

CHANGING LIVES: NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES FORUM

National Social Work Services Forum

Draft Minutes of the Meeting in pm

6 February 2007

Radisson Hotel
High Street
Edinburgh

Hugh Henry, Minister for Education and Young People - chair

Sandy Cameron – Scottish Executive – Chair of the Performance Improvement Group

Norma Graham - Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland

Annie Gunner - Community Care Providers Scotland

Peter Hay - Society of Personnel Directors

Nigel Henderson – Penumbra – co-chair of the Service Development Change

Alison Horner – National Practitioners Forum

Alexis Jay - Social Work Inspection Agency

Andrew Lowe – Scottish Borders – Chair of the Practice Governance Group

Gail MacNamara - College of Occupational Therapists

Sylvia Murray - CoSLA

Catriona Renfrew - Health Board Chief Executives

Jacque Roberts - Care Commission

Ruth Stark - British Association of Social Workers

Bryan Williams - Scottish Institute for Excellence in Social Work Education

In attendance

Lisa Curtice – Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability

Scottish Executive representatives

Val Cox – Acting Group Head – Children, Young People and Social Care

Paul Connell - SWSPD

Karen Lax – SWSPD

Jane Leask - SWSPD

Valerie Macniven – Justice Department

Catherine Rainey – Acting Head of SWSPD

Adam Rennie – Health (for Paul Gray)

Elaine Martay - SWSPD

Apologies:

SOLACE

Janet Birks – Falkirk – co-chair of the Service Development Change Programme

Brian Corrigan - Social Care Association

David Crawford - Association of Directors of Social Work – Chair of Leadership & Management Group

Christine Hallett - University Principals /Universities Scotland

Len Hammersley - Association of Scotland's Colleges

Pauline Innes - Communities Scotland
Jane Kennedy – CoSLA
Ronnie O'Connor - Association of Directors of Education Scotland
Stephen Smellie- UNISON
Carole Wilkinson - Scottish Social Services Council – Chair of Workforce
Development Group
Tommy Williams - Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

SE Representatives:

Laura Dolan – Housing and Regeneration (for Mike Nielson)
Paul Gray – Health (represented by Adam Rennie)
Colin McKay – Public Services Reform
Mike Nielson – Development Department, Housing and Regeneration (represented by
Laura Dolan)
Ruth Parsons – Public Services Reform Group

Welcome and Introduction

1. Hugh Henry, Minister for Education and Young People opened the meeting. He advised the members that social work issues could easily get lost, as there was no mention of it in the Ministerial title. However, he felt that social work needs to be a driver of debate, and that its profile needed to be raised in Scotland. For example NEET was not only about schools and health. It was also about social work, and the need to engage with families. Social work was a difficult job to do. Social workers were working with clients on the edge, and unforeseen things could happen. Inevitably the world focuses on mistakes. We must highlight the good things that are done well.

Minutes of the last meeting

2. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

3. The Communication Strategy had been delayed due to departure of the previous communications officer. However, a new communications officer (Ben Coburn) had been appointed and would be in post on 15 March 2007.
4. Catherine, I was asked to check up on some domestic arrangements at this time and so missed this part of the meeting - EM Catherine Rainey introduced the paper on “Principles – Agenda for Change”. She expanded on the paper, speaking of several meetings involving stakeholders which had taken place. One in particular had been set up by BASW and focussed on criminal justice social workers who had been uncomfortable with the word “autonomy” in the employment context. The use of the word “autonomy” needed to be grounded within a clear notion of “accountability” so that the idea of rights was also embedded in the concept.
5. Comments following this presentation were:
 - o Hugh Henry acknowledged the need for change, and that it needed to be done now. He viewed it as important that the Local Authorities should collaborate and cooperate to achieve effective change at the local level. But there needed

to be training and development of managers throughout the social care services to deliver the Changing Lives programme and to have effective leadership in the future.

