



Scottish Hearing Voices National Office and Support Service Consultation: Background papers

In this document we have provided some background information about the consultation process, other planning methods we are using and information about the Scottish Hearing Voices Network and INTERVOICE.

1. The Consultation process

2. Planning Methods and Tools

3. Timetable

4. Appendix

1. The Consultation Process

The Scottish Network has received funding from the Lotteries Fund to help it put together a plan for the further development of hearing voices work in Scotland. This plan is to be developed by the SHVN with the on-going support of Paul Baker, the INTERVOICE Coordinator.

The Scottish Hearing Voices Network are using the services of Paul Baker to facilitate the process of writing and consulting people who hear voices about the plan.

1.2 How we will consult people about our plans

- This proposal concerns how we will go about agreeing a plan to enable SHVN to apply for funding for a national office and paid workers to support the network, as well as how that work will be carried out.
- This proposal will be open to consultation with all those people and groups interested in developing the support available to people who hear voices with a special focus on existing hearing voices groups and people who hear voices.
- As part of the consultation process we will use the internet and other methods of contacting individual voice hearers and groups around the country. We will also use Skype (a free on-line telephone service) to link people and set up a web page to let people see and comment on the progress of the writing of the plan.
- Following contact through Skype, e-mails, letter, texting and phone calls, we will then be organise visits to meet groups to discuss the proposed plan with Hearing voices Groups around the country.

2. Planning Methods

2.1 As well as the consultation process outlined here there will be a planning process that will have the following components:

(i) A mapping exercise:

- to determine the number and strength of hearing voices groups in Scotland (e.g. self-help groups):

- to evaluate their strengths, weaknesses and support needs
- to identify areas where no hearing voices work is being carried out - and - to determine whether support is available for the development of new hearing voices groups
- to identify other hearing voices initiatives such as training provision, one to one work, anti-stigma work, emergency help and telephone support etc.
- to identify key supporters amongst voice hearers, allied professionals and voluntary & statutory services

2.2 This task will help determine the level of need within Scotland for Voice hearing work, to establish the priorities for such work and to audit the level of support available.

(ii) An evaluation of the current status of the Scottish Hearing Voices Network

Including the steering group and other support functions carried out by the Network. This would include membership issues, formal status, current funding and other forms of support. This task will help identify the organisational and structural needs of the organisation and work needed to ensure it is prepared for the work required in carrying out the proposed Action Plan

(iii) Determine the availability of resources to fund and support a national office and workers to provide support services to an emergent national network of voice hearing initiatives.

(iv) Establish a 3 year work programme for the further development of the SHVN that will ensure the SHVN will be an effective:

- Change Agent: e.g. by identifying gaps; developing innovative practice
- Service Developer: e.g. promoting joint working, education and training
- Capacity Builder: initiate, develop and sustain community initiatives around voice hearing
- Access Facilitator: to services; community resources; overcoming language and cultural barriers.

2.3 It is critical to the success of this exercise that voice hearers are in control of the processes, including this consultation.

This will include:

- Goal Setting;
- Planning;
- Implementation

2.4 This approach considers people who hear voices as the experts by experience and the people who work with them as experts by profession. Value is placed on the personal involvement of both voice-hearers and professionals. Seeing each other first as people, secondly as allies, and thirdly, as all having different but mutually valuable expertise to offer.

2.5 The exercise will adopt participatory approaches to development, based on principles of empowerment and the ownership of the development process. It will focus on how to engage people as citizens (rather than clients) in development, and how to make the resulting services more effective and responsive.

2.6 The Business Plan will be drawn up using community development principles as follows:

The appreciation and mobilisation of individual and community talents, skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs)

It will be a community-driven development rather than developments driven by external agencies

2.7 We will utilise the internet to complement meetings and written reports.

3. Timetable

The work started with a visioning meeting with members of the SHVN and will be followed up by an action research programme that will lead to the development of an Action Plan. This Plan will then be subject to discussion, amendment and adoption by the SHVN.

Timetable dates:

15th and 16th March 2008

Meetings with the SHVN steering group and members of the Dundee HVN and Aberdeen HVN to draw up ideas and to set the process in motion

31st March 2008

Paul writes up and sends out initial proposal as agreed at the meeting to the steering group members for agreement.

1st July 2008

The Outline proposal is sent out widely, ideally we would like to involve about 300 people.

It will be available in the following formats:

The document will be available as a paper document and sent to those who wish to see a hard copy.

It will be available as a word document and a pdf that can be sent as an attachment by email

A web page will be set up which will allow people to read the document and comment on-line and to see how the document is progressing

Paul will be available to discuss the document by email, instant chat and by phone and/or Skype*

Paul will also meet with groups as required:

September (date to be decided) The business plan will be adopted and launched at a special meeting of the SHVN

4. Appendix:

4.1 The Scottish Hearing Voices Network

The Scottish Hearing Voices Network was established in April 2001, by members of Hearing Voices groups throughout Scotland.

The Network aims to:

- Relieve the suffering and distress of people who are voice hearers, vision seers and/or have related extraordinary experiences.
- Promoting the development of hearing voices support groups in Scotland.
- To provide mutual support
- The advancement of education through training and research

4.2 INTERVOICE

The Scottish Network is a member of INTERVOICE, the International Network for training, education and research into Hearing Voices and hosted the 2006 INTERVOICE seminar in Dundee.

INTERVOICE is an international support group for hearing voices initiatives. There are currently 19 active national organisations in membership. INTERVOICE aims to:

- show that hearing voices is a normal though unusual variation in human behaviour
- show that the problem is not hearing voices but the inability to cope with the experience
- educate society about the meaning of voices so as to reduce ignorance & anxiety and to ensure this innovatory approach on voice hearing is better known by voice hearers, families, professionals and the general public
- demonstrate the wide variety of voice hearing experiences and their origins, and peoples' approaches to coping
- increase the quality and quantity of mutual support available to all people and organisations involved in hearing voices work across the world
- make our work more effective and develop more non-medical ways of helping voice hearers cope with their experience

4.3 SHVN meeting with Paul Baker on 15 and 16 March 2008

Present: Ann, Bill, Christine, Ian, Gavin, Mary, Pat, Richard and Paul

The meeting with Paul were very productive and he went away to produce a draft proposal for the objective of producing a business plan to enable SHVN to apply for funding for a national office and workers for the network. He will be sending this out to us shortly for our comments.

Paul had good ideas re use of the internet in addition to other methods of contacting individual voice hearers and groups around the country. The idea would be to use Skype to link people and to set up a web page to let people see the progress of the writing of the plan.

Following contact through Skype, e-mails, letter, texting and phone calls, Paul will be better placed to best organise visits to meet groups.

The initial draft proposal will include the following ideas re what is needed from the SHVN and these will be amended and added to as the process goes on.

- Address isolation and withdrawal of voice hearers
- Build a sense of community (of common interest)
- Support individual voice hearers
- Support the development of groups
- An interactive website to allow people to share coping strategies, stories, etc.
- An annual conference
- To employ 2 workers (? 1 expert by experience and 1 expert by profession)
- Training services

The meeting on the 16th with members of the HVN-Dundee management committee went well and they were very positive re the development of SHVN. We will continue to work closely with them to ensure their needs from SHVN are met and that we are able to start supporting them rather than their continued of us. For example, they will additional funds through rent payments.

