

Disability Action Alliance Steering Group Meeting 08/04/2015

Attendees

Liz Sayce	Disability Rights UK
Ray Ashley	English Federation of Disabled Sports (EFDS)
Andy Rickell	ADWUK
Cam Nicoll	Digital Accessible Centre
Debbie Roberts	Digital Accessible Centre
Stephen Brooks	Disability Hate Crime Network
Dan Sumners	Signature
Sarah Yiannoullou	NSUN
Chris Smith	Disabled Golf Association
Gary Powell	Equalities National Council
Naomi Marek	Sky Badger
Charlie Willis	Independent Lives
Julie Jaye Charles	Equalities National Council
John Coxon	Disability Action Alliance
Stephanie Harvey	Disability Action Alliance
Kerry Williams	Disability Action Alliance
Shanta Lekhai	Disability Action Alliance/Note-taker
Lee Garfoot	ODI

Apologies

Jim Edwards	Signature
Carol Pearson	Surrey Coalition
Bola Akinwale	Public Health England

Previous Action Points (AP)

AP discussed:

- John commented on AP4 – ODI feel that another route might be better; it was suggested that DAA members that conduct this function, such as Evenbreak, might be able to help. Liz mentioned that the Disability Rights UK website advertises job vacancies.
- Sarah stated that AP16 should be closed - she has circulated the report.
- Stephanie thanked Dan and Carol for getting quotes for a low cost introductory section of the website using BSL and easy read.

Action 1: Stephanie to look into funding – deadline 18th May.

Action 2: The secretariat team to put Gary in contact with relevant DAA members – deadline 18th May

Pre-election period

John explained the impact of the pre-election period (sometimes referred to as Purdah) on the DAA secretariat. During this period, Civil Servants are not permitted

to comment on or promote current government policies, the policies of opposition parties or potential future government policies. This means that the secretariat is not able to post any new material on the DAA website, tweet or produce newsletters. The secretariat is only permitted to undertake operational activity i.e. responding to specific operational queries and posting new member details. These arrangements will continue until a new government is formed.

However the DAA is independent of government and therefore non-governmental members of the Steering Group are able to post new material on the website. Cam and Debbie from DAC have volunteered to upload material provided by the Steering Group during this period. Members were asked to send material directly to Cam. The secretariat team asked to be included in the email circulation list so that they can remain informed; however they are unable to comment or amend content.

It is for this reason that a note on the website refresh went up on the website prior to the pre-election period from the secretariat. If the Steering group want to publicise the refresh when transition is complete, they are able to use the process outlined above and using their own Twitter accounts.

Liz suggested that at the next meeting, (19th May), the group develops proposals on the future of the DAA, including where and how it should best function, to put to new ministers. It was agreed that this would be the focus of the next meeting agenda.

Action 3: Liz to circulate to the Steering group, some initial thoughts on the future of the DAA to discuss at the next steering group meeting.

Project Updates

Commissioning

The commissioning project group has achieved some useful outcomes including:

- getting the 'inclusive communities' material published on the commissioning academy resource bank, and
- Securing slots on two of this year's programme days – on co-production and supplier's perspective.

Work is also underway reviewing the public service transformation network resource banks in order to identify any gaps in material.

It was agreed that this is good progress and that there seems to be appetite for these discussions which we should capitalise on. However there was discussion about how it is difficult to influence SME's in the same way.

Transport

Letters advising ATOC and CBT about the transport card and associated training package were issued. Stephen has received a response from ATOC and is in the process of setting up a meeting with them. He has already agreed to work with several large train operators to deliver training from disabled people.

Stephen mentioned that he will continue to contact bus operators directly.

X-Card

The X-Card survey closed on 16 March. The Secretariat will collate the results. The results will be published once the pre-election period has ended.

Intersection

A first draft of the checklist has been produced. This will be discussed at the next project meeting with a view to bringing it to the next Steering Group meeting.

Action 4: Stephanie to set up the next meeting

Action 5: Stephanie to put the project lead names on the project update.

RDAAC

Stephanie met with officials from Department for Education (DfE) prior to the pre-election period to discuss how we might work together and avoid duplication where possible. The imminent pre-election period limited agreements that could be made but a follow up meeting is planned in June. Additionally DfE were very interested in the possible school governors' angle of the public appointments project and have agreed to make their governors' network aware of this work.

Public Appointments

Stephen outlined the preparatory work he has already undertaken, including building links with the public appointments commissioner and the NHS governance board.

It was agreed that as well as working with the bodies that make public appointments, it was important to promote opportunities to disabled people, who might be reluctant to put themselves forward. Stephanie mentioned that the commissioner was keen to promote their relevant material and that the DAA website might be useful for this.

The question was raised as to how many National governing bodies related to sport have disabled people on them. It was noted that there are several that do, but that work is currently underway to increase this and more advocacy is required.

