

# Sparkle Sheffield – Independent Audit Report March 2017

## Preface

Sparkle Sheffield is a voluntary group, a registered Charity that specialises in the services that include but are not limited to: provision of awareness events, signposting, community-based activities, seminars, school visits, awareness training for commercial outlets, advice and support for autistic children and their parents and carers, advocacy, casework.

The management structure comprises a mix of unpaid community volunteers who give their time and professionals who provide free services, most of whom have experience with autistic children and their parents and families.

Each member has a specialist skill-set appropriate to the organisation.

Sparkle Sheffield evolved from the Reidy Youth Foundation (RYF), all objectives being the same.

The CEO of Sparkle Sheffield has over a decade of experience with organisational / team management and leadership, being herself an entrepreneur, and having been a founder member of RYF as well as being a parent of a child with autism

## Introductory Discourse to the Audit

A brief outline was given of income sources, whether from national organisations (PHT, A4A ) , Sponsorship, ( including Lord Mayor's Fund ), Free Storage facility Big Yellow Storage and HTC Wolffkran.

Sparkle Sheffield also showed charges for services and equipment hire that contribute towards self-sustainability.

As well as local publicity, for example in the press, the CEO and other members of the team also gives interviews on local radio, TV and other media outlets.

Other events include: Autism Awareness Week, a Fund-Raising Ball at Chatsworth House, "Sparkle Autism TV", BBC4 Listening Projects (Idris Alba), "Auti-talk", Sheffield Carnival, 'Arena' Sensory Room, 'Sparkle Media'(A)

From this introduction, with operational staff and the Board of Trustees the overall impression was of a well-rounded, well-lead organisation providing a broad and inclusive range of services related to autism.

Following the interviews and assessment of operational staff, and members of the Board of Trustees, the second stage of the audit, comprised of a review of the organisations delivery, systems and their Quality Assurance Management System in place, to ascertain their application, appropriateness and to analyse were these proportionate to the needs of the organisation.

The agreed date was 1 March.

Meanwhile, the following documents were provided:

221109 Customer's Conditions of Grants/funding

220116 Confirmation of grants/funding

234187 Accounts and Financial systems and procedures

235610 Financial Statements

020616 Minutes meetings

090616 Minutes AGM

090616 Minutes Special AGM

103613 Policies and Procedures

036218 Quality Assurance Systems

036222 Strategic Plans

037592 Business Plan

0465298 Events and Activities Reports

0467845 Value for Money Assessments and Reports

0478319 Office Handbook

0479721 Customer Feedback Returns, analysis and reports

049752 Declarations of Interest

0501238 Job Descriptions and Authorities (contract specific where applicable)

0503659 Continuous Professional Development

051832 DBS and other fit person checks

### Rationale

Simply as a guide, ISO 9000 was consulted as a base, although compliance is not a requirement for the contract, nor would be proportional or appropriate.

Emphasis was placed on risk of exposure to financial liability and amelioration of that risk to best protect the investments (grants and other generated finance ).

Those funding and supporting Sparkle Sheffield are entitled to know that the money invested is safe, and that delivery by Sparkle Sheffield is value for money.

### Findings and Recommendations

Feedback to: - Sparkle Sheffield Personnel: Chair, MD/CEO, P.R.(M)

### Service Level Agreements

Recommend amend wording at next review.

Policies and Procedures- All up-to-date and being applied effectively, including:-

### Complaints Procedure

Conclusion: Working effectively.

### Equality Policy

No discrimination or victimisation tolerated. Effective application

Equality, British values, Diversity, Anti-Discrimination and Inclusion and specialist Autism Training - Yes, refer personnel records and training plans- individual and team.

### Finance Control Policy

Copy seen undated, and needs review date.

Ring fencing of specific contracts to be reviewed in Finance Procedure.

Note: New accounting software purchased, Accountant to brief staff and create project-specific account records next week.

### Financial Management Policy

Pro-formas for customer projects - refer to accounts records.

Accountants embarking upon transferring all data to Sage.

### Handbook for Board Members and Staff

Needs ongoing review. Well structured. Generic.

### Job Descriptions

Generic and specialist portfolio ones.

For contract-specific job descriptions defining roles and responsibilities refer to contract specification, if applicable.

Continuous Professional Development - refer to personnel files-up to date and effective

Pro-forma appraisals and systems- fit for purpose

Whistleblowing policy

Follows national guidance.

Complainant route logical - propose make consistent in each procedure.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Missing line: "Failure to comply shall result in disciplinary proceedings"

Recommend for future consideration:

Create an enhanced index of policies and procedures and pro-formas, using standard document control, to show document, authorisation, version, and review.

This is not a requirement for the current contracts, but will be useful for staff.

This can be set up with outside help.

Conclusions:

Sparkle Sheffield has shown that it has the capacity, experience, structure and management and delivery teams to successfully deliver for the benefit of service users and via contracts for customers.

The Board, CEO and other team members all have the requisite leadership skills for strategic and operational management of Sparkle Sheffield

The organisation functions effectively and to a high standard.

It is recommended that Sparkle Sheffield better promote its successes through presentation of the positive publicity it receives for its work.

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3 March 2017