

**CARE AND REPAIR SCOTLAND  
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup> APRIL  
EDINBURGH TCV, 16 ST MARY'S ST, EDINBURGH, EH1 1SU**

**Present:** Gerry Power, The Alliance (Chair)  
Ian Graham, Region 1 (Zoom call)  
Andy Douglas, Region 2  
Angela Brunton, Region 3  
Jamie Burgess, Region 4  
  
Robert Thomson, National Director  
  
Rob Gowans, The ALLIANCE

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Gerry Power welcomed Board members to the meeting and introduced Rob Gowans, Policy and Public Affairs Manager of Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE).

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Presentation on National Care Service**

Rob was invited to give a presentation on the development of the National Care Service. Gerry explained that CRS had commented at the time of the consultation that the plans did not contain any reference to housing services or to Care and Repair. Gerry wrote to Kevin Stewart, the Housing Minister at the time, and expressed our concerns. The Board is interested in the current position, given the change in First Minister and other Cabinet responsibilities and also would welcome advice about how we might influence the proposals.

Rob explained that the National Care Service Bill went before Parliament in June 2022. The Scottish Government are currently working on co-design of five areas of the Bill:

- Information Sharing to Improve Care Support
- Recognising Rights and Responsibilities
- Keeping Care Support Local
- Making Sure My Voice is Heard
- Valuing the Workforce

The timescale aims to conclude the co-design in Autumn/early Winter. The Bill as it stands is a framework for change but much of the detail still needs explanation. So far, there is a recognition that important elements are missing, like palliative care and housing. There are also questions about a lack of detail in the proposals, how the changes will be financed and the role of Scottish Ministers. It is generally felt that the costs have been underestimated, for example, how much it will take to fund a national records system. The ALLIANCE is looking into issues around human rights, data sharing, and independent advocacy and has had positive discussions with Scottish Government around these. There is still an opportunity for CRS to raise potential issues with the new Ministers prior to the Parliamentary recess.

COSLA is not against the principal of the NCS but is not engaging with the co-design process because of concerns about the role of Scottish Ministers and the removal of responsibilities from local government and care boards. The local government Trade Unions have concerns about pension rights

and staff transfers. Unison would like to see the Bill scrapped and GMB would like to see major amendments made. There is a need for further engagement. CRS is funded by local authorities and so we would have concerns about how that funding would continue if there is more centralisation of care services. Gerry pointed out that there was uncertainty about Care and Repair funding when the IJBs were introduced and the NCS could replicate that if introduced. It is short sighted not to include Care and Repair in the consultation documents as these services are essential to help people remain at home. There is opportunity to influence the co-design process through clients' lived experience.

**Action: Rob will send details about the co-design group meetings and Robert will try and find clients who are in Marie Todd and Paul McLennan's constituencies who could contribute to the groups. Gerry and Robert will liaise about writing to Ministers to request an introductory meeting prior to the recess.**

#### **4. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The minute of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023 meeting was approved without amendment.

#### **5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

**Action: Robert to organise the relevant forms with RBS to make Gerry and Angela the signatories on the account.**

Robert has completed the RBS online process. Gerry and Angela will receive requests for their information by email.

**Action: Robert will arrange an election for Region 2 to allow for Andy to resign from the Board.**

Unsuccessful with arranging online meeting. Will organise face to face meeting.

**Action: Robert will write a draft Business Plan and discuss with Gerry. It will be submitted to the Board for comments by mid-February with the aim of Board approval by early March.**

Business plan approved by Board in March. A report based on the business plan was submitted to The Cabinet Secretary

**Action: Robert to suggest dates for meetings in 2023.**

The following dates were agreed for in person meetings in 2023:

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April, Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September, Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December.

It was agreed that the June meeting should be changed to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July to allow for holiday arrangements.

#### **6. National Director's Report**

##### Cost Benefit Analysis Of Housing Support

Jamie asked that the Board discuss the feasibility of CRS providing local offices with a template that will allow them to assess the cost benefit of their services.

One of the outcomes from the Scottish Government review of Care and Repair in 2010 was that CRS would establish a framework to would allow local teams to demonstrate to funders the cost benefit of their service. David Belfall (Chair) and Richard Grant (Vice Chair) and Robert Thomson

worked on this off and on for three years and could not come up with a sensible way forward. We also engaged a consultant who had extensive experience with Care and Repair in England and Wales. When he presented his findings to us, we considered his proposals would not be accepted in the real world and over inflated the benefits of Care and Repair.

Shortly after David and Richard resigned from the CRS Board, Care and Repair Cymru started to publish a cost benefit saving of £9 for every £1 received. This figure appeared in all their literature, website and was mentioned in various speeches.

Since then various studies have been undertaken, including one by York University.

Argyll & Bute Care and Repair commissioned a survey of GPs and NHS practitioners to explore what evidence they would accept as cost savings to NHS budgets. I was a Board member of ABCR at that time and attended some of the meetings. The accountant for NHS Inverclyde told us that we would get nowhere with him if we used the term 'savings' or 'cost benefit'. His argument was that NHS would always re-allocate any money saved and there would be no way to demonstrate a cost benefit. He advised us to focus on outcomes for patients.

The most recent attempt by a Scottish Care and Repair team to attempt to quantify the cost benefit was by Fife. Their report concluded that for every £1 spent there was a £1.50 return.

