

Disability Action Alliance Steering Group Meeting 02.02.16

Attendees

Liz Sayce	Disability Rights UK
Stephen Brooks	Disability Hate Crime Network
Chris Smith	Disabled Golf Association
Charlie Willis	Independent Lives
Ray Ashley	English Federation of Disabled Sports
Jason Jaspal	DR UK
Nikunj Upadhyay	Barclays
Stephanie Harvey	ODI
Maxine Thompson	Secretariat team
Jacqui Wyatt	Secretariat team
Kerry Williams	Secretariat team
Naomi Marek	Sky Badger
Theresa Hodge	Surrey Coalition
Councillor Bill Bentely	LGA
Cam Nicoll	Digital Accessible Centre

Apologies

Julie Jaye Charles - Equalities National Council
Dan Sumners - Signature
Andy Rickell – ADWUK
Jemma Mindham - Volunteering Matters

Welcomes

The Steering Group welcomed Bill Bentely back to the group and expressed their appreciation for him getting back in touch since returning to office. Bill was pleased to be back and to re-engage with the group.

Results of Steering Group questionnaire on DAA Structure

Liz outlined the context for these discussions, in terms of the opportunity to set a new Strategy and thanked the sub-group for doing preparatory work over January so that the Steering Group could consider and decide on options today. The Sub-group had looked at all the options, narrowed them down to 2 and was making a recommendation today.

Stephanie outlined the purpose and results of the survey that was circulated to the Steering Group in December in relation to the DAA's USP, vision and measures of success. Stephanie referred to an original aim of the DAA, as set out in the Fulfilling Potential Strategy, which was to fill a perceived gap in the world of UK disability issues, which was the ability to network and build strong partnerships across sectors.

The survey concluded that there are three key USPs in the Steering Groups' view:

- the DAA's ability to bring DPULOs together with Government/public bodies,
- having the facilitation of cross sector collaborative working as a main aim,
- the DAA's 'non-lobbying' policy.

One response highlighted that it is the DAA's non-lobbying nature that enables government to work in close collaboration with the DAA to take action forward, even if individual members do lobby outside of the DAA's work.

Stephanie then outlined the nature of the work undertaken by Steering Group sub-group set-up over January to begin thinking about possible future DAA operating models/ways of working. She thanked Barclays Bank for hosting the meetings and for their valuable input, based on their experience of working with other similar groups. In considering options, the sub group took into account the following:

- The aspirations of/feedback from the membership.
- The sustainability of the model long-term.
- The timeframe of the one year grant.
- Resources available and how to best prioritise these.
- The natural evolution of the projects and networks.

Further work is required to evaluate the impact of projects/achievements and to consider how the new ways in which members are engaging can be built on to maximise what the DAA can do for its members.

Points made during the discussion include:

- The purpose of the DAA is to bring together organizations to take action.
- It should continue to be a non-lobbying united voice.
- It must maintain strong lines of communication with Government and other public bodies.
- It will be important to grow the membership and encourage more engagement from the wider membership.
- We must ensure that the DAA is financially viable long-term.
- More action at a grass-roots level is something we must aim for.

The future Operating Model of the DAA

Stephanie summarised the subgroup's thinking in relation to the DAA's USP as to provide opportunities to build partnerships, across sectors and core-business interests, allowing member organizations to deliver improvements for disabled people that they might not have been able to deliver alone.

Evidence being considered also includes analysis of how the website is being used and feedback/correspondence that the secretariat has had with the wider membership, i.e. – many more members wanted to participate in certain projects than we were able to accommodate, and this is seen as a lost opportunity by the Steering Group.

It was proposed that the vision going forward should be: "Building communities of practice at all levels and across all sectors, to take action"

Kerry outlined an initial proposed model, which is based on two key elements;

- **Headline theme/s:** a theme/s on which to galvanise and build communities of practice amongst members and other relevant organisations – this/these

could be used to attract increased profile and potential funding. These are likely to be based on the themes of current projects.

- An interactive gateway portal: a LinkedIn style interactive web platform that enables networking and sharing of information between members – more automation to allow members to better network/partner with other members by removing the need to go through the secretariat team and could support organisations to more easily find those with similar aims who are looking to partner up.

It was explained that headline theme/s would be taken forward in by the DAA Steering Group in collaboration with group of interested members, with an evaluation of the work undertaken periodically; the wider membership would be encouraged to share stories, good practice and information relating to the theme/s.

