

Social Security Committee

16th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5), Thursday 14 September 2017

Coalition of Carers in Scotland meeting 30 August, Perth

Note of attendance

1. Alison Johnstone attended the morning part of the Coalition of Carers Scotland meeting in Perth. The following is a summary of the meeting:

Lucinda Godfrey co-Convener of the meeting welcomed the opportunity to do something different in Scotland and looked forward to helping design the new system (she is a member of the Scottish Government's disability and carers benefits experts advisory group).

Chris Boyland (SG) gave a short presentation. He highlighted that the new system will establish social security as a human right, with the potential to create new versions of existing benefits and new benefits. The new system will seek to address the gap between what people are entitled to and what they get. There will be a single application process as far as possible. Over-payments as a result of a mistake by the agency will not, in normal circumstances, be pursued and re-determinations will be undertaken within a fixed timescale. Illustrative regulations will be available during stage 1. Carers allowance supplement will be paid from summer 2018.

A Q&A video recorded by the Minister was played. The expert group is looking at a number of issues related to carers allowance, such as earnings, taper and where a carer provides care for more than one person (not just children). The First Minister will make an announcement in the autumn about support for young carers.

On disability benefits, the experience panels will advise what needs to change. The Minister confirmed assessments would not be conducted by the private sector in Scotland.

Alison Johnstone MSP spoke about the principles of dignity and respect and also adequacy of support. .

An attendee mentioned the current consultation on the carers act regulations and said there had been little publicity around the carers act and how it interacts with the social security bill.

2. It was agreed that the Coalition would pull their comments and thoughts together for a written submission for the Committee. The written submission from the National Carers Scotland Organisations can now be found [here](#).

Anne Peat
30 August