**National Appropriate Adult Oversight Group**

**11 January 2022 10.30am – 11.45am**

**Virtual meeting – Microsoft Teams**

Attendees:

Sandy Riddell, Mental Welfare Commission (Chair)

Jo Savege, National Appropriate Adult Coordinator/COSLA (Secretariat)

Lucy Lawson, Scottish Government

John Wallace, Scottish Government (note taker)

Anil Gupta, COSLA

Suzie Moran, Police Scotland

Lee Kelso, Care Inspectorate

Ashley Martin, Care Inspectorate

Alison Cooke, Care Inspectorate

Ian Binnie, Care Inspectorate

Alice Squire, SOLD Network, ARC UK

Nick Ward, Support in Mind Scotland

Jana de Villiers, Forensic Network

Jenny Paterson, Victim Support Scotland

Stephen Heath, Clarity in Communication

Apologies:

Zak Tuck, Scottish Government

Karen Donoghue, Scottish Appropriate Adult Network

Kirsty Naysmith, Scottish Appropriate Adult Network

Jamie Lipton, COPFS

Debbie Wilson, Law Society of Scotland

Frank David, SOLD Network, People First

Laura Kerr, Social Work Scotland

Jan Green, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

# **Welcome & Introductions**

Sandy introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the 6th meeting of the Group and gave a warm welcome to Alison Cooke, Nick Ward, Jenny Paterson and Ian Binnie on their first meeting.

Apologies were noted.

Given the number of new members in attendance, Sandy took the opportunity to note the Group’s remit and terms of reference.

**Action – Jo to reissue the current Oversight Group Terms of Reference to members**

# **Declarations of Interest**

Stephen noted that he had interest to declare in respect to the training proposal at item 7. Stephen advised any contribution to this proposal by Clarity would have no financial benefit or business interest.

# **Note from Previous Meeting**

Sandy noted that any comments on the draft had been included and a final copy has been circulated.

There were two outstanding actions from the last meeting.

* **Group to forward ideas on how to continue engagement with local networks to Jo –** Jo has received no input to date. Sandy noted that improving engagement with local networks was vitally important for the group and invited members to contact Jo with any networks that were not currently reached or if there were ideas to enhance current engagement. **– Carried Forward**
* **Jo to seek membership for new Quality Assurance Sub-Group and develop a work plan for the group. –** Jo noted that Lee Kelso would speak to this in the Care Inspectorate update as it would now lead on the work of this sub-group

# **Definition of Appropriate Adult (paper circulated)**

Jo thanked all of those who participated in the short life working group and subsequent consultation which focused on who an Appropriate Adult was and not on their role which is defined in guidance.

Jo noted that of the two versions consulted upon Version 2 was the more popular, however there was a broad spectrum of responses and strength of feeling for both definitions. Jo asked if anyone had any further thoughts before a definition was chosen.

Stephen Heath noted the amount of work undertaken to create the definitions is admirable. He advised he had submitted a possible revision to Version 2 to Jo and said he was concerned that the draft definitions may lead people to believe that the role of the Appropriate Adult is wider than it actually is. Stephen felt that there may be issues should the role of the Appropriate Adult be questioned in court. Stephen suggested that an agreed definition could be accompanied by a summary of the role.

Alice Squire stated that she appreciated that so much work went into creating the definitions. She also noted that they seemed aspirational and that the wording could be set out in more plain English.

Lee Kelso noted that it was a real challenge in defining the Appropriate Adult separate of the role, with lots of talk at workshops about the terminology. She acknowledged the amount of work in background to develop these definitions.

After further discussion it was agreed Jo would rework the definition document to include

* Who an Appropriate Adult is
* What they do as defined by legislation/in guidance
* What they are unable to do

Sandy noted that this would be a good opportunity to reflect on the terminology and wording. Lucy Lawson advised that the Scottish Government is working with a language agency to review the wording of documentation for victims and witnesses and consideration could be given to asking for an agreed definition to be included in this work. Jenny Paterson highlighted that the definition should be considered by people with lived experience.

**Action – The group to provide any further comments to Jo on the definition ASAP so a refined combined document can be circulated in advance of the April meeting. Jo will seek views from members representing the legal profession and those with lived experience.**

**Action – Lucy to identify whether the document can be included in the Scottish Government justice communication review.**

# **Update from National Appropriate Adult Co-ordinator**

Jo summarised the work and engagement that she had been involved with since the last meeting this included:

* SLWGs –
  + Currently one underway looking at Adults with Incapacity guidance for Appropriate Adults. There has been one meeting to date which has generated a lot of engagement and debate.
  + Lee will talk to the QA and self-evaluation group;
* Training Project
  + Lucy and Jo are meeting with West Lothian College to get a firmer idea of timescales and delivery plans. Once the training is ready, there will be a presentation to Local Authorities to explain the future plans. If anyone would like to attend then please let Jo know.
* Data improvement – IT Platform
  + Jo met Pamela Hunter (Team Lead) just before Christmas. Work is ongoing with regard to building the specification for the platform.
* Review of Guidance
  + Jo advised that a review of guidance is planned for this year, which will very much be informed by the work of the SLWGs to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.
* Communities of Practice - [Introduction to communities of practice | Wenger-Trayner](https://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/)
  + Jo advised that she proposes to use this framework to support the participation and representation of Appropriate Adult practitioners.
* Policy & Participation Officer post at COSLA
  + This is a new role to work to support the work of the National Coordinator and lead on corporate engagement with local authorities. Jo noted that they would be looking to advertise for this post later this week or next. Keen to get a broad spectrum of candidates and asked the Group to please circulate the job spec widely when it is available.

