

**Community of Practice**

MINUTES

**Date: 20th May 2024**

**Time: 9:45am-11:45am**

**Location: One Parent Families Scotland, 20 Grampian Gardens, Dundee DD4 9QZ**

**Chair: Katie Angus Minutes: Eve Russell**

**Attendees: Katie Angus, Peter Hine, Eve Russell (DVVA), Rachel MacDonald (Alternatives Counselling), Mary Sneddon, Lesley Russell (DIAS), Gill Thomson, Aurelia Amrouche (The Yard), Simon Jeffrey (Children’s Hearing Scotland), Maryam Deeni (DVVA), Nicola Cairns (SAMH), Alana Harper (Deaf Links)**

**Apologies: Heather Kelly (Aberlour), Jenni Leigh & Hallie Mortiboys (National Literacy Trust), James Beck (PIA), Craig Strachan (DCC), Geoff Leask (WM2U), Stephen Douglas (SLCO), Linzi Dear (WRASAC), Nicola Donnelly (Carolina Trust), Beth Gow (NHS), Bryan Smith (Transform Community Development), Claire Stewart (Families Outside), Kathryn Baker (TCA), Heather Wilkins (DVVA)**

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| **Agenda** | **Discussion** |
| Welcome, introductions and apologies – Katie Angus | Although we aren’t working with the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund anymore, Peter, Eve and I want to dedicate our time to the Community of Practice to encourage more partnership working. Setting this up will be flexible, and we will adapt as we go along.  Katie is now the Hubs manager at DVVA, and Peter works as the Lochee hub coordinator. We have a new timetable at the hub, so if interested please get in touch – [peterhine@dvva.scot](mailto:peterhine@dvva.scot) |
| OPFS host presentation – Sarah Stewart | One Parent Families Scotland was set up in 1944, making this our 80th year. Keep an eye on our socials for various upcoming events to celebrate.  Presentation –    We work around 6 priority areas, which were identified by single parents. Part of our work across Scotland is about policy, and we have been working with Gingerbread (charity in England and Wales for single mums and dads), focusing on lived experiences from children and parents. We like to involve parents in the development of our services. We try to myth bust the negative stereotypes of lone parents, like ‘they’re all on benefits’ but many single parents have barriers in securing work due to childcare etc. We work in Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire and Motherwell. Our policy and communications team work closely with ScotGov to help improve delivery change. We’re currently working on partnerships and collaborations with other agencies in how we deliver other services for non-single parent families. Dundee has a small team, so when looking at building capacity we look at supporting single parents to develop and deliver groups themselves.  Q&As –  Mary Sneddon – impressed, there may be few partners we support that might not be aware of your work, so may organise getting someone from OPFS to DIAS partners meeting. The case study in presentation is a good overview of your commendable work.  Katie Angus – It may worth meeting Peter to discuss working with families in the Lochee area. Do you work with single men or predominantly women?  Sarah – 10% of Scottish population is single men, it has increased by 15% in the last year, but this can change. We see isolation from single dads so work with Andy’s Man Club and the Change project to signpost to support. Dads are welcomed and encouraged to join us.  Lesley Russell – Do you work in the rural areas like Angus, as there isn’t much support for parents North from Dundee?  Sarah – Our team does just Dundee. However, anyone can use our helpline which can be used for wellbeing checks too; **Lone Parent Helpline: 0808 801 0323**. There is also a single parent online forum to utilise peer support.  Rachel MacDonald – Alternatives will be starting our first perinatal group in June, in case anyone that OPFS is supporting feels would benefit from that, it will be based initially at DVVA. |
| The Yard presentation on successful WFWF bid – Gill Thomson and Aurelia Amrouche | The Yard support families whether their children have been diagnosed with ASN or not. We’ve been running since 1986, and Dundee does a 5-day service.  Presentation will focus on our WFWF Phase 1 funding. We run whole family groups on Sundays, and school sessions during the week for those struggling with curriculum. Our Board is currently deciding whether to refit or knock down our building, so are looking for a temporary house. Would require an indoor and outdoor secure space, so please drop us and email if you know anywhere available. A couple of churches have come up to explore this week. [Gill@theyardscotland.org.uk](mailto:Gill@theyardscotland.org.uk)  Our enhanced transition program with Baldragon P7s is going well; the children come to us as the transition workers can’t reach all the children in all schools, and we’re working with families on the transitions too. Children have opportunities to make friends at this program too.  