

Meeting Note – Carers’ Panel

Title	Carers’ Panel
Venue	Zoom
Date	08/03/2021
Attendees	Agnes Stevenson, Anne Bisset, Jacki Aston, Patty Gordon, David Binnie (guest speaker), Kirsteen Powell (CoEL)
Apologies	Hazel Bradshaw, Helen Wedgwood

Agenda

- Introductions
- Guest Speaker David Binnie, Carers’ Rep on Integrated Joint Board (IJB)
- Review of previous meeting’s note
- Carer Engagement opportunities/ Hot topics
 - Date/time of strategy development sessions
- COEL service developments (Extended hours info & advice service/ Befriending project)
- Any other Business

Summary of discussions

Guest Speaker, David Binnie, Carers’ Rep on the IJB, shared some of his insights and experiences.

Structure and function of IJB

David explained the structure and function of the IJB and his role as the Carers’ Rep. The IJB has a directing or specifying function. It has an annual budget of c. £150 million, which comes from the local authority and the health board. It directs the local authority and the health board to deliver services. It is not a service delivery organisation itself. There are 8 voting members on the board – 4 councillors and 4 representatives of the health board. Other members, including the Carers’ Rep and the Service User Rep, are non-voting members. Below the Main Board, where decisions are formally ratified, sits the Strategy Board, where proposals are debated, refined and agreed. Below the Strategy Board, there are seven Change Boards including a Carers’ Board. The Change Boards are responsible for overseeing the delivery of their area of the Strategy Plan.

Carers’ Reference Group

Prior to the pandemic, there was a Carers’ Reference Group, which included carers’ organisations and individuals with lived experience. The Carers Reference Group fed into the Carers’ Board, making suggestions and commenting on proposals. The structure of the Reference Groups that feed into the Change Boards is currently under review.

Impact of Feeley Report (Independent Review of Adults Social Care)

David noted that the recommendations of the Feeley Report have the potential to improve support for carers – carers need to campaign for their implementation. The Scottish Government has committed to establishing a National Care Service over the next five years to set standards nationally and fund IJBs directly. The report recommends that Carers and Service User Reps be given voting rights on IJBs. It also recommends that carers be given a right to respite.

Discussion on Right to Respite

Panel members discussed what a right to respite for carers might look like. Jacki suggested it should be a universal entitlement for carers like annual leave for workers. Anne and Patty

highlighted the importance of regular respite each week for carers in addition to any annual breaks away. A key theme was the respite had to be flexible enough to meet the wants and needs of individual carers. It was noted that the delivery of the right to respite would depend on developing the capacity of social care/ building a robust infrastructure of replacement care, which is not currently available.

Campaigning hints and tips

David shared hints and tips from his experience of campaigning. Remain independent – don't be captured by the agenda of the establishment. Speak up early on – don't leave it too late to start asking questions or raising concerns. Be appropriate – don't go in too forceful too soon. Do your research - use facts and figures to argue your case. Prepare your questions in advance – what three things do you want an official to remember as a result of your interaction? Keep focussed – back each other up when making a case, don't let an official off the hook by making a comment or asking a question that diverts the conversation away from the topic in hand. Talk about carers not the people being cared for. Lobby for change as an individual carer and as a collective. Write and speak to your local councillors as key decision makers within the HSCP.

Other agenda items – previous meeting note was not reviewed during the meeting due to limited time available after guest speaker.

Awareness Raising – Haddington Farmers' Market

Anne and Agnes would like to hold an information stall at the Haddington Farmers' Market in October. Kirsteen will ask Jess if COEL will cover costs (£30 + VAT)/ check appropriate public liability insurance is in place.

Questions for guest speakers Ashley Hardy and Trish Carlye

Kirsteen asked if Panel members had any additional questions for Ashley Hardy and Trish Carlye in advance of next month's meeting. Anne wanted to know if the funding for proposed Dementia Meeting Centre would have to be drawn from other services' budgets. Anne also wanted to know what alternative models of care were being explored by the HSCP to address the shortage of care workers/ the limitations of the time and task model of home care.

Next steps/ Key decisions

- Panel members wish to invite councillor Shamin Akhtar to speak to them at some point in the future – dates and topics to be discussed.

