

AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER REFERENCE GROUP

Note of meeting held on 7 June 2010, Atlantic Quay, Glasgow

Present :

Ken Aitken- Action Against Autism

Carolyn Brown- Educational Psychologist, Fife Council

Linda Connolly - Social Work Inspection Agency

Professor Aline-Wendy Dunlop- National Centre for Autism Studies

Ian Hood - Learning Disability Alliance Scotland

Jane Hook- Parent

Richard Ibbotson- National Director Scotland, Autism Initiatives

Peter Kelly - Adult Care and Support Division

Alison Leask- Autism Argyll and SASN

Stella Macdonald- ASD Co-ordinator, Fife Council

Jane Neil-Maclachlan- Autism Co-ordinator, NHS Lothian

Jean MacLellan- Adult Care and Support Division (Chair)

Robert McBean - National Autistic Society

Iain McClure- Consultant Psychiatrist NHS Lothian

Nigel Rooke- Autism Services Coordinator, Glasgow City Council /NHS GG&C

Val Sellars- Director, Scottish Centre for Autism, Yorkhill Hospital

Sam Sinclair-Camphill Scotland

Alan Somerville- Chief Executive, Scottish Society for Autism

Adam Stewart- Policy Officer, COSLA

Rachel Sunderland - Support for Learning

Charlene Tait- Lecturer, National Centre for Autism Studies

Marion Thompson- Adult Care and Support Division

Apologies

Apologies were received from Paul Dickinson and Carol Evans.

Welcome

Members were welcomed to the meeting and introductions made. The note of the last meeting was agreed.

Introduction

Hugh O'Donnell has formally introduced a Private Member's Bill to Parliament and the parliamentary process involving the 3 stages of a Bill was explained to the group and estimated timings on how it might unfold were laid out. It was explained that there were specific responses that Scottish Government officials would need to make over the next few months.

The Bill asks for a national autism strategy and the Government position is that the best vehicle to delivering a strategy is through the ASD Reference Group which can offer one by late autumn, following a period of public consultation.

Questions were asked by the group to help them understand the two different journeys towards delivering a strategy and what finances would be attached to either option.

Whether government led or parliament led, we are offering support to people on the autism spectrum and COSLA has committed to work with us on delivering this support.

Alan Somerville, Scottish Society for Autism, gave a presentation based on the work of Malcolm K Sparrow. He suggested the first step to developing a national strategy would be to map service provision across all sectors through a research project, to have some understanding of the unaddressed demand for services. Only by such a comprehensive mapping exercise could we identify the scale of the problem which the strategy must address and therefore the overall cost. This would help the group think about what work to prioritise to eliminate 'harm' and what it might deliver in interventions over short, medium and long term.

The group split into 3 workshops to discuss the work on the autism strategy and shared a summary of their thoughts on what should be included and what might make it more robust. It was suggested that a writing group could be set up within the group to help with drafting the document as the capacity of the government team is limited.

Action Point - Group members to submit immediate comments on the structure within 2 days of meeting with detailed comments and suggested changes to officials by 21 June.

Group Members

A writing group made up of Jane, Sam and Charlene, with email contributions from Aline-Wendy and Ian, could finalise the document before one full meeting of the group in July.

Any other business

It was suggested that there should be additional representation on the group from the Royal College of Psychiatry, the chair of the Scottish Autism Research Group, HMIE and ADSW (children and adults representation).

Date of next meeting

The next meeting was set for 8 July 2010.

