

Cross Party Group on Carers

18th February 2021

Zoom meeting

- Present:**
- Collette Walker - ISP**
 - Celia sweeney – Carer**
 - Anne Wilson – Children’s Health Scotland**
 - Louise Morgan – Carers Trust Scotland**
 - Cath Purdie - PASDA**
 - Christine Farquhar – Carer**
 - Claire Cairns – Coalition of Carers in Scotland**
 - Elizabeth Morrison – Life Changes Trust**
 - Colette McDiarmid – MND Scotland**
 - Fiona Pirrie – East Ayrshire Carers**
 - Tom Arthur MSP – Co-convenor**
 - Mark Griffin MSP – Co-convenor**
 - Karen Maloney – Carers Trust Scotland**
 - Paul Traynor – Carers Trust Scotland**
 - Jean Campbell - Soroptimist International (Scotland) / Support In Mind Scotland**
 - Johann Lamont MSP**
 - Justina Murray – SFAD**
 - Kate Hogarth – Shared Care Scotland**
 - Keith Robson – MS Society**
 - Moira McWhinnie – Carer**
 - Tom Wightman – PASDA**
 - Nicola Tams – Edinburgh Headway**
- Apologies:**
- Irene Oldfather – Alliance Scotland**
 - Mark Bevin – Leuchie House**
 - Alison Wright – Carers of West Lothian**
 - Joan McAlpine MSP**
 - Anne Bisset – Carer**
 - Arvind Salwan – Care Inspectorate**

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Mark welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the Cross-party Group for carers for this Parliamentary session. Both Tom and Mark thanked everyone for their contribution to the meetings over the last two years

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and matters arising.

The convenors asked if anyone had any comments or amendments to the minutes. None were received. The minutes were approved; proposed by Celia Sweeney, seconded by Claire Cairns.

Celia asked if the letters had been sent out. The secretariat stated they had but would be resent with the minutes from this meeting.

3. Carer Aware Course – Gill Ryan, The Open University Scotland

Gill introduced Charlotte, one of the student carers who had participated in the creation of the course, who explained her situation and spoke about her experiences at university, the good and the bad. Gill went through the process to create the course and what they hoped to achieve. A Q&A session followed.

Charlotte also spoke about not self-identifying as a care and how that affected her life and how she was identified.

Mark asked if the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) would be requiring that Colleges and Universities take the course and award as part of their outcome agreements, suggesting that the group write to SFC with this proposal. He then thanked Gill and Charlotte for the presentation and for sharing their experiences.

Below is the link to the Carer Aware course.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/view.php?id=6195>

4. AOCB

Carers Scotland Act FOI – Louise Morgan

Louise reminded the group that they had previously agreed to submit an FOI on the implementation of the Carers Scotland Act 2016. This had been postponed due to Covid-19. She asked the group if members would be willing to have this submitted in the name of the Cross-Party Group for carers. It will be submitted post dissolution of the group in April and will capture data for this year. The group agreed to this going forward in their name.

Young Carers Action Day

Louise spoke about Young Carers Action Day (YCAD) on 16th March 2021. The focus this year is on what lies in the future for young carers and young adult carers, as their mental health and wellbeing has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. The ask is for Scottish Government to develop a national action plan for young carers which would address their education and employment futures as well as their health and wellbeing.

Carers Trust Scotland are looking for the group to formally endorse the ask for a national plan and to send a letter in the name of the Cross-Party Group to the Minister to ask them to take forward the national plan. The group agreed to endorse and the letter to the minister.

Dissolution of Cross-Party Group for Carers

The secretariat explained that the group would be dissolved after this meeting and once Parliament had reconvened, invites would be sent out to re-join the group. The initial meeting would be to elect office bearers. The Convenors would then submit the registration and request for the group to be re-established. Thereafter dates for upcoming meetings would be sent out.

Jean Campbell raised the issue of unwanted emails from a former member of the group. Mark stated that the convenors would contact the person and explain the situation and request that they stop sending out these emails.

Celia asked about how carers could get involved with the Review of Social Care going forward as Parliament was soon to be dissolved. Mark stated that there would still be ongoing work with carers organisations until after the elections.

Anne Wilson also informed the group that the 19th February is World Care Day for care experienced children.

5. Date of next meeting

This was the last meeting of the Cross-Party Group for this session and once parliament was reconvened after the next election, invites to re-join the meeting will be sent out and dates for the initial meeting will be included.

Mark thanked everyone for their participation and good work that had come from the group over the last session.