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# INVOLVE

## Minutes of the Empowerment Sub-group Meeting

Thursday 14 December 2006

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**Present:** Mary Nettle, Susie Parr, Kate Sainsbury (chair), Roger Steel (minutes), Deborah Tallis

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### 1. Welcome, apologies, introductions, declarations of conflict of interest and ground rules

Kate Sainsbury welcomed the group. Apologies were received from Karen Collins, Sarah Carr and Rachel Purtell. There were no conflicts of interest declared.

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### 2. Notes of meeting held on 12 October 2006

The labels on the diagram in item 5.1 should read 'Research Environment' and 'INVOLVE's Values'.

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### 3. Matters arising

#### 3.1 Public leaflet

This is currently being piloted and is proving popular.

#### 3.2 Black and Ethnic Minority (BEM) work

The £2000 agreed as a contribution to support bursary places at the 'Inclusion & Exclusion' Conference has been transferred to the Race Equality Foundation. INVOLVE is badged as a sponsor on conference publicity, and Roger has now joined the planning group. The conference will provide a helpful springboard for

developing a BEM research strategy group assuming there is enough interest. The conference takes place on 29 January 2007.

There was a discussion about the length of time some development work takes because it is about influencing and persistence. This kind of work does not necessarily fit neatly into the INVOLVE budget cycle. There is a need to underwrite development work started with a continued commitment from the group. The group discussed the potential of networking with a wider range of organisations who have been working in the area of BEM – for example, SPRU at the University of York, and the University of Central Lancashire.

**Action: Roger to continue working with the Social Services Research Group and the Race Equality Foundation as a way of forming a foundation for a wider strategy group.**

### **3.3 Contributing to the research agenda**

It was hoped that this would be tabled as a discussion item for the full Group in December, but due to time constraints this has not been possible, and so Roger will prepare a short paper in readiness for the March 2007 meeting after speaking to Lester Firkins regarding the James Lind Alliance (JLA). It was thought that the paper should focus on the work of JLA and then discuss areas that still were not being addressed.

**Action: Roger to start the paper in January 2007.**

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## **4. Operational Plans for 2006/2007**

### **4.1 Accessibility**

Roger has recently circulated the initial draft of the Accessibility Strategy developed with Susie Parr. Email comments would be welcome at this stage, before a further draft is developed. There was a discussion about the shared responsibilities in accessibility, especially at events like the INVOLVE Conference.

**Action: The Empowerment sub-group to respond by email to the initial draft by 10 January 2007.**

**Susie and Roger to develop the strategy further following feedback and to circulate a second draft in January.**

## **4.2 Information Pack**

The content of the Public Involvement Information Pack (PIP) will shortly be laid out in full by the designers. This includes accessibility considerations. The finished product is to be in the form of four booklets, the first and second covering different aspects of involvement in research – from the theoretical to the practical, the third will have contacts for getting involved and the fourth will be a glossary. It is due to be published in March so the spend will not be carried over into next year. Feedback from current work will be sought before further developments in other media are considered.

## **4.3 Good practice leaflet**

Roger thanked all those who responded to the initial draft for this leaflet in 'DL' format. There had been a suggestion from the Support Unit that the format could be an A4 information sheet rather than a DL folded leaflet. The sub-group thought that the guide could be produced in both formats. The sub-group agreed that following feedback from the Support Unit the adjusted draft could be externally circulated for feedback from researchers, research organisations, and service users.

**Action: Roger to develop draft 2 for external circulation and feedback.**

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## **5. Budget**

Roger explained the latest budget figures. There is a substantial overspend on the Public Involvement Information Pack, but underspends on the good practice leaflet and accessibility. Overall this shows a projected overspend of £2,380 by the Empowerment sub-group this year, but this is better than an overall underspend. The Empowerment overspend is offset by underspends in other sub-group budgets so that the overall INVOLVE spend should be on target.

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## **6. Development of Strategic Plan**

### **6.1 Progress since the October meeting**

The main points from the discussion at the full Group meeting in October will be put into a draft strategy and circulated with membership for comment and then be taken forward to a chair's meeting in March 2007.

**Action: Empowerment members to be ready to comment on the document when it is circulated.**

## **6.2 Empowerment sub-group terms of reference**

Following discussion at the October Empowerment sub-group meeting, Roger has redrafted the terms of reference. The sub-group agreed that the wording was fine.

**Action: Roger to take the terms of reference to Nick for sign off.**

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## **7. Plans for 2007/2008**

The sub-group discussed plans for the coming financial year.

