



**Minutes of Parenting Network Meeting
Raploch Community Campus
Drip Road
Stirling FK8 1SE
Wednesday 21st March 2018
10am – 1.15pm**



Who was there:

Andy	Miller	Acting Chair (SCLD)
Sharon	Swan	Aberlour Family Service (South Ayrshire)
Katie	Wanless	City of Edinburgh Council
Lorraine	Milne	City of Edinburgh Council
Dominic	Jarrett	NHS Ayrshire & Arran
Bianca	Wood	People First (Scotland)
Jane	Lewis	People First (Scotland)
Paul	McConnachie	Parent
Elizabeth	Findlay	Central Advocacy Partners
Shellie	Connor	Dundee Health & Social Care Partnership
Donna	Finlay	Renfrewshire Learning Disability Service
Christine	Fletcher	People First Highland
Emma	Grant	People First Highland
Della	Collins	Equal Say Advocacy
Dana	Martin	Equal Say Advocacy
Angela	Rushton-Clark	Equal Say Advocacy
Tracey	Dickson	Aberlour Family Service
Amanda	Muir	Equal Say
Chris	Steer	Scottish Government
Rachel	Pyle	Scottish Government
Andrew	Scott	Scottish Government
Oonagh	Brown	Scottish Commission for Learning Disability
Christine	McBain	Minute taker from Scottish Commission for Learning Disability

1) Welcome and Introductions

In Gillian's absence, Andy welcomed everyone to the meeting, introductions were made and housekeeping rules explained. Elizabeth informed the Network that members of Central Advocacy Partners do not like the traffic light cards and that she will not use these during the meeting. After a short discussion, it was agreed that the use of traffic light cards at Network meetings will be put on to the agenda for the next meeting.

2) Review of Minutes of Meeting of 6 December 2017

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

3) Actions from Meeting of 6 December 2017

- Network members to speak to parents to find out the level of interest there is for parents to meet together either before or after the Network meetings and the format of these meetings. Feedback this information to Oonagh **(ALL)** Informal meeting taking place after this meeting
- Contact Oonagh with details of parents who are willing to have their quotes included in the guide for professionals working with young pregnant women and young fathers **(ALL)** No details of parents provided. Oonagh will ask for an update on the guide **(Oonagh)**
- Put the issue of neglect on to the agenda for the next meeting **(GILLIAN / OONAGH) c/f**
- Send the volunteer job description to the Network **(OONAGH)**
Handed out at this meeting
- Provide Anthony O'Malley with information on easy read **(PEOPLE FIRST (SCOTLAND)) Done**
- Let Oonagh know of any topics / issues to be discussed at future Network meetings **(ALL) Done**

4) Supporting Disabled Children, Young People and Their Families Framework

Chris Steer from the Scottish Government gave a presentation on the Framework. Following the presentation, Bianca spoke about the need for the Framework document to be available in easy read for parents with a learning disability who have disabled children and for the voices of these parents to be heard as part of the consultation. There were further questions and discussions around the involvement of advocacy, not assuming that everyone would be able to access information online, the use of the word 'disabled', the need for life long support and to remember that a child is part of a family so adults have to be considered too. Andy will provide his email address to be forwarded to the Network members for these points to be emailed to him. It is also hoped that the consultation process will provide people with the opportunity to raise these points and others.

5) Parents' Input

Paul McConnachie gave a presentation on being a parent with a learning disability. This was well received and provided an opportunity to highlight some of the good support and some of the difficulties experienced including professionals not having enough time to explain how to do things like make a bottle of milk using formula. Paul also talked about parents with a learning disability not being allowed to make mistakes like others, living with the fear that the child could be taken away, parents being scrutinised, judged, constantly watched and not being allowed to take risks or make any decisions.

6) Network Member Updates

Andy reminded the Network members to email their update to Christine if this is to be included in the minute of the meeting.

Bianca Wood - People First (Scotland) Parents' Group

Bianca informed the Network members that a big discussion had taken place in the Parents' Group about neglect and the possible change in the criminal law that could result in parents with learning disabilities being charged with a crime they do not feel was committed. A statement is

being written. The statement will then be sent to the Minister for Children and Young People together with a request to meet. Bianca asked for this subject to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Some parents met with Clair Halliday from the National Parent Forum Scotland (NPFS). They talked about how schools can engage better with parents with learning disabilities. Clair suggested that NPFS could help with the roll out of easy read letters in Scotland and encourage schools to communicate better with parents. Clair informed the Parents' Group that there is a parental engagement steering group run by the Scottish Government. Clair would like some parents with learning disabilities on the group and give input to the parental engagement action plan.

Bianca went to a meeting with the Scottish Government about child poverty. They wanted to know about particular issues for disabled parents. Discussion took place around poverty that comes from a lack of support to budget or support to get out and about.

Together with SCLD and other members of the Network, Bianca took part in a training session for social workers and managers organised by Social Work Scotland. This went well.

Sharon Swan – Aberlour Family Support – South Ayrshire

Sharon informed the Network members that their main offices have moved from Girvan to Ayr as the majority of families are from Ayr and it is more central.

The Nurture group has started up again and is going well. There has been some decrease in engagement. This has been put down to the number of new families settling in and families who have achieved good outcomes transitioning away from intensive supports. Groups have been divided between two localities to improve accessibility.

David and Sharon have been involved in Strategy Planning in the local authority (Parenting and Family Learning / Learning Disability). Sharon

co-organised a collaborative consultation meeting with families from their service and families involved with Children 1st in order to share their views on what improvements could be made to improve family life.

