



BASW Cymru Committee Meeting
19 November 2014.
Elan Valley Hotel 1030 - 1530

1 Present and apologies

Present: Ian Ellison (chair), Robin Moulster, Johnny O'Hagan, Neeta Baicher, Carys Davies, Ian Woolrich, Delyth Lloyd Griffiths, Marianne Palin, Steve Elliott, Dr Neil Thompson (BASW Cymru Ambassador), Kevin Waldock (Wales SWU Officer designate), Gaye Sheridan, Carol Davies, Cath Taffurelli, Dave Allan, Paul Twyman (minutes).

Apologies: Craig Richardson, Nick Lovell, Alex Clapson, Jean Letton.

RM welcomed Kevin Waldock and Dr Neil Thompson to the meeting.

2 Appointment of Equal Opportunities Monitor

Ian Woolrich appointed.

3 Minutes of previous meeting for accuracy

The minutes of the telecom on 17 September 2014 were agreed.

4 Matters arising (items not arising on the agenda)

CPEL response - feedback from committee members was used and provided by RM to the Care Council for Wales.

University visits. Social work courses are run by 8 universities in Wales, GS has co-ordinated 7 visits so far with Bridgend's still to be done. Visits have been very successful; PT made up over 300 membership and information packs and 94 students have been recruited during visits. Thanks to Carol D, GS, CT, JL, RM, PT, NB and DLG for their help with organising and attending the visits to give a BASW perspective and that of practising social workers. Links with the universities are well established and will continue with a similar programme next year.

Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) – NT is running an interactive on-line course and would consider offering a discount to BASW members. Signing –up may be via local authority as employer or by individuals but it is not clear how the course would count towards CEPL.

Action point: GS and Carol D to make independents aware.

SWU – Kevin Waldock appointed and attending this meeting. He is due to start at the end of December and will be operational in the New Year.

Membership – BASW Cymru 1,288 members at 13/11/2014; BASW UK almost 17,000.

5 Social Work Awards Sub-group feedback.

Proposed to change the award title from “runner up” to “highly commended”. Next year’s awards to be on 6 October 2015. Compass’ strong recommendation was to keep the awards as an annual event to maintain profile and momentum; Compass to start work earlier and work to increase raise the profile of the awards, to increase the number and raise the quality of nominations, and to gain more sponsors, at a cost. Agreed by the committee. Proposals to make the nomination process simpler, to encourage nominations from users, to publicise and encourage nominations via ADSS Cymru and events run by or attended by BASW Cymru.

NT expressed concerns about the quality of nominations this year and that there was less competition than previously. Committee agreed the proposal that one judge should leave the panel each year to ensure fresh perspectives; Gabe Conlon leaving this year as he plans to sponsor an award and should avoid any possible conflict of interest. Some flexibility in the criteria for nominees might allow for exceptional contributors to be recognised, but only in limited circumstances and at the judges’ discretion. Linking the evening awards with a daytime event on the same day might encourage more social workers, managers and others to attend.

Sub-committee membership updated to CT (chair), SE, MP, IW and JT. Meetings to be face to face if possible, otherwise by telecom.

Action point: RM and Carol D to discuss/confirm possible new judging panel members.

Action point: RM to ask Gabe Conlon to use ADSS to raise profile and encourage nominations from all LAs.

Action point: RM to ask Gwen Carrington (Ynys Mon) to raise profile and encourage nominations from all LAs

Action point: sub-committee to consider all proposals and report.

Action point: RM to speak with Mark Pearson (COMPASS) regarding further input from COMPASS re. marketing and nominations.

6 Budget/resource issues

RM presented a summary of BASW Cymru finances. Budget had not been discussed or agreed with him and included a doubling of the income target and a reduction in the chair’s employer’s fee. RM has asked for information on leavers to allow staff in Wales to contact them and try to persuade them to remain as members as this has worked effectively in the past.

Action point: IE, CT, JO’H to raise non-consultation and the income target at Council.

Action point: RM to pursue information on leavers.

7 Policy, Ethics and Human Rights Committee feedback

SE attended meeting on 11 November, minutes will follow in due course. The whistle-blowing policy has been agreed and published. This appeared to fit with the Regulation and Inspection Bill and the SSWB(W) Bill, but need to check that PEHR priorities match those for Wales. Wales' perspectives and legislation are increasingly different and need to be taken into account.

Action point: SE to circulate minutes.

8 Council feedback (inc. governance review update)

IE reported that council had discussed funding and new projects.

9 Matrix assessment

Members were asked to complete and update the record of their skills and experience and to add their ability to read, write and understand Welsh.

Action point: PT to circulate current skills list, members to update and email to PT.

10 Conference 2014 review

Carys D reported on positive feedback on the conference. Proposals for further improvements included offering an early-bird rate for advanced bookings; advance selection of workshops; advance notice of titles of speeches; BASW UK communications to attend to write prompt reports for PSW; professional or skilled photographer to attend (KW offered his services); close doors when first speaker starts and let late-comers in only in breaks between speakers; feedback forms to be available on the day. Committee thanked Carys D and Carol D and others involved for their hard work.

Members commented that the venue was stuffy and needed better air circulation. Disability needs such as hearing loops should be specified in advance but venues should cater for a range of disabilities. The next conference is booked for 10 June 2015 at Future Inn, Cardiff Bay.

Carys D stepped down as chair of the conference sub-committee. Role may be less demanding next year as the venue and key speakers are booked. IW agreed to take the lead for 2015 with CT, JL, SE, MP and NB on sub-committee.

