

Governance Group meeting minutes
16th June 2015, 2:30 pm
Number 6 One Stop Shop, Edinburgh

REVIEWED BY CHAIR

In attendance: **Kabie Brook**, Autism Rights Group Highland; **Maureen Bruce**, Scottish Government (Care, Support and Rights Division); **Michael Dawson**, an autistic person; **James Fletcher**, ARC Scotland; **Anne Marie Gallagher**, NHS GGC; **Emma Hanley**, Autism Network Scotland; **Richard Ibbotson**, Autism Initiatives; **Thom Kirkwood**, Parental Peer Advocate; **Jean MacLellan** (CHAIR), National Autism Co-Ordination Project, Strathclyde University; **Donald Macleod**, National Autism Coordination Project; **Jayne Porter**, Autism Network Scotland; **Annette Pyle**, Scottish Government (Care, Support and Rights Division)

Guests present: **Idem Lewis**, Listening to Community Conference Organiser

Apologies: **Carolyn Brown**, Fife Council/Education; **Beth Hall**, COSLA; **Ian Hood**, Learning Disability Alliance Scotland; **Iain McClure**, NHS Lothian; **Jess McPherson**, Scottish Government (Care, Support and Rights Division); **Jane Neil-MacLachlan**, Independent Advisor; **Jenny Paterson**, National Autistic Society; **Alan Somerville**, Scottish Autism

Absent: **Peter McCulloch**, Social Work Scotland

Minutes by: Tracy Wenzl, Autism Network Scotland and National Autism Co-Ordination Project

- I. **Welcome, apologies and introductions** – Apologies were read.
- II. **Minutes** – minutes from 13 March 2015 were approved. Action items were reviewed:
 - a. RI to send RCGP autism contact to JMcP - DONE
 - b. JMcP to contact someone in Education/Scottish Government to invite to Governance group – still in progress
 - c. KB to send further information on Autistic Pride Day to AP – DONE
 - d. Autism Achieve Alliance position – no update per AP
 - e. Julie Haslett from Joint Improvement Team will meet with Donald and Jean from the National Autism Co-ordination Project
 - f. Mackay's report on micro-segmentation expected imminently
- III. **One Stop Shop Evaluation Report**

The heads of Autism Initiatives Scotland, National Autistic Society Scotland and Scottish Autism (collectively referred to as The Partnership) co-wrote the foreword to the report. Self-evaluations were used in creating the report. Discussion then turned to what would make the report more useful for people outside of the evaluation process. It was agreed that The Partnership would write a more clear and useful description of what a One Stop Shop is and does, to sit alongside the report.

ACTION ITEM: RI to lead effort with The Partnership to write a clear and useful description of what a One Stop Shop is and does.

- IV. Autism Development Fund project update – AP reported that the Scottish Government is still waiting for several of the self-evaluation reports from funded projects. These were due at the end of May. The evaluation process will look at “high-value” (meaning larger amounts of money invested) projects only. They are waiting to receive all of the reports before beginning the evaluation process and are beginning to chase these up.
- A discussion followed, which indicated that several groups are keen to see these results, including local authorities and Working Groups 2 (transitions) and 3 (good autism practice). KB suggested that events could be held to allow funded projects to “show their wares” and that Autism Network Scotland could possibly organise this. She noted that people are interested in knowing what services exist across Scotland (and in their local area.) EH responded that ANS has done some collecting and collating of local autism resources through the Menu of Interventions roadshows, and that these have been built into a [series of web pages](#). She noted that through this process, ANS has learned about some small projects that have been really valuable, and asked that the Scottish Government consider this when deciding which projects to evaluate. JP noted that there is learning to be gained from unsuccessful projects as well, and TK noted this could be the best data. RI noted that the biggest impact might not be in the projects that received the most funding. MB asked if a sample across a range of projects would be better. RI asked if there were one-page summary reports on each project, as was done in earlier rounds of funding. AP suggested a special edition of the newsletter could be produced to highlight successful projects. JP noted that Working Group 3 would like to put together a “good practice festival” alongside the 4th Annual Conference on The Scottish Strategy for Autism, due to take place at the end of 2015. MB suggested that the sharing process be included in future funding requests. JF noted that Working Group 2 is interested in knowing what projects have been sustained by communities, especially those related to children and young people.
- ACTION ITEM:** EH to liaise with AP on how ANS can support the Scottish Government’s efforts to evaluate the Autism Development Fund projects
- KB suggested that The Partnership charities should have links to Autism Network Scotland’s website available on their websites, to aid people searching for autism resources to find things like ANS’ Menu of Interventions local autism resources.
- ACTION ITEM:** EH to contact Scottish Autism, National Autistic Society and Autism Initiatives to request links to ANS website be added to their websites.
- MD noted the Strategy website doesn’t work very well. EH and JMacL noted that ANS is getting more web support lately, and are in the process of requesting further changes.
- V. **Report on Listening to Community: The Autism Strategy Conference** - TK presented a document containing the feedback and suggestions that came from the day. The event, held in Perth on May 20, was attended by people on the autism spectrum, parents and carers. JMacL noted that this was an event for the autism community, led by the autism community with support and funding from Autism Network Scotland. Guest IL, who helped organise the conference with KB, MD and TK, said the group was keen to involve service users and carers in future events, to continue to be inclusive. He suggested that the group go out into communities and hold events, planned or co-planned with people from that community, so that a number of different perspectives can be represented. KB agreed that they wanted to do more, local events, involving local people, local

