



Name of group: North East Sex Work Forum (NESWF)

Terms of Reference (TOR) – Revised 3/12/19

Type of Group:

A multi-agency forum that offers services/support to individuals across the North East involved in all aspects of sex work recognising that the spectrum of experience can be vast with varying levels of need, vulnerability and harm. The group agrees to have no pre-judgement on any individual's lifestyle, recognising autonomy and labour rights within the sex industry and will offer tailored support/engagement and/or needs led interventions depending on a case by case basis. The group is committed to and has a long history of conducting participatory research in collaboration with people with lived experience to continue to improve service development and delivery.

Membership:

Board Members:

- Gaynor Trueman - Coordinator/Chair
- Changing Lives - GAP MAP Project
- A Way Out – Liberty Project
- HMP Low Newton – Pathway 9
- Durham University –
 - Alison Jobe – Sociology Department, Board member of SWRH (Sex Work Research Hub)
 - Maggie O'Neill – Ustinov College, Co-founder of NESWF & SWRH

Partnership Members:

- Agencies/Individuals who offer services/support to people involved in the sex industry
- One membership per organisation with SPOC (specific point of contact)

Accountability:

- Board members are responsible for ensuring a representative from each agency attends forum meetings (details below), or to inform the chair of non-attendance in good time. Attendees are expected to adhere to agreed deadlines regarding actions, feedback, comments etc.
- The coordinator is responsible for ensuring all board members are aware of funding objectives and the reporting schedule for such objectives.
- Board members are responsible for ensuring funding objectives are met and for the coordinator to be kept informed of any strategic/operational/research developments.
- Each board member organisation agrees to update the coordinator/other board members of any service changes or research and development initiatives.
- Non-board members are not required to attend meetings but may be asked to attend as a guest speaker to explain their services in more detail; this will be during an open session following the closed board meeting.

Objectives

To ensure the forum has both a strategic and operational impact regarding regional policy and effective frontline service provision board member responsibilities have been split into two sets of accountable objectives. Each group will be fully transparent and strive to be fully supportive of each other's objectives:

Strategic:

- To improve multi-agency working and ethical responses to sex work related matters.
- To inform regional and national policy concerning all aspects of the sex industry.
- To ensure a shared model of excellence is adhered to regarding all service provision/training.
- To recognise crimes against sex workers as hate crimes generated by stigma, prejudice and marginalisation.
- To recognise the difficulties that people involved in the sex industry face in reporting crimes against them; defend their right to be safe and to have equal access to justice when they are not.
- To actively take part in campaigning work, with regards to ending violence and discrimination against sex workers.
- To develop, conduct and share findings of ethical and robust research studies.
- To identify opportunities for collaborative funding opportunities and research alongside partner agencies.
- To keep updated on sex work policy, practice and research both regionally and nationally and support the operational group to deliver appropriately needs led services.

Operational:

- To communicate effectively to support sex workers who travel across the North East, including a directory of specific services and risks around buyers who travel.
- To provide specialist training to key stakeholders to ensure appropriate knowledge sharing regarding the diversity of the sex industry.
- Create 'tools' that practitioners can use when engaging/supporting individuals involved in sex work.
- To coordinate and plan annual Regional Learning Day (RLD) events for both professionals and service users.
- To keep updated on sex work policy, practice and research regionally and nationally.
- To work together in the interests of the support, safety and recognition of sex workers across the North East.

Meeting Details:

All meetings will be chaired and minuted by the forum coordinator.

Strategic Meetings

- Quarterly Meetings – The forum will hold quarterly strategic meetings for management level board members to discuss and maintain the strategic objectives of the forum.

**Next dates will be confirmed at the end of each meeting

Operational Meetings

- Bi-monthly meetings – The forum will hold bi-monthly meetings for front-line practitioners representing board member agencies to allow sharing of operational information and non-client intelligence through practical discussion to ensure best practice across the region.

**Next dates will be confirmed at the end of each meeting.

Information Sharing:

Board members agree to adhere to strict confidentiality regarding any information shared within meetings or otherwise except for when a safeguarding issue is highlighted, and usual protocol needs to be followed regarding risk of harm.

Case management information regarding specific clients will not be shared within strategic/practitioner meetings.