

Inclusive Communication External Stakeholder Reference Group

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 24 August 2022
Time	10:30- 12:00
Location	Virtual – Microsoft Teams
Note	Note: As this information is available to the public, we have anonymised attendees. We have named only the most senior civil servants and members of Social Security Scotland Executive Advisory Board.

Attendees

Present

- HF (Chair) - Head of National Engagement and Partnership, Social Security Scotland
- KH - Inclusive Communication Expert Adviser, Social Security Scotland
- LM - Inclusive Communication Support Officer, Social Security Scotland
- DP - Inclusive communication Organisational Lead, Social Security Scotland
- LB - Creative Communications Manager, Social Security Scotland
- SS - Creative Communications Executive, Social Security Scotland
- RB - The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)
- HS - Age Scotland
- CG - Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (UK)
- MK - Inclusion Scotland
- SB - British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association (BLESMA)
- JM - Scottish Sensory Hub, Health and Social Care Alliance, the ALLIANCE

Secretariat

- RE - Team Manager, Social Security Scotland

1. Welcome from the Chair

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed the Group. New members were invited to introduce themselves.
- 1.2. Members confirmed they were happy with the note of the last meeting.

2. Actions arising from Previous Meeting

- 2.1. A number of actions points were taken since the last meeting:
 - The Inclusive Communication Team shared the Inclusive Communication Preferences Profiling Tool they have developed with VoiceAbility.
 - VoiceAbility shared the 'Advocacy Service Standards' with the group for their information.
 - In response to a question about what graphics and text would be used in the promotion of the second phase of Scottish Child Payment GW shared a leaflet with the group.

3. Inclusive Communication Action Plan Update

- 3.1 KHK Provided members with an update on the Action Plan and progress towards meeting the five assets outlined within it. KHK confirmed the Action Plan will be published in Plain English.

4. Inclusive Communication Involvement Plan

- 4.1. Under Asset 3 of the Inclusive Communication Action Plan, 'effective involvement of people who understand and express themselves in different ways', one of the recommendations is to create an Involvement Plan. LM presented an overview of the draft Involvement Plan. This plan will assist colleagues in different areas to access input from individuals with lived experience of communication disadvantage.
- 4.2. The questions members' were asked to discuss were :

- What sort of involvement would you like with Social Security Scotland?
- How can you or your organisation get involved?
- What would make involvement easy and an attractive thing to do?
- What would barriers to involvement be for you?
- If you were on our “Go to” list how would you like recruitment from the list to work?

4.3. Notes were taken for each group discussion, this information will be collated and shared with members. Some points that were fed back from the breakout rooms include:

- For involvement to be easy, it has to be flexible in terms of time commitment, communication channel and frequency
- Members were open to facilitating connections with people who could be on our ‘Go to’ list of individuals
- Participants time should be acknowledged and where possible compensation provided as well as travel costs and care costs.
- There should be a coordinated approach to recruitment from the list of people.
- Participants need to be fully informed about aspects such as involvement, frequency time of day and how many hours.
- When we recruit people to our ‘Go to’ list we should ask about their communication preferences

4.4 MK raised concerns that language in Asset 3 of the Inclusive Communication Review Report might suggest that simulation activities would be used. KHK confirmed this is not the case and committed to re-evaluate the wording used in the report.

Action Point	KHK	Consider changing the wording in the action plan for Asset 3 : Effective Involvement of People who Understand and Express Themselves in Different Ways.	Before next meeting
Action Point	LM	Points raised in breakout rooms to be collated and, shared with the group.	By 31 August 2022

5. Social Security Scotland Volunteer Activities

- 5.1 LM explained to the group that Social Security Scotland staff are able to undertake 6 days of paid special leave for volunteer work. LM asked members to consider how Social Security Scotland staff who wanted to volunteer might be able to help their organisation in the area of inclusive communications.
- 5.2 LM then displayed some questions to aid a group discussion:
- Does your organisation accept volunteers or have they in the past?
 - Do you think your organisation would benefit from volunteers? What skills or interests might make them effective volunteers for you?
 - Do you think volunteer work you can offer would give good insight in to dealing with different clients and/or different communication needs and preferences?
- 5.3 Points raised during the group discussion include:
- Age Scotland are looking for more volunteers for the Age Scotland friendship service which is one hour a week. This service offers older people a chance to talk to someone to avoid loneliness.
 - Deafblind Scotland have volunteers and would be happy to have Social Security Scotland staff volunteer. It's bespoke and can be at activities, assisting Deafblind members in the centre, supporting staff with newsletter printing/packaging etc. No experience or skills needed. Someone who is compassionate, patient and willing to learn would be beneficial.
 - The Alliance have a system ALISS, which people can access and find out what's available in their area regarding community based organisations and events.

6. Any other Business and Forward Look

- 6.1 SB explained that the Department for Work and Pensions has services specific to Veterans. He asked if there is a plan for Social Security Scotland to replicate this. HF advised that we will follow up with relevant colleagues.
- 6.2 HS would like clarity on when someone would be referred to Local Delivery and when we would refer them to VoiceAbility. HF advised that they would check guidance on this to determine an answer.
- 6.3 The Chair thanked members for coming and for their contributions to a very engaging and vibrant discussion.

Action Point	Inclusive Communication Team	Speak with colleagues to determine whether Social Security Scotland has plans to provide services specific to veterans.	After meeting
Action Point	Inclusive Communication Team	Confirm guidance on when a referral should be made to Local Delivery versus VoiceAbility.	After meeting

Date of next meeting: 28 September 2022