Actions		
Who	What	By when
Kirsteen	Research and summarise changes to benefits being transferred from DWP to SSS in 2020 including rationale for reduction in face-to-face assessments. Update Panel members.	Outstanding 31/07/2021
Kirsteen	Ask Jess if COEL will cover costs (£30 + VAT)/ check appropriate public liability insurance is in place for stall at Farmers' Market.	31/08/2021
Panel members	To discuss at next meeting – do panel members wish to continue meeting online or would they prefer to meet face-to-face (as restrictions allow)?	06/09/2021

Appendix 1 – Carer Engagement Opportunities & Hot Topics

Carer engagement opportunities – August 2021

Immediate (next 4 – 6 weeks)

#1 CoCiS survey on Carers Allowance Supplement Bill – Monday 2nd August

The Coalition of Carers in Scotland (CoCiS) have created a two-minute survey for carers to share their views on the Carers Allowance Supplement (Scotland) Bill:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CarersAllowanceSupplement>

You don't have to be receiving carers allowance to respond to this survey – CoCiS are keen to hear from ALL carers, regardless of whether they receive carers allowance or not. The Bill provides for a one-off doubling of the supplement for the period 1st Oct 2021 to 31st March 2021. It also gives the Scottish Government the ability to increase the supplement again in future.

#2 Musselburgh Dementia Meeting Centre Relaunch – Tuesday 10th August, 10 am to 12 noon

Meeting Centres are social community clubs for people living with dementia and their (unpaid) carers, family and friends. This model of support was originally developed in the Netherlands. Dementia Friendly East Lothian (DFEL) are spearheading a project to establish a Meeting Centre in Musselburgh. They are very keen for as many dementia carers as possible in East Lothian to participate in the process. Please register for online meeting (on Zoom) here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/musselburgh-meeting-centre-relaunch-tickets-164182433077>

#3 COEL Strategy Development Sessions – Thursday 26th August or Friday 27th August

CoEL is holding two strategy development sessions with carers to create a new business plan to shape our work going forward. We will be writing to all carers who are registered with us to invite you to sign up to one of these sessions shortly. You can choose whichever session suits you best. The invitation letter or email will also include a copy of our annual survey.

- Thu 26th Aug, 10:30 to 15:00, at the Fraser Centre, 3A Winton Place, Tranent, EH33 1AF
- Fri 27th Aug, 10:30 to 12:30 on Zoom

Please note we will provide lunch and pay reasonable travel expenses for the face-to-face session at the Fraser Centre.

Medium term (next 3 months)

#1 Meeting with Ashley Hardy & Trish Carlye @ Carers' Panel, Tuesday 7th September

Trish Carlye, Carers' Lead, and Ashley Hardy, Strategy Officer, from East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership (ELHSCP) have agreed to speak to the Carers' Panel at our September meeting. They will cover Carers Act Funding and carers' rep opportunities within ELHSCP. They would also like to hear Panel members' views of Carers Strategy (see link below), which is due to be updated and refreshed this year. https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/28027/east_lothian_carers_strategy

If you have any other issues you would like Trish and Ashley to address during this session (bearing in mind we have an hour their time, from 2:30 to 3:30 pm) please let me know by Friday 6th August.

#2 Consultation on the legislation for a National Care Service

The Scottish Government have set up a Social Covenant Steering Group, which includes several unpaid carers, to help guide the development of a National Care Service. You can read about it here: <https://www.gov.scot/news/first-steps-towards-a-national-care-service/>

A consultation on the National Care Service is due to be launched on Monday 9th August. I will update you on opportunities to get involved as more information becomes available.

#3 Possibility of an information stall at Haddington Farmers' Market

Val Shields from Haddington Farmers' Market has said they have no stalls available for charities/community groups in August or September. The first date would be Saturday 30th October unless they have a cancellation. There is a small charge (£30 + VAT).

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

#1 Carers' Rights Day (Thu 25th Nov 2021)

Building on the Carers Hustings, I wanted to flag Carers' Rights Day as a possible opportunity to invite political representatives for East Lothian to answer questions from carers. Paul McLennan (SNP) is the East Lothian Constituency MSP but Craig Hoy (Conservative) and Martin Whitfield were both elected as MSPs for the South Scotland region.

Hot Topics in July 2021

Topics raised by COEL staff on behalf of carers during July 2021

#1 Riverside Medical Practice

Again staff reported that carers were having severe difficulties accessing GP appointments at Riverside Medical Practice, Musselburgh. CEO Jess Wade will investigate who CoEL can most effectively make representations to on this issue on behalf of carers.

Update on previous hot topics: No new updates.