

# NAWRA

## Committee meeting – 29 Feb 2024 – hybrid meeting in-person at Durham Town Hall and on Teams

**Present:** Julie (chair), Lee, Atif, Corin, Gareth, Tom, Julie, Dan, Maureen, Daphne, Greg, Andrew, Michael, Rachael, Kelly (minutes)

**Apologies:** Alan

### Communications and publicity

- **Dan** to reconvene the social media working group, involving Will Hadwen and Gary Vaux.
- **Alan** to set up NAWRA email addresses for new committee members. **Atif** to contact Alan with a query about his email settings.
- **Kelly** to add notes from DWP stakeholder meetings to the members area of the website.
- **Greg** to set up a new area of the website for NAWRA in Scotland.
- **Greg** and **Lee** to draft a survey of NAWRA members in Scotland.

### Equality and diversity

- Notes from working group meetings can be found on the [NAWRA website](#).
- So far, eight organisations working with people with protected characteristics have been invited to join NAWRA for free and have accepted this offer. **All** to consider nominating any organisation that they feel meets the criteria for free membership.
- Rita Chadha (ASA) has drafted a monitoring form for us to use to survey our members. This is currently with working group members for comment. **Kelly** to circulate to all NAWRA members when finalised.
- The next working group meeting will take place on 5 March 2024 on Zoom. **Kelly** to send a reminder email to working group members.

### Governance

- The committee welcomed Rachael Jeffers (Community Advice Craigavon) as our new (and first ever) rep for Northern Ireland.
- Following a call for nominations, there was an election for the post of rep for north west England in Feb 2024. Dan Manville (Greater Manchester Law Centre) has been re-elected for another two-year term. There were no nominations in other regions, so current reps will serve another two-year term.

### Policy and campaigns

- Council tax support schemes in England:
  - **Kelly** to set up a new page on the website and add links to the consultations we know about.
  - **Corin** and **Gareth** to talk to Sangeeta Enright (Cystic Fibrosis Trust) and draft web form that can be used to capture information about characteristics of the schemes and proposed changes.
- **Kelly** to set up a new page on the website and upload resources on how to make the business case for funding welfare rights services.
- Accreditation and advice sector workforce development:
  - **Dan** and **Rachael** to discuss advice quality standards.
- A new edition of NAWRA's benefits updater chart is almost ready. **Tom** to send to Daphne for final draft.
- Gareth has delivered 'Benefits and Pensions' training in London, Manchester, Bristol, Swansea, Middlesbrough and Edinburgh and will run the course in Birmingham on 14 Mar 2024.

### Finance

- Kelly updated the finance report to the end of the third quarter of 2023-24 and circulated it to the committee on 15 Jan 2024. **Kelly** to circulate the finance report updated to the end of the fourth quarter of 2023-24 in early April 2024.
- **Kelly** to find out the value of NAWRA's reserves.

### Next conference

- Tuesday 4 June 2024 (1.00pm to 4.00pm) and Wednesday 5 June 2024 (9.30am – 1.00pm) – online. No host.

### Future conferences

- 6 Sep 2024 – in-person in Glasgow (hosted by Glasgow City Council)
- Dec 2024 – online

### Potential hosts

- Staffordshire University has offered to host an in-person conference in 2025
- GMWRAG? With Jigsaw? At Cross St Chapel? (**Dan**)
- WRAC? (**Gareth** and **Tom**) combined with Cardiff (Tom Evans at Qualia Law)? Or Swansea Council?
- Woolwich? (**Corin**)
- Central Bedfordshire Council (online)
- Central Borders CAB (online)

### Potential speakers and workshops

- **All** to add their ideas of potential speakers and workshops to the '*Future NAWRA conferences – ideas and offers*' working document on GoogleDocs.

### Next committee meeting

- TBC. **Kelly** to circulate calendar invitation and Zoom link.

### AOB

- 2025 will be NAWRA's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. **All** to think about ideas to mark it. **Kelly** to email Geoff Fimister about adding more to the 'History' section of the website.
- **Alan** and **Daphne** to discuss the possibility of a NAWRA committee 'away day' where more strategic matters can be discussed, and long-term decisions made.