Stephen explained that there has been little progress made since the work he carried out in this area 10 years ago. Application packs for public appointments are still largely inaccessible and it was felt by some that government departments could do more to encourage/support the appointment of disabled people. It was noted that the

assessors responsible for monitoring and reviewing public appointments are key to ensuring genuine equality throughout the process, and speaking to them could be beneficial. It was also agreed that ODI and the DAA project group both have roles in improving the current position.

Liz mentioned that there is a new government disability champion, the Permanent Secretary at Department for Transport, Philip Rutnam. The Cabinet Office has recently published a set of reports, one on disability - see [Cabinet Office report](#), on barriers to career progression in Government Departments. Government has responded

Action 6: Stephen to circulate the Annexes of the previous report – deadline 1st May

Action 7: Stephen and Andy to discuss how Andy can support this work.

Action 8: Steering Group to comment on the Annexes and their relevance today where appropriate – deadline 18th May

Action 9: Liz to circulate link for cabinet office report – Complete, please see hyperlink above.

Action 10: Secretariat to invite Phillip to a Steering Group meeting post pre-election period to discuss his work.

Sports and physical activity

Ray explained the previous regionalisation project has been amended to this, with a view to allow regional (and other) networks to grow more organically.

Ray stated that being a member of the DAA has brought huge benefits to EFDS, enabling him to build partnerships at the local level between providers and organizations supporting disabled people. Ray also spoke about the Charter for Change, which has been designed with the DAA priority areas in mind.

He wants to further build on this work through this project and highlighted 3 key ways that the DAA can support:

- Facilitate continued growth of local partnership working amongst DAA members.
- Support the challenging of and work with providers to increase opportunities for disabled people to participate in local activities.
- Continue to collect and promote positive stories that reflect disabled peoples participation in all levels of activity and the Charter for Change.

It was agreed that the networking section on the new website will be a useful tool to help facilitate and promote local partnerships as well as regional and national networks, and to promote the Charter.

The issue of sports ambassadors and advocates was raised. Chris mentioned that his organisation is in the process of training their first set of ambassadors.

Action 11: Ray to send through further good-practice examples of partnership working that could be uploaded on the website.

Action 12: SG members to consider signing up to the Charter for Change and let Ray know (copying in the secretariat).

Action 13: Ray and Chris to discuss this further outside of the meeting.

‘What disabled people say works in supporting their working lives’

A new project was proposed –using the new project ideas form on the website. Steering Group had read the proposal and it was agreed to take this forward as a DAA project. Sarah, Charlie, Chris, Gary and Ray wish to join the project group. The aim of this project is to Identify, promote and celebrate good practice by using members’ knowledge and experience. Andy stated that the purpose was to identify good practice by what disabled people say is helpful. The project aims to collect evidence on how disabled people overcome barriers in the workplace and publish this as a possible spring board.

It was agreed that this project should focus on work, not just employment, so as to include the experiences of disabled people that are self-employed. It was noted that any resulting report must be accessible.

It was suggested that it might be worth looking at confidence building prior to people going to the jobcentre. It was mentioned that DWP is undertaking a number of pathway trials in this area.

Action 14: Secretariat to add project to website post the election period and add project volunteers to group list.

Communication and Marketing

Kerry outlined the comms and marketing strategy for the DAA including the overarching aim to increase the reach and profile of the DAA. The three key objectives would be to:

1. raise the general awareness and profile of DAA and its key messages,
2. increase membership of DAA, and
3. Further the aims and objectives of the project groups, e.g. to increase sign up to the volunteering charter.

The group discussed whether the strategy should focus on the outcomes generated by the partnership working of the DAA rather than focusing on the DAA itself. It was agreed that it was important to grow the membership of the DAA and therefore an important part of the strategy would be to raise the profile of the DAA itself. However,

a new objective should be added on encouraging and celebrating the outcomes of partnership working.

The group discussed utilising the Pimp My Cause platform to help with the marketing of DAA. Naomi said that she would be happy to make the introductions.

It was suggested that the performance measures were extended in order to capture the reaction to/impact of DAA publications and blogs on other sites.

It was agreed that the DWP press office should not be used to help secure local media stories and that this reference should be removed. There was concern this would undermine the independence of DAA news stories.

The strategy was approved subject to the changes outlined above.

Action 15: Kerry to amend draft strategy paper accordingly.

Action 16: Kerry to discuss with Naomi contacting Pimp My Cause.

New Website

Debbie showed the group the latest version of the website. The blogs page has been disabled for the moment. The general lay out of the page is the same as the one shown at the previous meeting but with the suggested amendments made. There is a magnification feature and an accessible calendar. The website will be available for viewing by Friday.

Alliance Update

There has been a marked increase in traffic on the website and number of twitter followers. Detailed Statistics will be circulated with the note of the meeting.

AOB

On behalf of the steering group, Liz thanked Shanta for all the work she has done for the secretariat team and wished her good luck in her new job.