

CARERS IN HERTFORDSHIRE

Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting of *Carers in Hertfordshire*, held on Thursday 31 March 2016 at BioPark, Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL7 3AX



Members in attendance

Wendy Abbott	Philip Latheron
Steve Begg	Susan McCann
James Brazier	Lynda Merchant
Mary Christiansen	Milly Navin
Brenda Dalton	Chris Philpott
Derrick Hale	Malcolm Philpott
Dawn Hunt	Debra Radley
Jean Innes	Dennis Rimmer
Paulette Kane	John Wilmott
Henny Latheron	Jenny Young

Trustees in attendance

Julia Everett
Santo Mann
Andrew Mills
Mike Ormerod (Chair)
Nial Thackray

1 Welcome

The meeting was opened by the Chair of *Carers in Hertfordshire*, Mike Ormerod, who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Purpose of the meeting

The Chair and the Chief Executive, Michele Stokes, provided some background to the purpose of this meeting.

NOTED:

- 2.1 *Carers in Hertfordshire* (CinH) had announced in December 2015 that it was in discussions with Crossroads Care Hertfordshire South about how we can work more closely together through merging into one charity. By joining forces the charities felt they could strengthen the services and support provided for unpaid carers and the people they look after, and offer a more joined-up service. The timing for the review had also been prompted by wider budget setting, including commissioning by Hertfordshire County Council and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in the county. The ongoing challenges to social care funding and austerity measures were also an influence.
- 2.2 Both charities are committed to ensuring unpaid carers are recognised, valued, informed and supported in their caring role and that they have a collective voice with the chance to be involved in planning and decision-making with regards to services for them. A merger would mean carers would have one less service they need to make contact with; freeing up their time. It would also make it easier to access funding, raise the profile and situation of unpaid carers and improve service provision with shared skills and working practices.
- 2.3 Since the announcement, the two charities had been working together with the support of legal and human resource specialists to progress the transfer.

- 2.4 One of the key areas to be changed in order to progress the transfer, is the Objects of each company to accurately reflect the work of the merged charity. The change must be approved by the Members of the charity.
- 2.5 Members of CinH had been provided with details of the proposed amendments to the current Memorandum 3, Objects of the Company, included in its Memorandum and Articles of Association last agreed in 2010.

3 Comments from the floor

The Chair invited comments from Members:

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
<p>A comment was made about the terminology 'living alone'. Carers don't all live alone and don't need care yet. Are these carers still entitled to services? The interpretation was that they are unable to have care because they do not live alone.</p> <p>Members gave examples of caring scenarios to demonstrate various situations as they felt that the new wording narrowed it too far and suggested that it might be better to have 'living without carer support' or 'unpaid carer support' instead of 'living alone'.</p>	<p>According to the current Objects, should something happen to the carer, CinH is not allowed to give any form of support to the person who was the cared for because CinH can only support carers. We are bringing it together so that we can actually continue to offer them some of the support and guidance which we have. By incorporating the new wording it will be an extension of the service currently provided by CinH.</p> <p>We are in contact with carers living outside the County who care for someone in Hertfordshire, therefore that cared for person technically lives alone; not anyone living in the house with them acting as a carer.</p> <p>The function of the change that we are making is not to draw it any narrower than it is currently, it's to extend to a new group of people that currently have home care services provided for them because there isn't an unpaid family carer to do it for them. We had to adopt a legal definition of that and the lawyer was satisfied with the wording. We would continue to support someone in the situations mentioned in the discussion.</p> <p>It is not the intention to exclude people in certain situations. The word alone that might be causing some concern is an addition/clarification to the previous part of the sentence. It talks about establishment of community based carer attendants. That goes on to say that it also covers people living alone. It's a broad definition of providing care attendance.</p> <p>The wording in black in the amended Objects has been part of the Objects since CinH became a charity; the new red section adds to it.</p>

