



Deaf Sector Partnership Communications Protocol

Communications Protocol

Overview

The Deaf Sector Partnership (DSP) will use an asset –based approach to ensure that the all the communications are fit for purpose, inclusive, person-centred and rights-based. The DSP will also ensure that any communications provided by members of the partnership are fit for purpose and are evaluated on a regular basis.

Derek Todd (DSP Co-ordinator) will have an overview to ensure that the communication methods used and the messages produced are always a quality product that delivers the messages in an appropriate manner to the right audience – DSP members, people whose first or preferred language is BSL, their families and/or carers, and both local and national public bodies, including Scottish Government.

The DSP has agreed to work to these principles:

- Openness and transparency
- Fairness and collaboration.

All information to be shared across the DSP will be sent to the **Derek**, as the **DSP Co-ordinator**. Those responsible for gathering data from other members of the DSP or from public bodies will ensure that Derek knows what is happening to prevent duplication of work.

Inclusion

As a Partnership, we need to be as inclusive as possible of colleagues, people whose first or preferred language is BSL, the public bodies, and members of the public. This is good practice and we should be showing what good practice looks like as an example to others. We will use the principles of inclusive communication which promote good practice – for more information, go to <http://deafsectorpartnership.net/resources/>.

- We will use BSL and English for our meetings with BSL/English Interpreters and for public-facing information.
- Meetings will be in fully accessible venues with working hearing loops and Electronic Notetakers.
- Everyone's language/communication support needs will be met.
- Meetings with people whose first or preferred language is BSL will be in fully accessible venues. We will make sure that the communicate support needs of BSL users who may have additional language/communication support needs are met.
- Information will go out in accessible formats – hard copy (Word, PDFs), plain language, visual clips, on social media in its widest sense, email, e-bulletin and websites.
- For more information about accessible information, go to <http://deafsectorpartnership.net/resources/>.

Everyone should receive the same messages at the same time. The delivery of these messages needs to be accessible as well as the messages themselves.

The Deaf Sector Partnership has a number of **Online Services**. When these were set up, individual organisations in the DSP had, out of necessity, individual control over set up and content. Now that the DSP is established, the monitoring of content will be a responsibility of all the DSP members, who should report any issues to the DSP Co-ordinator.

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The DSP will provide guidelines for the use of the DSP **Website, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn services.**

The guidelines will be published on the DSP Website and the use of these will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.

The same messages will be shared across all the **online services.** Feedback use will be monitored. Comments or questions will be sent on to Derek Todd as DSP Co-ordinator in the first instance. Derek will decide where these have to go for recording and/or answering.

- The DSP **Website** will provide information for public bodies whose staff cannot access Facebook. The DSP **Facebook** will provide information for Deaf and Deafblind BSL users, and will also provide a forum for debate and information sharing as the work of the BSL National Advisory Group progresses.
- The DSP **YouTube** account will be used to upload BSL clips that provide information and will support the DSP Website.
- The DSP **Twitter** account will be used to support the DSP Website and Facebook by notifying people that they have been updated with information.
- The DSP **LinkedIn** account will have a similar function in that it can be used to communicate with public bodies that may not use other forms of social media.

There will be times when the Deaf Sector Partnership will be working with other organisations, departments of the Scottish Government, public bodies and/or companies in the private sector. This is part of the "**whole team**"

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approach” as detailed in the Work Programme for the Partnership. It is equally important at these times that we all remember that we are a Partnership and that the views of the Partnership take priority over the views of individual organisations/people.

Internal Information

Emails:

All our communications need to **be proportionate**. There will be times when it is **not** appropriate to send an email including everyone. This is not about deliberately excluding anyone; it is about being balanced in what is shared and with whom. If the email is sent **to you**, then you should action it. If you are copied in – **c.c.’d** – the email is for information only and there is no need to reply.

The majority of emails that are for **all the DSP members** should be sent to **Derek** (DSP Co-ordinator) **for circulation**. Derek will make sure that DSP members respond to the person sending the email if this is required. There **may** be times when an email will be sent from another member of the DSP to all members, but this should be kept to a minimum.

There will be times when there will be an email that includes everyone in the partnership. It is **not necessary** to “reply to all” for all these emails. Please use some discretion here.

Not all emails have to be sent to **Hilary Third**. In fact, Hilary needs certain pieces of information but **doesn’t need the day-to-day** information. Nor should we expect Hilary to sign off pieces of work. This is **not** her role. All members of the DSP must remember this.

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If you are **not sure** who might have the **answer to a question** you have, please **email Derek** (DSP Co-ordinator) in the first instance. He will **signpost you** to the person who will be best placed to give you an answer.

Public Information

Public information about

- the Deaf Sector Partnership;
- the work that we are doing on the BSL (Scotland) Act that is to be shared with
 - people whose first or preferred language is BSL;
 - the listed public bodies;
 - the Scottish Government ;
 - and/or the public;

will be moderated by SCoD so the messages are clear and consistent.

