

**PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT CHANGE PROGRAMME
MINUTES OF MEETING OF 23 OCTOBER 2006**

ST ANDREWS HOUSE, EDINBURGH

Present

Sandy Cameron, Chairman, Parole Board for Scotland (Chair)
Bernadette Docherty, North Ayrshire Council
Martin Narey, Barnardo's
Gill Ottley, SWIA
Annie Gunner, Community Care Providers Scotland
Val Cox, Social Work Services Policy, Scottish Executive
Catherine Rainey, Social Work Services Policy, Scottish Executive
Marie Swinney, Social Work Services Policy, Scottish Executive
Bill Ellis, Social Work Services Policy, Scottish Executive

Apologies:

Colin Mackenzie, Aberdeenshire Council
Bernadette Malone, Perth and Kinross Council
Norma Graham, Fife Constabulary

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Sandy Cameron welcomed members to the first meeting of the Group.

2. Remit

2.1 Sandy Cameron indicated that this group is one of the 5 change programmes arising from the Implementation Plan of the Changing Lives report. Ministers have made it clear that a culture of continuous performance improvement is critical to the future development of services and sustainable change and so see this area as a top priority. This group should be action focussed and explore new ideas for performance improvement across social work. The chairs of all 5 change programmes will report progress to the National Social Work Forum and reports on the work of the NSWF and the other Change Programmes will be brought back to this group.

3. Where are we now – Implementation of changing lives, the change programme

3.1 Catherine Rainey did a presentation on the key messages from the social work review, the mechanisms being put in place to help drive forward change, and the key tasks identified for this group in the implementation plan by way of context for this work.

3.2 The Executive has set the direction and is working with internal and external colleagues to join up thinking. For Performance Improvement the aim is to embed a culture of continuous improvement in all services and to improve outcomes for the people who use them. Martin Narey said that the group needed to be clear what was wrong and what could be done better. Val Cox said that the key challenge for this group is to get people thinking about continuous improvement at all levels and embedding that approach into organisational cultures.

4. Performance Inspections, the Performance Inspection Model

4.1 Gill Ottley said that SWIA, last year, began a 3 year programme, approved by Ministers, to inspect social work services in all 32 local authorities. A Performance Inspection Model has been drawn up, developed from EFQM which is almost identical to HMIE inspection model. It is structured around 6 key questions and 10 areas for evaluation. Local authorities are asked to complete a self assessment questionnaire structured round a 6 point scale ranging from excellent to weak. Examples of very good and weak practice are currently being finalised by SWIA. It had been hoped to use the HMIE examples of very good and weak practice, but these were seen as focussing on non social work areas. As part of the inspection process 500 questionnaires were issued to staff, service users and key stakeholders such as carers. Gill Ottley will arrange for feedback on the service users questionnaires to be brought to the next meeting.

4.2 In general discussion it was noted that:

- there is no list of national targets across the Scottish Executive for social work services. It was agreed that a stocktake paper pulling together such information will be prepared for the next meeting
- most targets were output focussed and policy areas were often quite a way from identifying outcomes
- it was possible to have good outcomes from poor processes and to have good processes with poor outcomes
- that there may be a need to compromise where good outputs are identified (given difficulties over outcomes in some areas) as long as these were reasonable and genuine
- there may be a culture of resistance to performance improvement
- there needed to be firm lines of accountability
- there are public sector areas which have accepted responsibility and the example of Health was given where clinicians have accepted management responsibility for the figures on length of stay
- indicators need to be part of a culture of progress – not just a big stick.

5 What has gone before – Work and findings of previous performance Improvement sub group

5.1 Marie Swinney gave a brief report on the work of the Performance Improvement sub group, which was carried out at the same time as the 21st Century Social Work Review,

but this was limited due to time constraints. The sub group had looked at the Quality Assurance systems in all 32 local authorities and in a sample of voluntary organisations. There was a huge variation with some bodies having very little in the way of QA systems and other areas with very well developed systems. A Performance Improvement Framework (PIF) for Children and Families had been developed. A working group (comprising all local authorities and some representatives from the voluntary sector) had considered outcomes around the 7 visions for children i.e. safe, nurtured, respected and responsible, achieving, included, healthy and active, which would be issued shortly for use on a voluntary basis.

5.2 One of the milestones in the implementation plan refers to the development of an overarching PIF for social work services. The group agreed that SWIA's Performance Inspection Model could serve as the overarching Framework though there would be a need to consider some aspects. For example:

- the PIM does not currently cover Criminal Justice
- how this be applied to the voluntary sector.

5.3 Sandy Cameron said that he had asked Zoë van Zwanenberg of the Scottish Leadership Foundation to look at performance improvement in sectors outwith social work both in the UK and overseas. She has been asked to report on the key characteristics, determining principles and the behaviours that are needed if continuous improvement is to be embedded. It will be important that the group considers what can be learned from other sectors and organisations that have embedded performance improvement approaches and how this might apply to this work This would be picked up at future meetings.

6. Date of next meeting

6.1 The next meeting will be held on 29 November at 2.15 pm in Conference Room B, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh.