

Scottish Accessible Information Forum

Minutes of the SAIF annual review, the 54th SAIF meeting, held on Thursday 1st March and Friday 2nd March 2007 at the Marriott Hotel in Edinburgh

Present

Ben Forsyth (chair), Jean Dunlop (vice-chair), Jean Alcock, Marie Burns, Andy Groves, Margaret Hurcombe, Mary Evans, Nicola Noon and Sandra Wilson,

Also present: Steve Harvey and Susan Burn (project staff), Eva Bolander (website consultant, first day only) and Jim Byrne (Thursday afternoon only)

1. Apologies

Nikki Cameron, Grant Carson, Lionel Long, Marilyn Slavin, Robert Sneddon, Carolyn Wyper and Sheila Williams

2. Chairman's opening remarks

Ben welcomed everyone to the annual review. He remarked on another year of high activity, in particular the success of the training events which has been a first for SAIF and the hard work of the working groups which has resulted in the publication of 3 revised documents this year, Making E-communication Accessible, the Standards and the Guide to User-led Reviews. He thanked the working groups and project staff for their efforts during the year.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th October 2006

Agreed as correct.

4. Matters arising

- a) We have now removed our publication on the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) from the website as it is out-of-date. We can link to the Disability Rights Commission's own papers on this. It was suggested that we speak to the Scottish Consumer Council and Health Rights Information Scotland to look at commissioning an easy-to-understand version of the DDA.

- b) Mary suggested SAIF may find the textic software tool useful. It can make material on websites more accessible. She agreed to get more information for SAIF.
- c) Ben reported that he has set up a meeting with the Inland Revenue on Tuesday 27th March 2007 at Loanhead Social Work Centre. Margaret will also attend on behalf of SAIF. Ben will send her a map.
- d) Margaret suggested we submit an application to advise the Inland Revenue on accessibility issues. Applications have to be submitted by the 30th March 2007. Margaret will send the link to us.
- e) Ben is now representing SAIF in the SHOP (Scottish Helpline for Older People) Consortium. See report distributed for the meeting.
- f) Jean (A) is attending regular meetings of the East Renfrewshire Disability Workers Forum and seminars are being organised. SAIF is scheduled to do a presentation on 26th April.

Action

- Consider easy-to-understand version of the DDA
- Ben and Margaret to meet with Inland Revenue on 26th March. Ben to send map to Margaret.
- Margaret to send link for application to Inland Revenue to Steve/Susan
- Mary to send info on textic bar to Susan/Steve

5. Report on the 2006 Work Plan

Steve introduced the report and its main features, which were:

- an introduction highlighting the main developments during the year,
- a statement of each SAIF objective,
- working group memberships for 2006,
- background information about each SAIF objective,
- the work plans for 2006 with targets and outcomes,
- a suggested work plan for each SAIF objective for 2007,
- a list of SAIF publications with numbers distributed in 2006.

Each section of the report was then introduced and summarised by a project worker or working group member. The report was accepted and agreed.

6. SAIF Standards

The following comments were made regarding the suggested 2007 work plan:

- a) The Standards are currently with the printers and with the companies producing the DVD in British Sign Language, the double CD and the online checklist. These should be ready for distribution by the end of March.
- b) Marie asked that consideration be given to the graphics when the A5 easy-to-understand booklet is updated to ensure a fair representation of people. Updating of this booklet to be added to the work plan.
- c) FAIR have already run their pilot project using the Guide to User-led Reviews. Margaret will send in a report.
- d) There was discussion around keeping the Standards and accompanying documents up-to-date in terms of legislation. We need to consider a strategy for doing this with the online version.
- e) The group considered the draft proposal for work on quality assurance systems. Margaret asked if we could be given an indication of how much time it would take to get organisations to adopt SAIF Standards in this piece of research. Marie expressed an interest in supervising this piece of work.
- f) It was agreed to publish Grant's paper on the Social Model of Disability and Language. Project staff to liaise with the SCC press officer about publicity for this.

Action

- The suggested work plan to be amended as necessary to take account of the above.
- Margaret to send in report on Guide to User-led Reviews pilot project.

7. Formats Resource

This has now been distributed on CD and is available online on UPDATE's website and via a link from SAIF's website.

It was suggested that when considering future developments with the formats resource we should consider an on-line version only which would be regularly updated.

Action

- Project staff to discuss options and funding with Lionel.

8. Website development

This item was brought forward to allow Jim Byrne to contribute.

- a) Sandra gave feedback on the developments over the past year, in particular the publication of Making E-communication Accessible and some of the priorities for the new work plan.
- b) Eva gave a presentation on the website including statistics on visits and downloads. She also raised the issue of looking to the future and thinking about accessibility in terms of PDAs and mobile phones so we can be proactive in thinking about the new ways of communicating.
- c) Mary advised the group about some lobbying work being done on copyright law and accessible formats. The E-comm group agreed to look at this with a view to informing SAIF and then the SCC. The contact person is Paul Nisbett at the CALL Centre in Edinburgh.
- d) Jim spoke about his views on the future for SAIF in terms of e-communication, for example on-line training, blogs and discussion forums on the web.
- e) It was suggested that all working groups consider implications for the website when planning new work, for example time to put new documents online.

