



**Carers Careline Annual General Meeting**  
**11:00-12:30, 24 November 2021**  
**Ecumenical Centre, Evesham Walk, Redditch B97 4EX**

	<p><b>In attendance:</b>  <b>Trustees:</b> Michael Hopper, Rosemarie Seaton Smith, Angela Vaughan, Pam Dunstone, Peter R Williams</p> <p><b>Staff:</b> Erica Gibson Di Meo, Becky Howes, Nat Carney, Mel Hoare</p> <p><b>Volunteers/Carers:</b> Irene Yates, Heather Bishop, Ann Tarry, Jenny Duffil, Marlene Speakman, Philip Bladon, Joy Cox, Albert Ryder, Sandy Warren, Hazel Downes, Annette Stanley, Mary Elvy, Alison Beatman, Carolyn Field, Rita Massey, Janet Ivins, Joy Blundell, Lynn Barber, Lyn Turner, Chris Loboda, Pat Appleton, Alan Tarry, Joy King, Angela Trahearn, Angie Salisbury, Carole Silcock, Pauline Clark, Jim Casey, Fiona Mitchell.</p> <p><b>Others:</b> Chris Jordan – Disability Talk, Fiona Mitchell, Nick Hoare,</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Hilary Leedham</p>	
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Introduction by Chair</b>  Michael Hopper opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, going through health and safety and then asking the trustee, staff and volunteers to introduce themselves. He then invited everyone to find out one fact from the person on left/right: Carer, Life After Carer etc  In the meantime Marcus Mingus from the Redditch Standard set up for a photo of the AGM. The room was full of chatter as they continued with their introductions before the photo was taken and proceedings could continue.</p>	MH
2.	<p><b>Apologies</b>  MH asked if there were any apologies – EDM indicated that Hilary Leedham had not been able to attend.</p>	MH
3.	<p><b>Minutes from the 2020 AGM to be read and signed as correct</b>  The minutes from November 5<sup>th</sup> AGM were signed as correct by MH</p>	MH
4.	<p><b>Matters Arising from Minutes?</b>  There were no matters arising from the minutes</p>	MH
5.	<p><b>Chairs Report</b>  MH went on to address the audience with his Chairs Report.  He said he was privileged to be Chair of Carers Careline after working with and supporting the charity for over 10 years. And like everyone, the last 2 years have been very difficult, compounded by the departure of Fiona, CCL’s Chief Officer and Alex, our Chair of Trustees. He noted that we owe both a great deal of gratitude guiding Carers Careline through the early stages of the pandemic and giving us the platform on which to build and take Carers Careline forward.</p>	MH

	<p>He talked about how as an organisation, CCL had prepared for the departure of Fiona and recruited a new Chief Officer who sadly, after a month, decided the job was not for them. Subsequently CCL had gone back into the market and recruited Erica who he said has made a great progress. He noted that CCL are lucky to have her as EDM was already doing an excellent job in taking Carers Careline forward despite the legacy of the pandemic.</p> <p>He reiterated that the words here are taking the organisation forward, something that everyone can all be a part of together, especially CCL’s carers whose input is vital in shaping the organisation to ensure it continues to meet their needs.</p> <p>He talked about the challenges of losing key members of the team and the time it takes to recruit plus the constant struggle to maintain a balanced, healthy financial position are already enough for a small organisation like Carers Careline. Coupled with the pandemic, they have understandably put a strain on the whole organisation. He said that he was very glad to say there now seems to be a very positive light at the end of the tunnel, with the support and hard work from CCL’s dedicated staff, volunteers and trustees the early signs of regeneration were apparent.</p> <p>He ended by saying that together with help and support from CCL’s valued carers he felt that CCL have a good future in which we can all see, and all be part of.</p> <p>Before handing over to Erica he wanted to make sure that the leaflets placed on each of the attendees chair could be given out by those attending to get word around about CCL and to help others who may also be struggling.</p> <p>This would help in raising our profile and getting our name known</p>	
6.	<p><b>Chief Officers Report</b></p> <p>Erica Di Meo started with saying a big welcome to everyone and thanked everyone for taking the time attend.</p> <p>EDM added to the health and safety note from MH on the subject of lunch. She noted that measures had been taken to keep everyone safe – including complementary masks and sanitiser. And at the end of the meeting invited everyone to stay for lunch and take advantage of the having the full team of Carers Careline here to have a chat.</p> <p>She then moved onto the Chief Officers report</p> <p><b>CHALLENGES</b></p> <p>EDM noted that MH had mentioned in his chairman’s report about the challenges the organisation has faced...and then some!</p> <p>She then talked about how she had joined the Carers Careline team in May this year but knew of and could still feel the reverberations of those challenges including the loss of key members of the team – Fiona and Alex.</p> <p>She said CCL have Fiona and Alex to thank initially for laying the foundations for the future of Carers Careline along with the trustees and staff who have steered and supported the organisation through the most challenging of times this year and that the good news is that CCL are here today and now looking forward to the future.</p>	EDM

She said that none of this could have been achieved without the hard work and determination of the CCL staff team – Nat, Becky and Mel or the invaluable support CCL have been “**gifted**” by their dedicated team of volunteers.

