

COPA MEETING WITH CITIZEN VOICE BODY (CVB) – 3 FEBRUARY 2023

Present (Zoom): Alyson Thomas – Interim Chief Executive CVB, Angela Mutlow (Deputy) COPA – Steve Milsom, Lyn Finn, Chris Thomas

1. This meeting was organised following representations made by COPA to the Minister for Health at Welsh Government about concerns regarding how CVB would operate, particularly in relation to older people, when it commenced its role on 1 April 2023 and replaced Community Health Councils (CHC).

2. Introductions were made including a declaration of interest from LF who has been a CHC volunteer for a number of years. SM reiterated that COPA hope that the first meeting will become a series where we can build a good working relationship with CVB and ensure the voice of older people is heard in the development of the systems and processes CVB will be introducing. Collaboration and hoping to achieve co-production were our approach and that COPA and the 50+ Forum network would be able to assist the CVB.

3. A positive and constructive discussion was held. The following main points were made in response to questions from COPA:
 - i. **Structures** – AT explained the new CVB would have a national. Regional and local presence. It would be a Welsh Government sponsored body and have one national board – rather than the 7 that Community Health Councils have. Whilst still formally CVB, it would be called “Llais” (Voice) as consultation showed nobody liked CVB. There would be CVB presence in each of the 7 LHB regions in Wales. The Regional Partnership Boards would form the basis for strategic engagement across both health and social care. Outreach into the Community would be the approach and there would be 12 Office spaces. The Board had been appointed by WG and it would have a strategic focus. It was hoped that most staff as well as the current CHC volunteers would move over to the new body. They would be from 1 April an independent body and no longer be relying on NHS governance structures. Alongside publicity, presentations to local and national Groups were being organised to raise awareness of CVB. **It was agreed that a CVB presentation would be made to the COPA Forum Representatives Group and in due course the Forums would all be offered the opportunity of a visit from the CVB. COPA would also share CVB explanatory information to be sent with the other National Older Peoples Organisations.**

- ii. **Role** - Llais is established as a “voice” body and not for inspection. It would focus on the individuals experience and concerns about health and social care. They would have no right of entry but use co-operation powers in the Act to work with Health Boards and Councils. They would provide added value by developing their role across social care as well as health and providing a complaints advocacy service. They would also extend to support Children and Young People. The process and procedures for these new categories would form part of the development agenda from 1 April. There would be a recruitment campaign for new volunteers to fulfil the new role. The volunteer model would be more flexible than that for the CHCs and allow more choice in the areas individuals could contribute. The issue of insurance for volunteers to provide indemnify was being examined. **Further information about how the CVB role is to evolve would be sent to COPA and we would be included in any consultation they undertake.**
- iii. **Older People** - Memorandums of understanding were being developed with both Care Inspectorate Wales and the Commissioner for Older People to ensure good co-operation and co-ordination to avoid any duplication or confusion. Care Forum Wales were being approached as the main provider body for care homes in Wales. Whilst unannounced visits were intended, the usual visits to care homes would be on the basis of co-operation, planning and preparation. The involvement of residents and upholding their dignity would be a priority. Safeguarding training would be provided for all CVB staff visiting in the care homes or community. The processes for visiting domiciliary services including older peoples own homes were being developed and there would be an opportunity for COPA and others to comment on guidance. CVB would be able to support self-funding residents in both care homes and home care when requested. COPA priorities of creating Age Friendly Communities and engaging with older people on the basis of co-production were concepts that the CVB understood and were happy to work with us on further. COPA emphasised the importance of families who support older people both in care homes and as unpaid carers in the community being directly involved in engagement of their loved ones by CVB. Welsh Government are consulting about detailed regulations and statutory guidance for the operation of CVB. **It was agreed that CVB and COPA would exchange copies of their respective consultation responses to WG when made.**
- iv. **Next Steps** – It was likely that the first year of the CVB would be one of development and putting processes and procedures in place, particularly for social care. **This would be undertaken on the basis of**

co-production and COPA would be involved. Further information about the CVB and its startup would be sent to COPA. In addition to the presentations – para 3i – a further discussion would be set up with the COPA sub group to provide update and as a basis for further involvement.

SGM 4/2/23