

**Minutes of the West Belfast Locality Planning Group on Wednesday
3 October 2018 at 10am in Whiterock Children's Centre, 91
Whiterock Road**

Present:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Deirdre Walsh | Whiterock Children's Centre (Chair) |
| Una Casey | CYPSP |
| Ihintz O'Iden | Upper Springfield / Whiterock Family Support Hub |
| Deborah Burnett | Greater Falls Family Support Hub |
| Mairead Gilmartin | Outer West SureStart |
| Andrea Barr | Team Leader for Health Visiting |
| Elizabeth Gracey | Action Ability Belfast |
| Gemma McCauley | Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid |
| Pamela Hughes | Kids Together |
| Dympna Johnston | Greater Shankill Partnership |
| Nikki Terlik | Libraries NI |
| Dympna McKeown | Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid |
| Mairead McCrea | Kids Together |
| Kelly Maxwell | Autism NI |
| Karen Burns | BHSCT |
| Laura Fitzpatrick | Save the Children |

Apologies:

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Jim Girvan | West Belfast Partnership Board |
| Jackie Redpath | Greater Shankill Partnership |
| Michael Doherty | Glen Parents |
| Penny Ambrose | Beechmount SureStart |
| Natalie Killough | BHSCT |
| Tony Kearns | Belfast City Council |
| Joanne Mehabney | Shankill Family Support Hub |
| Leontia McKenna | Outer West Family Support Hub |

In Attendance

Fiona O'Donnell SENAC

Welcome and Introductions

Deirdre welcomed everyone to the meeting and a round of introductions took place. Deirdre explained to the group that Tish Holland has passed

away the previous week and extended deepest sympathies, on behalf of the whole LPG membership, to Tish's family and friends and wider community and noted that she will be greatly missed for all the community work she'd been involved in and noted that she has left such a legacy and she will always be considered part of the LPG.

Apologies

Were noted as above

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 August 2018 were agreed as accurate

Matters Arising

Deirdre noted that there was a great turn out at the screening of the resilience documentary on the first day of the Féile an Phobail and that there was good feedback from the event but felt that it was still important to get the message out to families. Dympna noted that she had attended the Belfast Healthy Cities event on Monday on ACEs and Trauma Informed Practice and explained that at this SBNi explained that they have funding under EITP Work Stream 4 to roll out awareness raising and training on this and will be going out to tender for the delivery for the Community and Voluntary sector. Members agreed that there were so many questions raised for people at the screening and that it was important to include counselling services at them.

Health Relationships subgroup – Una has been unable to secure a date for this meeting to take place.

2017-2020 Action Plan

Deirdre outlined that LPG Action Plan Priority 5 is "Inclusion of children and young people with disabilities and ethnic minorities" as part of this action she welcomed Fiona O'Donnell to give a presentation on the work and information from SENAC NI.

Fiona outlined that SENAC is a registered charity since 2003 and offers a regional services and is mostly supported by volunteers parents, the service is independent and doesn't receive any government funding. The service is often contacted by parents who are under a lot of stress and either need support to communicate with schools or EA or have a lack of confidence to do so. The service supports children and young people up to the age of 19 if they are still in school and provides parents with knowledge, support and advocacy through issues such as what the statementing process is and how to get the relevant support in school without a diagnosis or statement. The give advice on the content of the

statement and help with letters to school, help with the legal document etc.

Advocacy – SENAC will work with parents, and go to meetings and guide them through the points, and help clarify. There is also a tribunal rep who can help parents if they want to take a case. Fiona also referenced the NICCY who will help children as well as the Children's Law Centre. The advocacy support workers can also guide people to do this for themselves.

Services – telephone advice line – this is confidential and offers independent advice and information to parents. This is not funded by EA or DE) this is needs lead and not resource based.

SENAC also offers a specific project for Looked after Children and helps to advocate for them if no one has been identified for their educational support.

Fiona noted that if a child is struggling in school that this often can have an impact on many parts of family life, therefore it is important to give them the whole picture so that they can make referrals to other support services.