- f) Steve suggested a one-off meeting for the forum to discuss the future development and modernisation of the SAIF website and SAIF e-communication.

Action

- Special meeting to take place on Monday 30th April from 10.30am to 1pm followed by lunch. Venue to be decided.
- Working group to look into issue of copyright law.

9. Local Strategies

- a) Margaret gave feedback on the work during the year, in particular the success of the Beyond the Ramp and the Information Explosion training events. A full breakdown of the income and expenditure for these events will be prepared for the next working group meeting. A report on the training was circulated with the annual review papers and will now be sent to the Scottish Executive.
- b) The group discussed the questionnaire sent to local authorities and health boards for which we received only 19 responses. A summary of the responses will also be sent to the Executive.
- c) The draft proposal for a piece of work expanding on the information gained from these questionnaires was discussed. Susan and Steve to progress with SCC.
- d) Jean A reported on progress for Beyond the School Gate which will run on 15th March. A short-term working group has also been set up to look at a specific event for the NHS. This group to include Jean A, Carolyn, Susan and Sarah Wheeler from Health Rights Information Scotland.

Action

- Training report to be sent to Scottish Executive and published on website.
- Summary responses from questionnaires to be sent to Scottish Executive and to local authorities.
- Susan and Steve to progress the brief for the research work.
- Short-term working group on 23rd April at 10am in SCC.

10. Promotional Strategies

- a) Ben reported on his ongoing liaison work on behalf of SAIF with the Department of Work and Pensions.
- b) Sandra suggested that we issue press releases for all new publications. It was agreed that the responsibility for organising this would lie with the individual working groups. Once *Making E-communication Accessible* has been put on-line we will contact the SCC press officer for advice on how to do this.
- c) The meeting discussed the proposal from the SCC that they will fund a consultant to research work being done on accessible information in England. It was agreed that we would ask to look wider than England for other European examples of good practice. Susan and Steve to take back to SCC.

Action

- Suggested work plan to be amended to take account of the above.

11. National information providers

The work plan report was accepted and agreed. It was agreed that UPDATE should be left to do its own promotion work with national information providers and that this will be dropped as a SAIF objective.

12. Other objectives

The work plan report was accepted and agreed.

13. Working group membership

Agreed:

- Nicola Noon to leave Standards and join E-communication
- Jean Alcock to join E-communication

Action

- At the next SAIF meeting we will ask those members not at the review if they wish to join or leave any working groups.

14. Review of decisions

On the Friday morning Steve ran through the main action points from the day before and clarified the following:

- a) Ben and Jean to discuss role of consultants with SAIF staff.
- b) Marie was thanked as outgoing Chairperson for the E-communication working group for all her hard work, in particular in the publishing of Making E-communication Accessible and for initiating and developing the idea of the electronic checklist for the Standards.
- c) Sandra will chair the one-off meeting to look at e-communication.

15. SAIF membership and attendance

Ben and Jean D reported on the interviews carried out on 23rd February and recommended that the following three people be invited to join SAIF:

- David Armstrong, publications co-ordinator for the SQA
- Lucie McAnespie, a speech and language therapist in East Lothian
- Claire Brennan, interim head of the Staff Governance Unit of the Scottish Executive Health Department.

This was agreed by the meeting.

The recruitment of David, Lucie and Claire means that SAIF now has 21 members and no vacancies.

However, it was agreed that:

- a) Mary Evans and John Whitfield are welcome to join following their work with the Standards working group.
- b) A few members have played no part in SAIF during the past year and should be asked if they wish to continue.

- c) We should seek to attract more disabled people onto SAIF over the coming year, by seeking out and inviting interested people to apply rather than advertising at this stage.

Action

- It was agreed that Steve and Susan would get in touch with the members who had not been to meetings for a year to find out if they wish to continue on SAIF.

16. Dates and venues for SAIF meetings

It was agreed that whilst the working groups had been very active and their meetings well attended, attendance at the full SAIF meetings during 2006 had been less than we would like. It was suggested that we:

- return to four meetings per year (rather than the three we scheduled in 2006) plus the annual review,
- that we consider other venues which should be affordable and accessible.

The agreed dates for Forum meetings are:

- Wednesday 4th April 2007
- Wednesday 13th June 2007
- Wednesday 12th September 2007
- Wednesday 21st November 2007

Please note: These dates are changed from the suggested dates sent out in the mailing for the annual review.

Action

- Steve and Susan to research possible venues.

17. Application for funding 2008-2011

Steve reminded the group that the funding application for the period 2008-2011 would probably need to be submitted to the Scottish Executive by the 1st October 2007. It was agreed that we should discuss the matter fully at the SAIF meeting in June.

18. Next meeting

Wednesday 4th April 2007 at 10.30am. Venue to be confirmed.