

**VOLUNTARY SECTOR CHILDREN'S FORUM**  
**The Cottage Family Centre**  
**30<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

**Present:**

Lynn Gillies	Family Matters	(Chair)
Tanya Coull	Family Matters	(Minutes)
Shirley Cusack	Aberlour Child Care Trust	
Dianne Girven	Attention Fife	
Laura Crombie	Clued Up	
Elaine Harding	Crossroads Fife Central	
Robert Grant	DAPL	
Morag Hyde	Dunfermline Women's Aid	
Morag Coleman	East Fife Women's Aid	
Lynsey Haldane	East Fife Women's Aid	
Trudy Doidge	ENABLE Scotland	
Rhona Cunningham	Fife Gingerbread	
Joyce Munro	Homestart Dunfermline	
Jan Marshall	Homestart Glenrothes	
Alison Kirkcaldy	Homestart Levenmouth	
Amber Higgins	Penumbra Youth Project	
Tracy Christie	Scottish Society for Autism	
June Lyall	Scottish Childminding Association	
Sarah Todhunter	The Cottage Family Centre	
Craig Morris	TIBAL	
Jane Saunders	Victoria Family Centre	

**Guest Speakers:**

Melanie Durowse	Fife Child Protection Committee Support Team
Alistair Gaw	Senior Manager, Children and Families & Criminal Justice

**ALISTAIR GAW**

Alistair agreed to present information on the development of children's services in Fife Social Work and quick Q&A session.

- Confirmed that Fife Social Work's priorities were to support children to live with their family / extended family or in a family based environment. Where this is not possible, for the child to be placed within Fife. The criteria for commissioning would be based on the above priorities.
- Numbers of LAC in Fife is still increasing - almost at 800 children, 3 years ago it was 300.
- Increase in substance misuse have impacted on Child Protection figures, especially heroin.
- Fife has been able to provide longer term funding for Voluntary Sector i.e. 3 year agreements.
- Re Commission/Funding Group – confirmed that Lynn Gillies is Rep for Voluntary Sector in her role as Chair of Forum. First funding meeting to be held in July. Dave Wright to be invited to next meeting to discuss Commissioning Group further. **ACTION: LG**

- Question whether Fife Council plans to utilise/improve voluntary agencies that we have already rather than developing new services. Alistair in agreement. Feels there is a positive relationship between Voluntary Sector and Fife Council and wants this to continue.
- Question re links to Fife Council through Contracts Officers - not as close a link as previously. Important to create local links through Social Work Teams – share what works well between agencies.

## **MELANIE DUROWSE**

Melanie outlined her role as Quality Assurance and Development Officer. Preparation for HMle inspection as follows:

- Pre-Inspection return completed by Fife re categories of children – Registered, De-Registered, Complaints etc.
- Inspectors provide list of files they wish to inspect which could include SW, medical, police, Children’s Reporters files etc. Not aware that voluntary sector files have been requested previously but could be. Melanie will forward list of files to voluntary sector prior to Inspection.
- 2 weeks of inspection planned – w/b 6<sup>th</sup> October and 27<sup>th</sup> October.
- Head of Services will give presentation to Inspectors – Police, Education, Social Work, NHS etc.
- Inspectors will read case files and interview relevant services involved. Voluntary Sector members may be interviewed here if part of Core Group Plan for example.
- Inspectors also like to attend events with children involved.
- Report written and Fife Council given opportunities to challenge.
- Final Report written.

### ***Training***

- Series of Roadshows “How good is your practice” planned. Recommended that voluntary sector staff attend also.
- Briefing pack designed for staff who are to be interviewed by Inspectors. Colin Beattie, Inspector of Police has also completed an Aide-memoir which may be useful.

### ***Exercise***

- Self Evaluation Tool with 5 key questions, linked to Quality Indicators. Groups completed one question each. Feedback positive.

### ***Engagement***

- Discussion on recording numbers of families not engaging – how do we monitor this? Agreement that difficult to monitor – Social Work do not officially record it as family not engaging. Questionnaire / Audit for Voluntary Sector to be proposed and discussed at next meeting.

## **NEXT MEETING**

- Lynn confirmed next date of Co-ordinating Group on 22.07.08, 3.30pm.
- Next full Forum scheduled for October, details TBC.