

Communication group minutes

29 August 2006

Who was there?

Fiona Wallace, Margaret Hurcombe, Kelly Houston, Rob Kay, Jimmy McIntosh MBE, Senga Menzies, Simon Willoughby-Booth. Anne Edmonstone



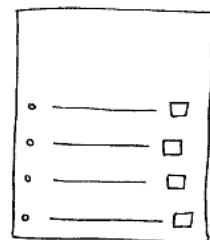
Supporters were Rhona Neill and Emmanuelle Le Coz.

Who could not come?



Carol Flack, Michael White, Denis Rowley, Suzanne Munday, Neil McCarthy, Mairi McReynolds.

Senga read the minutes from the previous meeting. They were agreed.



Use of symbols or pictures?



OR



?

People First received a DVD from Colin Anderson. Fiona looked at it and found the symbols unclear.

Unfortunately the DVD was not available for the group to look at. Margaret asked about Bonnington symbols. Rhona and Fiona said that People First did not like them. Margaret agreed. Rhona said that members of People First prefer a combination of symbols and pictures.

Anne said that it is the same problem with all symbols: you have to learn what they represent first, before you can recognise them. It is quite easy to represent objects but it is more difficult to represent ideas and complicated meanings. Photographs are good but it is difficult to show something you can't see, like an idea for example. People might need someone to explain complex ideas.



Simon suggested you might have to take your own pictures.

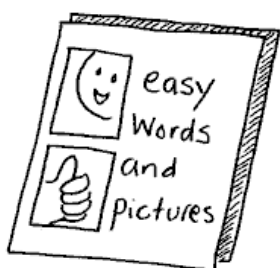
Rob said that comics are good. Children use them when they learn to read. They are a good way to represent emotions or ideas in simple pictures.



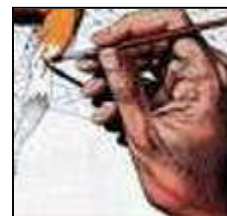
Anne said symbols should be used in everyday places like museums, not just in learning disability services.

Jimmy said symbols were a good idea way back but you need to keep them up-to-date and that's difficult. Also, when symbols change it is harder to keep remembering them.

Rob asked which images to use for the website and the newsletter.



Margaret said that Denis asked FAIR to do an easy read version of the interim report for the Review. She showed the group some documents called "plain facts" and "banking on change". On these documents there were some drawings to explain the ideas. The drawings were made especially for the documents by an artist from FAIR. The groups liked the drawings and thought they were quite clear. There was a vote and everyone agreed that the artist from FAIR should do drawings for the easy-read report.



Fiona said People First would help by giving comments. Margaret will send a draft version of the document.



Denis wants the easy-read version distributed to a lot of people before the first event. Fiona thinks things are rushed. Jimmy agrees. He said it on the website.

Fiona has emailed the chairs of the other sub-groups to encourage them to use the site and post their notes.

The address is

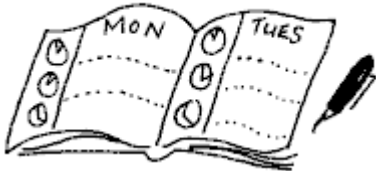
<http://www.lothianlearningdisabilityreview.info/>

Events

Fiona and Emmanuelle explained the discussion which took place earlier about the events. Rob was concerned that it costs a lot of money to print the newsletter and there is too little time to advertise properly before the first event, supposed to be on 23rd September in Edinburgh.



Rob suggested moving the Edinburgh event to the end of October. Some people were concerned that Denis wants an event in September because of the Review Board meeting. Everyone agreed that we can't do it well if it is rushed. Jimmy said he wants a lot of people to come so we need to do it properly. All agreed the event should be moved to later on.



Fiona said the costs are a problem. Rob asked if Chris Bruce would pay for people's transport. He thinks the newsletter could cost a lot of money.



Fiona phoned Denis to ask permission to move the Edinburgh event. Denis agreed. He said Chris needs to be contacted about the costs.

The group agreed that the Lothian wide event should be cancelled just now because it will take off some pressure. It was mostly an advertising event but everything is too much work already. Emmanuelle and Fiona said that they are worried that people think that People First are organising the events. Staff can help but People First have not got resources to support members at meetings and organise events as well. They have made tables for tasks to do for the events. The content is a big question. What are we going to ask people?

Some people felt that small discussion groups would be a good format. There could be themes in different corners of the room and people to facilitate discussions, with flipcharts and someone to draw. The people facilitating discussions need to be independent.



Rob asked clarification for who is invited or allowed to come. Can carers come? Fiona and Jimmy said that it is better if carers are not there otherwise people might not speak up. Rob is concerned that some people might need support to attend, and who will do the support?

Also, some people depend on carers to travel so they might not come at all.

Margaret will publicise the West Lothian and East/Midlothian events in September's FAIR newsletter. She will advertise the Edinburgh event in the October issue when another date and a venue have been confirmed.



Rob said we need a contact number for bookings, information and requirements. Emmanuelle and Rhona said People First cannot take on this responsibility.



No one has the resources to do this. Margaret and Rob said that we could set up a virtual office. This means there will be a special phone number for people who want to book or ask questions.



Margaret said MacSense employ people with disabilities to do this and they are very good. She will find out how much it costs so we can

tell Chris.

Anne said people with communication difficulties should be included. She is volunteering to help people with communication difficulties at the events.

The next meeting of this group is:
Tuesday 19th September 2006, 2pm, People First
(Scotland) office 77-79 Easter Road, Edinburgh.

