

Governance Group meeting minutes  
11 February 1pm  
Number 6, One Stop Shop

APPROVED

**Present:** **Kabie Brook**, Autism Rights Group Highland; **Michael Dawson**, an autistic person; **James Fletcher**, ARC Scotland; **Anne Marie Gallagher**, NHS GGC; **Emma Hanley**, Autism Network Scotland; **Richard Ibbotson**, Autism Initiatives; **Thom Kirkwood**, Parental Peer Advocate; **Jean MacLellan** (CHAIR), Strathclyde University; **Donald Macleod**, National Autism Coordination Project; **Jenny Paterson**, National Autistic Society; **Annette Pyle**, Scottish Government (Care, Support and Rights Division); **Nicola Thomson**, Scottish Government (Care, Support and Rights Division),

**In attendance:** **Linda Allan**, Scottish Government, **Kjersti Fergusson**, Scottish Government, **Tony Jevon**, Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

**Apologies:** **Carolyn Brown**, Fife Council/Education; **Beth Hall**, COSLA; **Ian Hood**, Learning Disability Alliance Scotland; **Peter McCulloch**, Social Work Scotland; **Iain McClure**, NHS Lothian; **Jess McPherson**, Scottish Government (Care, Support and Rights Division)

**Not Present:** **Alan Somerville**, Scottish Autism

**Minutes by:** **Christine McMillan**, Autism Network Scotland

- I. **Welcome, apologies and introductions**
- II. **Minutes** – minutes from 23 October were approved.
- III. **Matters Arising** – documents for information
  - Working Group Activity Report
  - Coordination Report
  - Local Autism Strategies Table
  - Network Report
- IV. **Mental Welfare Commission Investigation into the death of Ms MN** – Tony Jevon from the Mental Welfare Commission summarised the process and findings in the context of the MWC’s overarching role of promoting good practice so that learning can be extracted and services improved.

This report investigates care practices in the last twelve months of Ms MN’s life. TJ outlined the background to the report, placing it in the context of the life of Ms MN, who had a diagnosis of Asperger’s syndrome.

Recommendation 11 is directed at the Governance Group, which is, “The Autism Governance Group should review the issues raised by this case and consider the implications for the implementation of the current autism strategy, particularly what more can be done to ensure staff in mental health and learning disability services are trained to meet the needs of autistic spectrum disorders who use their services”.

TJ noted that recommendations from the Mental Welfare Commission normally have a three month deadline for response. Although this is not the case with investigation reports, this timescale should be regarded as a guide. If the Mental Welfare Commission is not satisfied with the response, this is elevated to Scottish Government. AP stated that the Minister and Cabinet Secretary have made a commitment that the Governance Group will consider how to take this forward. Scottish Government have also asked NHS Education for Scotland how to take this forward as their training framework is implemented. JM proposed that the group considers whether then new Mental Health Act offers systemic opportunities, given it is not due for commencement until 2017. The Working Groups are to consider the recommendation and discuss at the next Governance Group meeting.

The investigation report can be accessed from the Mental Welfare Commission's website at [www.mwcscot.org.uk/publications/investigation-reports](http://www.mwcscot.org.uk/publications/investigation-reports).

- V. **Scottish Strategy for Autism and Criminal Justice** – AP noted that the Minister has asked the group to consider the gap in the Scottish Strategy for Autism related to Criminal Justice.

JP outlined National Autistic Society's current involvement in Criminal Justice.

AP noted that the current National Outcomes Framework for the Strategy is in place until 2017. JM proposed that the National Autism Coordination Project addresses the issue of Criminal Justice within local autism strategies within their work at a local level.

- VI. **AOCB** - None
- VII. **Date of Next Meeting** – To be arranged

#### **KEY MESSAGES**

The Governance Group for the Scottish Strategy for Autism will consider “The death of Ms MN” report from the Mental Welfare Commission at its next meeting. In the interim period, the Working Groups will consider how best to take forward recommendation 11 within the report.

The current National Priorities for the Scottish Strategy for Autism are now in place until 2017. The Governance Group will consider how emerging priorities for the strategy can be included beyond this. The National Autism Coordination Project will address the inclusion of Criminal Justice within local autism strategies within their work.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

**ACTION ITEM:** Working Groups to consider Recommendation 11 from the Mental Welfare Commission investigation report into “The death of Ms MN” at their next meetings, prior to discussion at the next Governance Group meeting.

**ACTION ITEM:** The National Autism Coordination Project to address Criminal Justice within local autism strategies.

**NEXT MEETING**

TBC