### **AIM**

She took a moment to recap first and remind everyone what CCL do and why CCL are here.

She said that Carers Carelines aim is to promote the health, mental and emotional well-being of unpaid carers in this community and they have been doing this for over 33 years. That this is done through CCL’s programme of services by engaging with carers, enriching their lives - with the intent to empower and enable them to overcome the challenges they face in their role as a carer.

### **SERVICES**

She went on to say about the programme of services which have expanded significantly over the last few years. As an organisation CCL have adapted them to respond to and meet carer needs. When she first joined in May she could see Carers Careline already had a very strong proposition with their service offering. The telephone and email support service, drop-in and form filling facility, support groups and the support we offer with counselling and bereavement truly complement each other in supporting the full life cycle of a carer.

It is the intention of CCL is to continue to listen, learn, adapt and grow – and as MH had said - move forward.

She reiterated that this is why the consultation and feedback session later on is so important in gaining input from carers as they are key to shaping the organisation longer term.

She then added that the programme of services had been tested this year – the pandemic, the lockdowns and the restrictions imposed by the government have heavily impacted what CCL could offer.

For the majority of the year the staff have had to manage and adapt the programme of services offered in order to remotely support the 325 carers and life after carers registered with CCL. She clarified that everything CCL have achieved, every carer we CCL have supported has been realised from a make shift desk at home in the kitchen, at a dining table or from lap top resting on a cushion in the sitting room - juggling home-schooling, childcare, pets and house full of distractions. That this can’t have been easy but the staff and the organisation prevailed.

### **TELEPHONE SUPPORT AND NEWSLETTER**

She went on to say that it was clear from very early on in the pandemic that CCL’s telephone and email support service and the newsletter would be key in maintaining connections with and in providing lifeline to, carers

### **CALLS**

With regard to calls she noted that the decision was made to call **all** those registered with CCL and not just the 165 that had registered for this service.

	<p>That CCL had made 2276 calls and spent on average 40 minutes per call – and for any mathematician in attendance this equated to 91,020 minutes or 1571 hours – just under half of all staff hours combined dedicated to this charitable activity.</p> <p><b>EMAILS</b></p> <p>Also CCL sent out 555 emails, a new service in the last year to allow CCL to remain connected with those carers who cannot receive calls for a number of reasons and that the email support service allows carers to stay connected with CCL in their own time without the pressure of picking up the phone.</p> <p><b>NEWSLETTER</b></p> <p>The newsletter had provided a further was lifeline to carers – more than ever in the middle of a pandemic. Again with so many restrictions in place stopping CCL from providing any kind of face to face support a decision was made to produce and send the newsletter out monthly in order to connect and to capture any signposting or information that could or would be useful or in some cases critical.</p> <p><b>SUPPORTS GROUPS</b></p> <p>She noted that unbelievably CCL had managed to hold 53 support groups with 223 attendees by adapting the way it ran the groups to the reflect the limitations imposed by the pandemic. When allowed picnics and walks were arranged but for the most part virtual technology was embraced using zoom to host some of the support groups including the creative writing workshop, book club and virtual coffee shop.</p> <p><b>DROP-IN</b></p> <p>She mentioned that sadly Drop-In was not possible over the period although CCL had managed to assist with 11 form filling appointments, a new service which continues to gain momentum in helping CCL’s carers navigate the maze of adult services and benefit applications and eligibility.</p> <p><b>COUNSELLING AND BEREAVEMENT</b></p> <p>She noted that the Counselling and Bereavement services which are best suited and most effective face to face were also impacted by the pandemic. Alternative ways to offer these were explored including telephone and zoom calls. However the real benefit to these sessions was face to face and therefore take up of the service this year was down by 75% on the previous year although CCL still managed to offer a number of sessions within pockets of lifted restrictions and run a Bereavement group in the October.</p> <p>She ended noting that it’s incredible what was achieved by the team in the backdrop of the pandemic, the loss of key members of the team and the many many issues with IT and access to the organisations database, however the IT piece was another story and not for the AGM!</p>	
7.	<p><b>TREASURER’S REPORT AND PRESENTATION OF THE ACCOUNTS</b></p> <p>Erica went on to present the accounts and was very pleased to report a small surplus of £1411</p> <p>Income in grants and donations was £68K, in comparison to the previous which was £104,000 - £36k more than this year (£67917 2021/£103,986 2020)</p> <p>Expenditure was kept in check, at £66,500, £12.5k less than last year (£66,506 2021/£78,940 2021)</p>	EDM

And out of the £66,500, £43,225, was spent on charitable activities, 65% of CCL's total income.

