



Date: Tuesday 26th March 2019, 2pm – 4pm Venue: Cwmbran Library

Present:	Chair : Patricia Parsons Vice Chair: Toni Hayes Treasurer : Roslyn Chamberlain Secretary : Walter Harris Dawn Bevan Paul Davey Maureen Guppy Sylvia Hoad Roger Hayes Barbara Parry Joyce Petrovic Valerie Crandon	Pat Walkley Maureen Williams Evelyn Trumper Richard Guppy Carol Briffett Angela Day Brian Day Rosemary Butler Dalene Leek Muriel Price Doreen Smith Olive Jenkins Ann Parish	Avril Weaver Kit Welberg Jane Dorset Don Jones Bridget Barns Margaret Oleman Dorothy Phillips
In attendance:	Age Connects Torfaen - Arthritis Care	Melanie Faulkner Paul and Sue Cusack	
Apologies:	Barbara Bowen Doreen Smith Dawn Bevan Verlie Crandon Richard Guppy Maureen Guppy Jean Jones	Brian McDowell Shirley McDowell Barbara Parry Dorothy Phillips Doreen Smith Sheila Gummery Margaret Stubbington	

Agenda item	Minutes	Action
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence The Chair welcomed all on a lovely day, enquiring if everyone was registered and had been able to purchase a raffle ticket. PP explained that there were some corrections to the previous month's minutes. PP read out the amendments and advised that these would be added to March's minutes. In view of this February's minutes were not accepted and matters will be reviewed in this month's minutes.	
2.	Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting Corrections to the Minutes of 26 th March 2019:- 1. Roslyn Chamberlain is Treasurer and not Vice Chair. 2. Section 6, questions should read:- Patricia was concerned that a member has difficulty of training cover for his wife's needs, so that he can attend some functions (Forum). He says that as main carer he very much appreciated the excellent service he's had from Flexible Dementia Respite Service. This ceased	

	<p>quite suddenly and he's had difficulty in receiving an explanation as to why and thought the Commissioner may have an explanation. He wondered if it was a service suffering from financial difficulties. If so would the Welsh Government finance this much needed, valuable service. The Commissioner advised that he should contact her office and a case worker would be available for advice/support. The member has been contacted by the Dementia Service and an appointment made to visit him.</p> <p>3. Walter Harris question re budget allocation. 4. Walter Harris did not set up Webster.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Speakers: Paul and Sue Cusack, Arthritis Care.</p> <p>Chair welcomed Paul and Sue to the Cwmbran Forum. Paul introduced he and Sue as volunteer trainers with Versus Arthritis. He explained that Versus Arthritis was a merging of Arthritis Care and Arthritis UK. Versus Arthritis strive to increase awareness of Arthritis and Arthritis UK are involved in the development of Medication to treat Arthritis. He pointed out that leaflets covering all aspects of the subject were at the rear of the room and available for all to take away as required.</p> <p>Paul advised that 10 million people in the UK have been diagnose with Arthritis, there are 200 plus different types and all come under different headings.</p> <p>Sue explained she had been diagnosed with Osteoarthritis 36 years ago and suffered with carpel tunnel, has sustained fractures, has severe problems with her thumbs and is waiting for an operation.</p> <p>Paul informed a diagnosis of Arthritis does not mean you are not able to do anything. However, a purpose made drug to deal with all pain is nearing trial stage and subsequent to that would be available within 5 years.</p> <p>Question: Who suffers with Arthritis? Answer: Osteoarthritis is most common in women over 45. However, young people can also be diagnosed and some children can even be born with Arthritis.</p> <p>Paul further advised dealing with the condition involves learning to deal with each day, to plan, rest and manage yourself. There are different ways to manage the pain and these vary with each individual. It is best to work within their own range or abilities and have a mind set to keep going. There will be good days and bad days. He went through the various leaflets available and how they could be of assistance.</p> <p>Paul also explained that distraction techniques could assist when in pain such as watching television, eating chocolate of just doing something you found pleasurable. Never ignore the pain but use the tools you have developed to help life improvement. There is also a household aids booklet in progress which will offer items such as jar openers.</p> <p>Sue explained lots of people lose their confidence when they are diagnosed. From her own personal experience, she has had to use a walking stick in the last 2 years and this has had an effect on her confidence. Paul explained, a lot of people feel isolated and Versus Arthritis are trying to promote support</p>	

