QQI
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Joint QQI/Community and Voluntary Sector Working Group

Minutes

Minutes of the fifth meeting of the **Joint QQI/Community and Voluntary Sector Working Group** held in QQI Offices, 26-27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2 on Monday, 28 September 2015 at 11:00 am.

PRESENT:
For the Community and Voluntary Sector
Avril Bailey, An Cosán
Deborah Brock, South County Dublin Partnership
Tara Farrell, Longford Women's Link (AONTAS Executive Committee)
Maria Finn, CASP *(Clondalkin Addiction Support Programme)*
Suzanne Kyle, Limerick Community Education Network (AONTAS CEN Steering Group)
Stuart Lawler, National Council for the Blind
Niamh O'Reilly, AONTAS (Head of Strategic Development)
Rachel Tucker, CTEC *(Community Training and Education Centre, Wexford)*
Nuala Whelan, Ballymun Job Centre (QA Network)

For QQI
Walter Balfe, *Provider Approval*
Colette Harrison, *Awards & Certification*
Mary McEvoy, *Legal & Compliance*
Trish O'Brien, *Strategic Planning& Communications*
Mary Sheridan, *Legal & Compliance*

Independent Facilitator
Peter Nolan

APOLOGIES
Sive Bresnihan, Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
Sylvia Ryan, ICTU

PRELIMINARY

Peter Nolan welcomed new member Avril Bailey, An Cosán, to her first meeting of the *Joint QQI/Community & Voluntary Sector Working Group*. Avril replaces outgoing member Gaye Kelly. Peter paid tribute to Gaye's contribution to the Working Group and wished her well in the future.

1. **MINUTES OF FOURTH MEETING (CVSWG/M4)**

   It was noted that at the last meeting the community and voluntary sector participants wished to record their ongoing opposition to being subject to QQI fees. It was agreed that this would be inserted into the minutes of the previous meeting of the working group. Apart from this omission, the minutes were agreed.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

   2.1 Parliamentary Q&A on Fees

   The group noted the clarification received from the DES in relation to this matter.

   2.2 Seminar Questions & Answers

   The group expressed satisfaction with the responses drafted by the QQI executive and were happy to have more overarching version of these posted to QQI's website.

   2.3 Feedback on Quality Assurance Guidelines

   The group noted that this is still in progress and that no new feedback had been received via the seminar participants.

   2.4 Website Page: Working Group

   The group noted that QQI's website will contain a webpage specifically outlining the work of the *Joint QQI/Community & Voluntary Sector Working Group* which will be up and running before the end of September 2015.

3. **MODELS OF COLLABORATION**

   The group noted the document "*Sharing Practice, Sharing Resources and Establishing Consortia*", which was drafted by the QQI executive. The document briefly considers the types of collective and collaborative engagement that providers may have with each other, but focusses primarily on the establishment of consortia for the purposes of re-engaging and subsequently engaging with QQI.

   Whilst members generally welcomed the thrust of the document, there were some concerns surrounding issues such as legal entity, ownership of programmes, responsibility for QA, resource implications, loss of control/autonomy and funding. Members considered that more detailed guidance from QQI regarding the establishment of consortia would be helpful. Some members outlined their positive

experiences in meeting with similar providers and establishing collaborations in terms of the sharing of knowledge, expertise and resources; experience did not extend, however, to participation in legal consortia.

In determining the manner in which consortia are approved for re-engagement, and in addition to the legal matters regarding consortia, QQI clarified that it must also satisfy itself that a consortium has the capacity to develop, deliver, and maintain programmes to completion and in accordance with agreed standards in the same manner as it must be able to do so for single providers.

In light of the concerns expressed and in an effort to further explore issues facing providers regarding the establishment of consortia, it was agreed that a Workshop for the community and voluntary members of the working group would be facilitated.   It is intended that the Workshop will enable the members to discuss the possible types of collective and collaborative engagements that providers may have with each other and the various issues arising from these. In addition, the advantages and disadvantages, implications and possible solutions to engaging in collaborative arrangements, versus operating and re-engaging independently, will also be explored.

In advance of the Workshop, QQI will provide the group members with some further elaboration of the paper that was circulated on collaboration. The Workshop itself will be attended only by the community and voluntary sector members. The outcomes will be presented at the end of the workshop to the QQI executive, and for further discussions with the full group.

4. **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**
The group noted that the Working Group will hold two more meetings. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Working Group will be devoted to the Workshop (as outlined at item 3 above). An Agenda and further details will be circulated in due course.

The final meeting of the working group is scheduled for December 2015.

5. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
None

The meeting concluded at 1.00pm.