In addition, members would still be encouraged to continue work on other themes/subject areas through the development of relevant communities of practice. This work would be supported by the DAA though the Steering Group and secretariat may not be as involved as at present. If this is taken forward, the intention would be that the new web platform would enable this approach, so as to allow as many themes as the members want to be taken forward.

Points made during the discussion include:

- The sub-group felt that the model would offer members more opportunities and provide a better chance of making the DAA sustainable in the long term.
- The wider membership should be consulted ahead of the next meeting in May on what themes the DAA should focus on – this was agreed.
- It would be important to ensure that the model facilitated partnership working at the local level, particularly between public bodies such as local authorities and experts in disability from DUPLOs.
- The success measures in the meeting paper were too ambitious for a 12 month period.
- The success measures should not focus on growing the membership at this moment in time, but instead on increasing membership engagement.

AP 1 : Kerry to revise the paper on the operating model in light of the above comments.

AP2 : Stephanie and Maxine to contact Cam, Naomi, Charlie, Theresa to discuss a first cut of what functionality the new web site should have and other user considerations.

AP3: Liz, Jason, Cam and Steph will meet to agree a timetable for the website development.

ODI Membership of DAA

Kerry reminded the group of the ways of working that the DAA would need to maintain in the future to ensure that ODI can continue its membership and involvement in the Steering Group. This followed a request at the last Steering Group meeting for clarification on this issue.

It was noted that the ODI could not be involved in the governance arrangements of an income-generating organisation with a legal personality, i.e. - the ODI could not be a standing member of the Steering Group/Board. Other public bodies may also find themselves in a similar position, but further advice would be required on a case by case basis. However there may be other ways that the ODI could stay connected that would be worth investigating were the DAA to explore income-generation; the group was encouraged not to let this stunt considerations of the future of the DAA.

It was noted that, as representatives of the Crown, ODI staff cannot take part in forums that appear to be involved in lobbying and/or political activity.

The group agreed that at the moment the DAA is committed to the ODI remaining a member of the DAA and part of the governance arrangements.

Governance Arrangements

Stephanie invited the group to consider the governance arrangements going forward. There is a need to review what governance arrangements should be put in place to oversee the next phase of the DAA. The group discussed what the future governance structure should look like, what skills are needed and what skills the group already has.

The following points were agreed during the discussion;

- Cross sector representation should be kept, with a move to ensure private sector representation.
- There should be opportunities for other members to put themselves forward.
- Skills sets for those involved in governance should include business development, communication and marketing skills.
- There should be clearly defined roles and responsibilities for members of the Steering Group, especially if this skills-based approach is taken.
- There should be an audit of the skills and experience of the Steering Group members to see if we have the right skills already in this group.
- Changes to the Steering Group should not be rushed as it is important to maintain continuity during this period of change.
- Governance arrangements should be a priority at the May meeting.

AP4: Stephanie to circulate a skills matrix and role descriptions to group.

AP5: SG members to then send an outline of their skills and experience to Stephanie.

Communications

Stephanie outlined the proposed narrative for the communications package for the announcement on 15 February. Between now and the 15th of Feb the secretariat agreed to compile all statements, case studies and Q&A and to speak to key stakeholders. Following the public announcement, the secretariat and the DRUK will begin to consider how and when it will consult with the wider DAA membership. The plan is to use surveys, invite comment throughout communications and to host a member's event in May. Thank you to Barclays for providing a space to host the event.

AP6 : Secretariat team and DR UK to coordinate COMMS activity.

Secretariat Update

The majority of the previous Action Points have been closed. The remaining will form part of the transition period for the website.

Number of new organisations joined the Alliance	1	Total : 408
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Number if new organisations pledged to DAA Volunteering Charter	11	Total : 112
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In terms of our online presence, the secretariat reported:

- **1098** Twitter followers, compared to **982** on 29/10/15.
- Since launching the **Quick Links page** on 19/10 it has received **78 views**.
- Since launching the **Volunteering resource page** on 3/12 it has received **42 views**.

AP7: SG members to add the DAA twitter handle to their tweets to enable the DAA to retweet.

Before the close of the meeting Liz and the rest of the Steering Group thanked the ODI secretariat team for the fantastic team work and their can do attitude. The next meeting will be hosted in ODI and ODI will provide refreshments, however the new secretariat team will be in place.