

## MSIG Committee Meeting Minutes from 06/11/2018 Meeting

### Dates for your diary:

**MSIG Assemblies:** 4<sup>th</sup> of December (AGM); 5<sup>th</sup> of March; 4<sup>th</sup> of June; 3<sup>rd</sup> of Sep.

Venue: Quaker Hall (QH), Guildford, GU1 4LH. 8pm start.

**MSIG Committee: Wednesdays:** 6<sup>th</sup> of February; 1<sup>th</sup> of May; 7<sup>th</sup> of August; 6<sup>th</sup> of Nov.

Venue: United Reformed Church, Portsmouth Road, Guildford. 7.30pm start.

**Region dates:** Workshop: Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> of January 10.30am.

Venue: London Meed School, Chanctonbury Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 9YQ

### 1. Attendance:

a. Alice, Stef, Dina, Peter, John, Marie, Eddy, Catherine, Yvette, Shaun, Ian, Barbara.

### 2. Apologies: Sue D., Michael, Jason, Darren.

### 3. Structure of MSIG Committee

- a. No other Intergroup (IG) Alice has heard of has a committee structure like MSIG; some have a PI committee, some have a steering committee, and others have no committee - just Assemblies. MSIG's committee functions as a combination of a PI committee and a Steering committee. During the MSIG Conscience meeting in September questions about PI activities at group level was raised by a GSR. As a result, Elizabeth has begun to undertake a lot of new activities which as it turns out were not compatible with her health or personal life and she has therefore stepped down from the role of PI liaison. Alice had thought we could try a new committee format in November, but it was now not possible without a PI Liaison. Alice asked committee if they are happy to continue as we have done. If Liaison Officers need more time they could choose themselves to meet before or after the committee meeting. During Alice's time in service for MSIG, there had been no extra PI meetings, but there could be if that was desired. Barbara inquired whether Jonny conducted separate PI meetings and Alice replied that he may have liked to, but it requires additional time of other Liaisons. Zara had also wanted extra PI meetings. John said he didn't want extra committee meetings, and Alice said this was usually the case. Extra PI liaising and meetings depends on the officers at the time. And how/if they want to work together. Part of the issue is that now there are so many other PI roles - health, employment, young peoples, probation and criminal justice etc - there can seem little left for a PI liaison to do!
- b. Marie inquired why Elizabeth stepped down given her previous enthusiasm. Alice replied that Elizabeth hadn't guided her as to what to say to committee and she'd therefore like to leave it at that.
- c. Ian inquired whether it didn't state in the AA structure handbook that PI officers should meet. Alice confirmed that this was the case but MSIG has a PI/steering committee already. The Handbook also says each intergroup structures things differently. Extra meetings depend on the officers in service at that time. Eddy said that for his ASLO position it would help if he had some terms of reference for it.
- d. Yvette informed the group that she attends a non-AA steering group that plans treatment for alcoholics in Surrey. Police, GPS, Employment centres, etc, are all present. Yvette receives several calls afterwards and that's how Amber got in touch. Perhaps a spreadsheet where all those who are in contact with the wider community could log their activities? Eddy replied that we shouldn't be too precious about overlapping on activities. Perhaps PI is more of a coordinating role? Alice

thought that perhaps PI was more of a triage role to direct inquiries to the right person?

- e. Catherine suggested that the AA Structure handbook says to work through a service committee which is the MSIG committee in this case. Alice felt that hopefully the LO reports are of use for this purpose even though not every LO would necessarily remember – or have read – what a LO put into their report a couple of years back. For now, Alice, suggested, we work through the officers that we have. John inquired whether there's been a problem? Alice replied that the question was whether we needed a separate PI committee. Alice added that we all need to be mindful of what other LOs are posting in their reports and are telling us during committee meetings and email exchanges, so all are aware of activities.

- i. **Action: All** to send Stef LO reports by Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> of November.

#### 4. Agenda for December Assembly

- a. If any officers would like to see anything specific on the Agenda, please let Stef and Alice know.
  - i. **Action: All** officers to let Stef and Alice know if they'd like to see anything specific.
- b. Yvette stated that she will bring prepared wallets with her for Assembly and would like to talk about them for 5 minutes. Alice agreed and reminded Yvette to stick to 5 minutes as time is precious at Assembly.
- c. Ian needs 5 – 10 minutes to present the accounts.