11 WAG – reserved Functions

Jonathan Isaacs from WAG attended, he is the WAG lead on the social care workforce and working on Regulation and Inspection. RM thanked him for attending and for the opportunity to present BASW Cymru's views at an early stage of the legislative process, and provided the document setting out the initial thoughts of

some committee members on reserved functions as a starting point for discussion – this is not a BASW position document.

Jl said that the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) is a key regulatory vehicle; reserved functions will be further explored via a white paper; the Scottish and English models are being looked at; the Law Commission bill on workforce regulation covers some ground but does not refer directly to social workers and does not apply specifically in Wales. Much more needs to be done before any reserved functions are enshrined in legislation. Any functions which are reserved for social workers should be clearly identified and cover only those functions which cannot be carried out by anyone other than an appropriately qualified social worker under any circumstances. Jl hoped that the SSWB(W)Act would help liberate social workers from roles that others could carry out, and allow them to focus on what they and only they are trained to do. WAG does not have a clear view on what if any functions should be reserved or a clear timetable for identifying them and would welcome BASW Cymru's views and input at this early stage in the legislative process.

Committee felt that they and BASW Cymru need to help identify those functions which are unique to social workers in adding value to achieving outcomes. Given financial constraints there is a fear that social workers may be replaced by cheaper workers leading to poorer quality of service to vulnerable people and communities. The codes of practice for employers are not regulated. Social workers can and should be held accountable for their work, and must be actively and directly engaged with end users, not acting by proxy or simply supervising others. The input of social workers early on in complex cases helps achieve quick and desirable outcomes, but it is often difficult to identify complex cases initially unless suitably experienced social workers are properly involved at the outset. Different cases require input from social workers with different levels of experience and expertise. Communication with non-English or Welsh speakers ought to be through properly skilled, objective and accredited interpreters and ought to be face to face as body language is an important part of communication. Any RF enshrined in legislation would need to be revisited regularly as the role of social workers evolves.

It was suggested that a representative group be formed to link with Jl to take issues forward. The group agreed is JO'H, MP, IE, RM, DLG, CT and GS.

Action point: RM and Jl to arrange future meetings and plans to progress the issue.

Action point: GS to gather relevant links including the partial search she did prior to this meeting and forward to the whole committee prior to the initial meeting of the representative group.

12 Legislative updates

RM confirmed Regulation and Inspection Act due for implementation in 2017 and 2 tranches of regulations for SSWB(W)Act either side of Christmas 2015 with implementation starting in April 2016. Committee to consider how/if to consult on

Regulation and Inspection Bill directly with members for views on RF. Work on this would need to be included in BASW Cymru's Finance and Activity Plan and into individual workplans, and work to be related to outcomes.

Action point: Committee members to read the original White Paper on Regulation and Inspection.

13 World Social Work Day 17 March 2015

Cardiff University was good as last year's venue and RM and PT are meeting their Alyson Rees on 28/12/2014. Committee felt that alternative venues should be considered, including those outside SE Wales, but recognised need for venue to be suitable in itself, available at reasonable cost and readily accessible to people who might wish to attend.

Action point: members to feed any ideas on the event or alternative locations to RM.

14 Any Other Business

PSW – MP reported that the group met 2 weeks ago. Reports on the Care Act 2014 made it seem as if it applies to the whole of the UK whereas it applies only in England. Greater clarity is needed on the scope of legislation and for all articles. All need to be aware that Shahid Naqvi may rewrite articles considerably in his role as PSW editor.

Action Point: JO'H and Carys D to submit article on substance abuse to Shahid.

Action point: MP to email PT with PSW editorial deadline dates. PT to circulate to committee.

Celtic issues – NT floated the idea of an on-line publication in the form of a quarterly e-newsletter dealing with social work issues from a broad Celtic perspective covering Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This would need commitment to submit articles. Committee supported the idea.

Action point: members to contact NT with ideas and/or articles for newsletter and longer and more fully developed articles for the Practice Journal.

Mencap - learning disability advisory group, budget cuts. CT sought members' views on the social workers perspective on the effect of cuts on finance or other resources on the quality of service delivery.

Action point: comments to CT by 15/12/2014.

Substance abuse - JO'H asked for ideas on social work practice in Wales related to substance abuse for the WARM (well-being and recovery matters) project.

Action point: JO'H to email background information to RM. RM to include in an e-bulletin to all BASW members in Wales.

BASW membership posters - PT gave committee members posters "BASW Cymru speaks up for me and my profession" to display at work to encourage social workers to join.

Action point: members to display posters. PT to get posters translated into Welsh and available to members.

IFSW event 7-9 September 2015 - the event is in Edinburgh but it is a BASW UK event and all countries are asked to provide support from staff and committees. Event will have some 2,000 delegates and some 40 countries represented.

Action point: IE and CT to raise support for committee members who wish to attend the event at Council.

Voluntary work time credits. NB asked PT to circulate information about time credits for individuals or groups who carry out voluntary work to committee members.

Action point: PT to scan and circulate.

Death, dying and bereavement conference. There will be a conference on bereavement and related issues in Scotland in 2016.

Action point: committee members to forward any information or contacts on Welsh perspectives on bereavement to NT.

15 Dates of 2015 meetings

Tuesday January 13, 1900 – 2000 telecon
Wednesday March 18, 1030 – 1530 Caspian Point, Cardiff
Wednesday May 13, 1900 – 2000 telecon
Wednesday July 8, 1030 – 1530 Elan Valley Hotel
Wednesday September 16, 1900 – 2000 telecon
Wednesday November 18, 1030 – 1530 Elan Valley Hotel