

## **Workers' Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Tuesday 5th May 2020

**Present:** Salim, Farrukh, Rosie, Catherine, Kalpna, Vikki, Penny, Jamie, Ruth, Michael (S), Christine, Judith, Lesley, Roy, Shelley, Malcolm, Judy, Carlos, Neil, Helen, Frank, Pui Wah, David, Rita, Ian, Reminder, Gillian, Annette, Sue, Mahtab, Pat, Geoff, Gee,

### **Welcome and introductions**

Everyone was welcomed to the “virtual” meeting by Catherine (ASM). Catherine noted that there were currently 24 workers working from home, including 10 paid staff. Assistance given to clients encompassed advice line and telephone advice appointments - most enquiries at present related to employment and UC. Everyone was working well and had adapted quickly to the new systems, and Catherine expressed her thanks to all concerned. She emphasised that all volunteers are still very much in her thoughts, even if not working remotely. She was working on a plan to proactively contact vulnerable clients and would potentially be asking volunteers not currently working remotely to take part in this if they wished to do so.

### **Chief Officer Update**

Salim reported that there were huge fluctuations in demand - 800 advice line calls had been answered in one month, and we were meeting 70% of demand. Demand for advice would increase when lockdown measures reduced and he was therefore trying to raise additional funds. The Board were looking at how face to face advice could be safely resumed - for the time being it was likely that the steps taken in March would be reversed gradually. He needed workers to let him know what measures they felt would be required in order to feel safe, but the priority would be to take on board Government advice and not rush. Catherine said that a survey would be sent out to seek views.

## **Training & Recruitment Update from Rosie**

- Rosie noted she was trying to keep everyone occupied with plenty of training - more could be provided if required!
- There was a new platform for training materials etc being launched – Decebo – which she had emailed everyone about; she asked everyone to log on to this as soon as possible, as doing so would update the GDPR record. The link could be found on the Staff and Volunteer website.

**Catherine then asked everyone present in turn to speak and say how they were currently passing the time, what they would do when lockdown ends and what they were looking forward to doing once back at the Bureau.**