This is to make sure everyone is getting the same messages no matter the source.

If you are unsure that the information you are sharing is “on-message”, send it to Derek or Mandy for support and/or guidance.

All the information will be translated internally into BSL. Deafblind Scotland will ensure that it is accessible to Deafblind people.

NDCS/Deaf Action will advise on what is appropriate for young people and will help with accessibility.

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All the information, whether in BSL, English or other accessible formats, will be owned by the Partnership. It will be available through a number of entry points that will be decided collectively by the members. The Partnership will have a website and social media that is shared equally. All information that is produced by members of the Partnership for the Partnership will be branded with the Partnership logo before being shared externally. We will continue to develop and improve our communication process and ensure the information produced is of a high quality and is fully accessible.

Part of our work as a Partnership is to develop a bank of BSL/English information and resources that will be a legacy from the Partnership and support the work that the public bodies will be doing to make the BSL (Scotland) Act a reality. This will be stored centrally on an online hub.

Agreement, compromise and possible disagreement

As a Partnership, we need to work together and share the same messages. It may be that there are some things discussed that we all agree on; others may need some members to compromise in order to get an agreement.

However, there may also be times when there is no agreement or compromise possible. If this should occur, we agree that **Neil (VAF)** and if necessary, another person from VAF, will take the disagreement “off table” to look at possible solutions/compromises. If this dispute resolution does not work, **only Neil** will raise the matter with Hilary. Hilary will have the final decision in order to move forward. Hilary **should not** be involved at the start or “just in case” as this is not appropriate.

Project Leads

It is the responsibility of each project Lead to keep everyone involved in their own project/organisation up-to-date with partnership information and to share the information produced with their own members.

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Reporting

We will use the VAF Programme Report **template and guidance for reporting** each quarter. Mandy from SCoD will use each of the five projects' reports to draft a DSP report for Scottish Government, including information on our reach across Scotland and who we are engaging with – people whose first or preferred language is BSL.

Each project will keep its own **learning log** and **risk register**, but Mandy will continue to keep the partnership learning log and risk register up-to-date. If anyone has problems with their reporting template, please contact Mandy or Neil. At the end of each quarter, each project will email their project report to Neil and Mandy. The finalised DSP quarterly report will be shared across the partnership and made available on the DSP website in both BSL and in English.

Reporting deadlines: All the leads/editors for each project will receive an email from Neil to remind them that the reporting deadlines are coming up. The dates for reporting are: **30th September 2016, 6th January 2017, 3rd April 2017 and 7th July 2017.**

Quarterly report: Mandy may contact the leads/editors to clarify a point for the report.

Meetings

Note: Derek Todd, as DSP Co-ordinator will attend all the meetings in his role as Co-ordinator, not as a member of the staff from the SCoD Project.

Papers for meetings will be shared at least 7 working days in advance. If members need the papers in an **accessible format** or have language/communication support needs that the Co-ordinator is unaware of, they will **contact Derek**

(DSP Co-ordinator) to let him know what format they need and what their language/communication support needs are.

All papers will be written in a size 14 sans serif font (Arial or Verdana). A note of the meeting will be taken. Action points from the meeting will be sent to those who attended the meeting including those who gave their apologies as soon as possible after the meetings. At all meetings, we will follow the ground rules for accessible meetings (see last pages of this protocol) so that everyone has a chance to take part.

DSP members will be invited to attend the post NAG/pre NAG meetings as well as the quarterly DSP meetings. Derek will provide all the meeting details and papers. Each member organisation will prepare a short report (no more than 10 minutes in length) to update the DSP on feeder NAG activity and project activity that has taken place between the relevant meetings.

There will be 2 places for each organisation at each meeting. Meetings will have a learning element so that each member organisation can share learning with other members of the Partnership. This means that those attending need to prepare for each meeting they will attend.

The Partnership Learning Log, Risk Register and Equality Impact Assessment will be updated and presented at each meeting.

Monitoring the Communications Protocol

Mandy will update the communication protocol as we go along, however this is a partnership document that we all agree to work to. One off meetings will be arranged to review and update the protocol as required.

Derek will monitor communications across the partnership and will contact organisations directly if there are any breakdowns in communication. Derek will require the following information:

- All feeder NAG meetings and DSP events / training, including BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 related events to be sent to him for wider circulation in plain English in Word and PDF formats.
- All BSL film clips to be uploaded on to DSP's YouTube account.
- Details of any filming requests (media requests) about BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 or Deaf Sector Partnership (DSP). Derek will seek approval from Hilary.
- All general information for the DSP, for example matters related to
 - 1.) BSL (Scotland) Act 2015,
 - 2.) National Advisory Group (NAG),
 - 3.) British Sign Language (BSL),
 - 4.) BSL Awareness Training,
 - 5.) Enquiries from public bodies,
 - 6.) Enquiries / requests from news, TV, newspapers, radios, researches, academics, etc. and
 - 7.) Complaints / issues regarding DSP (confidential).
- All general DSP questions can be emailed to Derek. If he is unable to respond he will forward to appropriate person.

