

Cross Party Group Older People, Age and Ageing
Draft Minute of Meeting
26 October 2016 13.00-14.30
Scottish Parliament Committee Room 3

Attendees:

MSP Members

Annie Wells MSP - Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party & Vice Convener
Richard Leonard MSP – Scottish Labour

Non-MSP Members

Action on Hearing Loss Scotland – Alan Dalziel
Age Scotland - Doug Anthony, Richard Baker and Diana Findlay
British Geriatrics Society Scotland – Dr Rowan Wallace
Generations Working Together – Alison Clyde
Scottish Pensioners Forum – Eileen Cawley
Scottish Seniors Alliance – Bill Johnston
Scottish Older People’s Assembly - Tom Berney, Avril Crossley and Glenda Watt

In attendance

GMB Retired Members – James Millar
HIV Scotland – Liam Beattie
Individual - Christine MacLeod
Lothian HIV Patient Forum – Will Dalgleish
Marie Curie – Susan Lowes and Paul Harding
National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP) – Alan Spinks
Scottish Government – Dorothy Ogle and David Berry
Office of Sandra White MSP – Amanda Gordon

Apologies: Sandra White MSP, Pat Scrutton, Katherine Brookfield, Rhona Murray, Rohini Sharma Joshi, Rose Jackson, Moira Bayne, Eileen Wallace

1. Welcome

Everyone was welcomed by Annie Wells MSP

2. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies were noted and introductions invited.

3. Draft Minute of Meeting held on 13 September 2016 and any Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and there were no matters arising.

4. A New Future for Social Security. Consultation on Social Security in Scotland – Dorothy Ogle from the Scottish Government’s Social Security Policy Division

Dorothy Ogle spoke to the presentation on 'A New Future for Social Security, Consultation on Social Security in Scotland'. She gave background to where the process began, the context and the journey so far. Three parts to the consultation were described- A Principled Approach, Devolved Benefits and Operational Policy. This includes consideration and actions on a complex range of tasks relating to a new system, a change of scale of enterprise, IT systems, procurement and staff organisation. The most important element being a safe and secure transition of payments to individuals. Participants were encouraged to contribute to the consultation which ends on 28 October 2016. Further information is at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/>

The following points were raised during the discussion:

- Industrial Injury Benefit and the need for a timescale for transfer to allow people to prepare
- That it would be a staggered timetable for delivery with communication in good time
- That applicants are put off applying through the automated system thereby forcing people to access information online. This should be avoided in any new Scottish system.
- The need for the service to join up effectively with DWP
- A Freephone number should be provided
- Smooth and ongoing communication between the two main agencies will be vital

Funeral Poverty

Dorothy also referenced 'Funeral Poverty' and the devolution of the Funeral Payment. She spoke to the trends and the impacts of an inability to pay. She discussed the Scottish Government approach, statistics around applications, grants being awarded and a report providing wide reaching recommendations on how to tackle funeral poverty in Scotland. This is 'Funeral Poverty. A review for Scottish Government'.

http://www.cas.org.uk/system/files/publications/funeral_poverty_in_scotland_0.pdf

The Scottish Government response is at:

www.gov.scot/Topics/People/fairerscotland/future-powers/Publications/FuneralPoverty

In addition, there have been three themed round table discussions led by the Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities and a Funeral Conference is to be held on the 16th November 2016 in Edinburgh. A Funeral cost Plan is to be developed early in 2017.

Points raised during discussion

- As all local authorities charge different rates for burial and cremation perhaps a standard cost could be introduced
- Possibility of a national funeral service
- Consideration should be given to the non – devolved consumer legislation and implications for Scotland

Richard Leonard MSP left the meeting after the above item

5. Early Stage Dementia - Richard Baker, Policy and Communications Manager, Early Stage Dementia Team Leader, Age Scotland

Richard outlined the incidence of early stage dementia and the Age Scotland project. He described the challenge and what the project would do in terms of raising its awareness in workplaces, how to reduce the risk of dementia, the low knowledge of risk factors and policy priorities. Further information can be found at

www.agescotland.org.uk/earlystagedementia

discussion points are listed below:

- There is an 18 month waiting list to access a link worker in some areas but not all for post diagnostic support, and a 3rd of referrals do not receive help
- GPs need to be confident that people receive support following diagnosis
- In terms of admission to a general hospital, support is patchy for patients with dementia
- HIV increases the risk of dementia
- There is fear around diagnosis and the loss of the driving licence
- People live with dementia rather than 'suffer from it'
- Stigma and the understanding of dementia and its impact needs to be better understood

6. Consultation on Scotland's National Health and Social Care Standards

Glenda Watt provided information on a 12 week consultation on Scotland's National Health and Social Care Standards from 28th October 2016. The Care Inspectorate will be holding a series of engagement events across the country. Short films and a social media campaign are included to encourage participating in the consultation. Information is available at

www.newcarestandards.scot

7. AOCB

Tom Berney – SOPA Annual Assembly to be held in the Parliament on the 25th November 2016. Anyone wishing to attend to contact Glenda Watt at glenda@scotopa.org.uk
www.scotopa.org.uk

Alan Dalziel – Action on Hearing Loss – new report Time to Raise Standards. The experience of NHS audiology patients in Scotland. Visit - actiononhearingloss.org.uk/scotland

8. Next Meeting

This will be held on **Wednesday 25th January 2017, 13.00-14.30 in Committee Room 4**. It may deal with mental health issues and older people plus an update on the Social Security in Scotland and the National Health and Social Care Standards.