

Policy and Partnership Minutes - 9th September 2010

Attended: Seb Fisher, Jennifer Roe, Claire Cairns

Apologies: Rhona Spowart, Suzanne Munday, Mary Stewart, Ann Anderson

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising: Concerns regarding the new government and effects of spending cuts on carers were discussed. Issues included:

- Charging for care services
- Tightening of eligibility criteria, particularly in relation to short breaks
- Increasing carer poverty

It was agreed these issues should provide the focus for a pre-election campaign in advance of the local elections in 2012

The NCO group should consider how to best measure the impact of spending cuts on carers.

2. The National Carers Strategy – Implementation

Seb agreed to contact Moira Oliphant to enquire about the timing of the Carers Strategy implementation group and the process for implementing carer representation on CHPs

It was agreed that the Coalition should support the implementation of the Carers Strategy by playing an active role in:

- The implementation group
- The NCO short breaks initiative
- The NCO carer and workforce training initiative
- Carer representation on CHPs
- Local implementation and the development of local carer strategies
- The development of the Carers Rights Charter and recognising carers as 'equal partners in care'

In order to define carers as 'equal partners in care' it was felt it would be useful to identify how carers are currently discriminated against. It was agreed to work with members to develop a one month survey in November to record and highlight incidents of carer discrimination. For example, ability to access services and flexible working.

It was agreed to launch this at the next Coalition meeting in November. Claire will develop guidance in what is meant by discrimination and a template for recording incidents of discrimination and Jennifer agreed to set it up on survey

monkey and to give a presentation at the next Coalition meeting in November. If possible, Jennifer will also identify a carer to highlight an individual example of discrimination.

Claire agreed to identify a CHP carer representative to contribute to the Coalition meeting in November. Following this session we will look at a meeting for carer representatives to be held in early 2011

Finally, the Coalition meeting will cover development in relation to short breaks with Don Williamson being invited to introduce this session.

In relation to the development of local carer strategies, it was agreed that this should be a key manifesto priority for the local elections in 2012.

3. Current Policy Developments - their relevance to carers

i. Equalities Act 2010

It was felt that Carers Scotland has particular expertise in this area. It was agreed that Claire should contact Fiona to discuss how we can support them in this, for example through our survey.

ii. Self Directed Support Bill

It was agreed that Claire will write a letter to Shona Robison emphasising the current discrimination in relation to self-directed support and the employment of family members, particularly in light of the Equalities Act.

4. National Carer Organisations Group – Joint Working Initiatives

- i. Short Breaks:** Two projects have been proposed. The first will allocate funds to local carer organisations, or alternative local projects to allow for spot purchasing of short breaks. The second will be a Short Breaks Grant Fund. The proposal has been sent to the government and is still to be finally agreed.
- ii. Carer Training:** A training Coordinator, Graham Walkinshaw, has been employed. The audit is nearly complete and the grant criteria is currently being developed.
- iii. Carer Manifesto Campaign:** The manifesto has just gone to the printers. Meetings have been held or arranged with all the main political parties and the second stage of the campaign will begin in early 2011

5. AOCB

There were no matters arising.