West Lothian Volunteer Network

**WLVN Meeting – Monday 7th November at 11.00am**

**Attendees**: Linden Raeburn(Advice Shop), Rachel Lee, Lisa Callaghan (Homestart) , Margaret King (Team Jak) , Roma Skjoldager (Venture Trust), Alastair Ramsay (CAB West Lothian) , Ann Holloway(Change,Grow,Live), Maureen Colquhoun(Advice Shop), Claire Garton(NHS Lothian), Elizabeth Campbell(HCL Transport), Tracy Kerr (Volunteer) & Gillian Dunnigan(Social Security Scotland).

**Guest Speaker**: Gillian Dunnigan, Social Security Scotland.

**Apologies:** noted with thanks.

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| **Agenda Points:** | **Minutes:** | **Action/By:** |
| **1. Welcome & Apologies** | Linden Raeburn chaired the meeting and led introductions. |  |
| **2. Agree Previous minutes** | A few matters arising from previous minutes: event update to follow, information to be passed to VSG (Anne completed), Ann taking the first two TSSG meetings, Ann will update at next WLVN meeting in January. |  |
| **3. Next meeting hosting and minutes** | Tracy Kerr to Chair, Maureen Colquhoun to take the meeting minutes on Monday 16th January 2023 at 11am. |  |
| **4. Guest Speaker** | Gillian Dunnigan, Social Security Scotland [Gillian.Dunnigan@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:Gillian.Dunnigan@socialsecurity.gov.scot)  [www.socialsecrutiy.gov.uk](http://www.socialsecrutiy.gov.uk)  Social Security Scotland is an executive agency of the Scottish Government with responsibility for social security provision for the country.  There is to be new benefits introduced.  Gillian detailed how people can make an application – SSS cannot take referrals, however they do signpost to other organisations and offer local delivery appointments which can be made over web chat or calling 0800 182 2222. These can also take the form of home visits.  Important changes to two benefits -  From the 14th November onwards, there is to be alterations to the current Best Start Pregnancy and Baby grant. Currently, the grant for the first child higher amount than subsequent children. The change is still awaiting parliamentary approval; however, it is hoped that the higher amount for all children who are under a criterion will be introduced. Examples of this criteria included, children of refugee status, domestic violence situation, or care for other children over 12 months old.  Another change, which will also come into effect on the 14th of November, to the Scottish Child Payment, with it being raised from £20 to £25 a week for those aged under 16.  Finally, organisations are welcomed to invite Social Security Scotland to present information. To do so, get in touch with Gillian.  Fact sheet to be sent round with minutes. |  |
| **5. Event** | Update:  Forms have been reviewed, 19 responses to the poll. Overall feeling is everyone would like to attend volunteer fair and people were happy with items suggested – better ways to recruit volunteers in the current climate. Best times were voted as being Tuesday mornings or Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. This will be held at the room in Gateway, Bathgate for 3 hours. The date was suggested to be at the end of January due to busy Christmas period.  An Eventbrite link or email to book place, still to be decided. Speakers – Volunteer Scotland suggested, space for a couple more speakers. VSG suggested, Tracy to confirm. WLVN to be highlighted.  Date to be finalised and speakers to be confirmed. | All to come forward with items to be added to agenda or suggestions for speakers. |
| **6. Service updates** | Claire Garton – Seeking Ward Helper volunteers in the middle to retirement age range.  Margaret King – announced Jak’s Den has now opened in Aberdeen, second one in addition to Dedridge, Livingston. Always seeking for volunteers.  Linden Raeburn – Community Connections project; several hubs across West Lothian with more to follow. This project aims to support with health, housing, occupational referrals, benefits. All are encouraged to spread the word about Community Connections Hubs.  Maureen Colquhoun – Macmillan returned to drop in as opposed to appointments. They also have both a Ukrainian and Russian interpreter for the advice shop.  Other useful direct contacts include:  VSGWL - [vsg@vsgwl.org](mailto:vsg@vsgwl.org)  West Lothian Council - [volunteering@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:volunteering@westlothian.gov.uk)  West Lothian College - [ecampbell@west-lothian.ac.uk](mailto:ecampbell@west-lothian.ac.uk) | All are encouraged to spread the word about Community Connections Hubs. |
| **7. AOCB & Date of Next Meeting** | Tracy Kerr – discussed if these WLVN meetings should be held on a different day of the week or rotate due to Part time staff scheduling conflicts. This will be looked at after January meeting.  Agreed an in-person meeting would be beneficial, perhaps a hybrid approach of in-person and digital meetings. This could be held at the Gateway.  **Dates of next meetings:**   * No December meeting * Monday 16th January 2023 at 11am on Teams   Joining details will be sent nearer the time for all meetings and reminders of dates posted on our social media channels. If you do not already follow the social media channels, please do so:  West Lothian Volunteer Network (WLVN)    <https://www.facebook.com/WestLothianVN>  <https://twitter.com/WestLothianVN> | All – add to diary  All – follow socials |