



## **SurvivorsUK Service User Panel (SUP)**

Notes from SUP 1 on 19 May 2019

Present: Andy Connolly, Katherine Cox, Jeremy Sachs, 9 service users

1. Introduction (Andy Connolly)
2. Ground rules (Katherine Cox)
3. **Feedback received**

### **i) Get-together**

**“I felt really welcome. I didn’t know quite what to expect. The get-together format works, it is welcoming”**

**Attending the ongoing group, then get-together, then SUP is a very long day - could it be shortened? Could there be a ‘mix and match?’**

**FFT venue appears to be closed at weekends on googlemaps - this could be off-putting for potential participants**

**I received too many emails asking me about attendance for the get-together and SUP**

**The size of the room limits how many people can take part**

**Asking for immediate feedback is difficult - I don’t know how I will feel e.g. when I get home**

**An idea of what you can expect at the drop-in would be good to get before you come, as I just didn’t know what to expect. (*Maybe accounts from other people who have been?*)**

**I like the neutral description - it means it can be what you want it to be, different things for different people**

**I like that I can come and leave whenever I want**

**Could there be a facebook group or online forum? Discussion about how safe this would be, e.g. if I was having a bad day I might write things that would not be helpful or be offensive / have a detrimental effect**

**Discussion about the merits of locations - balance of being safe & private, versus not feeling hidden or difficult to find**

**It felt best when someone from SUK was at the door to greet me and take me in, not someone who doesn't work for SUK**

**I don't like that the receptionist knows my full name, and having full names on stickers**

**"I like that it is in a different place to where I had my counselling. I associate that with painful memories, difficult work and trauma, and that might affect me if the get-together was there"**

**Should get-together be called 'co-support?'**

**This might put some people off though, feeling like there is a duty to support others or that they won't get professional help**

**Colour-coded stickers for ongoing group versus get-together?**

**Some people might feel labelled by this, and foster preconceptions about others**

**A code of conduct should be on the wall**

**As the get-togethers are relatively infrequent it is hard to feel a sense of momentum**

**I'd like there to be more activities, not just talking. Writing letters and stuff like that**

**I'd like it to be longer**

**ii) Service User Panel**

**Service user panel should be every 2-3 get-togethers - to wait 6 months is too long**

**One hour isn't long enough for SUP, e.g. if there were 20 participants**

**Could there be a SUP after the wellbeing day?**

**Saturdays and Sundays work well for most**

**It is really great to see that you are welcoming feedback to develop and improve for our sake**

**iii) Social events**

**“Theatre or cinema trips would be a positive thing.....more than just.....private and secretive. We’re all adults”**

**“I’m fed up of hearing about the lack of funding. It’s a cop out”**

**Christmas dinner would be a good social event, it would not need to be expensive, everyone could bring food etc**

**“Social events can be awkward, like the only thing that you have in common could be abuse. Theatres are not safe spaces, and alcohol can be an issue at social events”**

**iv) Waiting list**

**Why can’t you send an email about how to manage and deal with symptoms, and include details for other counselling services? I don’t feel like there is enough help to cope**

**“I feel like you do a fantastic job. The support I received has always been empathetic, humble and has made me feel safe. It is one of the best services I have ever accessed”**

**I’d like to be able to share the things that have helped me with others. Maybe they could be compiled into a handbook or something for new clients, or we could volunteer to talk with them. Emotional tools, how to cope with trauma, that could help as it can be so isolating**

**v) Blogs**

**Is it safe? What if people can search for you online and find you?**

**vi) Premises**

**'SurvivorsUK' sign identifies what we are going into the building for. Idea of a fake sign, so as not to be so revealing.**

**It is difficult to find the offices, and no signage leading up to the building**

**"We need to be seen"**

**Not everyone feels this 'pride' in survivorhood**

**vii) Other**

**"I wear my badge all the time, and people ask me about it. I tell the name and that they should look it up"**

**Could we produce a book, based on our experiences coming here? A 'Survivors Guidebook'**