



scottish social services
learning network
tayforth

SSSLN Tayforth Strategic Management Board

Ramada Hotel, Perth

9th January 2008

Chair: Pam Linton: Staffing & Training Manager – Angus Council
Alison Upton: Professional Development Manager - Stirling Council
Allan Keir: Chairperson - ORCHA
Billy Swan: Service Manager – Fife Council
Eleanor Brown – Perth College
Karl Stern: Training & Staff Development Manager – Perth & Kinross Council
Mike Martin – Open University
Stuart Eno – Perth & Kinross Council

In Attendance:

Anne Tavendale: Project Manager – SSSLN Tayforth
Caroline Sturgeon: Development & Policy Officer - VSSSWU
Joanne McMeekin – Stirling Council
Lance Cosford – SSSLN Tayforth (Minutes)

Apologies:

Tina Miller from OU has now moved and Mo MacPhail will take her place to receive written copies of minutes with further discussion confirming whether Mike Martin will continue to represent the OU.

Andy Haggart: Service User - Dundee Service Users and Carers Group (other commitments)
Maggie Maclean: Training Service Manager – Clackmannanshire Council (on sick leave)
Pam Gillespie – Falkirk Council (other commitments)
Pat MacCowan: Practice Learning Manager – Dundee University (annual leave)

Agenda:

1. Welcome:

Welcome from PL and introductions. The Board was introduced to Joanne McMeekin of Stirling Council. Apologies also noted.

2. Matters arising from previous minutes:

Previous Minutes were confirmed as accurate.

Page 1 - Alison Robertson from Angus Council Finance Team will attend the next meeting.

Action: LC to invite AR to the next Management Board meeting

Page 2 – PLQSS Development officer: Neil Henery (currently Learning and Development consultant with Barnardos) will be taking up this opportunity with further discussion being required in respect of mechanism for recruiting and remunerating. AT reported that our lack of legal status has hampered resolution of employment issues and has again involved significant amounts of time being spent trying to resolve governance related issues.

Page 3 – There is no separate PM report from AT, the SSSC monitoring report is not due until end of January and will be circulated.

AT noted that R. Bromage will be helping to organise events in a temporary capacity as Angus Council have agreed to up to 2 days per week of his time being available for the Network at no cost until end March 2008. Thereafter 2 days per week until March 2009 would cost 20k.

Vice Chair – discussion on need for vice chair to support PL with the considerable amount of time required to support her duties as network Chair. Alison Upton was nominated for this role for the next year subject to further clarification of time commitment.

AU will discuss workload balance with AT and PL before accepting.

Action: AU, AT and PL to discuss workloads for Vice Chair

Page 4 – There are no matters arising.

Page 5 – CS reported that she has had interest from members who would like to join the Practice Learning Operational Management group and she would like to send out the ebulletin to members and ask which group they would like to join and what they would expect to gain from joining.

Action: CS to organise this with 4 Operational Management Group Chairs

- 3. Feedback from Scottish Government:** AT informed the Board that the key message from the last meeting was that the Networks' objectives for the future require further work to agree the best fit with sector, SSSC and government priorities. AT circulated a write up of the 4 network development day which took place in December 2007 between network Chairs and managers along with the discussion document from the Government which highlighted where they positioned the Networks in the sector landscape. AT emphasized that there was broad agreement at the last meeting with the Government that the 'unique space' which the Networks occupied was in relation to acting as a conduit between employers and education/training providers, and SSSC/government.

AU attended the 4 network development day and reported that the message seemed to be unclear as to what future role the Networks should have. There was an issue of authority and what level of accountability the Networks should have. Broadly there was agreement that the 2 key themes of 'continuous learning' and 'workforce planning' would form the structure of the revised core objectives but that further work on the detail would be agreed through forthcoming meetings between the Government and 4 networks.

KS suggested that the 4 Networks should look at their realistic functions and what the Networks can actually achieve. He saw the Networks as linking all of the individual groups with the relevant outcomes for: workforce planning; continuing learning framework; education and training.

A detailed write up of this meeting will be sent round the group shortly. The next meeting is to be held on the 29th January.

AT reminded the Board that the current underspend figures and plans are for the existing Network objectives and not for the revised ones.

Action: AT to circulate minutes from the last meeting with the Government.
AT will report back on information received from the next meeting to be held on 29th January.

- 4. Underspend Plans:** AT handed out an overview of the underspend figures. These figures cover the years 05/06, 06/07 and 07/08, although we have not yet received monies for 07/08. AT talked through the figures. However, this year we have already spent 160k.

AT mentioned some of the main costs for next year as being: 46k towards the Perth and Kinross post for two further years; 30k towards the Forth Valley post for one further year; the PLQ (SS) Development Coordinator post; Events Coordinator post. There was also potential for an Information Officer's post, and a full time administration post. AT will write up a full report detailing underspend plans in relation to all agreed areas of activity from the Network operational group and await confirmation from Government and SSSC.

The Board agreed that these figures could go to the Government with a '0' underspend figure. AT has been advised that 08/09 funding has been agreed in principle by the government and also advised the board that the government wishes all networks to confirm the contributions in kind partners are willing to commit to the Network plans. Board members were asked to consider this and forward to LC.

Action: AT to send agreed figures to the Scottish Government.
Board members to think about their future contributions to Network business and confirm contributions to LC.

- 5. Communications Group:** The Communications group consists of AU, BS and CS. The group was asked to look at the old communications strategy and revise this, to become a more relevant Tayforth Comms. Strategy. The group has met three times so far.

A draft document was handed out and AU talked through this. It started by describing what the Network is and the themes relevant to stakeholders. The group came up with a number of questions that still need to be addressed:

1. How does the strategy link to the business plan?
2. How do we listen to stakeholders?
3. Is there a Management system for stakeholders?
4. Can the Network organise a survey of stakeholder interests, to find out who's out there?
5. Do we hold the results on paper or electronically?
6. What do stakeholders really want?

The group will be looking at these questions at their next meeting. However, AU did note that the group felt the four operational groups would play a main role in getting stakeholders together, perhaps through events. The group will update the strategy with the relevant points from today's discussion. AT will meet with AU and CS to take this work forward.

PL acknowledged the efforts of the working group and the time spent in producing this information. The group will have further information available in March.

Action: Communications group to discuss the above questions at their next meeting.
Communications group will update the Strategy with relevant points from today.

6. Verbal Updates from Operational Management Groups:

Practice Learning - SE noted that the first meeting has already taken place, with the second meeting to be arranged as soon as possible. The group is moving towards the outcomes and looking at ways to achieve these. Already it is evident that there are differing views of Practice Learning. The group has sent out some letters to encourage wider, sector representation as most members are from Local Authorities.

Employee Development - MM noted that the first meeting had already taken place. This group has a wider constituency. The group spent time looking at the workplan and deciding what events could be setup to achieve some of the objectives therein. MM noted that the group was moving quite swiftly towards the objectives and that the second meeting was set for mid February.

The Supporting Registration and Workforce Planning Groups are set to meet next week.

Action: Groups to meet monthly and report back to the Board on relevant issues.

Next Meeting: 25th March 2008 in Dundee. This will be an emergency meeting and will focus primarily on the financial issues facing the network.

Draft