

**SurvivorsUK Service Users' Panel**

**29.9.19**

**Facilitator:** Katherine Cox, Counsellor & Groupwork Co-ordinator (KC)

**Notes:** Elizabeth Noble, Counsellor (EN)

**Attendance:** 12 service users

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Introduction to meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Second service users' panel meeting – they take place at the end of every other get-together event</li> <li>- Meetings are a forum for suggestions about how SurvivorsUK can shape its services – the meetings include feedback from SUK staff on how service users' suggestions have been implemented, and on the reasons for not taking forward suggestions</li> </ul>	EN to work with SUK Communications Team to post notes of this meeting online
<b>Feedback from previous meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The feedback on the location of the SurvivorsUK office indicated that equal numbers of people like it and don't like it. The organisation is planning to expand the space in its current building</li> <li>- It was suggested that SUK schedule more social events/activities for service users – this will be taken forward in 2020</li> <li>- One person expressed general appreciation and thanks to the staff team at SUK for the support they provide to service users</li> </ul>	
<b>SurvivorsUK Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Soundproofing of counselling rooms and/or relocation of the waiting area needs to be a priority in refurbishing the SUK building</li> </ul>	KC to ensure this feedback is considered in office re-design – it echoes the views of SUK staff about this issue

<p><b>Wellbeing Day 2019</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Running these events annually or twice-yearly would be helpful for service users</li> <li>- Mixed programme of discussion groups and activities worked well</li> <li>- Providing more and longer opportunities for allies of survivors would be positive</li> <li>- It would be helpful if activities and discussion groups could be described in more detail on the day or in advance</li> <li>- Would increase accessibility of physical activities if the level of difficulty can be tailored to beginners</li> <li>- Service users value the chance to engage in Wellbeing Days and Get-togethers, and want to see these events continue</li> </ul>	<p>KC to implement suggestions in organisation of next Wellbeing Day</p> <p>EN and KC plan to schedule 6-10 Get-together events for 2020</p>
<p><b>Feedback on Walworth Living Room</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current Get-together venue is booked until the end of 2019 – was selected based on cost and accessibility, we are testing its suitability and will review in December</li> <li>- Acknowledgement that for some people the venue is difficult to get to, for others it is convenient</li> <li>- Co-location next to a church and the noise from services on a Sunday can be upsetting</li> <li>- The small size and acoustics of the room used currently are not good</li> <li>- Moving venues semi-regularly could be a helpful way to ensure access for people in different parts of London/UK</li> <li>- Service users suggested the team research Quaker meeting houses, Air BnB, Black Cat Café Hackney, Brixton Pound and the Live-In Guardian scheme near Aldgate East station for potential free or low-cost venues for 2020.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SUK Online Forum</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work to set up an online forum has been interrupted by staff changes at SUK but remains a planned project for the future</li> <li>- Service users would like to see this include a thread for self-help resources and signposting to other organisations</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Renaming SurvivorsUK</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The pros and cons of the name 'SurvivorsUK' were discussed</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The organisation is considering a re-branding exercise including renaming, will only do this based on careful consideration of potential risks and benefits, and when funding can be secured</li> <li>- Service users' suggestions for a new name have been placed on the list for consideration</li> <li>- One person suggested the organisation consider engaging an advertising/marketing/branding company to find a new name – either pro-bono or with funds secured for the rebrand</li> </ul>	
<b>Self-help</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There was agreement that self-help techniques for managing trauma are helpful for service-users</li> <li>- A paper resource pack has recently been produced and is available at the SUK office. A series of graphic and text-based support sheets are currently being produced now.</li> <li>- All agree these should be available online</li> <li>- Those who access the Get-togethers/Wellbeing Day have the option to join the Thrivers whatsapp group where self-help tips are shared</li> <li>- It was suggested that the organisation consider publishing a book on the theme of men's experiences of surviving sexual violence</li> <li>- SUK plans to offer a practical and skills-based group session every 2-3 months from 2020, to support people who want to learn trauma-management techniques</li> </ul>	
<b>Questions about 121 counselling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People who have completed 121 counselling at SurvivorsUK can now re-refer themselves for more counselling after a break. In such cases, people will be re-assessed and placed on the waiting list to ensure the service can be delivered to as many people as possible</li> <li>- People can request to see the same counsellor if they re-join the service and SUK will seek to meet this request if possible</li> <li>- People can ask their counsellor if they are able to offer them a private service after SUK counselling ends. In such instances counsellors, always discuss this in supervision before agreeing, clients sign a document stating that private</li> </ul>	

	counselling is separate from SUK services, and there must be a break between the end of counselling at SurvivorsUK and the start of private counselling	
<b>Fundraising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In answer to a question about where SurvivorsUK secures its funding, Katherine shared that it is from a number of large and small grant-giving organisations (including the Lottery); from the Ministry of Justice; and from individual donations</li> <li>- One person shared his thanks and congratulations to the staff at SUK who secure the organisations' funding</li> <li>- Service users are interested in fundraising volunteering with the charity</li> </ul>	
<b>Thanks &amp; Next Meeting</b>	Katherine and Elizabeth thanked all those who attended the meeting for their important contributions	<b>Next meeting will be scheduled for early 2020</b>