

Draft minute of the **Health and Social Care Special Interest Group** held at 10.30am on Friday 15 May on Zoom



**Present:** Gail Anderson (Voluntary Action Orkney / representative IJB), Renate Andrews (Relationships Scotland Orkney), Tamsin Bailey (Relationships Scotland Orkney), Ann Clark (YPeople), Fraser Devine (Care and Repair), Suzy Frazer (Tackling Household Affordable Warmth), Alison Guthrie (Voluntary Action Orkney – Adult Befriending), Karen Mack (Voluntary Action Orkney – Connect Project), Alison Meason (Wellbeing Coordinator, Shapinsay), Nicola Reed (Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland), Margaret Rendall (Vital Talk), Gillian Skuse (Age Scotland), Sandra Towrie (IJB Carer representative/ Sanday Development Trust), Patricia Urquhart (Samaritans).

**In attendance:** Cecily Cromby (minutes)  
Ewan Masson, Outreach Services Officer, Scottish Parliament

## 1 Welcome and Apologies

Gail welcomed those present and thanked them for attending.

Apologies had been received from Hilary Allen (CAB), Erika Copland (Home-Start Orkney), Michelle Ward (Women’s Aid Orkney).

## 2 Notes of previous meeting held on 13 March 2020

With the following amendments the notes were approved:

**2 Apologies** - to include Gillian Skuse

**4 Matters arising Aberdeen Red Cross Guest House** – to read ‘Gail advised that the Red Cross event service in Orkney would operate under the St Andrews banner meaning that local first aid services remained available.’

## 3 Matters arising not on the agenda

### **Item 5: Social Security Scotland presentation (Denis Harvey, Social Security Scotland)**

Cecily advised that the presentation had not yet been received from Denis and that she would follow up.

**Action: Cecily**

**Item 8: Public Protection Committee:** Gail noted that the meetings had been cancelled but would be rearranged. She will forward details when available.

**Action: Gail**

**Item 10: AOCB - Defibrillator training information:** Gail noted that the points raised by Phyllis had be followed up with the trainer and the training information changed.

#### 4 **Member updates**

**YPeople (Ann Clark):** Services being provided by telephone/online.

**Age Scotland (Gillian Skuse):** Services being provided by telephone/online with the exception of the podiatry service which has been temporarily suspended.

**THAW Orkney (Suzy Frazer):** Services being provided by telephone/online.

**Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland (Nicola Reed):** Counselling now provided by telephone.

**Care and Repair (Fraser Devine):** Office still open and emergency repairs/alterations still being offered where safe and appropriate.

**Relationships Scotland Orkney (Renate Andrews and Tamsin Bailey):** Most services being provided by telephone/online. Tamsin will replace Renate as RSO Service Manager in July.

**VAO Adult Befriending Service (Alison Guthrie):** Services being provided by telephone.

**Shapinsay Wellbeing Coordinator (Alison Meason):** Established service to provide meals/groceries to under 18s and over 70s on the island.

**VAO Connect Project (Karen Mack):** Services being provided by telephone/online.

**Vital Talk (Margaret Rendall):** Services being provided by telephone/online.

**Sanday Development Trust (Sandra Towrie):** Trust established a fund (£10/week for each household member) for those experiencing financial hardship as a result of Coronavirus. Trust distributed hand sanitiser to all households on the island.

**Samaritans (Patricia Urquhart):** The local service has been closed during lockdown due to volunteers self-isolating. They hope to be open again in the next few weeks. The national service has been very busy and has produced a new self-help App.

The need to plan ahead was mentioned by a number of organisations, notably given a potential surge in referrals to counselling and support agencies.

Gail noted that the flexibility of third sector services and the speed of the response to the lockdown was remarkable.

#### 5 **Ewan Masson, Outreach Services Officer, Scottish Parliament – updates and discussion**

Ewan noted that the role of Parliamentary Committees is to scrutinise legislation and conduct inquiries. Many Committees were continuing existing work but there has been a shift to Covid-19 related issues. Ewan discussed the work of some of the Committees most relevant to members of the Health and Social Care Group:

Local Government and Communities Committee – Ewan advised that the Parliamentary Outreach team had written to TSIs requesting their views on Scottish Governments response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This consultation closed today.

Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee - seeking views from businesses and individuals on the impact of Covid-19 on Scotland's businesses, workers and the economy.

Education and Skills Committee – seeking views on supporting vulnerable children during the coronavirus outbreak and the impact on exam year school pupils.

Health and Sport Committee - seeking views of managers, staff, residents and families on the impact of COVID-19 on care homes. Consultation open until 20 May.

Equalities and Human Rights Committee – seeking views on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights: what groups and individuals are disproportionately impacted by COVID 19; what measures need to be taken to minimise negative effects of the pandemic on equality and human rights.

Ewan advised that a full list of Committees and their inquiries is available on the Scottish Parliament website:

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/committees.aspx>

People can sign up to the mailing list of individual committees to receive regular updates and a monthly newsletter is available from the Parliamentary Outreach team. Please contact Ewan at [Ewan.Masson@parliament.scot](mailto:Ewan.Masson@parliament.scot) for more information.

Ewan took questions from the group:

Gillian Skuse asked if an inquiry was planned to look at the impact of Covid-19 on home care in addition to the inquiry into care homes. Ewan was unsure and suggested Gillian contact the Committee directly to ask. He advised that people could contact their local MSPs to ask them to raise an issue at Committee and noted the benefit of looking to see if any of Orkney's 8 MSPs sat on the relevant Committee.

Margaret Rendall asked about the possibility of counselling clients being provided with laptops to access online counselling in relation to the Governments proposal to improve access to technology for vulnerable people. Ewan advised that this was a query for Scottish Government rather than the Committees. Gail advised that SCVO were managing a Scottish Government funded scheme to provide technology to those who were shielding. She noted that information was available on the SCVO website and would be circulated in the VAO training and funding email.

Ewan asked members how they thought Committees could access the views of people without the means to complete online consultations. Gillian suggested that Age Scotland could ask a small number of questions to clients during telephone support conversations. VAO could ask local services for a description of groups that they were in regular contact with – ie young people, etc. Ewan noted that he was conscious of asking already busy organisations to do more. Gail noted the importance of ensuring that the views of vulnerable people could be heard, especially as the pandemic held huge implications for this group. Gail advised that this would be discussed further at future meetings. Gail thanked Ewan for attending the meeting.

**10 AOCB**

None.

**11 Date of next meeting**

17 July 2020