She then confirmed that Omerod Rutter had prepared the accounts again this year and that the Board were confident the accounts are up to date and made up in line SORP practice and FRS102 and thorough in their approach. She noted that for anyone who would like a copy this can be printed out or sent by email or post.

She noted that prior to the AGM the trustees unanimously indicated their acceptance of the accounts and Michael has since signed them.

**Erica then went on to present who CCL had received grants from the in the last financial year which totalled £63,931**

**These were from:**

Community Lottery:	£40,000
National Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund:	£7,800
The Eveson Trust:restricted to our counselling service	£5,592
Independent Age: for telephone support	£5,000
Redditch Borough Council VCS Grant Scheme:	£2,000
Worcestershire County Council:	£1,200
Co-op Local Community Fund:	£1,139
The Frank Russon Trust:	£700
The Grimmitt Trust	£500

**DONATIONS**

She noted significant donations totalling £1850 were received from the Masons, Clare Parry from the DWP and Bromsgrove & Redditch NHS Retirement Fellowship. Plus, generous donations totalling £1,443 from a number of dedicated Carers Careline supporters who donate throughout the year. Erica said CCL are very grateful for all their generous donations.

**FUNDRAISING**

Erica talked about how CCL's fundraising efforts had been put to the test over the year. This year's 100-club running Jan to December had just 53 members raising £1325 in income however the commitment to paying out £100 per month for a winner and runner up, amounting to £1200 over the year left CCL with a fundraising total of just £125. Erica confirmed that the 100 club will be put on hold now until the new financial year in July 2022.

Raising awareness of the charity through usual outlets has been difficult this last year so the Grants secured prior to and during the pandemic, and donations throughout the year have been the charities lifeline in order to keep going.

Erica talked about the other avenues to fund raise including the Redditch Community Lottery, Local Giving, Easy Fund raising and Amazon Smile and indicated that CCL will continue to find other ways to creatively fundraise in the future. Erica asked if anyone would like to support that the team could send links to them.

Erica then went on to say that there's good news for the future and that Fiona successfully secured funding from the Community Lottery formerly the National lottery for the next 5 years which will cover approximately 50% of our core costs for the next 5

years from 2020. This year's contribution is £40,000, however the organisation needs an income of around £70–80K to operate each year. This is an excellent start although CCL will need to find the balance year on year.

8. **CCL's FUTURE**

Erica said that there was even more good news! And that out of the numerous grant applications that had been made CCL had been successful in being awarded funding totalling £35K -WCF, B&R part, RBC = £27.5k and another £7.5k from co-op. HP, Grimmitt, the County Councillors divisional fund, Magic Little Grants (local giving) and Asda.

- £10,000 Worcestershire Community Fund
- £10,000 Bromsgrove and Redditch Partnership
- £7500 Redditch Borough Council
- £3695 The Co-op
- £1500 Harry Payne
- £1000 The Grimmitt Trust
- £1000 Councillors Grant
- £500 Magic Little Grants -for keep fit
- £200-500 Asda Green Token

Erica said that the future looks good and that this funding amount of £35K coupled with the Community lottery money totalling £75K and secures CCL's future into the next financial year and beyond.

Erica then went on to say that to add to this success, CCL also have a couple of funding applications pending and will be working tirelessly on more over the year plus CCL have been given a fantastic opportunity through Insurances with a Cause to receive donations through our association with Disability Talk and their connection with Blue House Equity Release (BHER). BHER have committed to supporting Carers Careline, amongst a number of other charities with a donation for each policy taken out via the links on their website and ours.

Erica indicated that Chris Jordan, the MD of Disability Talk, who was present in the meeting had been the catalyst in bringing this together and presenting us the opportunity which should go live by the end of November.

She said that Chris, along with BHER, had also kindly offered to sponsor a Creative Writing Competition for our carers and she lead onto introducing both Chris and Irene Yates who would be looking after the project to tell everyone a little more about the competition which will be launched in January 2022.

IY introduced "My Caring World" and explained to the audience that "we" are all capable of writing from the heart as all carers "get it". IY explained that it didn't have to be a work of literary art but it could be a story or a short poem – something meaningful to the carer. She then introduced CJ who talked about his experience of being an unpaid carer and the injustice of it. He then went on to discuss the 2 pronged reasoning of the competition – the first an opportunity to express yourself and get

inner most thoughts down which can be therapeutic. Secondly to raise the profile of CCL through the local community with press releases and social media engagement.

