



VICTIMS &
SURVIVORS
FORUM

Thursday 29th January 2015 @ 2.30pm

Radisson Blu, Belfast

MINUTES

In Attendance

Alex Bunting
Mitch Bresland
Liz Clark
Roberta Holmes
Eibhlin Glenholmes
Jude Whyte
Ann Travers
Peter Heathwood
Fiona Kelly

Jennifer McNern
David Scott

Apologies

Stephen Gault
Alan Brecknell
Irene Kerrigan
Violet Craig

John Loughran
Jeff Smith

Present

John Beggs (Chair)
Adrian McNamee
Tina McCann
Sheila Davidson

1. Minutes from Forum meeting: 11th December 2014

The minutes were checked for accuracy. No amendments were made and the minutes were proposed by Ann and seconded by Mitch for the record.

2. Matters Arising

John reviewed the action points from the 11th December meeting and referred to the engagement with Chief Constable Hamilton that had occurred in the morning session. He said that the meeting had been a positive session and welcomed the invitation from the Chief Constable to visit Seapark.

John added that the preparation for the meeting had been challenging but there were lessons to be learned on the process used by the Forum in preparation for engagements. All speaking notes will be brought to the attention of all members in advance of engagements.

It was agreed that Tina would forward the invite to all members electronically in order to gauge the response and liaise with the Chief Constables office.

AP1: TMC to email invitation to members and ask to express interest in attending and liaise with CC's office.

John advised that he is continuing to meet one-to-one with each Forum member and would report back on his findings at the residential.

AP2: Agenda Item for 19th February – feedback from John Beggs from one-to-one meetings.

A discussion will also be held at the residential on the Commission for Victims and Survivors work programme for 2015-16.

AP3: Agenda item business meeting 19th February- work programme.

3. Adoption of Forum Papers-Services, Dealing with the past and Building for the Future Information Paper.

Adrian gave a status update on the three Forum papers. He reminded the members that in the absence of a Commissioner the Commission cannot submit advice to Ministers but that the Forum can submit advice or information papers to the Commission.

The three papers were circulated to the members in December for comment and he would ask members to propose these papers for adoption. The Services Working Group paper contains recommendations but the Building for the Future and Dealing with the Past Working Group Papers were information update papers only.

Alex proposed all three papers and Eibhlin seconded and subsequently all three papers are passed for the record.

AP6: Forum papers adopted for the record.

4. VSS Update

John advised that the VSS are meeting with the Forum services working group on the 10th February and will report back at next meeting

AP5: Schedule feedback from meeting with VSS at Forum meeting on 19th February

Members advised that there are continuing communication problems with the VSS and this needs to be discussed at the meeting on the 10th February. Tina advised that she would add it to the agenda for the meeting on the 10th February.

John also informed the members that the VSS are currently pending appointment of Board members. He also gave an update on additional funding of £2.6m and the co-design process

5. Stormont House Agreement

It was agreed with the Steering Committee that a key issue for exploration at the Forum residential would be an overview and review of the Stormont House Agreement (SHA). Key academics have been invited to join the meeting to give their views and interpretation of the agreement. Sufficient time has been delegated to the issue and it is hoped that at the end the Forum will have an informed view of the agreement and agreed next steps.

6. Feedback from OPONI engagement

A discussion was had on the outcomes from the engagement with the Police Ombudsman engagement on the 25th January. It was agreed that it was a positive engagement and as with the Chief Constable engagement, it was a critical time to inform and influence the legislation and establishment of the HIU and ICIR. It was agreed to discuss this in more detail at the session on the SHA at the residential and ask the academics present to comment on the legislation required for the implementation of SHA.

AP6: Tina to raise queries with Dr's Moffett, McGrattan and McEvoy.

7. Forum Residential

Tina informed members of the arrangements for the residential and asked that they advise if they would be in attendance after an invite is circulated on the 2nd February.

AP7: Members to advise on their attendance at Forum residential

8. Diploma in Working with Victims, Witnesses and Survivors

Tina informed the members that the Commission were offering two members the opportunity to participate in the Level 4 Diploma in Working with Victims, Witnesses and Survivors. Tina will be assessing this accreditation offered by Skills for Justice. Interested members should express interest via email to Tina by Friday 6th February.

AP8: Members to advise Tina via email if they wish to participate.

9. Commission for Victims and Survivors- Forthcoming events

Adrian advised the members of the following forthcoming events and any members wishing to attend should respond to the invite electronically;

- 26th February- RSM McClure Watters Research on funding seminar, Ramada Plaza, Belfast
- 5th March- Towards a Better Future Seminar, Hilton Templepatrick
- 28th March- (for information only) training event for victims counsellors, Hilton Belfast

10.AOB-

UU INCORE Summer School June 22nd-26th 2015

Tina circulated information on the forthcoming INCORE Summer School and advised that she will forward the relevant detail with interested parties expressing interest by Friday 6th June.

Pension- Sheila Davidson attended the meeting to present a proposal to highlight the pension issues publicly. After much discussion and deliberation, members agreed to have further discussions with political representatives in light of the Stormont House Agreement.

John agreed to discuss this further with the department before agreeing next steps.

AP9: John to discuss pension with departmental officials

11.Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Forum Residential will be held on Thursday 19th – Friday 20th February 2015, Lough Erne Resort, Fermanagh.