#### 5. Elections

- a. Three people are standing for election at December Assembly. AA CVs are as follows:
  - 1. Shaun – co-opted for Probation:
    - a. Shaun is 6 years sober in September and has always been in service including teas, secretary, GSR etc. Shaun also has a sponsor and sponsees. Probation was part of Shaun's journey and he feels passionate about it.
  - 2. Darren O. – co-opted for Prisons:
    - a. Darren had his last drink in 2002 and his first AA meeting was in prison. He was released in 2003 and between 2004-2011 served as prison liaison officer for MSIG. After a 7-year break Darren is keen to take the service on again.
  - 3. Young People – Sarah S.:
    - a. Sarah is 31 years old and has been sober for 2 years and 9 months. Her home group is Sandhurst and she's right on the MSIG and TVI border and attends meetings in both regions. Sarah has been greeter, tea person, literature, secretary, telephone responder. She has a sponsor with good sobriety and has been through the steps. Her sponsor is fully supportive of Sarah putting herself forward for this role. Jon E has offered his support and encouragement in taking on the role and has said he will be there to help if needed. The

outgoing YPLO Zara approached Sarah about applying as she's volunteered to help with Youth in the past.

- b. Sarah's story is on the mid-surrey YP website. She first found the Rooms at age 19 so has experience of being very young in AA.

6. Vacancies

- a. PI (vacant)
- b. Share (vacant)
- c. Employment (from Mar '19)
  - i. **Action: Stef** to put on Assembly agenda for Dec.

7. Ratification

- a. All officers need to be ratified in December.
  - i. **Action: Alice** will ask for all officers to be ratified and **Stef** will ask for Alice to be ratified in her role as Chair.

8. Officer's proposed budgets for 2019

- a. We haven't previously sought approval for LO's budgets in the past, but Alice feels it would be good for GSRs to have visibility of budgets. Currently the LO budgets are '£250 / year-don't-need-to-check'-budgets meaning that £250 are allocated to each LO and they can spend against receipts at their discretion to get the job done. If it exceeds this figure, then it needs to be approved by the treasurer before spending. Barbara stated that this could include annual York visits to attend sub-committees but that some LOs will require more than £250. Yvette agreed and stated that the starter packs cost £1.50 each and that she's been giving out loads. Alice advised that the print cost for the wallets was £500 plus we also have the print cost of the 'Where to Find' cards each quarter. Ian stated that some LOs don't require any budget. Eddy felt that we need to have an audit trail if we are to assume that each LO can spend up to £250 without requiring further approval. Alice injected that we don't just give LOs £250 – the LOs always provide receipts. She then enquired whether Barbara needed a storage locker for all archived materials. Barbara replied that she wishes to keep all materials at the house for now so that she has easy access to them.
- b. Alice inquired how we could present this at Assembly and suggested that Ian presents it as treasurer such as 'LOs have a budget of £250 to spend and need to ask if they need more'. Ian replied that in his experience you don't give an allocation but instead ask them how much they require. Eddy added that he's been in the post for six months now and while he hasn't spent anything, yet he will do if he needs to go to York. Alice inquired whether Ian was happy with this arrangement and Ian replied that he was.
- c. Alice also added that some LOs may need more and asked Barbara if she needs to have a greater allocation set aside. Barbara replied that she didn't. Peter then stated that he didn't need any funds. Catherine suggested that we say we've 'ring-fenced' this amount for each LO and that they can claim against that with receipts? Ian replied that he couldn't say who needs what at this point. Yvette inquired whether Tony didn't use to sign-post what each LO had spent. Alice asked Yvette whether she could include in her report what she had spent in 2018. Dina inquired whether this

meant that all LOs need to include in their reports what they've spent. Alice replied that it didn't need to be broken down for GSRs. Dina replied that she pays for domain hosting and that she hasn't claimed it yet. Ellie confirmed to her that she could claim this. Alice advised Dina to send her receipts to Ian to be reimbursed. Marie interjected that Tony had a spreadsheet with the figures of what everyone had spent. Ian wasn't certain who the LOs are and Stef agreed to send Ian the spreadsheet with LOs names and roles.

