**Meeting Note – Carers’ Panel**

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| **Title** | Carers’ Panel |
| **Venue** | Zoom |
| **Date** | 01/04/2021 |
| **Attendees** | Agnes Stevenson, Helen Wedgwood, Jacki Aston, Kirsteen Powell (CoEL) |
| **Apologies** | Anne Bisset, Fiona Cooper, Terry Cooper, Yvonne Macaulay, |

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| **Agenda** |
| * Review of draft meeting note 3rd March 2021 * Feedback from Coalition of Carers in Scotland (COCiS) meeting * Request to publish meeting notes online (COEL website) / Publicising Carers’ Panel * Carers hustings with constituency candidates online * Carers Week 7th to 13th June – ideas for awareness raising opportunities * Any other business (AoB) |
| **Summary of discussions** |
| **Review of previous meeting note**  No comments or changes were made – note approved by those present.  **Feedback from CoCiS meeting**  Jacki and Kirsteen shared the key points they had taken from CoCiS meeting with Derek Feeley, Chair of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care. Review recommended both a change in the structure and a shift in the culture of social care, which Freeley reckoned would take 10 to 15 years to be realised. Change in structure included shifting responsibility away from local authorities to national government (national care service) and giving more power to the people who use services and their carers (for example, giving carers both a voice and voting rights on key decision making committees). Change in culture included seeing social care as an investment in, not a burden on, society.  Helen noted that it was heartening to see unpaid carers recognised as the foundation of social care but disappointing that there were not more details on implementation in the Review – how recommendations should be financed or the order and proposed timescales in which the recommendations should be implemented.  Agnes shared her experiences of trying to get MSPs to listen when campaigning for dignity in dying – driving change can be a long, slow and frustrating process.  **Request to publish meeting notes**  Kirsteen asked if panel members would give permission for meeting notes, once approved, to be published on CoEL website to publicise panel and maintain an easily accessible record of its work. Agnes, Helen and Jacki agreed to this suggestion. Kirsteen will email remaining panel members to seek their consent.  **Carers hustings – East Lothian**  Panel members discussed format of the hustings event with local constituency candidates. It was agreed that people would be asked to submit a question when they registered for the event, which would be open to all adult carers. In advance of the event, panel members would review the questions submitted, group them into themes and then create a short list of questions on the basis of the most frequently raised issues. Nominated panel members would take it in turns to ask the short list of questions. Attendees would be invited to make comments/ ask further questions in the chat, which would be summarised at intervals by Kirsteen if time allowed. Jess Wade, CEO of CoEL, would be invited to open and close the event, welcoming everyone at the start, giving a little context about the number of carers in East Lothian (to help candidates understand potential size of the carer vote) and thanking everyone at the end for participating. Election candidates would be given a set amount of time (60 – 90 seconds?) at the start to introduce themselves - their name, party and knowledge of/interest in carers’ issues.  Panel members had various ideas for questions in relation to shorter and longer term concerns, including about if and how candidates and their parties would deliver the recommendations of the Independent Review of Social Care.  There was a discussion about if and how candidates’ answers to questions could be recorded for future reference. One suggestion was to record the event on Zoom – this would require every participant agreeing to be recorded. Another suggestion was to take notes and produce a written summary afterward.  **Carers Week 7th to 13th June**  Not discussed. |

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| **Next steps/ Key decisions** |
| * Panel members who are available will meet w/c 12th April to draw up short list of questions for carers hustings / finalise event details * Carers Week will be added to agenda for May |

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| **Actions** | | |
| **Who** | **What** | **By when** |
| Kirsteen | Set up Zoom meeting w/c 12th April for panel members to create short list of questions submitted for hustings | 02/04/2021 |
| Kirsteen | Invite Jess Wade to open and close hustings event | 02/04/2021 |
| Agnes & Helen | Attend National Carers Hustings on 8th April on behalf of panel and feedback at next meeting | 08/04/2021 |
| Kirsteen | Email panel members to seek consent to publish approved meeting notes on website | 06/04/2021 |

Appendix 1:

**Carer engagement opportunities – April 2021**

**Immediate (next 4 weeks)**

**#1 Carers Manifesto**

The National Carers Organisations (NCOs) have created a [Manifesto](https://mcusercontent.com/d0755ec5938a4f04dec8974cc/files/da46c41e-003b-426b-9ddc-1adb278d0554/NCO_Carers_Manifesto_FINAL_1.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2Xz_-5bqfmVDINOLh_rl8Zzdc8TCR1IgPYfV6t2_aW-qQksfujJiEQI7o) highlighting the top priorities unpaid carers want to see delivered by the next Scottish Government. They are asking all candidates standing for election to hear that supporting unpaid carers matters to voters.

