

NAWRA Committee meeting – 7 Sept 2017 – Edinburgh

Present: Jim McKenny (Kirklees Council, chair), Daphne Hall (Rightsnet), Corin Hammersley (Greenwich Council), Terry Patterson (Manchester City Council); Julie Henry (Durham County Council), Craig Samuel (City of Edinburgh Council), Tom Messere (Maggie's / Big Book of Benefits), Tamara Moreau (Benefits and Work), Kelly Smith (Child Poverty Action Group, minutes)

Apologies: Alan Markey (Coventry Independent Advice Service), Juan Ramirez (Derbyshire County Council), Eri Mountbatten (Edge Hill University), Jenny Wood (Eastbourne CAB), Maureen Arthur (Family Mosaic)

Action log:

	Action required	Who
1	Survey lapsed member to find out their reason for leaving	Kelly
2	Complete expenses claim and send receipts to Kelly	All unless employer willing to pay
3	Write a blog on alternative payment arrangements in UC	Julie
4	Re-organise website resources	Alan and Daphne
5	Email all members about the move to Mailchimp	Kelly
6	Convene the development subgroup	Alan
7	Set up a working group on UC and disability	Tom
8	Write some FAQs for the 'UC Survivors' Facebook group	Tom
9	Write a blog on take up of legacy benefits before the implementation of UC	Daphne/Julie/Corin
10	Contact Clive Davis (Newcastle City Council) and Julia Harris (Lambeth Council) to find out if they have met with the Office of the Public Guardian about appointeeships	Daphne
11	Add NAWRA as co-signatory to the Give Me Five campaign to increase child benefit in Scotland	Kelly

12	Investigate potential hosts in the south of England	Daphne/Corin/Jenny
13	Re-write the 'Join NAWRA' page of the website so that it contains more information about the benefits of NAWRA membership	Alan and Kelly
14	Circulate updated information on HMRC's Needs Extra Support scheme	Corin
15	Update the benefit updater chart	Tom and Daphne
16	Provide evidence from Greenwich on ESA conversion issue	Corin
17	Contact Julie if you would like to run a UC workshop at the BASE conference in Brighton on 8 Nov	All

1. Welcome, minutes and matters arising

- a) Minutes of meeting on 2 March 2017 agreed.
- b) Action log updated.

2. Finance

a) 2017/18 finance report

Kelly circulated the financial statement for 2017/18 updated with income and expenditure to 5 Sept 2017. There has been a substantial 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.

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

b) Committee member expenses

All - If your employer is not willing to pay please complete the expenses claim form and send receipts to Kelly.

3. Publicity and communications

a) Website

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

b) Social media

- Daphne now has access to Twitter.

c) Email

- We have recently developed problems with using Outlook at CPAG to send messages to large numbers of recipients. Kelly has set up a Mailchimp account to use instead. It is free to use if we send under 12,000 emails per month (approximately 20). This should be fine. **Kelly** to email all members via Outlook to let them know.

4. Governance

● Committee members

- Eri has got a new job at Edge Hill University. As a result, there is a vacancy for a rep in Wales.
- Committee member list available on the [website](#)

● NAWRA development sub-committee

- No report this time. **Alan** to arrange a sub-committee meeting.

5. Policy and campaigns

- a) **Tom** to set up a working group on UC and disability. **Tom** to write some FAQs to post on the 'UC Survivors' Facebook group.
- b) Take-up work needed to get people onto legacy benefits before the implementation of UC. **Daphne/Julie/Corin?** to write blog for website.
- c) Appointeeships are poorly dealt with by HMRC. **Daphne** to contact Clive Davis (Newcastle City Council) and Julia Harris (Lambeth Council) to find out if they have met with the Office of the Public Guardian and to discuss next steps, including a potential judicial review.
- d) NAWRA to support the [Give me Five campaign](#) calling on MSPs to ensure the 2018/19 budget and Scottish Government spending plans include a top-up of child benefit by £5 per week. **Kelly** to contact Jenny Duncan at CPAG in Scotland and update the website.
- e) Following a data match with DWP, HMRC discovered that 33,000 families had not been receiving the disability element of child tax credit. [CPAG is bringing a case](#) on the refusal to backdate.

6. Reports from consultation groups and other events

- Daphne attends the DWP stakeholder group meetings.
- Maureen attends HMRC benefits and credits consultative group meetings.
- Tom attends disability stakeholder group in Wales.
- Craig attends the PIP forum in Scotland.
- Jim and Corin attend LGA advisers group meetings.

7. Promoting NAWRA and recruiting new members

- Potential new members: unions, housing associations (via NHF and CIH), student advice centres (via NASMA), law centres (via Law Centres Network)
- Potential places to advertise: Welfare Rights Bulletin, Adviser, Advice UK, HB Info, Legal Action
- There will be a NAWRA stall at the CPAG London conference on 14 Sept. We have bought two banner stands.
- NAWRA has not met in the south of England for some time and this may be affecting membership levels in this region. **Daphne/Corin/Jenny** to investigate potential hosts in the south of England.
- **Kelly** and **Alan** to re-write the 'Join NAWRA' page of the website so that it contains more information about the benefits of NAWRA membership.

8. Future NAWRA meetings & workshops

- **Friday 1 December 2017** – Council House, **Coventry** (hosted by Coventry Independent Advice Service and the Partnership for Coventry)
- **Friday 9 March 2018** – The Tab, **Stockton-on-Tees** (hosted by Stockton Borough Council)
- **Friday 1 June 2018** – Nottingham Law School, **Nottingham** (hosted by Advice Nottingham, Broxtowe Citizens Advice and the Nottingham Law School Legal Advice Centre)
- **September 2018** – **Glasgow** (date and venue TBC)
- **Friday 7 December 2018** – Town Hall, **Durham** (hosted by Durham County Council)
- **March 2019** – host needed
- **June 2019** – tentative offer from Greenwich Council

Tentative offer to host received from Scottish Borders Council. Daphne has been in touch with South Somerset Council and Bristol City Council. Both are keen but the venue is expensive.

Workshop ideas:

- Two child limit (Corin) in Sept 2018?
- Making use of HMRC's 'Needs Extra Support' provision. **Corin** to circulate updated information.
- Universal credit and disability

9. Any other business

- **Tom** and **Daphne** to update the benefit updater chart in time to launch at the Coventry meeting on 1 Dec 2017.
- **Corin** to provide Daphne with evidence from Greenwich Council's data trawl to support letter to David Gauke about our concerns around ESA conversion.
- Contact Julie if you would like to present a workshop on UC at the BASE conference in Brighton on 8 Nov.

10. Next committee meeting

Thurs 8 March at 2pm in Stockton on Tees (location to be confirmed)