

Chairperson's Report AFCCRA AGM 19th November 2010

We have now had a full year with a council supported by a funded secretariat and indeed what a full year it has been! The past 12 months has not been without its challenges and this is not entirely unexpected given that any change brings about both opportunities and challenges. I would like to praise Fiona for operating in a professional and dignified manner during some stressful interactions. As a peak body we are looking forward to forging and strengthening our relationships with the state associations and other relevant stakeholders and I am confident that there will be many positive partnerships/liaisons over the coming year. As the sector hopefully expands our role as a conduit between the State Associations and the peak body is going to become increasingly important.

More importantly, a huge amount of work has been undertaken and a lot has been achieved during this time. We are enormously lucky to have Fiona as our Executive Director. She brings many skills, a lot of relevant knowledge and a huge amount of passion to the role. Fiona has provided us with a snapshot of the past 12 month's achievements in the form of a very professional document 'Report to Stakeholders 09-10'. The chair's report would normally outline the major achievements during the previous year but I think this document speaks for itself. Even the highlights take up more than a page!

In particular I would like to note and congratulate those involved in putting together a fabulous conference. There were over 300 attendees which is pretty impressive. The feedback we've received to date has been really positive and I think it is going to be a huge challenge to go one better in 2011. I'm sure though that we'll give it our best. The Jan Pentland Foundation inaugural dinner was a very special and heartfelt event providing us with an excellent opportunity to remember Jan's amazing work and passion, and to carry on her memory in a practical way through the Jan Pentland Scholarship and the Jan Pentland Foundation.

We spoke yesterday about the role and responsibilities of AFCCRA council and noted that we have a strong responsibility to ensure we are actively engaged in setting the strategic direction for AFCCRA and in ensuring that the peak body is accountable to the sector. Good governance I believe is essential to the ongoing success of the organisation.

We are in a fortunate position now to be able to move forward on a number of really important initiatives and like the rest of council I feel privileged to be a part of such a growing profession. I am looking forward to the coming year and being part of a sector that is:

- Working to strengthening professionalism,
- investigating innovative ways to increase access to services and
- actively campaigning of issues of fairness and equity, both for workers and clients

I would like to thank AFCCRA staff, particularly Fiona for all their hard work and dedication and also thank my council colleagues for their commitment to the financial counseling sector.

Carmel Franklin