Fiona gave an outline of the current SEN process and stages but noted that this will be changing and also highlighted that parents can request an assessment directly through EA as schools often say they can only put a limited number of children through for assessment, she advised that there are lots of resources on the SENAC website www.senac.co.uk

A discussion took place about how parents often seem to get referred back and forwards between GPs and schools, again SENAC can help parents navigate this.

Fiona noted that about 10% of all the regional calls to SENAC are from West Belfast. She explained that the main reasons for parents contacting SENAC are:

Autism, (highest reason)

Dyslexia (highest reasons)

Anxiety (massively increased in last two years)

ADHD

Behaviour (often in very young children; schools often lack ability to support them)

Trauma history

Speech and Language

A discussion took place about the increasing number of children on reduced time tables or are out of school; this has a social impact as well as an educational one, plus its discriminatory as children have right to access to education. NICCY are collating information on children on reduced hours.

A discussion took place about the increasing number of children with anxiety and how it is increasingly younger children. A discussion also took place about private diagnosis and it was noted that EA have to take note of this, often private diagnosis gives parents peace of mind, and the schools have to weigh up if they have done enough within the resources of the school to support the child/young person and weigh up the cost.

The SENAC has a useful reading section with fact sheets and resources for parents and schools, template letters, information request letters and guidance for questions to ask teachers.

Feedback from Belfast Area Outcomes Group

Deirdre and Karen gave feedback from the September BAOG meeting that included that the priorities for funding will be home visiting, mentoring and disability. The future funding will have to follow full procurement rules which therefore doesn't allow for C/V sector representatives. LPG members noted their disappointment with this. There is currently some in-year funding and currently contracted projects have been emailed to invite them to apply for this and closes on 10th October. Questions were asked about what will happen after 31st March to existing projects if the procurement process isn't in place and if there would be a roll-over period as otherwise that would have a massive impact on the Family Support Hubs.

Family Support Hubs Updates

Greater Falls Family Support Hub – Deborah Burnett

August and September have been quieter months; main reasons for referral were family support, disability support and mentoring.

Upper Springfield and Whiterock Family Support Hub – Ihintz Oliden

There were 70-80 referrals in the last quarter, August was quieter. Reasons for referral were anxiety, behaviour, children assessed but not diagnosed, schools starting to refer again, there have been a number of re-referrals, showing families needing further support and know that they

can come back to the hub. There have been 823 referrals from the start of the hub.

Greater Shankill Family Support Hub – Dympna Johnston

The numbers of referrals have been quieter in September; referrals have been of children on reduced hours from pre-school and primary schools, this is a worrying trend.

Member Updates

Save the Children – Laura Fitzpatrick.

Families Connected Programme has been delivered in a number of Primary Schools. Full Service Community Network staff have been trained to deliver the programme and are supporting schools with limited capacity to deliver the programme. This term two schools are delivering

- St Paul's delivering second cycle this term
- St Joseph's delivering cycle one this term
- Other Primary Schools within Greater West Belfast area Gaelscoil an Lonnain, Springhill, Holy Evangelist, Good Shepard and Black Mountain.

Save the Children have reviewed the Eat, Sleep, Learn Play grant and will now be replaced by a new programme Building Blocks which will be piloted in Belfast. This will be managed through Sure Starts for 0-6 year olds. The Sure Starts in West Belfast are: Outer West Sure Start, Saol Úr Sure Start, Shankill Sure Start, Clan Mór Sure Start, Beechmount Sure Start; the programme will be operating before the end of the year.

Dates of Future Meetings

All meetings will take place at 10am

Wednesday 7 December

Tollymore

| Day and Date | Venue |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Wednesday 6 February | TBC |
| Wednesday 3 April | TBC |
| Wednesday 5 June | TBC |
| Wednesday 7 August | TBC |
| Wednesday 2 October | TBC |
| Wednesday 4 December | TBC |