Robert has been invited to attend a meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> May - details below:

*"The **Housing Support Enabling Unit (HSEU)** has commissioned and funded a piece of research which examines existing evidence about the benefits of housing support. This has resulted in a publication, "Economic benefits of Housing Support", by **Prof Ken Gibb and Dr Vikki McCall**. The research partners are organising this meeting to set out and discuss the findings and recommendations. Ken and Vikki will outline how effort should be made to highlight the significant positive impact of Housing Support on people's lives, alongside the important preventative public finance savings it can provide. Attention will also be given to the need to map and account for all Housing Support funding streams and partners and to assess the costs, benefits, and social value of Housing Support."*

HSEU has advised that Care and Repair features in the report and they are interested in examining how we could work together to share the findings and develop a way forward.

**Action: It was agreed that Robert should report back after the HSEU meeting and we will consider if it is worthwhile pursuing the suggestion that CRS develops a template for the offices.**

#### Digital Inclusion Pioneers Fund

The fund is part of the Digital Inclusion in Mental Health and Housing Programme, provided by the Digital Health and Care Directorate, Scottish Government, and managed by SCVO.

Digital Pioneers Housing Fund offers funding of up to £50k to support existing impactful digital inclusion activity in a housing context. Funding will support organisations delivering housing services, with a particular focus on people with protected characteristics or experiencing multiple deprivations.

Projects will be supported for 12 months. Projects can be delivered by a single organisation or using a partnership model. Projects must be working with customers or tenants. This work can be with people living in social housing, the private rented sector or owner occupied housing.

Projects will be required to participate in a Community of Learning which will explore sustainability and best practice models for Digital inclusion in a housing context. Organisations that are eligible to

apply include: Housing Associations, Social Enterprises, Local Authorities, Community Interest Companies (CICs) - if there is an asset lock in place, Charities.

Robert attached a summary of the aims of the fund for discussion and proposed that we apply for funding of £50,000 and also bring to the table (internally) the Digital Inclusion funding that we have in reserve, currently £35,000. It is a requirement of the funding that we nominate two members of staff that will attend community learning group meetings.

**Action: It was agreed that Robert should make a bid for £50,000 and if successful, CRS will look to fund this work through an office or offices as we did with the Fire Alarm funding. We will not employ staff as we did with the Ayrshire Digital Inclusion Pilot**

#### Scottish Government Guidance – Equipment and Adaptations

The Board considered the Guidance document which is now live and Robert reported on a meeting with the Local Authorities Adaptations Network to discuss the implications. The following points are some of the main recommendations that will affect Care and Repair :

- The scheme of assistance is resource intensive for services, inhibits access by creating a financial barrier, is not person-centred, and considerably slows the process of provision.
- Removing grant arrangements and instead encouraging partners to focus on partnership business models, which maximise procurement and recycling benefits, would establish a basis for effective tenure neutral integrated approaches and genuine equity in the delivery of services to people in our communities.
- It is also necessary to remove barriers related to the assessment pathways, ensuring that direct access opportunities are maximised, for straightforward and standardised adaptation solutions e.g. shower installations in local authority and housing association properties.
- This should remove the need for occupational therapy assessment for these type of installations. As it stands there is no legal requirement for an OT assessment yet this has become a requirement as a matter of practice, by many housing providers in Scotland, as a way of managing demand and budget expenditure.
- To address these types of issues and help partners jointly manage budgets in a more strategic and planned way, partners should jointly identify the most effective mechanisms to utilise financial resources collectively, including consideration of pooled budgets under joint governance.
- These changes and improvements need to be supported by clarity of strategic direction, with robust joint governance arrangements which include a wide range of relevant stakeholders across housing (all tenures), health and social care.
- Work also requires to focus on the need for cohesive local housing plans, aligned to housing allocation policies, which promote the provision of barrier-free housing and early intervention strategies, supporting service users and their families, to review their long-term housing needs, including the needs of children with long-term conditions.
- All of the above needs to be supported from government, and it is proposed that as a next stage of work, a national Adapting for Change Action Plan should be devised to compliment other policy work, and assist partnerships to drive forward these changes, and address the outstanding issues in our services.

The local authority adaptations network wants to arrange a face to face workshop day where we can discuss at length how the Guidance may impact our services. It should be noted that a number of LAs are raising questions about how they can continue to fund Care and Repair services under

the current arrangement and how they can finance 100% grants if the 20% client element is removed.

**Action: Robert will attend the housing network meeting and report on further developments.**

### Scottish Charities' Bill

Long anticipated legislation to address the regulation of the Scottish voluntary sector has now been brought forward and has commenced its parliamentary process. The Bill focuses primarily on regulatory amendments rather than a broader agenda for change addressing the challenges which the sector faces. A commitment has been given to a wider and deeper review of the complex legal and regulatory context in which voluntary organisations operate.

Robert gave a verbal report on a meeting organised by Brodie's solicitors held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April. Many charities are concerned about the lack of real world detail in the Bill especially around Scottish Government commitment to long term funding for charities.

**Action: No action required as CRS is meeting the OSCR regulations and will continue to comply when the Bill is introduced.**

## **7. Financial Statement**

The Board noted and approved the Financial Statement. Robert read an update statement from TPT pensions trust about a court case that will clarify some concerns around deficit arrangements.

The Board agreed to pass a resolution in respect of the signatories to the Royal Bank of Scotland accounts.

We resolve that:

- if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the "Add or Remove Authorised Signatories" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section,
- if we change the Signing Rules in the "Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section,
- and the current mandate will continue as amended.

## **8. A.O.C.B**

There were no other items of business.

## **9. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023.