

NAWRA Committee meeting – 2 March 2017 – Durham

Present: Alan Markey (Coventry Independent Advice Service, chair), Daphne Hall (Rightsnet), Corin Hammersley (Greenwich Council), Terry Patterson (Manchester City Council); Julie Henry (Durham County Council), Juan Ramirez (Derbyshire County Council), Kelly Smith (Child Poverty Action Group, minutes)

Apologies: Eri Mountbatten (Aberystwyth University Students' Union), Jenny Wood (Eastbourne CAB), Jim McKenny (Kirklees Council), Tom Messere (Maggie's / Big Book of Benefits), Maureen Arthur (Family Mosaic), Tamara Moreau (Benefits and Work)

Action log:

	Action required	Who
1	Promote benefits of NAWRA membership to potential new members	Development subgroup
2	Survey lapsed members to find out their reasons for leaving	Kelly
3	Contact Bristol and South Somerset Councils to see whether they would like to host a meeting.	Daphne
4	Circulate finalised 2016/17 finance report	Kelly
5	Circulate finalised budget for 2017/18	Kelly
6	If your employer is not willing to pay, complete the expenses claim form and send receipts to Kelly	All
7	Write a blog on alternative payment arrangements in UC	Julie
8	Re-organise website	Alan and Daphne
9	Email members in Scotland to ask for approval for Craig Samuel (Edinburgh Council) to be Scottish rep	Kelly
10	Set up a working group on UC and disability	Tom
11	Draft a letter to Damian Green on IB to ESA data trawl	Daphne
12	Write a blog on take-up work needed to get people onto legacy benefits before the implementation of UC	Daphne/Julie/Corin?

13	Draft motion and press release on PIP cuts	Daphne
14	Investigate holding a meeting in Coventry	Alan
15	Update the benefit updater chart	Tom and Daphne

1. Welcome, minutes and matters arising

- a) Minutes of meeting on 10 March 2016 agreed.
- b) Action log updated.

2. Finance

a) 2016/17 finance report

Kelly circulated the financial statement for 2016/17 updated with income and expenditure to the end of the third quarter. There has been a drop in member numbers and as a result it is likely that we will have a deficit by the end of the year. Expenditure remains stable and within budget projections.

Development subgroup to focus on marketing NAWRA membership to potential new members (including housing associations, university advice centres and university law departments) by advertising in the Welfare Rights Bulletin, HBInfo, Inside Housing and other publications. Also to investigate running stalls at conferences and buying a banner stand.

Kelly to survey lapsed members to find out their reasons for leaving.

NAWRA has not met in the south of England for some time and this may be affecting membership levels in this region. **Daphne** to contact Bristol and South Somerset Councils to see whether they would like to host a meeting.

Kelly to circulate finalised 2016/17 finance report in early April 2017.

b) 2017/18 budget

Kelly circulated a draft budget for 2017/18. It was agreed that the marketing and development budget would increase to £1000. Deficit budget approved. **Kelly** to circulate finalised budget.

c) Committee member expenses

All - If your employer is not willing to pay please complete the expenses claim form and send receipts to Kelly. Please make your claims no later than 31 March 2017.

3. Publicity and communications

a) Website

- **Julie** to write a blog on alternative payment arrangements in UC
- **Alan** and **Daphne** to re-organise website resources

b) Social media

- Daphne now has access to Twitter.
- See annual report for statistics on social media reach.

4. Governance

a) Committee members

- There are vacancies for reps for Scotland and Northern Ireland. **Kelly** to email members in Scotland to ask for approval for Craig Samuel (Edinburgh Council) to be Scottish rep.
- Updated committee member list available on the [website](#)

b) NAWRA development sub-committee report

- The sub-committee is due to meet in April or May 2017 and will take forward the work on increasing membership numbers, both to improve our financial situation and to ensure that NAWRA continues to be the national voice for welfare rights advisers.

5. Policy issues

- a) **Tom** to set up a working group on UC and disability.
- b) We surveyed members on their experiences of UC in early March 2017. **Daphne** to collate results.
- c) A data trawl of those affected by IB to ESA transition is needed. **Daphne** to draft a letter to Damian Green.
- d) Take-up work needed to get people onto legacy benefits before the implementation of UC. **Daphne/Julie/Corin?** to write blog for website.

e) **Daphne** to draft motion and press release on PIP cuts.

6. Reports from consultation groups and other events

- See the annual report for a full list of groups regularly attended by committee reps.
- Julie attended a UKAJ meeting on researching users' perspectives and the new digital proposals.
- Juan attends Derby and Derbyshire DWP/MP group on behalf of NAWRA.

7. Future NAWRA meetings & workshops

- 9 Jun 2017 – Wrexham (hosted by Rights Advice Cymru)
- 8 Sep 2017 – Edinburgh (hosted by City of Edinburgh Council)
- Dec 2017 – host needed

Tentative offers to host also received from Scottish Borders Council and South Somerset Council. **Alan** to investigate a meeting in Coventry.

Workshop ideas:

- Two child limit (Corin)
- UC
- Devolved Scottish social security agency

8. Any other business

Tom and **Daphne** to update the benefit updater chart.

9. Next committee meeting

Thurs 7 Sep at 2pm in Edinburgh (city centre location to be confirmed)