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
	The leaflets produced by CinH provide less legalese wording about the purpose of the charity so it can be easily understood.
<p>This Memorandum is a legal document, and the wording has to be carefully crafted so it doesn't include something you don't want or doesn't exclude something you don't want it to, so that one word could be either changed or embellished – alone or without carer support – something like that.</p> <p>Understand the hassle of going through this with the lawyers again but to change the word alone without carer support, then I think all of us would be happy.</p>	<p>We would have to go through the process of getting the legal definition of caring – which there isn't one. The more words we put into it the more complicated we make it.</p> <p>Unfortunately the concept of being unpaid or paid carers isn't a legally defined term and because of carers' assessments – some people are calling that a payment.</p>
<p>The term 'disabled' – does that mean someone that's physically in a wheelchair or with special needs such as ADHD/Autism/OCD/Downs - because some people who look and think of someone who is classed as disabled as someone in a wheelchair not someone with ADHD etc?</p>	<p>You are thinking of the public perception of the word – these words are legal definitions of someone who is disabled in some way.</p> <p>General consensus – defined under the Equality Act 2010.</p>
<p>Crossroads South – does this include the day centre in Stevenage?</p>	<p>No Stevenage is covered by Crossroads North. We are just talking about the South. Crossroads North is outside this agreement.</p>
<p>Do you think there might be an extension of CinH covering Crossroads North if this is successful – are you trying it out to see if it works?</p>	<p>If we think it works there will be a good possibility we'd want to talk to them.</p> <p>There is a contract between Crossroads North and South and CinH will take on that contract so we will have to work much closer with North. Where that leads is in the future. There are no plans at the moment.</p>
<p>Even though amalgamated are they going to change name – is Crossroads going to be in Carers in Herts now? When we get a letter will we get one from Crossroads and CinH?</p>	<p>Planning on adding Crossroads South's name to CinH so it becomes <i>Carers in Hertfordshire</i> including The Crossroads Service.</p> <p>You will get the same sort of letterhead as you received for this meeting and if it's about Crossroads we will brand that service, The Crossroads Service. Our name as a company won't change and will have the same charity number. You will recognise the same branding as that has been worked on quite hard so we don't want to dilute it and the Crossroads element will be what's apparent to anyone using that service. It will be on the website and everybody who currently uses Crossroads will get a letter.</p>

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Assurance that with being a provider of services now - will it create conflict with being an independent voice for carers?	<p>Had discussed this but concluded that it would actually increase our voice. It will give us more say, particularly with the local authority because at the moment we speak on behalf of the carer but for the three districts, we will also be able to speak on behalf of the people who receive the services. So yes we are taking on a new approach, we are going to be providing services through Crossroads South but that will give us a bigger status and more influence when we plan because we are a much bigger organisation and we now represent both sides.</p> <p>There is certainly a movement in local authority funding to try to get bigger contracts agreed so fewer need to be managed. We want to choose who we want to work with most closely and whose values are best aligned with ours.</p>
Assurance that nothing will be taken away from the core services	Absolutely not. Crossroads South will operate as a service and has a separately negotiated contract that will run from the Borehamwood office. There will be clear integration which will take place over the next few months.
Will all the admin come from one office?	Some things will be maintained as separate such as finance (Charging for services).
If carers come into Crossroads South – will CinH automatically be given their details?	Yes and vice versa. We will be transparent about what we both offer – ie, CinH Passport to Crossroads carers and breaks services to CinH carers.
'Attendants' horrible word – legal jargon? Doesn't sit well.	<p>People don't know what to call paid carers. Many different names are given to paid carers. Care Attendants are the words Crossroads South use; legally agreed with.</p> <p>What is presented on the website about the charity will be far more user friendly in terminology and explain what the charity really does rather than the legal documentation wording. The amendment to the Objects says what it has to say legally and the Memorandum and Articles of Association must be available for members of the public to download, but what we present is different and easier to understand.</p>
Are all the organisations we work with going to be updated about this change?	All staff knew about the proposals in December and other organisations were notified. All comments have been extremely positive and no organisations have opposed the change.
The Objects mention the establishment of Carers Centres – will this include Day Centres/ Clubs?	Carers Centre is what CinH currently does. We don't have a drop in centre – at the moment. Very broad term.

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Are we engaging with Carers Trust and will we be affiliated with Carers Trust?	Both Crossroads South and CinH are members of the Carers Trust.
Who started the process of the move with Crossroads South? Is this the only Crossroads to merge with another organisation? Is this a trend?	We started talking and the conversation developed. There are about 8 hybrids in the country now. Too early to say if this is a trend.

4 Adoption of the proposed amendments to Memorandum 3, Objects of the Company, of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of *Carers in Hertfordshire*

Following a show of hands from Members (none against and no abstentions), the following Objects of the Company were adopted:

To relieve the poverty and sickness and mental suffering amongst persons who are caring for people who are elderly, disabled or chronically sick (hereinafter called “Carers”) and the relief of such elderly, disabled or chronically sick persons by provision of information and support for those responsible for their care, the establishment of Carers’ centres and the provision of respite services by community based care attendants and, at the discretion of the trustees, to provide such care attendants for elderly, disabled or chronically sick persons living alone.

To advance public education concerning the care and treatment of those requiring care and treatment because of age, disability or sickness.

To undertake any other charitable activity.

5 Any other business

NOTED:

5.1 A short discussion took place regarding possible ways of celebrating the 21st anniversary of *Carers in Hertfordshire* in 2016.

6 Thanks

The Chair thanked Members for attending and for their helpful contributions to the discussion.

Meeting ends

Signed Date