

Scottish Accessible Information Forum

Draft minutes of the SAIF meeting held on Wednesday 28th April 2010 at 11am at the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living (GCIL)

Present

Ben Forsyth (Chair), David Armstrong, Jean Dunlop, Andy Groves, Margaret Hurcombe, Nicola Noon, Bobby Park, Sandra Wilson, Fiona Gray

Also present: Susan Burn (Project Worker), Jean Alcock (Training Advisor) and Liz Breckenridge (Consumer Focus Scotland Board Member)

1. Apologies

Claire Brennan, Steve Harvey, Lucie McAnespie, Mary Evans and Alex Stuart

Ben welcomed Liz to the meeting and thanked her for coming. Forum members introduced themselves and Liz also spoke a little about the work she is involved in at the moment.

2. Minutes of the annual review held on 25th/26th February

These minutes were agreed.

3. Matters arising

Page 2 b) Customer Service Excellence – in Steve’s absence, Jean D explained that the Standards working group is still seeking a meeting with a representative of this organisation.

4. Draft Annual Report

a) Sandra suggested that in the summary we refer to the combined expertise of the forum. There was also discussion around the tone of the report and Liz made some suggestions. On page 4 under funding rephrase with “we consider that we are very good value for money”. On page 6, rather than talk about what SAIF has done, focus on the impact SAIF has made on our target group and re-iterate that in the last paragraph.

The report should also be put into the third person which will make it read more effectively. Liz suggested making it into an executive summary with a covering letter.

b) Sandra queried having the appendices as a separate document from the annual report, as clearly they need to be linked by their very nature. They will be linked when they go on the website.

c) David had offered to read through the annual report. He will now do this and incorporate these changes. He will email amended document to Susan to put on website.

d) Jean Dunlop confirmed that she will now be the Chairperson of the Standards working group. This will be added to page 9.

Action

- David to look over annual report and email amended draft to Susan for website

5. SAIF future development plan and funding

Margaret reported on the first meeting of the development plan short-term working group which had taken place on Wednesday 21st April.

In summary, the main focus of the first meeting had been to agree the strategic objectives for the next 3 years. Broadly, the existing objectives still hold, but we need to be explicit on the importance of ensuring equal access to information in the context of Scottish Government priorities and initiatives, for example the fight against poverty and exclusion. Margaret talked about the main objectives that had been agreed and advised that the group had also managed to start looking at some targets for the first objective.

The draft papers will be tidied up and then circulated to the forum.

Steve had laid the ground work for this meeting with a comprehensive agenda and accompanying paper work, so it was able to go ahead in his absence. Thanks went to Sandra, Jean D and Margaret for making a good start on the development plan.

Action

- ❑ The group meets again on Tuesday 11th May

6. Standards working group

Jean D reported and the meeting considered the draft minutes of the working group meeting held on 15th April. Items discussed included:

- a) Revamp of the Standards publication – looking at making better use of the Checklist as the essence of the Standards to make them short, sharp and to the point. Sandra had agreed to produce a draft for the next Standards meeting. Jean D also asked Nicola if she would be willing to be involved in the rewrite. Nicola agreed.
- b) There was a discussion around the need to retain hard copies but also provide online versions of publications.
- c) There was also discussion about renaming the Standards and Best Practice was suggested by Bobby.

7. Local strategies working group

- a) The last meeting of this group had been cancelled so there were no new minutes since the annual review to consider. However, Margaret updated the forum on progress including the Brief Guide to Easy Read produced by the group which was now on the website and that NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde have contracted SAIF to deliver another 10 half-day training days to staff during 2010/2011. This was well-received by the forum and an indication of the support of NHS GG& C for the work of SAIF.
- b) Jean A fed back that she had attended a forum of equality trainers for NHS GG & C on behalf of SAIF.
- c) Following this feedback, there were questions around how we promote the Easy Read Guide outwith our own networks. David explained that the promotional strategy group, who would be meeting directly after the forum, was looking at new ways to promote SAIF including “easy wins” for this year.
- d) Liz talked about possible media opportunities for SAIF focusing on why people need equal access to information. There could be a

group article about success stories rather than any individual being the focus of an article, or the more usual stories about sufferers which SAIF would not be interested in.

Again, David explained that promotional strategy were considering these ideas and had met with the then press officer for Consumer Focus Scotland. Susan has also met with the Communications Manager who has offered to come along to any relevant working groups to help out if he can.

These ideas will be included in the promotional strategy paper so a long-term plan can be put in place highlighting key issues. One example given was the general election and if a plan had been in place we could have issued a press release.

8. Ecommunication working group

Sandra fed back and the forum considered the minutes of the working group held on 15th March.

a) There are several initiatives in the pipeline which will result in a couple of new publications, including a paper on social networking and the revised Making Information Accessible booklet which will comprise all the previously separate information posters now rewritten, updated and in one document. This will also go online shortly and a number of hard copies will be printed.

b) The group is still looking at producing postcards in association with the Civic Participation Network.

9. Promotional strategy working group

a) David explained that this group was meeting this afternoon but that he had now produced a draft paper for consideration which would include longer term initiatives along with quick wins for this year.

Susan will circulate this paper with the forum minutes as actions arising from it will now need to be embedded into the work of the long term working groups.

b) Ben reported that he continues to liaise with the DWP including about issues around form filling and the directgov website. There is still an apparent lack of awareness of accessibility issues in most of the benefit claim processes. Ben will continue to take these up as appropriate.

c) David reported that he has a meeting with someone from Adobe to talk about interactive PDFs which don't seem to work well with screen reading software. He will keep us posted.

Action

- Ben to continue to liaise with DWP
- David to feedback about meeting with Adobe
- Susan to circulate promotional strategy paper with forum minutes

10. Project workers report

Susan gave a brief update on other work including:

- a meeting with CrossReach, a social care organisation,
- consultation work for NHS 24,
- Steve had given a presentation to staff at Borders College,
- consultation on documents from Quality Scotland, NHS Quality Improvement Scotland and NHS Health Scotland among others,
- Susan and Jean A had both attended events around the Equality Bill.

11. Membership

a) We had agreed to keep this under review at each forum meeting. We currently have 17 members, with 3 new members coming on board at the annual review. It was agreed we do not need to advertise for more members at this stage.

b) Liz suggested we compile a biography of the forum showing the mix of experience we have, with a one-liner on each member. This would be particularly useful for other organisations and indeed for the CFS board, possibly for the next board meeting. It should also be highlighted on the home page of our website.

Action

- ❑ Susan to compile short paper on biography of SAIF members

12. Other business

- a) Jean A reported that she had attended a 2-day workshop on ALISS which had thrown up some interesting accessibility issues itself.

- b) Jean D had been involved in some community work around the autism bill.

- c) Susan reminded the forum that there was Awareness Raising training for SAIF staff and members on Wednesday 12th May from 11am – 1pm at the GCIL and to let her know who would be attending.

- d) CFS had been looking at the access audit done at the end of 2006 on the entrance to 100 Queen Street. SAIF is unable to hold the majority of its meetings at its own premises now due to a combination of access problems. Liz agreed to raise this at the next board meeting and to suggest that CFS write as a board to CF in London to complain about the accessibility of our building. The forum thanked Liz for agreeing to raise this important issue.

- e) There was a general discussion around involving SAIF more in the work of CF and Margaret felt, having looking at the CF annual workplan outline that there were a number of places where we could help. For example, the work being done around the closure of post offices and the work around consumers and public services. Liz agreed that SAIF could contribute not only to the CF work plan but also to the practice of the other earned income projects, such as the Healthy Living Award and Community Food and Health Scotland.

The forum agreed it had been extremely useful to have Liz attend and thanked her again for her support.

13. Next meeting

The next forum meeting will be on Wednesday 16th June at 11am at the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living.