

Note of the National Advice Network in Wales Meeting, held on Thursday 27th April 2017 – Citizens Advice Cymru office, 4th floor, Trafalgar House, 5 Fitzalan Place, Cardiff CF24 0ED

In attendance:

Bob Chapman, Chair of the National Advice Network (BC)
Andrew Jacobs, Financial and Digital Inclusion Unit, Welsh Government (AJ)
Amelia John, Deputy Director of Communities Division, Welsh Government (AJohn)
Stephanie Barry, Financial Inclusion Unit, Welsh Government (SB)

Core members

Lisa Hayward, WLGA (LH)
Dr Sumina Azan, Public Health Wales (SA)
Lee Phillips, Money Advice Service (LP)
Lara Ramsay, Big Lottery (LR)
Fran Targett, Citizens Advice Cymru (FT)
Paul Neave Flintshire Council (PN)
JJ Costello, Shelter Cymru and representing networks of IAPF (JC)

Extended members

Geoff Marlow, Housing and Regeneration, Welsh Government (GM)
David Clayton, Health and Social Services, Welsh Government (DC)
Jane Corbett, Energy Efficiency & Fuel Poverty, Welsh Government (JC)
Andrew Felton, Constitutional Affairs Unit, Welsh Government (AF)
Sally Hunt, Tackling Poverty Branch, Welsh Government (SH)
Pete Cowan, University of South Wales (Director Legal & Financial Advice clinic) (PC)
Vanessa Owens, West Wales Credit Union (VO)
Will Atkinson, Community Housing Cymru (WA)
Graham Roberts, Department for Work and Pensions (GR)

Item 1 – Welcome, apologies and introductions

1.1 BC welcomed everyone including the extended members to the 9th meeting of the National Advice Network in Wales. Apologies were noted from

Kay Powell, Law Society
Salli Edwards, Flintshire Citizens Advice
Martin Swain, Community Safety Division, Welsh Government
Kathryn Evans, Energy Efficiency & Fuel Poverty, Welsh Government - Jane Corbett attended on her behalf
John Davies, Equality Branch, Welsh Government
Marcus Hill, Environment, Welsh Government
Tina Aspinwall, Save the Children
Ceri Doyle, Newport City Homes

1.2 BC circulated his report to members ahead of the meeting to highlight the recent work. BC noted the encouragement from Ministers.

Item 3 – Update from Welsh Government

3.1 AJ updated the group that Paul Neave who is a member of the core group of the NAN has been appointed as the new Head of Advice Services on Secondment to the Welsh Government. Paul will take up his new post on Monday 8th May 2017. The group welcomed this.

3.2 AJ informed the group that the Welsh Government responded to the joint HMT and DWP consultation on establishing a Single Financial Guidance Body (SFGB). The response set out that, subject to further discussion, Welsh Government was in favour of an alternative model of devolved responsibility and budgets in respect of the MAS elements of the proposed SFGB. This was also subject to a fair funding formula, which fully reflects the additional needs of people in Wales. This would then be implemented in line with the Financial Inclusion Delivery Plan and the Information and Advice Action Plan, published in December 2016, which supported an integrated funding model for holistic advice to include both preventative measures, such as financial capability, and crisis help. This approach would ensure best value for the money spent and full integration with other related activities.

Following this, HMT and DWP are currently preparing legislation and have shared a copy of the early draft bill with the Welsh Government, and engagement will continue at Official level.

3.3 AJ informed the group about the workshop held jointly between the Money Advice Service (MAS) and Welsh Government earlier that week. MAS are beginning their work on a new commissioning programme for debt advice services and also the Communities Division in Welsh Government are considering how the three separate advice services grants/programmes it funds can be better integrated. MAS & Welsh Government are looking at working closer together and also using the understanding and knowledge of the sector in shaping the direction of travel. The timescales are very tight with the analysis, planning and engagement stage during May and June, with the intention to share initial options with the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children by end of June.

Item 4 – Review of Welsh Government's Information and Advice Action Plan

4.1 Action 14 of the Information and Advice Action Plan is for the National Advice Network to monitor delivery against the action plan and report to the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children on emerging priorities annually. For this exercise the group split into 3 groups each discussing the 'Quality', 'Funding' and 'Collaboration' actions in turn and the notes of the discussions can be found at Doc 1.

Item 5 – NAN Work Plan

5.1 The group discussion for Item 4 lasted longer than anticipated and therefore there was no discussion at the meeting regarding Item 5.

Item 6 – Notes of the Meeting held on 17th January 2017

6.1 The group agreed the notes of the meeting held on 17th January were a true record. There was one outstanding action regarding the amendment to the Terms of Reference which will be circulated with the meeting note for the meeting held on 27th April.

Action: BC to amend TOR and re-circulate

Item 7 – Presentation of ‘Adverse Childhood Experiences’

7.1 Alyson Francis, ACEs Support Hub Director - Cymru Well Wales, delivered a presentation which can be seen if you request a copy from Stephanie Barry.

Item 8 & 9 – Meeting close and dates of future meetings

It was agreed the next meeting for the core group will be held on 31st July in Cardiff.

Financial Inclusion Unit