



## **Ministerial Meeting of the Social Inclusion Work Sector**

**New Register House, Edinburgh, 20 April 2018**

### **COMMUNIQUÉ**

The British-Irish Council<sup>1</sup> (BIC) Social Inclusion work sector held its seventh Ministerial meeting hosted by the Scottish Government at New Register House, Edinburgh today. Ministers adopted an important Report entitled *Caring for our Carers: Supporting unpaid carers in the British-Irish Council Administrations*.

The meeting was chaired by : Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Public Health and Sport in the Scottish Government and Huw Irranca-Davies AM, Minister for Children & Social Care in the Welsh Government. The UK Government was represented by Ms Caroline Dinenage MP, Minister of State for Health & Social Care. The Irish Government was represented by Minister Jim Daly TD, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People. The Isle of Man Government was represented by Minister David Ashford MHK, Minister for Health & Social Care. The Government of Guernsey was represented by Deputy Jane Stephens, Member of the Policy & Resources Committee and the Government of Jersey was represented by Senator Paul Routier, M.B.E, Assistant Chief Minister. An official observer attended on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive.

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<sup>1</sup> The BIC, established under the Agreement reached in the Multi-Party Negotiation in Belfast on Good Friday 1998 is a forum for its eight Member Administrations to exchange information, discuss, consult, and use best endeavours to reach agreement on co-operation on policy areas of mutual interest.

## **Caring for our Carers**

In March 2015, BIC Ministers confirmed their interest in the issue of Carers and tasked officials, working closely with the BIC Secretariat, to consider how best to support carers by looking at best practice, new and creative policy responses and community actions across the eight Administrations. Today, Ministers discussed and reviewed the Report entitled *Caring for our Carers: Supporting unpaid carers in the British-Irish Council Administrations*, prepared by BIC Social Inclusion officials who visited the BIC Administrations to research the different approaches to tackling this area of mutual interest. In reviewing the report and as part of wider discussions, Ministers considered policy areas related to carers such as identifying carers; supporting young carers; supporting older carers; supporting bereaved carers; and supporting carers through the promotion of caring skills, self-care and technology-enabled care (TEC).

Ministers thanked the many voluntary and community organisations in each of the Administrations for their active engagement in the preparation of the Report and for providing site visits and presentations to officials throughout the duration of the Carers topic of this work sector. Ministers commended the Report as a further rich contribution to the shared learning that is at the heart of the work of the British Irish Council.

**BIC Secretariat**

**20 April 2018**

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