

**The Coalition of Carers in Scotland
Rural and Remote Carers Working Group, 27th July 2009**

Present: Sheena Munro, Convenor Jinty Morrison
 Claire Cairns Catherine Patterson

Apologies: Jan Wells

1. Minutes

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising:

All the matters arising are on the agenda

3. Western Isles Report

An analysis of questionnaires has been provided by the Western Isles Community Care Forum. The group noted the priorities identified by carers in relation to training, with moving and handling being their number one priority and subsequent priorities relating to caring skills, such as dealing with challenging behaviour and administering medication.

In relation to the question 'What kind of support or service would make your life easier as a carer?' posed by the PRTC, there was a variety of responses, offering no clear direction. Jinty explained that a centre-based model would not work on the Western Isles due to the challenges of supporting the different island communities. Other support models would need to be explored, such as innovative methods like telephone support, used by HCCF in the Highlands.

Jinty informed the group that the Health Board are planning to employ a part-time post using carer strategy monies to coordinate carer services, including carer training. It was agreed to take the following action in relation to these developments.

- Claire to contact the PRTC with results from the questionnaire and to inform them of developments in relation to the new post to see if there is any potential for working jointly with the Health Board to include additional support for carers.
- Claire to contact Ella McBain on the Western Isles to further discuss the new post and joint working opportunities. For example, the sharing of best practice examples on carer training from Argyll and Bute and the Highlands.
- Catherine and Sheena to provide information and resources on carer training as required.

4. Updates:

Carers Strategy Working Group

Claire informed the group of the progress in relation to the Carers Strategy Group and outlined the current membership and remit of the group. The NCO representatives are advocating a carers rights approach to the strategy and this is currently being debated. There are concerns about the delayed spending review and the impact this may have on the strategy and the likelihood of the strategy coming with additional resources to assist with implementation.

Claire informed the group that as a result of issues raised by carers Ann Oliver and Alison Muir at the Cross Party Working Group on Carers, the government has decided to include a section in the strategy on rural and remote carers. Claire agreed to keep the group informed of progress and opportunities to help to draft this section.

Carers Reference Group

A Carers Reference Group has been established to ensure that carers are central to the development of the strategy. Catherine is a member of this group and has been elected as the link person to the main Strategy Group.

- Claire agreed to check with Gordon Paterson if we can circulate minutes for both the strategy and carer reference group.

5. Tackling Rural Deprivation

This is a standing item, There were no issues to discuss

6. Identifying new areas for 2009/2010

- It was agreed that Claire and Catherine will meet to discuss the potential for work in the Argyll and Bute area and report back to the group at our next meeting.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was agreed as Tuesday 6th October at 9.50am. This will be a conference call.