

# Minutes of Local Practitioner Forums held in Victoria Quay on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

**\*Please note: Minutes taken by a local practitioner in attendance \***

## **In Attendance**

Joan Forson, Angus, Grace Robertson, Angus, Kath Coppock, Clackmannanshire, Justin McNicholl, Clackmannanshire, Jackie Gordon, East Lothian, Pam Gillespie, Falkirk, Elaine Stewart, Falkirk, Lisa Robertson, Fife, Tracy Herschel, Inverclyde, Wilma Easton, Perth and Kinross, Anne Marshall, Scottish Borders, Mervyn Paton, Scottish Borders, Maggie Miller, South Ayrshire, Liz Bohan, South Ayrshire, Raymon Hutchingson, South Lanarkshire.

## **Introduction**

*Action*

Ben Coburn welcomed everyone and opened proceedings by giving an update on the progress of setting up the local Practitioner Forums. He stated that 12 were up and running, while others were at different stages of development. He then spoke of the Changing Lives website, which has had a substantial number of 'hits' of interest, however the on line discussion forum, has had limited use.

Ben spoke of the need to clarify the roles of the local Practitioner Forums viz a viz the Scottish Government and he then invited his colleague, Andy Bruce to speak further on this. Andy reviewed the progress of the 5 Changing Lives working groups and linked this to the Government changes as expressed by the recent concordat. He spoke of the 5 Changing Lives Working Groups nearing the end of their work and intimated that 'Toolkits' from the respective areas will be available in the summer of 2008. Given some of the Councils represented at today's meeting did not have a voice in this arena, the group requested that front line practitioners be included in whatever discussions remained.

Andy said that he would pass this request forward but thought that it would not be possible.

Andy also spoke of the change in the Government through the recent concordat with its emphasis on devolving power to local authorities, and thus practitioner forums would develop locally, with the Government setting out principles for their development but having no further role. He therefore thought that the current role would change.

At this juncture Ben, Luke and Andy left the represented group and the following discussion took place. It took the form of national issues and local issues. This was then addressed on their return.

## **National Issues:**

This related to questions regarding the 'Changing Lives' group structure Chart 1 – See Appendix 1.

**All**

The group asked the following questions

- Who is the National Practitioner representative?

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- What is the purpose of the group of local Councils who met today and how does this fit into the process?
- The group saw the National Practitioners Forum as having a key role and identity based on the following aims:-
  - ✚ Representative
  - ✚ Influential
  - ✚ Owned by practitioners
  - ✚ Connected to the Scottish Government
  - ✚ Accountable
  - ✚ Linked to local groups

It was also considered that it should meet every 2 months.

- How can this group be part of the 5 Changing Lives working groups' discussion, given the ethos of Changing Lives is 'participation' and the 'personalisation' of services?
- Given the concordat, what is Ben and Andy's new role?

### **Local issues**

- We spoke of the common issues for each of the fora and agreed to look at it from the perspective:

**All**

'Face to face Contact'

This would include the areas of e.g. workloads, IT, paperwork.

It was at this juncture that Ben, Luke and Andy returned to the discussion. We went through each point as raised.

- There was not a current functioning 'National Practitioner representative – in the interim period until the situation could be clarified, the group nominated two representatives:

Ramon Hutchingson, South Lanarkshire Council  
Tracy Herschel, Inverclyde Council

This will be temporary and reviewed at the next meeting.

This step was taken to improve the communication between the local forums and the Changing Lives structure – see Appendix 1.

- This meeting was represented by 10 Councils, therefore the request was made that this Forum becomes the National Practitioner Forum, which has not as yet been set up. This was agreed in principle, with a meeting in 2 months.

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- If this is the National Practitioner Forum, can it have a voice on the 5 Changing Lives Working Groups?

Andy agreed to pass this on to the relevant parties.

- Clarification over Ben and Andy's changing role. The group thought that it was important to continue to have a dialogue with the Government's 'Changing Lives' structure.

**Andy**

Andy agreed to provide this for the next meeting.

Ben thanked everyone for their attendance and set a provisional next meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008. This will be confirmed, depending on availability of venue. The aim will be to encourage more Councils to attend and take forward the Local Practitioner Forum agenda.

**Ben**

It was further agreed that today's meeting would be minuted and circulated to each Council representative.