	<p>groups to enable sufferers to assist each other. The goal is for no-one with Arthritis to be alone.</p> <p>Paul then advised that for himself he manages the condition with pain killers and continues to work. Just because you have the diagnosis it does not necessarily mean you are on the “scrap heap”. Some people manage with pain killers, exercise, diet, injections but there is no cure.</p> <p>PP added that as a former Health Professional she had noticed that the stereotypical image of a person with arthritis being old and in a bath chair was showing change. There is a new fashion for using “Mindfulness” for dealing with pain along with other complimentary therapies. She asked Paul what their stance was on complimentary therapies. Paul answered that Versus Arthritis cannot actively promote such therapies and it would be up to the individual to make the decision as to whether these would be beneficial.</p> <p>Paul then advised that currently children suffering with Rheumatoid arthritis have to go the England for treatment. However, in the future rheumatoid paediatricians will be introduced in Wales. Further there is a shortage of Doctors generally in Wales and this is resulting in some General Practices shutting.</p> <p>PP suggested it may be beneficial for Paul to be in contact with Age Connects at Widdershins to discuss the possibility of a future Support Group.</p> <p>Walter Harris asked if Paul was able to supply the figures for Arthritis sufferers in Torfaen. Paul replied this was not possible as the statistics are based on National figures. Walter then asked how people living alone with Arthritis were identified and Paul advised, again this went back to increasing awareness of the condition and its effects.</p> <p>PP thanked Paul and Sue for attending and sharing their experiences. She also expressed a hope that a future Support Group would become available.</p>	
4.	<p>Chairs Report: Patricia Parsons</p> <p>The Cwmbran 50 Plus Forum Constitution has been rewritten by the Steering Group for the following reasons:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To bring our Aims up to date, to reflect current legislation and present-day concerns regarding loneliness and isolation. 2. Clarify the management of the Forums’ business. 3. To prepare a document more appropriate for our needs, with applications to grant providers in mind. <p>It has been necessary to tighten up our understanding and practice of membership definition. To meet this criteria we are stating that the money paid on attendance by each member is regarded as a membership subscription. At the moment it remains at £1 per person. Membership entitles a person to vote at the Annual General Meeting. We are pleased to say you will still be entered for a raffle at each meeting (this is optional).</p> <p>In the future Roslyn will collect your subscription when you are registered at the monthly meeting. Toni and Roger will continue to organise the monthly raffle.</p> <p>We have spent some time re-writing the Constitution and particular thank you to Toni, Anne Evans and Steven. Each member will receive a copy of the Constitution.</p>	

	<p>Treasurers monthly report - Current account: £1,958.83 Business Account: £1,005.37 includes 15p interest Total in bank - £2,964.54 Cash in hand: £94.25 Raffle Fees: £38.00 Raffle Prize: £5:00 Rent: £20.00 Refreshments: £1.61 Secretary's Report: Walter Harris Walter Harris informed all that "Know your Rights" leaflets had been made available for collection on the back table.</p>	
5.	<p>Age Connect Torfaen - information: No updates were given. It was confirmed that anyone wishing to book the Easter Lunch should contact Widdershins to do so.</p>	
6.	<p>Draw Raffle, Have your say The raffle was drawn and won by Roger Hayes. PP opened the meeting up for any member to "Have your say". There were no comments.</p>	
7.	<p>Any Other Business Chair commenced with sharing a newspaper article following on from a BBC Consultation on licence fee, which reported that the BBC had plans to use tens of millions of pounds of licence fee payer's cash to settle the tax bills of its presenters. Board members have discussed using public funds to pay around two thirds of the money the presenters owe the taxman. The general consensus of opinion was that this decision was "Disgraceful". PP then moved on to the topic of Forum trips and advised she had received a Jensen's brochure and outlined some possible trips which could be considered:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Burnham on Sea and Saunders Garden Centre (it was pointed out that Burnham on Sea only really offered the sea front and main high street.) 2. A day in the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean with your own guide, morning coffee and buffet. This option would consideration being given to the availability of a guide. 3. A tour of the Elan Valley with a sandwich lunch. Toni Hayes advised she has previously done the trip and it was well worth doing with a drive round the reservoir, beautiful view, a visit to the central control centre and lunch. 4. St Fagans. 5. PP advised she had been in contact with the Forest of Dean Railway Centre. They run a 1-hour steam train on Wednesdays. There were various options suggested to accompany this trip; hire a coach to Monmouth or Chepstow Garden Centre in the morning, go on from there to the railway, have a light lunch in the Forest of Dean. Alternatively, the Railway could provide a cream tea on board for a cost of £16 each served on the train leaving at 14.45 or a cream tea prior to the train ride at a cost of £12 each (20% discount for 20+). The cream tea consists of 2 scones; 1 plain, 1 fruit; jam; cream; and tea. Chair further advised that the cost of the coach would be around £300 and it would be necessary to consider how much would be subsidised and how much each attendee would need to pay. In the future a £5 deposit would be required to secure a place on all trips. Possible date was suggested of 12th June and PP to investigate further. 	

	<p>Chair asked members to consider the suggested trip and to make a decision at the next meeting.</p> <p>Walter Harris further suggested that it might be worth considering the Severn Valley railway for the future.</p> <p>Any other suggestions were also welcomed.</p>	
9.	<p>Meeting closed at 4pm Next meeting: 23rd April 2019, 2-4pm.</p> <p>Meetings are always the 4th Tuesday of the month, 2pm-4pm.</p>	ALL