- It was agreed that more needed to be done to prepare career pathways to senior leadership levels.
- The NSWSF should look at management systems.
- Clear corporate leadership will allow front-line staff to feel supported. However, front-line staff should also feel ownership of the Changing Lives change programmes.
- Frameworks are not necessarily incompatible with creative responses to SWS problems. If the SWS are to be respected then good standards and frameworks will have to be built in.
- There needs to be clarity about processes and systems. Processes are not being examined properly, there is not enough investment in good managers, and expertise is not being shared effectively.
- Selecting good leadership is problematic as imagination and creativity are needed, but difficult to assess.
- There needs to be more openness in the LAs, and a willingness to share expertise and knowledge. Cooperation needs to be more effective.
- A recent Occupational Therapy survey revealed that 76% of the workforce felt that their skills were not being utilised, as too much time was being taken up by paperwork which could be done by administrative staff.

Feedback from the Chairs of the Change Programmes - NSWSF/6Feb07/03

6. Karen Lax fed-back on the developments within the Leadership and Management Group.
 - The work on the Leadership and Management Framework dovetails with PSR. A draft is due in March/April.
 - Leading to Deliver had now selected its 5th cohort. The focus had been on middle and strategic level research. The individual participants had committed to taking change projects forward.
 - There was a mentoring programme being a piloted across the SW sector. It was targeted at senior managers and was looking specifically at what made mentoring successful.
 - There was a programme being developed which was looking at communities of practice in management, designed to cross-fertilise sustained development within the social services. This presented an opportunity to broaden the exercise to the wider sector and include other areas of high risk public services such as the police (who were keen to become involved).
 - An example of the above was the SWIA seminar on risk which was well supported.

National and Local Practitioners Forums (CL:NSWSP/6Feb07/04 paper)

7. Paul Connell up-dated the members on the current status of the Local Practitioners Forums (LPF). The LPFs had emerged from the 21C Review and embedded in Changing Lives. They were accountable to the National Practitioners Forum and the National Social Work Services Forum.
8. Feedback from front-line staff varied from enthusiasm for Changing Lives where the LPFs were up and running, to cynicism and a feeling of disempowerment in

areas where there were no LPFs. However, as yet there was little for the LPFs to discuss as the 5 change programmes were not yet at the stage of needing to consult with the LPFs.

9. The use of new staff to re-invigorate enthusiasm for Changing Lives should be captured before they were over-whelmed by work-loads. They need to be encouraged to engage with Service Redesign, LPFs and Changing Lives.
10. There is a worrying trend for young SW to be over-whelmed by large case-loads at the beginning of their working life. However, SWIA inspection surveys suggest that young SWs feel well supported and trained. In those areas retention is not a problem. Having a LPF in place is another indication of good practice.

Principles of Citizen Leadership – CL:NSWSF/6Feb07/05

11. Lisa Curtice presented the paper on the Principles of Citizen Leadership setting the context for the development of this paper. SCLD were just the facilitators for the Users and Carers Group which was very keen to engage with the change programme. The members had previously formed the Users and Carers Panel which had been used as a consultative partner in the 21C review. There were 12 members with diverse disabilities, although they were not representatives of those areas.
12. The aim of the principles of the Citizen Leadership paper was to attain consultative democracy, enabling users to have responsibility for their own services, but also to obtain best usage for the wider community. The members of the group were passionate to take this forward. They aimed to help with ideas and actions, set the principles and standards, share information between service providers and users and carers, and engage with the local practitioners Forums.
13. Comments which followed were:
 - o The SWSPD was very pleased with the paper, with two minor caveats:
 - o The language might have to be reviewed so that it was relevant for the criminal justice dimension. Also the term “users and carers” was not a universally useful concept, especially in CJ terms. It was felt that the term “carers” was useful, but perhaps needed to be developed.
 - o The work on the paper could link with work being done on aging populations.

National Priorities – CL:NSWSF/6Feb07/06

14. The purpose of the paper was to reflect the developing discussions in the past months, and is now ready for sign-off so that the development work can commence. Catherine Rainey gave a synopsis of the discussions from the morning workshop. This paper will go to the next Cabinet Delivery Group.

Date and time of the next meeting

It was suggested that the next meeting should take place in June (*This has been fixed in the Minister’s diary for 14 June at 2.00pm, though could be subject to change following the general election in May.*)

Elaine Martay

SWSPD

Feb 2007