

**Minutes of the East Belfast Locality Planning Group meeting
held on Wednesday 15 March 2017
at 10am in East Belfast Sure Start, 124 Albertbridge Road, Belfast
BT5 4GS.**

Present:

Maggie Andrews	EastSide Partnership (Chair)
Tracey Wilson	East Belfast Sure Start
Una Casey	CYPSP
Kris Morrison	NIACRO
Amy Gillen	Inner East Family Support Hub
Elena Brewer	Extern
James Scott	Belfast Drug and Alcohol Co-ordination Team (BDACT)
Lorraine Brennan	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Jillian Barr	Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid
Su Finch	Nettlefield Primary School
Barbara Wallace	EastSide Partnership
Annette McCann	Save the Children
Jamie Compton-Rea	ASCERT
Muriel Bailey	Parenting NI
Nicola Hannigan	Outer South and East Family Support Hub
Alison Templeton	New Life Counselling
Gillian Hughes	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Health Visiting
Laura Rankin	CYPSP

Apologies:

Linda Armitage	EBCDA
Yvonne Cowan	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Claire Humphrey	Barnardo's
Kathy Watters	Belfast City Council
Mary McManus	East Belfast Independent Advice Centre (EBIAC)
Ben Hanvey	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Irene Blanchard	East Belfast Community Counselling

Welcome and Introductions

Maggie welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Tracey for hosting the meeting. A round of introductions took place. It was explained that there are a number of themed meetings taking place to prepare for the Locality Planning Group's Action Plan 2017-2020 and the theme for this meeting is Parenting.

Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting held on 18 January 2017 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Tracey explained that herself, Mary and Madeline (Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership) had met a number of times following the previous Locality meeting. They have met with St. Vincent de Paul and local food banks to move forward discussions around poverty in the area. Tracey noted that there are potential plans in place; however nothing has yet been agreed. The next meeting will be opened wider for more organisations to attend and Tracey encouraged any practitioners who are interested to contact her.

Action: Members to contact Tracey if they wish to be part of poverty sub group

Parenting Theme

The main discussion points were as follows:-

1. Emotional and behavioural difficulties

- The highest number of referrals to the Family Support Hubs has been in relation to emotional and behavioural issues, these families often require wrap-around support and not just attending a course.
- There is a lot of anxiety in transition periods, from primary to post-primary level education, especially boys - needs to be more support from schools at an earlier age to prepare children.
- Emotional and behavioural issues increasingly common in early years reported from Family Support Hubs and in Early Years Services. Gillian noted that the structure of Health Visiting is

- changing to include an increased number of home visits, to support parents from their children's birth to pre-school years
- EITP is running a pilot to further support parents learn about attachment and social and emotional development of their children; however this is not available in East Belfast.
 - There is a current shortage of Health Visitors. The Trust are recruiting more staff in the coming months. Schools have a part to play in careers, as they need to provide more information on career pathways.
 - Save the Children programmes: Journey of Hope in Nettlefield Primary School working with children to improve their mental health in a classroom setting through storytelling. Also the Families Connect programme, helps parents support their children to learn literacy, numeracy; this will also teach parents how to support their child's emotional development.
 - Jamie pointed out that families with teenage children may also need early intervention, and the role is just as important as in the early years; it is important to consider all ages and stages.
 - Any updates on Family Support programmes should be on Family Support NI. Information about programmes also available from Ben Hanvey/ Natalie Killough (Child Development Interventions Co-ordinator). Link with Ben/ Natalie for updates of Family Support programmes.

Action: EastSide Learning/ LPG sub group to decide how to create a wider dynamic in schools

Action: LPG to link with Ben to find out what Parenting programmes are being run

Action: Any updates on programmes should be sent to the Family Support Hub Co-ordinators

2. Fathers/ Single parent families

- Fathers can feel isolated as programmes are often aimed at mothers. fathers often want to attend programmes/ health visits etc. but do not feel like they get the opportunity
- There were 93 out of 191 total referrals from single parent families in the Outer South and East Family Support Hub. The only organisation supporting single parent families on this Hub is Family Mediation NI and they do not have the capacity to sit on all Family Support Hubs

- Influence of grandparents; can cause conflict with parenting and boundaries with children

3. *ASD/ Speech and Language*

- High levels of disability, including Autism in Outer South and East area.
- The Health and Social Care Board is working on a paper on ASD pathways.
- Tracey reported increasing levels of children attending Sure Start with developmental issues, including speech and language and ASD. Influence of technology proving damaging for speech and language. Parents often do not realise their child has a developmental issue. This is more common in ethnic minority families.

4. *BME/ Translation*

- Lack of translation facilities available for BME families or is very expensive.
- Often difficult to involve BME parents/families on Parenting courses being provided if they do not have a basic understanding of English.
- Members reported that there has been a disappointing uptake in English classes, delivered by Willowfield Parish Church despite the reported need. There has been much better attendance at local health fairs of BME families - may be the best way to find out what their needs are.
- NINES service provides support to immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees entering Northern Ireland. May be beneficial to link.

5. *Addiction*

- Alcohol/ substance addiction is more of a hidden harm issue and often goes unreported as many of those affected do not want to engage in services.
- Recently there has been a high number of deaths due to prescription drugs and alcohol There has been an increase in levels of foetal alcohol syndrome.

6. *Encouraging parenting participation*

- There are different levels of parental engagement, it is important to find the most effective way to reach as many parents as possible.
- Important for schools, communities and parents to work together to increase involvement.

Any Other Business

- (i) New Life Counselling - There is now counselling available for children from age 4+ available through Children in Need funding, this is provided at New Life Counselling premises.
- (ii) Save the Children - A new Families Connect programme is starting in Knocknagoney for Primary 1 and 2 to support literacy and numeracy
- (iii) Niacro - A new programme called SCOPE being run to support children who have a parent in custody - Claire McKenna to give a presentation at a future meeting to outline what this service offers
- (iv) Extern - Reach Out programme being set up in Belfast to provide workshops and training on a number of issues, including drug and alcohol abuse and self-harm
- (v) BDACT - 'New Normal' workshops being run to question the current drug and alcohol culture

Dates of Future meetings:

Wednesday 10 May 2017 at 10am	Barnardos- Tullycarnet Primary School
Wednesday 5 July 2017 at 10am	New Life Counselling
Wednesday 20 September 2017 at 10am	TBC
Wednesday 22 November 2017 at 10am	TBC