Outcomes for Scotland

There was a general discussion on the purpose of this paper. It is intended that this document be issued with a suite of documents produced by the Practice Governance Group and distributed to social workers and managers in all relevant sectors. It was noted that there would be cross reference with the Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Work Officer and the Practice Governance Framework.

There was a general consensus that the document required to be rearranged to highlight the specific functions only a qualified social worker can do/be accountable for. The paper should identify what the social work contribution is and recognise that it is a different world now and social work has had to evolve to meet the increasing demand on their services. In particular, social workers have the responsibility for risk assessment and much more accountability.

It was agreed that this document would be revised and issued to Group members for comments – this would include amending the title.

5. Practice Governance Framework for Social Work Services

Some points could be taken forward from the work carried out by the consultants and the Group agreed that candid, constructive and clear feedback should be given. The Group took the opportunity to discuss in detail what this practice governance framework should look like and what it hopes to achieve. It was agreed that SG would produce a paper summarising the points of the discussion and circulate this to Group members, revising the starter paper provided by Catherine to try and move this forward.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 5 May 2009 from 10.00 until 1.00 in Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.