

NAWRA Committee meeting – 3 Sep 2015 – Edinburgh

Present: Alan Markey (Coventry Independent Advice Service, chair), Eri Mountbatten (Aberystwyth University Student Union), Tom Messere (Big Book of Benefits), Julie Henry (Durham County Council), Daphne Hall (LASA), Jim McKenny (Kirklees Council), Juan Ramirez, Patrick Hill, Tom Lamb (Dundee North Law Centre), Corin Hammersley (Greenwich Council), Tamara Moreau, Kelly Smith (Child Poverty Action Group, minutes)

Apologies: Maureen Arthur (Family Mosaic), Simone Caudell (Orbit Housing)

1. Welcome, minutes and matters arising

- Alan welcomed Corin to the Committee and thanked Shawn for all his work as rep for London. Alan also welcomed Tamara back.

2. Publicity and communications

- Website
 - **Alan** to circulate website stats, including the search terms that drew people to the website.
 - Ideas for new content welcomed.
 - **Daphne and Shawn** to re-organise the 'resources' tab to make it easier to find things
 - **Tom, Julie and Daphne** to update the benefit updater chart
 - **Daphne** to find out if Bristol City Council are planning to update their EEA HB flow chart and if not to ask for it in an editable format.
 - Agreed to produce blogs on:
 - Disability issues in UC – **Tom M**
 - Reg 35 (2b) – **Tom L**
 - Alternative payment arrangements in UC – **Julie**
 - ESA/JSA disability premiums?
- Social media
 - We have 709 Twitter followers and 190 Facebook 'likes'
 - **All:** send any suggestions on the use of social media to Alan

- **Governance**

- Eri drafted the membership survey and presented a summary of the results.
 - 151 respondents, spread across the regions
 - Members generally rated most things 'good' or 'excellent'
 - Some concerns about transparency and the role and accountability of the Committee.
 - Some suggestions that NAWRA is cliquy and off-putting for new members
 - A request to publish the minutes of Committee meetings. **Kelly** to add to website
 - **Kelly** to copy the regional rep into the email welcoming each new member
 - Suggestion that there ought to be a rep for national organisations
 - Support for joint campaigns, accreditation, training, ethical rules for members and a higher media profile
 - **Eri, Tamara, Tom L, Julie and Alan** to set up a NAWRA development group. The group will present recommendations to the membership by 15 Jan 2016. **Alan** to arrange meeting.

3. Policy issues

- **Tom M** to contact Disability Benefit Consortium
- **Eri** to pick up on MR issues

4. Reports from consultation groups and other events

- **Daphne** to continue to attend DWP operational stakeholders group meetings
- **Tom M** to attend DWP local liaison meeting
- **Maureen** to continue to attend tax credits consultative group meetings
- **Corin** to attend meetings on PIP

5. Finance

- Kelly circulated the financial statement for 2015-16 updated with details of income and expenditure to end of the first quarter.
- Invoices for 2015-16 membership fees were issued in early April 2015. We have now collected around 90% of fees. **Kelly** to chase payment from unpaid members.
- Expenditure is within budget.

- **All** - If your employer is not willing to pay please send receipts for your expenses to Kelly. CPAG has stopped issuing cheques so please include your address, bank account number and sort code.

6. Future NAWRA meetings & workshops

- 4 Sept 2015 - Edinburgh (hosted by City of Edinburgh Council)
- 11 Dec 2015 - Sunderland (hosted by Sunderland City Council)
- March 2016 - WRAC to host?
- June 2016 - Greenwich (hosted by London Borough of Greenwich)
- Sept 2016 - Glasgow (hosted by Glasgow City Council)

Offers to host also received from Staffordshire University and Scottish Borders Council.
Offers to run workshops from Tom L, Julie and Corin.

7. Any other business

- **Corin** to circulate details of ESA safeguarding workshop in Woolwich.

8. Next committee meeting

- The day before the main NAWRA meeting in March 2016. Date and location to be confirmed.