There is also a possible partnership developing with North Ayrshire Council and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Sharon spoke about Parents Stand Together. This is a parent led project to involve training for health and social care professionals, students and other agencies. There is also development of an Ayrshire wide network of parents. Discussion has taken place with Storyworlds Life to help to develop a resource. An event will take place in May to gather opinion from parents and professionals.

Andy Miller – SCLD

Andy gave an update on the work done by the Parenting Task Group. An implementation plan that includes training and development of professionals and local provision for parents who need support has been signed off to go to Ministers for ministerial support.

7) Network Update

Oonagh gave an update on the Mind the Gap: MIA / ANNA event that takes place on 15 May 2018 at the Scottish Youth Theatre, Glasgow. Oonagh will send out information to share with people who are not already engaged. This will include information on how to book a place at this free event. Around 6 – 8 volunteers from around Scotland are needed to act as points of contact to provide advice and examples of good practice for new people. 'Link Up Volunteer' forms were handed out.

Oonagh will send further updates to the Network members by email.

As time was running short, the Network members agreed that the agenda item 'How do we best work with parents?' will be discussed out with this meeting after a short lunch break.

8) Any other business

Oonagh asked the Network members to complete and return the Evaluation Form in their pack.

9) Date of next meeting

20 June 2018 in Dundee. Venue to be confirmed.

Actions from this meeting

- Put the use of traffic light cards at Network meetings on to the agenda for the next meeting **(GILLIAN / OONAGH)**
- Contact Oonagh with details of parents who are willing to have their quotes included in the guide for professionals working with young pregnant women and young fathers **(ALL)** No details of parents provided so contact will now be made with people in the guide and feedback provided at the next meeting **(OONAGH)**
- Put the issue of neglect on to the agenda for the next meeting **(GILLIAN / OONAGH)**
- Provide email address to be forwarded to the Network members to give input to the Supporting Disabled Children, Young People and Their Families Framework **(ANDY SCOTT)**
- Send out information on the Mind the Gap: MIA / ANNA event that takes place on 15 May to the Network members to share with people who are not already engaged **(Oonagh / NETWORK MEMBERS)**
- Send further updates to the Network members by email **(Oonagh)**
- Complete and return the Evaluation Form in the pack to Oonagh **(NETWORK MEMBERS)**

**National Network for Parents Discussion
Raploch Community Campus
Drip Road
Stirling FK8 1SE
Wednesday 21st March 2018
1.30pm to 2.30pm**

Who was there:

Andy	Miller	Acting Chair (SCLD)
Sharon	Swan	Aberlour Family Service (South Ayrshire)
Bianca	Wood	People First (Scotland)
Jane	Lewis	People First (Scotland)
Paul	McConnachie	Parent
Christine	Fletcher	People First (Highland)
Emma	Grant	People First (Highland)
Amanda	Muir	Equal Say Advocacy
Angela	Ruthson-Clark	Equal Say Advocacy
Salena	Begley	Family Fund (Scotland)
Oonagh	Brown	SCLD

Following the network meeting attendees were invited to come together to discuss the potential formation of a National Network of Parents.

Bianca Wood from People First (Scotland) thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Bianca gave an introduction to the discussion. Bianca said:

The People First Parents' Group has been talking about a National Parents' Network for a long time. It was also one of the most common wishes on our wishing line at the Parents' group 10th birthday event last year.

Parents say it is really, really important for them to meet with other parents who are in the same boat.

Bianca said meeting other parents:

- Helps us to know that we are not alone

- Helps us to find out about the sort of support we could be getting
- Helps us to stand up for ourselves
- Helps us to support each other
- Allows us to learn about our rights
- Supports us to push for ongoing support rather than having our kids removed

But we could get a much stronger voice if we could link up as parents from all parts of Scotland. We could share our experiences and push for change.

We would hope that the network could help to change attitudes and work for better support. The network could really flag up when parents still aren't getting the support we need and deserve.

But we have found in the past that getting parents together from different parts of Scotland can be difficult. If you have young kids you might not have much time. You might need to take children to and from nursery or school. You might not have childcare. You might not be able to travel to another part of Scotland on your own. You might be involved in lots of child protection meetings and not have any energy left for anything else.

We met with some parents in Fife a few weeks ago to talk about this. They said 'of course' it is a good idea. They thought the main aims would be to give parents a stronger voice, to change attitudes and push for better support.

We have come up with a few questions that we thought we could discuss together to try and help find a way forward:

1. Do you think a National Parents' Network is a good idea?
2. What would the aims be?
3. How can we get over the practical barriers like time, childcare and travel?
4. What are the next steps and timescales?

Andy added an additional question about how would a national parents' network feed into and take part in the Working Together with Parents Network.

Following a discussion around these questions and some of the opportunities and challenges of setting up a national parents' network the group decided the best first step would be to apply for funding to hold a one off event for parents with learning disabilities to establish the potential interest from parents to take part.

A working group was established of:

- Sharon Swan (Aberlour)
- Amanda Muir (Equal Say)
- Bianca Wood (People First)
- Paul McConachie (Parent)
- Andy Miller / Oonagh Brown (SCLD) to support the facilitation of the working group.

Salena Begley stated she would not be able to join the working group, however she has set up a meeting between SCLD and Jackie Tolland from Parent Network Scotland to look at ways the existing Working Together with Parents Network and a national parents' network could link with Parenting Network Scotland.

The first meeting of the working group will be decided between interested partners via doodle poll and updates will be given at the Working Together with Parents Network meetings. If you work with parents who would like to join the working group, contact Oonagh on Oonagh.b@sclد.co.uk

Actions from this meeting:

- Hold first meeting of Working Group **(ALL)**
- Meet with Jackie Tolland from Parent Network Scotland **(ANDY/OONAGH/SALENA)**