CJ talked about the names of the judges CCL would be engaging with including Ross Crawford in order to judge the competition. CJ will also ask a number of his own contacts - Melanie Reid, Sheila Foggarty and ED Balls who all have been involved recently in the carer arena.

Erica thanked Irene and Chris.

Erica then discussed other dates for the **diary**:

- Carers Rights day – 25/11/21 – Carersuk.org
  - ensure carers are aware of their rights
  - let carers know where to get help and support
  - raise awareness of the needs of carers
- Xmas Lunch 09/12/21 – sold out
- Christmas coffee morning 14/12/21 – 10.30-12.00 – cakes
- Panto 16/12/21 – sold out
- Weekly keep fit – sponsored by Magic Little Grants
- Coffee shop to be held monthly at Aroma and sponsored by Affy Qadeer, owner - please book, limited spaces
- Monthly newsletter and to watch out for diary of events - sent out 1<sup>st</sup> week every month
- Fundraising - ASDA Green token go live in February 2022 – need a vote for £500 (or £200) – look our for instructions on how to vote for us in the newsletter

**Before Erica passed back to Michael she wanted to say a few last thanks you's**

- To the community lottery and Tamsin Davey for their belief in Carers Careline and it's future
- To CCL's funders and to those who have generously donated and continue donate to Carers Careline
- To Chris Jordan who has and continues to present CCL with opportunities and ideas to raise monies for Carers Careline
- To Affy Qadeer who has offered to sponsor the monthly coffee shop meeting at Aroma
- To Morrisons and Asda and their Community Champions -Beverley and Chrissy for their fabulous hampers
- To Amanda Wilson, from Omerod Rutter for her patience and support in getting our FYE accounts ready for the AGM –she worked on Sunday prior to get them finalised!

And

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Fiona and her dogged determination to secure Carers Carelines future</li> <li>• To the trustees past and present for holding the fort in the absence of a Chief Officer</li> <li>• To the staff for their loyal dedication to the charity and for keeping operations and the programme of services going through the most difficult of times</li> <li>• To the volunteers who are and will always remain priceless</li> <li>• And finally to our Carers, some she had already had the privilege to have met, many she was yet to meet, for the job that the carers do and the purpose they fulfil. Together they complete our Carers Careline family.</li> </ul> <p>Erica then asked the audience to take just a few moments to think about those we have lost over the last year.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Rotation and reappointment of Trustees</b>  Michael then introduced the rotation and reappointment of the trustees. Under the terms of the M&amp;A of A of CCL it was the turn of Angela Vaughan to stand down as Trustee and apply for reappointment which she said she would like to do. Michael Hopper proposed her reappointment, Pam Dunstone and Rosemarie Seaton Smith seconded it.</p>	MH
10.	<p><b>Re-appointment of Omerod Rutter</b>  Under the terms of the M&amp;A of A of CCL it had agreed unanimously at the AGM board meeting on 17/11/21 that they should be reappointed.</p>	EDM
11.	<p><b>Consultation – open arena - questions, comments</b>  Erica then talked about the consultation which would happen prior to the lunch being served, That CCL would really appreciate feedback and that the tables behind had post it notes and pens to write feedback and assign it to the relevant questions which she then went through:</p> <p><b>Do Carers Careline services meet your needs as a carer?</b></p> <p><b>How do you benefit from the services Carers Careline provide?</b></p> <p><b>Barriers to access: What issues do you face in accessing Carers Careline services?</b></p> <p><b>What can Carers Careline do to improve their services or offer to meet your needs?</b></p> <p>The floor was then opened up to the rest of the audience.</p> <p>Annette Stanley mentioned about a discussion she had had with a friend who had challenged her about being with Carers Careline after seeing the press releases in the paper at Aroma coffee shop. She went on to say that the friend had not understood why she was being supported, perhaps funded, by CCL when she was no longer a carer. Fiona Mitchell (ex CCL CO) who was sat immediately behind Annette responded by</p>	EDM



	<p>telling Annette that even in the lottery bid there was an understanding that CCL had a mix of carers and life after carers and that the support offered was not outside the remit of the funding applications CCL make.</p> <p>There were no other questions or comments.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Raffle</b>  EDM introduced the raffle draw and IY asked Annette Stanley to draw the raffle. Angela Trahearn won the hamper.  EDM then introduced the second hamper sponsored by Asda which she indicated would be drawn at the xmas coffee morning 14/12/21 and to see Irene or other members of staff for tickets.</p>	EDM
13.	<p><b>Close of meeting</b>  MH final thanked everyone for coming and invited them to stay for lunch and chat with the staff and trustees.</p>	MH
14.	<p><b>Lunch</b>  Those attending were invited row by row and reminded of hand sanitiser and masks  Water bottles on food table</p>	EDM