authorities and ANS – people want to be more connected to Strategy Working Groups. She also noted the need for the Working Groups to be more joined up with each other, in particular autistic people and parents who are members of the Working Groups. MD noted that people were quite energised at the May event, and that capturing that energy to move forward is key. They want to partner with other areas to plan events in communities across Scotland. JMacL noted that the planning committee was invited to present at a future National Autism Co-ordination Project lead officers event, which would allow them to begin making contacts in those communities. EH noted that ANS has committed resources to helping facilitate further events.

MB noted that this event was a positive step, and that she was pleased to hear that this approach to wider engagement is working. She noted that the Scottish Government wants to know if the Scottish Strategy for Autism is impacting communities, and if the autism community is feeling any change from this. She agreed that holding events in local communities would allow people to have conversations where they want to have them. She was “delighted” to see this happening. MD noted the need to maintain input from people on the spectrum, and that they were working to build trust. KB noted that people want to give input and want to affect change. Everyone is looking for the best way to move the conversation forward. EH noted the group is meeting soon to decide on next steps. KB will make sure the group feeds back to the conference attendees after this meeting. She wants to involve people in group homes, people who are non-verbal, and people who are feeling excluded.

MD indicated that there was a need for more notice on funding (eg, Autism Development Fund.) AP said that it was appreciated the call for applications was tight and that would be noted for future announcements of funding.

- VI. Working Group Activity overview – DM read parts of his report as an overview of recent work.
- VII. Working Group Chairs updates
 - a. Working Group I – RI was unable to attend the recent Group 1 meeting, so JMacL reported on his behalf. The group reviewed their Work Plan and remit. The group is not clear whether they are meant to make things happen or facilitate things happening. They request clarification on what they can/cannot do. They wonder how they can best use their skills to facilitate work. RI noted that the group’s remit relates to several other people’s projects (ie microsegmentation, etc) and this example was used to clarify the group’s role. AP said the group should be facilitating work commissioned elsewhere. The wider group should be updated and feeding back as appropriate. The Scottish Government will receive the microsegmentation report when complete, and will ask Group 1 for feedback to the Governance Group. MB noted that a lot of delivery was going on, with Governance Group oversight. The Working Groups are asked to take a deeper look at some projects, and the Scottish Government may have specific items for Working Groups to review. The Working Group’s product will be analysis. JMacL offered to meet with the group chairs to further clarify roles.

ACTION ITEM: JMacL and AP to meet with four working group chairs to clarify expectations of the chairs and working groups

- b. JF reported that Working Group 2 is moving forward with their action points in their priority plan. A work plan detailing how the group would like to move forward was tabled. This document included long term aspirations to address headline themes in transitions, as well as some first steps to get started towards these aspirations. The themes were taken from a draft report on the outcomes from the Transitions Roadshows, led by Lynsey Stewart of ANS and Scott Richardson Read of Association for Real Change Scotland.

ACTION ITEM: Governance Group members to further review the work plan and feed back to JF via TW

TK noted that it was nice to see that the work plan picked up on a number a positive things, and noted that in some areas, practitioners are doing transitions right without the book (The Principles of Good Transitions 2 document.) JF noted that in many areas, it was down to having the right person involved to assure a good transition. TK noted that the handover between child and adult services needed a better process. He further noted that there was a need for transitions teams, rather than a paper with boxes to tick. JF noted they saw a need for more joined up working, with more focus on the process rather than relying on individuals. EH noted that ANS is seeing that some areas are using the PoGT2 document in establishing transitions processes. JF noted the issue of accountability – who should be taking responsibility for the transition process? AP noted that it appeared good transitions practice happened where integrated child and adult services exist, and wondered if the integration of health and social services might allow this process to develop. JF said that different areas have different models, and it remains to be seen how the integration of services will affect transitions provision. MB said it may be a while until any changes can be seen due to this. She noted that the work plan gave the Scottish Government specific concerns to work on. AMG noted that the Western Isles have no adult/child specific services, but use a model that works across ages, and suggested it could be an interesting model to explore further. TK noted that Stirling and Clackmannanshire have considered this approach.

KB noted that support for autistic parents with a child going through a transition is also needed. JF recognised the need to be proactive, and to provide information to parents before they need it so they are prepared for what's coming.

