



**21 January 2019
Dunsilly Hotel, Antrim**

Present

Judith Thompson (JT)
Andrew Sloan (AS)
Tina McCann (TMC)
Alana Fisher (AF)
Patricia Stewart (PS)
Peter Mann (PM)

Jan Crawford
Paul Crawford
Paul Gallagher
Paul McCormac
Minty Thompson
Alan Brecknell

Apologies

Donal Dunn
Mary Moreland
Lesley Veronica
Mina Jadeja
Kathryn Johnston
Jeremy Adams

Don Mackay
Sam Wilson
Niall O Murchu
Emmett McConomy
Robert McClenaghan
Carmel Rooney

Outline of Meeting

JT welcomed Forum members and noted apologies.

As an update to the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer, JT advised that Andrew Sloan had accepted the offer of the post on a permanent basis following his interim appointment in October 2018.

There was an update given on the November Forum meeting with the BBC Discover Project and the proposed Forum involvement in arranging a PR launch. JT advised for anyone wishing to take part in this to advise AF, and to make the Commission aware of any pastoral support needed. The Forum discussed issues that could arise within families of accessing footage related to personal conflict-related instances and suggested signposting towards support services.

Action Point: AF to pass on the contact information to BBC Series Producer of Forum members interested in taking part in the BBC Discover Project.

JT updated the Forum on the progress of the Legacy policy advice which will be publicised before the end of March 2019. As part of this, the Commission invited Forum members to attend a launch event at Westminster to relay their lived experiences and iterate the importance of addressing legacy issues to Members of Parliament.

Forum members made some suggestions of invitees to a Westminster event given their interest in Northern Ireland.

Action Point: AF to keep Forum members updated on legacy policy advice launch and invite suggested MPs to Westminster launch event.

JT then updated on the services aspect of the Forum's work. Having agreed to bring service discussions back into plenary rather than convening a sub-group of the Forum, it was decided that the Commission would invite representatives from the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) to meet with the Forum on a quarterly basis in the 2019/20 financial year.

Action Point: CVS to allocate agenda time on a quarterly basis to representatives from the VSS.

JT provided an update on the recent meeting of the Pension and Need Working Group to ensure Forum members were informed of the development plan for the pension policy advice as requested by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

PS provided a further update on the scope of the update request on the pension, the foreseen costs and figures and the foreseen recommendations the Commission would be making. She advised that the Commission would be engaging with other agencies who carry out assessments to learn the aspects that work well and where improvement can be made to ensure a victim-centred approach to the assessment process.

JT advised that the Pension and Need Working Group would be engaging with the five main political parties in Northern Ireland and invited any Forum members who were available to join. Membership of the Pension and Need Working Group was also extended to the Forum.

Action Point: AF to invite Forum members to Pension and Need Working Group Meetings with political parties and open membership to the Forum.

PM delivered a presentation on the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) service delivery prior to the VSS Chief Executive and Board representatives joining the meeting.

PM also advised that the Standard for Services Working Group would be convening meetings in the coming months and invited Forum representation.

Action Point: AF to email Forum members asking them to express interest in the Standards for Services Working Group and advise PM of interested members.

The VSS Chief Executive Officer, Margaret Bateson (MB) and VSS Board members joined the Forum. Welcomes and introductions took place and the CEO provided an overview of the health and wellbeing stepped care model under the current funding programme.

MB referred to the monitoring of service and looking at what can be done for those who feel their wellbeing has not improved after accessing support services.

There was further discussion around victims and survivors undergoing welfare application assessments and how VSS support these applicants as well as the barriers caused by GPs who are not engaging with the statutory welfare agencies.

Action Point: MB will attend next meeting with funded groups' advocacy workers and feed back to the Commission and Forum on the processes and workload.

The Forum engaged in a Q&A session with VSS Board members around funding and the schemes available to different victims and survivors and groups funded under the Victim Support Programme.

Under Any Other Business, an update was given on the upcoming Forum replenishment exercise as well as meeting plans for the 2019/20 financial year. PS also advised that in advance of the February meeting with the Policy and Research Officer at the NI Commission for Children and Young People (NICCY), that their '*Still Waiting*' report on young people waiting to access mental health service provision would be circulated to the Forum.

Action Point: AF to circulate the dates for the 2019/20 financial year.

Action Point: AF to forward NICCY '*Still Waiting*' Report to Forum members.

Meeting closed.

Agreed Actions

1. AF to pass on the contact information to BBC Series Producer of Forum members interested in taking part in the BBC Discover Project.
2. AF to keep Forum members updated on legacy policy advice launch and invite suggested MPs to Westminster launch event.
3. CVS to allocate agenda time on a quarterly basis to representatives from the VSS.
4. AF to invite Forum members to Pension and Need Working Group Meetings with political parties and open membership to the Forum.
5. AF to email Forum members asking them to express interest in the Standards for Services Working Group and advise PM of interested members.

6. MB will attend next meeting with funded groups' advocacy workers and feed back to the Commission and Forum on the processes and workload.
7. AF to circulate the dates for the 2019/20 financial year.
8. AF to forward NICCY 'Still Waiting' Report to Forum members.