

## **Borders Lived Experience Forum: Terms of Reference**

### **Introduction**

The Borders Lived Experience Forum (forum) aims to give a voice to people with lived experience of alcohol and drugs to improve and evaluate service and system design in order that we improve services and the outcomes of people who use them. To feedback on the needs within recovery communities and to make suggestions on how to improve services.

The work and findings from this forum are reported to the [Alcohol and Drugs Partnership \(ADP\)](#) and this forum is considered a sub-group of the ADP.

Meetings and papers for the forum are maintained by We Are With You and the ADP Support Team and emailed out to members in time with meetings.

### **Scope of the forum**

The forum provides a mechanism to:

- Contribute to the evaluation of the local ADP Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan
- Influence the development of future service planning
- Influence the understanding of the needs of people with lived experience from alcohol and drugs and wider services
- Contribute to national and local consultations and engagement processes
- Exchange relevant information

### **Membership**

Membership is open to anyone aged 16 and over who have lived or living experience of alcohol and drugs harms. This includes carers and family members.

The following officers also support the group and provide secretariat support:

- We Are With You Representation:
  - Community Engagement Worker
  - Operations Manager
- ADP Support Team representation
  - ADP Co-ordinator

All new members contact information will be collated by the Community Engagement Officer and a new members pack made available.

Non members may be invited to attend the forum but will not be included in any decisions being made by the forum.

### **How the forum works**

The forum meets quarterly at the Focus Centre, Galashiels between 11.00am and 12.30pm. Meeting dates are agreed at the start of the calendar year and reminders are circulated following each quarterly meeting.

The forum is able to convene longer meetings in response to particular pieces of work (e.g. development sessions, strategy consultation).

Any conflict of interest will be declared and recorded at the start of all meetings.

The forum will have a 12 month rotating chairperson and vice chair. Secretariat will be provided by We Are With You Operations Manager.

The secretariat will request any agenda items 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Agendas, other papers and minutes on behalf of the forum will be circulated 1 week prior to the meeting. At the moment this secretariat comprises of 'officers. It is hoped that one or more group members will also join this group. The secretariat meets approximately one week before group meeting to agree agenda and subsequent papers.

### **Decision Making**

The forum will need a minimum of 4 members to be in attendance for any decisions. If the forum numbers are below this number an email will be circulated with the minutes and it is the responsibility of the members to review and respond withing the required timescales.

### **Principles of how we work together.**

The following principles of how we work together reflect the integrity of the group to ensure all members have an equal voice in a welcoming, safe and professional environment.

- All members will be treated with dignity and respect, where all opinions are valued and treated equally
- Opinions and suggestions from members can be challenged but not the individual
- The forum will be a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Confidentiality will be respected at all times by all members
- All new members will be given a new members pack and will have the opportunity to meet with the chair to discuss the forum , its purpose and roles withing the group
- All members can reclaim incurred travel expenses. To reclaim mileage, mileage forms must be completed, mileage is paid at 45p per mile. To reclaim bus or train travel tickets must be presented to be copied for records.
- Refreshments will be provided at all forum meetings.
- It is members responsibility to come prepared for the meeting.
- Members must not attend the lived experience forum under the influence of drugs or alcohol.