- c. JP reported for JNM that Working Group 3 was pursuing a “good autism practice festival” to be connected to the 4th Annual Conference. They continue to discuss the possibility of an autism-focussed edition of the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (JADD) and the outcomes from the Action on Autism Research (AAR) series. They have also discussed commissioning and good practice. They are planning to launch a Knowledge Network, to be hosted as a virtual network/forum on the Autism Network Scotland website. The finer details of this are to be discussed at their upcoming meeting, with a launch time planned for the 4th Annual Conference. JNM asked JP to note that while there is a lot of focus on children with autism, and on learning disabilities, it was important to also consider

adults with autism. JNM also submitted notice that she would be resigning as the Working Group 3 chair after the 4th Annual Conference in November/December. MB noted the group's appreciation for JNM's work and impact of that work in improving the lives of people with autism.

RI noted that The Partnership is working on a paper on commissioning and suggested that Working Group 3 review it. TK suggested that both Groups 2 and 3 should be looking at the benefits of Self Directed Support.

iv. AMG reported that Working Group 4 met the previous week. She noted that the discussion went off the agenda at the meeting and that parts of the agenda were not addressed. The group's goal is building capacity/skills. The group discussed the idea of grandparenting, which the group disliked the concept as it was presented. They did agree with the idea of people with expertise in autism having opportunities to share this with others. TK described this as "senior individuals" rather than grandparents. AMG noted that one of the group members met with her after the last meeting and proposed a change in the group's working process. ANS set up a virtual network for the group to use to discuss the working process and other projects online between meetings.

KB noted that the group agreed that people with expertise needed time for mentoring, shadowing, and support of others working with autistic people.

EH noted that the meeting of the four chairs would be useful, to avoid duplication of effort. TK asked if the meeting was intended to avoid/remove duplications, and JMacL affirmed.

- VIII. National Autism Co-ordination Project Update – DM read from his report and noted that since submitting the report, the West Lothian Autism Strategy had been submitted. AP requested an update on Ayrshire, and JMacL noted they were awaiting a response to their latest enquiry. The Pan-Ayrshire leads had agreed on a work plan but key people have been out of the office for various reasons, and work has been delayed. MB asked how the information about local authority plans was being communicated with working groups, and DM responded that NACP and ANS are feeding back through the groups. JMacL noted the importance of coherence between all entities.
- IX. Autism Network Scotland update – EH read from her report.
- X. Any other business
- a. RI requested that meetings be planned further in advance. TW will poll for the next Governance meeting, as well as the chairs' meeting.
 - b. AP noted that two key staff members in her team were leaving and resources would be limited until the vacancies filled. KB suggested making it clear that people with autism are encouraged to apply. AP said that the vacancies called for people with an "interest in autism and learning disabilities."

- c. AP said the National Conference would be taking place in November or December, and that the theme of “best practice” was being considered. More information will be presented at the next Governance Group meeting.

XI. Date of next meeting

The next meeting date, tentatively in September, will be set by poll.

KEY MESSAGES

The One Stop Shop evaluation report will be published soon. The Partnership of the heads of Autism Initiatives Scotland, National Autistic Society Scotland and Scottish Autism wrote the foreword and will write a further description of what a One Stop Shop is and does to sit alongside the report. The Governance Group remains keen to see the outcomes from the Autism Development Fund projects, and Autism Network Scotland will liaise with The Scottish Government to see how they can support efforts to complete the evaluation of these projects, so that examples of good practice can be recognised and publicised.

A recent conference in Perth was attended by autistic people, parents and carers. The feedback from this event was that people wanted to be more involved with the Scottish Strategy for Autism and wanted more events in their local areas. The conference planning team wants to involve local authorities and communities in planning their own events so that people can bring their concerns and suggestions forward. This was recognised as a valuable and important piece of work towards involving the autism community in the Strategy.

The National Autism Co-Ordination Project is continuing to work with local autism leads on their autism plans and strategies. Almost all of the local authorities have now submitted plans or strategies and are starting to implement them. They have held a second event for local leads, this one focussed on out of area placements and complex care. They also held an event for service providers and commissioners, and that group was keen to be involved in further collaboration with each other.

Autism Network Scotland has recently visited Shetland to support the implementation of their autism strategy. They hosted the first ever conference in Scotland focused on the needs and expectations of women and girls with autism. The Network also enhanced the profile of autism at the University of Strathclyde through participation in Engage Week.

ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEM: RI to lead effort with The Partnership to write a clear and useful description of what a One Stop Shop is and does.

ACTION ITEM: EH to liaise with AP on how ANS can support the Scottish Government’s efforts to evaluate the Autism Development Fund projects

ACTION ITEM: EH to contact Scottish Autism, National Autistic Society and Autism Initiatives to request links to ANS website be added to their websites.

ACTION ITEM: JMacL and AP to meet with four working group chairs to clarify expectations of the chairs and working groups

ACTION ITEM: Governance Group members to further review Working Group 2's work plan proposal and feed back to JF via TW

NEXT MEETING

Poll to be held for date in September, in Glasgow