- i. **Action: Stef** to send list of LOs to Ian.
- ii. **Action: Dina** to send her receipts to Ian to be reimbursed.
- iii. **Action: All** to put anticipated costs into their reports for Ian to have visibility. For costs already incurred please only send your receipts to Ian for reimbursement if you haven't already done so.

#### 9. Officer reports

- a. Archivist - Barbara has been the archivist since 2011 and this position doesn't rotate out. Barbara reviews the committee meeting minutes and collects the history of AA in mid-Surrey and the UK. She receives items from members after they pass on if they are relevant to AA history in the UK. Recently she received Share magazines from 1972 and noted that even then there was a call for more child-friendly meetings and Barbara was saddened that this hasn't changed to this day. Stef asked if this can be changed and Alice replied that all meetings are autonomous. Barbara mentioned that Friday Merrow meeting is child-friendly but the meeting turned a mother with child away. Alice updated her that there was originally a Thursday morning child friendly meeting in Merrow. John inquired whether people really need to be DBS checked to look after children at a meeting. Barbara replied that this can be a requirement of the venue and the meeting or AA itself. Catherine added that if a parent asks another person to look after their child then this is fine as the parent transfers responsibility for care-taking onto the other person. If however the meeting advertises that they have someone there who will look after the children then this person will need to be DBS checked as the meeting takes responsibility for the children through the person they've put in charge. Alice stated that groups need to decide whether they would like to be child-friendly. Catherine, Eddy and Dina all gave examples of meetings that have allowed children in the past.
- b. Health LO – Yvette informed us that the Frimley Park meeting has been going since July and now has 50 attendees. Royal Surrey Hospital may want their own meeting. Yvette will speak to Antony on Nov 26<sup>th</sup> at the open meeting. Yvette also has parking permits for this meeting if anyone wants one.
  1. **Action: All** to let Yvette know if they'd like a parking permit for Nov 26<sup>th</sup>.
  - ii. Yvette spoke about Trish and others who've gone to various GP practices and handed out wallets. Yvette encouraged all to take some wallets for their November PI events. Weybridge Saturday morning's meeting was attended by Rev. Sydney who loved the meeting and took a pack away. Alice added that with regard to hospital or any other meetings – two or more AA members can set up a meeting – so it isn't necessarily for the IG to decide or

even be consulted. Ideally, they wouldn't want a Monday as the Monday column on the WTF cards is the busiest.

- c. Schools LO – John informed us that it's all going well on the school front. 2 talks are planned for George Abbott School in December and 2 more for January. Tiffins Boy's school in Kingston has also been in touch and John would be pleased to give these talks but was uncertain because they are outside of MSIG. Barbara and Alice both said to do the talks but to let South West London IG know that John's doing them. Peter confirmed that there have been issues with IGs working across their boundaries but so long as the other IG knows it's not a problem.
  - i. **Action: John** to let SWIG know about the Tiffin's talks.
- d. Armed Services LO – Eddy says it's been quiet. Eddy will be attending a Unit Health Fair on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December. Eddy suggested to possibly bring Sarah to work with the under-30s. Eddy agreed. Alice requested that Sue is kept in the loop as the original contact with Deepcut Barracks came from Sue.
  - i. **Action: Eddy** to ask Sarah to come along to the Unit fair and to keep Sue in the loop.
    - 1. Eddy also spoke about the fact that a brief paragraph on 'Is Alcohol costing you more than money? ... ' will be included by his contacts in Aldershot HQ in any email correspondence internally in November. Eddy also asked whether there is a regional ASLO and Marie said she's find out.
      - a. **Action: Marie** to advise Eddy of Regional ASLO.
- e. Secretary – Stef informed Ian that as secretary she's responsible for producing agendas and minutes and act as a first port of call for GSRs.
- f. Electronic Communications LO – Dina told Ian that she maintains the website and Alice commented that it looks good. Dina also said she'd like to have more tent cards printed.
  - i. **Action: Dina** and **Alice** to talk about printing more tent cards.
- g. Probation LO – Shaun told us about the meeting that's taking place at the Probation offices every other Wednesday. He would like to get this onto the WTF cards if possible and onto the website. It would also be helpful to have the preamble printed in large print for their meeting room. Alice had been told that in the past the probation office did not want AA meetings there advertised. However, they can be put on our website, as they used to be.
  - i. **Action: Shaun** to discuss w/ Catherine, Dina and Alice to get probation meeting onto WFTs, website and get preamble printed.
- h. Region Rep – Marie informed Ian that there are three region reps who attend regional and intergroup meetings and report back and forth. The September SE Region workshop was well attended by MSIG with 16 people. The treasurer position and conference delegate is coming up soon. The next region meeting is on Nov 25<sup>th</sup>. We discussed whether to let all new meetings around our border join MSIG. Alice informed us all that we should encourage new meetings on our borders to join the neighbouring IGs as we have 72 meetings now! She informed committee that Virginia Water Fri meeting recently moved outside of MSIG boundaries but decided to stay part of MSIG and we allowed this. Alice suggested that we possibly raise