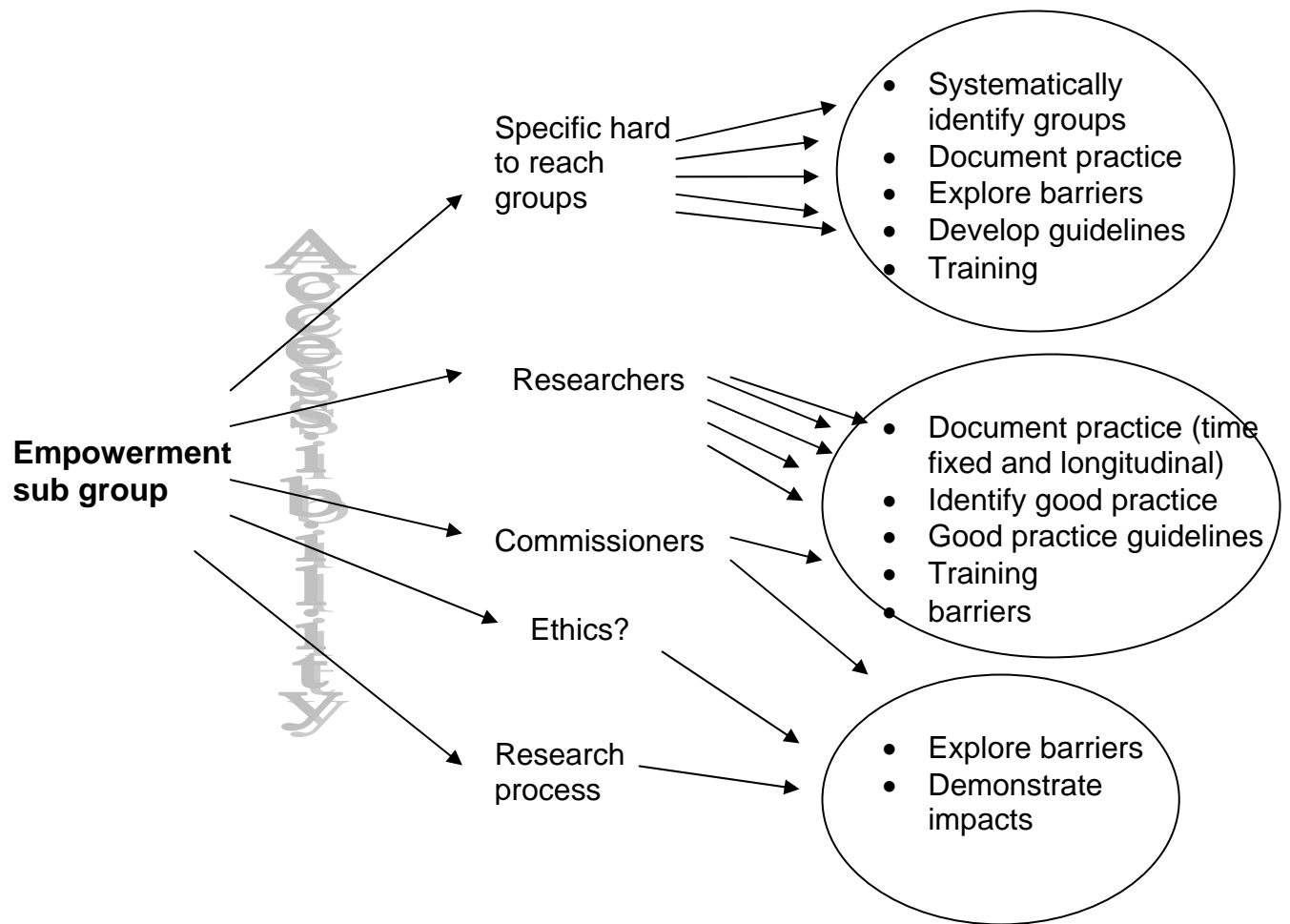
### **7.1 There are commitments to:**

- a) Accessibility
- b) BEM development work

### **7.2 Other ideas were:**

- c) The need for a clear statement about what INVOLVE is, who 'we' are, and a description of our history. More communication with the outside world about this was thought to be needed as there were frequent misperceptions. It was thought that this should be an information sheet or similar.
- d) A project identifying empowerment issues for researchers and practitioners
- e) Collect and publish examples of user controlled research
- f) Develop a coherent plan about identifying seldom heard groups. Find out what research is going on, and target groups to find out what difference their involvement makes, and utilise examples of good practice.
- g) Understand barriers and enablers in knowledge transfer practice when research results are published. What prevents research being used and what helps it to be used in services? This project could be conducted in collaboration with other organisations such as Research In Practice.
- h) Clarify for INVOLVE the relationship with industry

**7.3 What the Empowerment Group is trying to achieve might best be described in the following diagram:**



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**8. Any other business**

Concerns were expressed that INVOLVE was becoming too bureaucratic. Whilst there was an understanding that it was necessary to be more transparent and accountable because of the increasing profile of INVOLVE and external requirements due to legislation, it was thought that contributing to the work of INVOLVE by Group members was becoming more difficult for individuals. There were concerns that it meant that more vulnerable people and groups were being overlooked.

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