Sandy noted that with the exciting developments happening that he is keen that Jo and the Group gets the support they need. This additional staff resource will ensure there is a link between the group and service providers at a local level and will help to identify any gaps.

# **Proposal for Sub-groups**

These will be SLWG or sub-groups for the next quarter.

* Training, Evaluation & Recognition – to look at Continuous Learning and Professional Development and build on the current project to develop initial training
* Codes of Practice/Standards – part of bringing national consistency to Appropriate Adult provision
* Committee for a National Awareness/Launch Day – a launch day to celebrate and highlight the work done

Sandy noted that these working groups will be needed in the next quarter and if anyone has even a little time spare then please contact Jo to see how they can help. Sandy also noted that the sub-groups would have a tight focus which would be clear on the tasks they have been set. Sandy urged members to please seek clarification if they are unsure on whether they could help, rather than remain silent.

Jenny advised that VSS would be happy to be involved in the event planning, and Alice Squire advised that she was confident that SOLD members would be happy to attend the awareness session.

**Action – If anyone is interested in participating in any way with the SLWG then contact Jo**

# **Training Proposal by Stephen Heath, Clarity in Communication (paper circulated)**

# Stephen spoke to the training proposal noting that all of the details were included in the proposal paper. He advised he has spoken with Suzie Moran in relation to the proposal and has identified a number of funding avenues which might be available and that he would liaise with Jo about this.

Suzie advised that she is supportive of the project and has contacted the Police College about the proposal. At this point she is waiting for a reply.

Sandy asked the Group for comments and views on the proposal and Lucy noted that the Scottish Government are fully supportive and happy to be involved in any further work which would help increase wider awareness of Appropriate Adults

Alice advised SOLD would likely be delighted to assist in any project like this. Jenny noted VSS would be supportive too.

Sandy also acknowledged that the proposal links to other work of the Group and Jo highlighted the finer details need to be considered, for instance in relation to funding, updates, future review and ownership, but it appears that the group are generally supportive.

**Action – Stephen to liaise with Jo about developing the proposal.**

# **Member updates**

Care Inspectorate

* Lee Kelso advised that she had taken over from Jane Brown as the Care Inspectorate lead, Ian Binnie and Alison Cooke have joined the team.
* Work on the surveys for people with lived experience is ongoing.
* Continue to analyse data from completed surveys, this is due to team changes and large amount of data received. Should be available to share with the Group by April.
* QA group – Lee noted that she was looking forward to getting this up and running but was mindful of people’s capacity. Lee wants to make sure that the sub-group have the appropriate aims and membership. Likely to be Late Feb/March before people are approached for membership.

Sandy welcomed the update and highlighted the need for firm timescales and milestones to build on the progress which has been made.

SAAN

* Sandy noted that although SAAN were not in attendance they have been in contact and have been working with the Improvement Service to define their role and remit as part of the new statutory landscape. This is an important piece of work as it is vital to have clarity regarding representation at the Oversight Group. Sandy advised that there is a requirement for the Oversight Group to build relationships at a strategic level with local providers of the statutory service and that work led by COSLA in relation to this continues.

Social Work Scotland

* Jo noted an update from Laura Kerr; work continues to consult with the appropriate subgroups and committees to determine how SWS interacts with the Oversight Group and their role in the statutory landscape.

Clarity in Communication

* Stephen advised the response to the Omicron variant of Covid-19 appears to have had a recent impact on the calls for their service. Where normally they would receive 40-50 calls per month, last month they only received 12. Jo stated information received from other providers indicated the number of requests were lower nationally.
* Stephen noted that it would be interesting to compare crime figures for this recent period and the calls for Appropriate Adults.

# **AOB**

Plans for April 2022 meeting

Sandy advised the group that due to the current Covid-19 situation the next meeting would be held virtually, rather than in person as planned.

The Group discussed the possible content for the next three meetings and agreed:

* in April the Group will, in addition to conducting business as usual, take time to review the work of the Group so far
* in June/July, Covid-19 allowing – aim to have an in-person meeting and expand on the April meeting and “getting to know you” session.
* Autumn – Launch/Awareness event

Sandy asked that the Group contact Jo with any thoughts and comments on the future meeting within the next couple of weeks. In the meantime, Lucy and Jo will work on the reflection of the Oversight Group so far for the April meeting.

**Action – Group to provide feedback relating to the April meeting to Jo by 1 February 2022**

**Action – Jo and Lucy to produce paper reflecting on the work of the Group to date.**

Suzie advised that as she is retiring at end of February, this will be her last meeting and the new Police Scotland representative will be confirmed in due course. The Group thanked Suzie for her contributions and recognised her input and support in the development of the statutory service.

Dates of next meeting

The next meeting will be held virtually on **Tuesday 26 April 2022 @ 10.30 am.**

Future Meetings

* Tuesday 12 July 10.30am – 11.45am
* Tuesday 11 October 10.30am – 11.45am

**Action: Jo to send out invites, agenda and related documents.**