discussion about MSIG's size again in March or June. Barbara added that we are an effective IG. Eddy stated that when there's no time for any GSRs to talk with a group size of 60 then it really wouldn't be different with a group size of 90. Alice replied that with 36 GSRs (if MSIG were to be split in half) you could have discussions. Marie added that she recently went to North East Surrey IG and it's a very small IG. All GSRs did speak but there was nothing of grave relevance. Alice suggested that we inform Assembly that there are now 72 groups and we could consider splitting it. John inquired whether there's a minimum number of groups to form an IG and Alice replied that there isn't – it was asked as a Conference question recently and the answer was that each IG should decide for themselves. Marie stated that she tried to get people together a couple of years ago to discuss size and splitting but no one was interested.

- i. Telephone LO – Peter is also Regional Telephone LO. BT have recently informed us that all of our lines are moving to the cloud immediately. York has now instructed all Regions and IGs to switch over immediately. It's been a difficult few weeks as this is the most significant change in 16 years. It affects the way calls are split out to responders etc. This needs to be coordinated across regions. North Down switched two weeks ago and it's gone well. We'll switch in a few weeks. Responders will be automatically logged in. Our main priority is that we don't drop any calls. Alice inquired whether Peter was happy with MSIG responders and Peter stated that all is well except the switch to cloud. We should also have an idea of whether the Surrey advertiser ad has had an effect on calls to the helpline sometime after November. We've had more relatives phone and we give them Al-Anons number.
  - j. Treasurer – Ian stated that he's had a very good hand-over from Tony. The annual accounts have been audited and will be presented at Assembly and Ian will need 5 minutes at Assembly. There is a problem with the signatories at HSBC. Ian has applied for the mandate 3 weeks ago. Ian believes that Tony and Alice are on the mandate. Barbara added that she'd be happy to be added to the mandate given that the archivist doesn't rotate out.
    - i. Action: Ian to find out who's on the mandate.
      - 1. Ian currently can't make payments. We have a bank balance of £4,672 (after the ad cost) and we have approximately £2K incoming funds/month. Ian is currently working on the budget and wants to determine how much we can send to region. Alice advised to factor in £250/LO plus print costs (LOs: PI, Health, Schools, Employment, YPLO, Archivist, ALSO, Probation, Prisons, Share). Total to hold back: £2,500 for LOs, WTF print costs: £1K.
  - k. Vice Chair – Catherine works primarily on workshops and WTF cards. The Oct 30<sup>th</sup> workshop had 32 people in attendance with 3 great speakers.
10. MSIG committee meeting days – Mon, Tue or Wed?
- a. Alice has asked committee which date works best for most committee members and the answer was 'Wednesday'. In 2019 committee meetings will be held on a Wednesday.
    - i. **Action: Stef and Alice** to make contact w/ United Reform church for room bookings.

11. The next workshop will be in January on conference questions. What date's best? Alice advised that Bob is in charge of this one and for Catherine to liaise w/ Bob. Catherine also added that our IG includes an AA trustee and Alice replied that we shouldn't specifically involve the trustee. Catherine asked whether any evenings are good for committee members and Alice replied that most of us said Mondays or Wednesdays. Fliers to be available at December Assembly (and a date for the Agenda).
  - i. **Action: Catherine** to liaise w/ Bob and have date available by Assembly.
12. Close – we closed the meeting in the traditional way with the Serenity Prayer led by Stef.