

**Minutes of the Steering Committee
Connexions Development Fund
The Jarman Centre
18/03/03 @ 4.30pm**

Present

Frances Carbery (FC)
Chris Finney (CF)
Michael Jones (MJ)
Sue Lindsey (SL)
John Marsden (JM)
Jeremy Sharples (JS)
Chris Walton (CW)
Angie Woods (AW)
Sharon Whalley (SW)

Apologies

Amar Abass
Steve Aitken
John Poulson

Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. Proposed (AW) and seconded (FC) and agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

2. JS advised the meeting that The Jarman Centre has invoiced Lancashire Friend £3500 for the research and writing of our Report. A summary will be completed by the first week of April and the full report will be ready shortly after that.

3. JS said that Lancashire Friend had spent just over £100 on a freepost address - the best way for people to return their questionnaires. The freepost address costs £40 to renew each year. Lancashire Friend will pay second class postage and a small handling charge for each reply received.

4. CF said that her managers had stopped the distribution of our questionnaire to schools after consulting with two head teachers. The group felt disappointed by this news. CF said there was little that could be done given the time constraints involved. All agreed that a great deal of groundwork is needed (education, training and support) before schools accept our questionnaire. SL said that this need for preparatory work should be included in the final report. JS will prepare a draft letter for the next meeting asking the LEA for feedback and for guidance on what is acceptable in a questionnaire.

5. AW said that Brook had been handing out questionnaires and had received some 20 replies. The Youth Service had returned 74 completed questionnaires to us. SL said she had collected around a dozen. At the moment we have around 120 completed questionnaires.

6. Nightsafe were delighted to participate in our survey and asked for 50 questionnaires. They also held a long meeting during which all their staff discussed the survey and considered how the questionnaires ought to be completed. The Steering Committee found this a very encouraging response.

7. Other encouraging responses were received. AW said that QUEGS might well carry out the survey. This may be because they do not have the same restrictions as state schools; but also because some positive groundwork has already been done. St Mary's College is also interested and a member of staff (Chris McCauley) is offering one-to-one support for any students completing the questionnaire and needing help.

8. Several Committee members said it was difficult to access the opinions of the younger age group (13-16 years) and that this difficulty needed to be included in the final report.

9. FC suggested contacting the "Groundwork" projects in Mill Hill and at Whitebirk. They work with disaffected young people and work in partnership with the Schools' Inclusion Unit.

10. SL reported that she has found this work very frustrating; initially because she found it difficult to access the views of younger people, and then because the same types of answers were given as were given 10 and 15 years ago. She wondered whether there had been any real progress. SL reminded the group that this kind of research is complicated because it is hard to target gay and lesbian people. SL said that many agencies do not understand how sensitive this work is and how difficult research can be.

11. SL to feedback to John Smith her experience of carrying out the surveys. SL to respond as a member of the Youth Service rather than as a member of the Steering Committee.

12. CF said that one of the things that should come out of this report is the need for funding so that there can be groundwork done and schools targeted.

13. CF announced that she and Julie Waring have been awarded £7,500 by the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership to organise a one-day event promoting SRE. About 200 people from across the country will attend. It may be possible for the Jarman Centre and Lancashire Friend to lead a workshop on gay, lesbian and bisexual issues. CF is hoping that Peter Morgan (LEA) and Jim Paris (PCT) will chair the event and that it will be held in September. As head teachers will be attending it will be an opportunity for us build bridges with schools.

14. JM asked for a timetable for the Report's completion. AW said the summary will be ready in two weeks; but we will continue to distribute and collect the questionnaires until the end of March. The Committee agreed to meet next week to read the first draft and make amendments.

15. JS is to consult with Connexions about adding their logo to Lancashire Friend's letterheads; and paying for the letterheads out of the Development Fund grant.

16. AW said the report needs to be launched. JS and AW to co-ordinate a launch in September at Ewood Park. This will be managed by Ewood Park's event organisers and paid for by Lancashire Friend before the end of March.

17. Lancashire Friend will purchase two banners so we can have a stand at the launch. We hope to have around 50 people there such as head teachers, Connexions, those that have helped such as Nightsafe and Brook, the Youth Service and other agencies.

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 27 March at 4.30pm to consider the first draft of the Summary Report.