You can share the manifesto directly with your parliamentary candidates ahead of the election and ask them to tweet their support for carers here <http://ow.ly/g8UU50E65Mv>

**#2 Carers Hustings – National**

Thursday 8th April, 1.30pm to 3.00pm

Book your ticket here: [Carers Hustings](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/carers-hustings-national-carer-organisations-and-oxfam-scotland-tickets-147134985703)

The NCOs and Oxfam Scotland are hosting an online Carers Hustings event. This is an opportunity for carers to ask questions of candidates on the issues that matter to them.

**#3 Carers Hustings – Local**

Wednesday 21st April, 6 to 7 pm

I have contacted the election candidates for the East Lothian constituency to ask about an online hustings for unpaid carers on the above date (evening slot to enable a candidate who works as a teacher to participate).

Candidates who have confirmed attendance:

* Euan Davidson (Liberal Democrats)
* Martin Whitfield (Labour)
* Paul McLennan (SNP)

Candidate still to confirm attendance:

* Craig Hoy (Conservative)

Format of the event to be discussed and decided at Carers’ Panel on Thursday 1st April.

**#4 Redesigning services for adults with complex needs (transformation programme)**

The transformation programme is the name given to the re-design of support services for adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairments and mental health problems (collectively termed “adults with complex needs”)

Some carers have expressed a fear that adults with learning disabilities who have not been able to access the resource centres during the pandemic will be left with little or no support now and/or have more limited support options in the future. The resource centres have been running at 45% capacity due to social distancing guidelines and are only offering places to individuals who meet the criteria of “critical need”.

COEL is encouraging carers to share their views on how adults with learning disabilities can be supported whilst resource centres are running at reduced capacity. One carer raised the suggestion of extending the opening hours of the resource centres to evenings and weekends to allow more people to access them whilst maintaining social distancing guidelines.

COEL will raise carers’ concerns and questions with the transformation programme team at the next reference group meeting scheduled for April.

**#5 Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) – open call to people affected by cancer**

Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) is a Macmillan funded programme to address the non-clinical needs of people affected by cancer living in the Lothians. If you are interested in sharing your experiences as a patient or a carer to help shape the new service, please contact [loth.icj@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:loth.icj@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) or call 07977 307 286.

**Medium term (next 3 months)**

**#1 Carers Week - 7th to 13th June**

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. Theme for 2021 is “Make Caring Visible and Valued”. Opportunity for Carers’ Panel to shape the activities and publicity locally for this week.

**Longer term (next 6 months or timeline still to be confirmed)**

**#1 Training opportunities for carers**

There may be funding for training for panel members e.g. assertiveness training

**#2 ThinkCarer! Training/ Student Education**

There may be opportunities for carers to become involved in delivering ThinkCarer! training to health and social care staff or in developing curriculum for health and social care students.

**#3 East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership (ELHSCP) Structures**

ELHSCP has a Carers Change Board and Carers Reference Group to oversee the implementation of the East Lothian Carers Strategy and Action Plan. Carers of East Lothian (CoEL) and East Lothian Young Carers attend reference group meetings but there may also be opportunities for panel members to attend statutory sector meetings as representatives with lived experience.

One possibility would be to invite a representative from ELHSCP to speak to the Carers Panel about how carers can get involved and hold key stakeholders to account for the delivery of the strategy and action plan.

[East Lothian Carers Strategy and East Lothian Carers Action Plan](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/12974/east_lothian_carers_strategy)

[Change Boards and Reference Group Structure](https://www.edubuzz.org/almac/change-boards-and-reference-groups/)

**#4 COEL 5 year strategy**

COEL is due to develop a new five year strategy, which will require carer input. I am not yet clear on the timelines for this. Several factors may delay the start of this process including the recruitment of a new chair of the board of COEL. Both the CEO Jess Wade and a representative of the board would be keen to attend a Panel meeting to listen to what you

**Ongoing engagement opportunities**

**Care Opinion**

Opportunity to share publicly your experiences of UK health and care services, good and bad. (NB. All comments are pre-moderated to avoid any libel issues. Care Opinion sends published comments to service provider, relevant registering body and local political representatives). It has the potential to increase transparency although East Lothian Council does not currently subscribe to or promote the service. <https://www.careopinion.org.uk/>