

# Message from the Chair

*In an effort to be organised, this is being written a full week before the closing date and before the first warning from the newsletter editor...*



*Martin Stevens*

November saw four SSRG events across England and Scotland; a packed month and a pleasing sign of a healthy Network. The events covered the range of SSRG activity, with two events on the latest developments on the Performance Agenda for both children's services and adult social care. At the latter event we asked participants to comment on the new Adult Performance Indicators - we would still welcome your comments about these so please visit the SSRG website for further information

Both of these events were held in Birmingham and feedback suggests they were of great value to those working on all sides of the Performance multidimensional existence (one thing the Hadron Particle Accelerator won't throw any light on, even when it is eventually

working again - far too complicated and unpredictable!).

The fourth Inclusion and Exclusion event run in partnership of the Race Equality Foundation and INVOLVE, was also held in November (on the 20th), in London. Again this year we secured sponsorship from the Social Care Institute for Excellence, INVOLVE and The London Borough of Camden for this event. The sponsorship enabled us to offer 20 free places for people using services, with any personal assistants required. For this year, the focus of the event was expanded to focus on the impact of research in addition to the basic messages.

Future planning is ongoing as always: we are in discussion with a number of other organisations, including the Local Authority Research and Intelligence Network, Local Government Analysis and Research; London Education Research Network; Research in Practice; and the British Education Research Association to stage an event possibly on Safeguarding.

The Annual Workshop programme (21-23 April 2009) has very nearly been completed. Next year, we will be focusing on the connected policy developments of person-centred care, safeguarding and 'outcomes', again looking at policy, research, performances - and practice - developments.

SSRG is also involved in a number of other areas. Central Government departments have recently given out signals that there is a need to use research evidence in more effective ways in order to develop policy and practice. This has always been a key aspect of SSRG activity within local authorities and it is good to see the government expressing a desire to develop this link. This has been shown in two ways. First, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) recently published a consultation document, asking for views about the place of Science in Society <http://interactive.dius.gov.uk/scienceandsociety/site>, which covered all aspects of physical and social science. To increase the profile of research is one of the main aims of SSRG (I think I may have mentioned this once or twice in these messages) and it seemed hugely appropriate for the group to submit a response. You may have seen the e-mail alert asking for views, and thanks to those who responded: the full response is on the SSRG website.

Second, the Academy of Social Science, of which SSRG is a member organisation, is aiming to produce a strategy on Knowledge Transfer, aiming to improve the ways in which research evidence is presented to policy makers and practitioners. The Economic and Social Research Council has identified a budget to support this area of work, which is very much in line with SSRG's main