Aurelia (gave presentation) –    My role was funded by WFWF and I started in December. Part of our WFWF bid was also to increase in holiday provision (mapping of provision) with DCC.  I’ve been working on a mapping exercise of what’s available in Dundee and surrounding for children with support needs. Our family support workers are quite new, so working on what do we want support to look like for children for it to be beneficial, Edinburgh base did some big research on this. Starting to look at building relationships with organisations across the city, shows list of current partnerships.  Family support activities – A list of organisations which have been invited to Sunday family groups that support ASN children. Euan’s guide; like Tripadvisor for ASN. Scottish assembly works with them to help explain politics. DCC are making spaces more accessible for families with ASN children.  The specialist family support figures are only from March 24 as it has taken time for families to accept support. Have been working on an online notice board padlet that families can go to themselves for support. Been working to create family support nets but we’ve had issues with literacy and tech poverty.  Our premise offers a safe space for people. We’re care inspectorate registered to deliver respite to families which is desperately needed. We support food provision through different partnerships like Dundee Bairns.  Q&As –  Alana Harper – asks about accessibility for deaf children, some have deaf parents which is additional challenge.  Gill – we are trained in Makaton but could look at BSL training for staff.  Aurelia – if Deaflinks have identified families we can work on how to provide support them, or if there’s someone to give better support. |
| Children’s Hearing Scotland – Simon Jeffrey, regional partnership coordinator | I started in this position in January, and cover 4 local authorities. My job to recruit train and support CHS panel members in Dundee.  Historically the CHS had 32 area support teams nationally, but have now changed to 9 regions to work with the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administrator (SCRA). We have new support from March 2024, like paid staff to support volunteer panel members.  The Dundee cohort has 63 active panel members. The hearing centre in Commercial Street do hearings throughout the week; 10 sessions per week and a panel member does 2 sessions a month. Always looking for more panel members to volunteer but this can be difficult in the current financial landscape.  We are trying to create a resource pack for the panel members of directory of services; CHS are happy to pull it together but aware projects can come and go.  Q&As –  Lesley Russell – asks for volunteer profiles age-wise, how difficult is it to get broader sense of dynamics of panel members?  Simon – Main restrictions are of risks for conflicts of interest. Foster carers not able as tend to come across the same families.  Lesley Russell – How do you keep figures of how many children feel comfortable enough to attend their hearings, advocacy needs to be a big part of changes because when I went there was never many children actually there.  Simon – some cases regard attendance may create further trauma, and certain ages can be excused.  Lesley – children can be contributions by observation so wondered if new ideas are to be more child friendly.  Katie Angus – am currently a panel member, not had that many children come to hearings, but its good when they are because the hearing can start with them.  Mary Sneddon – DIAS would be happy to run session for panel members on independent advocacy. Could be opportunity to do this right across Scotland through SIA.  Katie Angus – On the resource pack, it should be made clear it is not for panel members to suggest people in hearings to attend places in packs, that’s social workers job to do this. Panel member suggestions could cause organisations frustration with referrals as well.  Discussed mock hearings previously done in Dundee, CHS could perhaps look into doing this again. |
| Future meetings – Katie Angus | From the feedback form we sent out, we will host the COP every two months, alternating between in-person and via Teams. Eve will send out invites for rest of year.  Would like to encourage group to think about communications that would be beneficial for group, padlet maybe? Aware specific things come up and would be good to share them as required without clogging mailboxes. |
| AOCB | Lesley at DIAS is working on a Joint Advocacy Support (JAS) questionnaire to be sent around to group, it will take no longer than 10 minutes.  There is a piece of national work on gathering views of parents and carers on RSHP (Relationships, Sexual Health & Parenthood education) at home, please share as you see fit –    Katie attended the Planet Youth dissemination event, and wanted to share the key messages from the data in the following document – |