

## NAWRA

### Notes from Equality and Diversity working group meeting 17 Oct 2023

#### Present:

Atif Kaudri – Mind (Chair)  
Riley Bartholomew – Beatson Cancer Charity  
Daphne Hall – Rightsnet  
Keith Thompson – Northumberland Council  
Bronwen Banner – National Energy Action  
Will Hadwen  
Michael Shanks – Norfolk Community Law Centre  
Pamela Carysforth – Jigsaw Homes  
Bhavani Sarma – Central Bedfordshire Council  
Jo Chimes – Advice Services Alliance  
Kelly Smith – Child Poverty Action Group / NAWRA Secretary (minutes)

#### Apologies:

Sangeeta Enright – Cystic Fibrosis Trust  
Rita Chadha – Advice Services Alliance

#### 1. Notes from the last meeting(s)

These can be found on the [Equality and Diversity page](#) of the NAWRA website. Notes agreed.

#### 2. Researching and adopting good practice guides written by other organisations

Thanks to working group members who shared good practice guides and resources. They have been adopted and are now on the [NAWRA website](#).

**Action:** All members to send good practice guides on protected characteristics to Kelly at [kelly@nawra.org.uk](mailto:kelly@nawra.org.uk) for discussion and adoption.

#### 3. To finalise the monitoring form for NAWRA membership on the characteristics of our members

It was decided that the monitoring form would ask about the personal characteristics of the individual advisers working for organisations that are members of NAWRA.

**Action:** Jo Chimes (ASA) to follow up with Rita Chadha about her offer to draft questions for a diversity monitoring form to be sent to members.

#### 4. Further updates to allow small organisations with little funding to join NAWRA for free

So far, six organisations have been invited to join NAWRA for free and have accepted this offer.

**Action:** all members to consider nominating any organisation that they feel meets the criteria for free membership by emailing Atif Kaudri (Mind) at [a.kaudri@mind.org.uk](mailto:a.kaudri@mind.org.uk) with the details.

**Action:** Kelly Smith (NAWRA/CPAG) to ask NAWRA committee representatives to contact the organisations with free membership in their region to welcome them and encourage them to attend conferences and get involved.

NAWRA offers free attendance at in-person conferences for local organisations who may consider joining NAWRA. **Action:** Kelly Smith (NAWRA/CPAG) to remind the hosts of our future in-person conferences to invite their local organisations.

**5. Contributing to work on equality and diversity in the wider rights and advice sector**

**a. Careers fairs**

Earlier this year, Will Hadwen attended a careers evening in south London to talk with young people aged 14-21 about advice work as a profession. Many were from migrant families with experience of helping their parents with benefits, debt and housing problems. The next event was due to take place September 2023 but has been postponed.

**b. National Careers Service website**

Keith Thompson (Northumberland County Council) would like the opportunity to improve the profile of a [Welfare Rights Officer](#) on the National Careers Service website.

**Action:** Keith Thompson (Northumberland County Council) to speak to the careers team locally.

**Action:** Pamela Carysforth (Jigsaw Homes) to talk to the Administrative Justice Council.

**Action:** Will Hadwen to contact course leaders at Staffordshire University and Nottingham Trent.

**Action:** Bhavani Sarma (Central Bedfordshire Council) to contact course leaders at University of York.

**6. Equality and diversity considerations at NAWRA conferences**

No feedback on recent events.

**7. AOB**

None.

**8. Next meeting**

The next meeting of the equality and diversity working group will take place at 12.30pm on Tuesday 12 December 2023. **Action:** Kelly to circulate the invitation and Zoom link to the working group and the full NAWRA membership.