Individual organisations will report in their own progress reports on how they are using the Communication Protocol and how they are encouraging and supporting their colleagues in the DSP to use it.

All the guidance that is produced will be put together in an induction pack with the Communication Protocol, most up to date progress reports and any other DSP information that concerns the partnership will be available for all new members of staff. All the guidance will be available in BSL and in plain English and will also be available on the DSP website.

Responsibility

Every partner is responsible for their own organisation's social media. SCoD have overall responsibility for the DSP website, Twitter account and YouTube. BDA are responsible for the BSL Facebook group. Deaf Action and NDCS are responsible for the young people's Facebook Group. Deafblind Scotland will ensure that all communications are as accessible as possible for members of the DbNAG.

The DSP also uses **publications** to communicate messages and information both internally and externally. Derek will monitor these to ensure they are appropriate and proportionate to the work that the DSP is doing and that they are fully accessible.

The DSP has its own **publicity materials** – its **logo** and **banner**.

The Co-ordinator will produce guidance on how DSP **presentations** should look and will produce a **template** that DSP members can use if asked to speak on behalf of the DSP.

Each partner organisation will **monitor the use** of all the online services. Every individual member who has a monitoring role will feed their reports back to Derek Todd as the Deaf Sector Partnership Co-ordinator.

APPENDIX 1

Ground rules for accessible meetings

The Chair will go over the ground rules at the start of each meeting:

1.

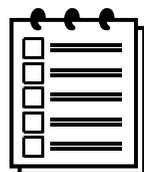


Turn your mobile phones off.

If you are expecting a call/SMS that must be answered or responded to, then please turn your phone to silent.

If the call/SMS comes through, please leave the room to deal with it.

2.



Keep to the agenda.

The Chair will help to keep all the discussion to the items on the agenda.

If you think something is missing from the agenda, please tell the Chair at the start of the meeting.

3.



Start and finish on time.

The Chair will keep the time, but each person at the meeting has a responsibility to help this happen.

4.



Give everybody time to express their views.

No one person's opinion should be heard more than anyone else's.

Only one person will speak or sign at a time.

5.



Raise your hand if you do not understand something or want something repeated.

Raise your hand if you want to say something.

Don't butt in – it is rude.

6.



Speak or sign slowly.

Use simple language. Don't use jargon or acronyms – for example, SPS is used for the Scottish Prison Service, but not everyone knows this is what it means.

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7.



Pay attention to and respect the views of other people.

Do not have private conversations with the person next to you during the meeting.

Everything said or signed during the business of the meeting will be interpreted.

8.



Keep confidential information in the room.

APPENDIX 2

SAMPLE Informed Consent Form for Deaf Sector Partnership Engagement SAMPLE

What is the Deaf Sector Partnership?

The deaf sector partnership is a **public-social partnership of seven organisations:**

- The Scottish Government;
- The Voluntary Action Fund (VAF);
- British Deaf Association (Scotland);
- Deaf Action;
- Deafblind Scotland;
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS Scotland); and
- The Scottish Council on Deafness

The work will focus on these **primary outcomes:**

1. To support the development of the BSL National Advisory Group (the NAG);
2. To support people whose first or preferred language is BSL (including Deaf BSL users, Deafblind BSL users, Deaf/Deafblind people from equality and diversity groups whose first or preferred language is BSL, and people with additional language/support needs whose first or preferred language is BSL) to be as involved as they want to be in the development of the first BSL National Plan; and
3. To support public bodies to be more inclusive of people whose first or preferred language is BSL and to support them to meet their duties under the BSL (Scotland) Act.

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What is the aim of this engagement?

Project to fill in details

You have agreed to take part in this focus group/engagement session (delete as appropriate). **You have been told why we are holding this focus group/engagement session** (delete as appropriate).

You are signing this form to agree to

- being filmed/recorded during the group meeting;
- anything you say/sign during the group meeting can be used in our reporting;

You understand that you can withdraw your permission to use any filmed/reported material and your opinion at any time.

_____ Signature _____ Name (Print)
_____ Date

SAMPLE SAMPLE SAMPLE SAMPLE

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Communications Protocol declaration

Each member of the Deaf Sector Partnership will sign to say they have read and fully understood all the information contained in the Communications Protocol. This statement will be held by Neil Bird (VAF)

I (**name to be added**) have read the Communications Protocol and fully understand all the information contained in it.

I agree to use the information in all my communications relating to the Deaf Sector Partnership. I agree to give feedback as and when necessary to Mandy Reid (SCoD) so that the Communications Protocol is kept up to date.

Signed:

Date: