

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY CHILDREN'S FORUM MINUTES OF MEETING

The Scottish Executive, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, 4 October 2004

Present:	Tam Baillie	Barnardos
	Karen Baines	Down Syndrome Scotland
	Kathleen Bessos	Directorate of Service Policy and Planning
	Heather Coady	Scottish Women's Aid
	Bronwen Cohen	Children in Scotland
	Joanne Crone	Voluntary Issues Unit
	Susan Elsley	Save the Children
	May Fong	Homestart
	Claire Houghton	Scottish Women's Aid
	Gill Jones	Children in Scotland
	Romy Langeland	Aberlour
	Janet Law	Scottish Out of School Care Network
	Colin MacLean	Children, Young People and Social Care Group
	Alison Mason	Civil Law Division
	Cathy McCulloch	The Children's Parliament
	Robert McGeachy	Youthlink
	Iain McLaughlan	SPPA
	Fiona Mercer	Greater Glasgow Health Board
	Susan Neilands	Early Education & Childcare Division
	Gina Nowak	Barnardos
	Judy Panton	Family Fund
	Alison Provan	Social Inclusion Division
	Catherine Rainey	Children & Families Division
	Euan Robson	Deputy Minister for Education and Young People
	Claire Telfer	Children in Scotland
	Margaret Tod	Children & Families Division
	David Turnbull	NCH Scotland
	Jennifer Turpie	Children in Scotland
	Alison Wales	Childline
	Marlene Walker	Early Education & Childcare Division
	David Wilson	Children 1st
	Juliet Wilson	Playbus
Apologies:	Gayle Duncan	ACVO
	David Gray	One Plus
	Lesley Fox	Nat Assoc of Toy & Leisure Libraries

Welcome and Introductions

1. **Euan Robson, Deputy Minister for Education and Young People** welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He also welcomed Gill Jones to her first Forum as co-chair.

Apologies

2. It was agreed that the apologies would be recorded in the Minute.

Minute of Previous Meeting

3. The Minute of the meeting on 29 March 2004 was accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising

4. There were no action points from the last meeting. **Gill Jones** reported that copies of the minutes from the International Year of the Family Steering Group meetings were being circulated to members.

5. **Colin MacLean** reported that the Planning Guidance on the Integrated Children's Services Plans would be issued in the very near future.

Topic for discussion

Child Protection Reform Programme

6. **Catherine Rainey** of Children & Families Division gave a presentation on the Child Protection Reform Programme. She provided the background to how the reform programme came about and went on to report progress to date and the future intentions. **A copy of the slides used in her presentation is attached.**

7. **Gill Jones** thanked Catherine Rainey for presenting a clear idea of the programme and opened the way for voluntary sector involvement questions. **David Wilson** asked whether due to the diversity of voluntary sector groups, were the reform team satisfied that they were having an impact on the smaller organisations. **Catherine Rainey** responded that the Child Protection Committees were being asked to be imaginative on how best to reach the smaller organisations at a local level in the draft guidance currently out for consultation.

8. **Janet Law** welcomed the information received here and at a recent seminar where one of the reform team had spoken. She reported that Childcare Partnerships could be a good route for disseminating information. She then asked how progress on work in each area was being monitored. **Catherine Rainey** reported that dissemination was being tackled through a number of different angles e.g. by approaching chief officers at the appropriate agencies and asking them to nominate lead officials; through Child Protection Committees; through representative bodies; and individual groups. The team would be happy to respond to requests for information or input and all materials were available on the SE website www.scotland.gov.uk/childprotection.

9. **Bronwen Cohen** asked if the SE is being proactive in providing the information in other languages or formats for the wide range of ethnic minority groups. **Catherine Rainey** confirmed that the standard practice in the SE was to provide translated copies if requested. **Tam Baillie** asked about the relationship between the Children's Hearing Review and the reform programme and **Catherine Rainey** explained that the team was working with colleagues leading the Children's Hearing Review in considering how this could contribute to ensure the protection system worked for children. **Euan Robson** took the opportunity to explain that phase 1 of the Children's Hearing Review had looked at the broader principles and phase 2 would look towards the expected outcomes and how all systems link together. It would also consider whether panels should have a duty to monitor outcomes. Phase 2 would commence at the start of 2005.

10. **Romy Langeland** asked how work was progressing on the integration of services and **Catherine Rainey** explained that the Minister had written to all chiefs of agencies asking them to look singularly and jointly at what they were doing to achieve continuous improvement. **Euan Robson** emphasised that the Executive would work continuously for improved services for children.

11. **Gill Jones** asked if the inspection pilots would be evaluated. **Catherine Rainey** confirmed this would be the case and used to inform the further development of the inspection of children's services. The reform team would also consider the outcomes from inspection to inform the work of the programme.

Community Health Partnerships

12. **Fiona Mercer** of Greater Glasgow Health Board gave a presentation on Community Health Partnerships (CHPs). She outlined what CHPs were and what they would look like for children from a Glasgow perspective. **A copy of the slides used in her presentation is attached.**

13. **Euan Robson** thanked Fiona Mercer for her interesting presentation and sought questions from the members. **Karen Baines** asked about the children's services guidance and **Kathleen Bessos** reported that the Minister for Health had signed off the guidance that morning and would be issued shortly. Additional advice notes on the relationship between CHPs and children's services were still being drafted by the Child Health Support Group and should be available in a few weeks time.

14. **May Fong** asked how the CHPs meshed with community planning given that Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) funding would soon be disappearing. **Fiona Mercer** acknowledged that a framework across the city area was needed but it was not yet developed and to make it easier it would be beneficial if the CHP and Community Plan boundaries were in line.

15. **Janet Law** explained that there were potential networks of voluntary sector representatives that could be called upon and **Fiona Mercer** confirmed that they were always trying to engage with the voluntary sector and in particular by using for a who could speak on behalf of groups. **Romy Langeland** asked if financial powers would be devolved and **Fiona Mercer** confirmed that they would be where possible.

16. **Bronwen Cohen** welcomed the opportunity to hear about the model of delivery in Glasgow but wanted to pursue the Executive's view of having someone on the CHP who knew about children. **Kathleen Bessos** reported that the minimum membership of CHP committees was prescribed in regulations (this included membership from local authorities, voluntary sector, users/carers, frontline staff and clinicians). Core members of the committee must be able to take a broad and holistic perspective on services for all age groups within the CHP area. It was up to NHS Boards and their partners to decide on local management arrangements and mechanisms to enhance the performance of individual CHPs. They must have full involvement in strategic planning including planning for children's services. **Colin MacLean** concluded that planning for children's services included all services and all agencies as part of one process.

Points for Information

Update on Youth Strategy Work

17. **Euan Robson** responded by reporting that the youth strategy was being developed with a range of interested bodies, including representatives of the voluntary sector, before it was put out for consultation. As development was at an early stage the style of the final report was still under consideration. The strategy was designed to give a positive image of young people, promote citizenship, and assist in the delivery of high quality; modern youth work projects, activities and facilities of relevance to young people. **Joan Fraser** also reported that young people, mostly in the 11-25 age group would be involved in the development, planning and monitoring of the strategy.

18. **Robert McGeachy** welcomed the SE commitment to include young people, although he felt that there was a weariness among some youngsters in participating and asked that this be noted. **Tam Baillie** asked when the consultation document would be produced and **Euan Robson** reported that it would be Spring 2005 at the earliest but probably not until the autumn as the PAB commitment was to have the strategy in place by 2007.

19. **Joan Fraser** reported that the World Youth Congress would be held in Stirling in August 2005 and this would highlight youth issues. Local projects would be linked to the themes of the congress and visited by delegates. **Susan Elsley** asked if youth work referred to informal provisions for young people or was it a term for professionals. **Joan Fraser** confirmed that when talking about youth work the SE was referring to the broad range of people who worked with young people which would include volunteers. **Euan Robson** suggested that a further update could be provided at the next meeting.
Action Point: SE to provide update at the next meeting.

EU Treaty

20. **Colin MacLean** confirmed that the SE was in discussions with colleagues in Whitehall regarding the EU Treaty. He explained that even though policy decisions had been devolved, constitutional matters were reserved and this could lead to different conclusions in Scotland. **Joan Fraser** reported that there had been a meeting the previous week to try to get an integrated reply on youth issues. This particularly noted the importance of the European White Paper on Youth and the need to report on national participation and information, as it involved and affected young people, by December 2005. **Euan Robson** suggested that this topic could be considered for a future meeting if it was to be discussed more fully. **Bronwen Cohen** than handed round copies of the Children in Europe magazine.

Any Other Business

21. **Susan Elsley** reported that the UK government and non government organisations were asked to respond on the reserved subject of the UN Study on Violence by March 2005, and wanted to know if the Scottish Executive would publicise the study. The SE contributed to the UK response and once it has been sent to Geneva the UN will take a decision on publishing.

Date of Next Meeting

22. **Euan Robson** reported that the next meeting would be held in March 2005, probably either the week beginning 7th or 14th.

Action Point: The Forum Secretariat would liaise with Children in Scotland to find the most suitable date.

23. **Euan Robson** brought the meeting to a close by inviting members to table items to be addressed at the meeting in advance of the meeting to allow SE officials preparation time. He thanked everyone for their part in the meeting and given the date of the next meeting, he took the opportunity to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. **Gill Jones** concluded by thanking everyone, especially the Minister, for attending.