

Armagh LPG
Minutes of Meeting - Thursday 21st May 2020 at 10am
Via Zoom Video Conference Call

Attendees			Apologies
Teresa Miles (BCM - Chair)	Billy Stewart (PCSP)	Michael McKenna (Youth Action NI)	Stephen Fields (West Armagh Consortium) Gerald Donnelly (SHSCT)
Darren Curtis (CYPSP)	Pat McGeough (Barnardo's, FSH)	Mark Doran (ABC Council)	
Joanne Patterson (CYPSP - Minutes)	Kelly Mallon (ABC Council)	Mia Murray (Arke Sure Start)	
Michelle McCloskey (Armagh Down Women's Aid)	Gemma Finn (Barnardo's DCYPPP)	Jude Keenan (Clanrye Group)	
Matthew Matchett (Cedar Foundation)	Siobhan Mackle (REACT)	Shirley Wells (CAPS / NIACRO)	
Elizabeth McNicholl (Early Years - Toybox)	Nikki Cullen-Hunter (Start360)	Alex Clifford (ABC Council)	
Aileen O'Callaghan (EA Youth Service)	Jacqueline Masterson (SHSCT)		

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action – By Whom
Welcome, Intros & Apologies	Teresa welcomed all to the meeting. Darren advised that this was the second virtual LPG Meeting to have taken place in NI and briefly ran through corresponding housekeeping matters. Apologies noted, per above.	
Previous Minutes - 5th March 2020	Previous Minutes shared on screen & agreed, with no amendments. All actions which were not subsequently affected by COVID-19 developments have been followed up on accordingly.	
Member Agency Updates & Unmet Needs in the Armagh Area	<p>Siobhan (REACT): Sent hampers to children in their service with baking supplies, games and arts & crafts included, in order to participate in online programmes via Zoom on Mon, Tue. & Thur night. Engagement with young people continuing as best as is possible. Poor wi-fi signal can pose as a problem for some. Making a telephone call with any new referrals but proves challenging sometimes as no pre-established relationship through a physical meeting. Some family members also uncomfortable with their child on Zoom meetings if considered too young. Reaching kids & parents can be difficult if they do not have social media accounts. Creating new ideas to keep young people interested as lockdown continues will also be a challenge.</p> <p>Mark (ABC Council): Most Council staff re-deployed to the COVID-19 Support Team, assisting delivery of food parcels, fuel stamps, etc. where there is a lot of demand owing to high levels of material poverty. Great partnership work happening during the lockdown period with good learning. SVP are coming under major pressure on shortage of fuel. IT poverty has been raised during helpline calls.</p> <p>Michael (Youth Action NI): Continuing work with Keady Young Men's group, involved in the Keady COVID-19 Action Group, packing food parcels to be sent out into the community (Not delivering). Also involved in litter picks in the local community. Linking up weekly via Zoom for gaming sessions. Continued to meet weekly with young men from REACT, theme of young men & violence. 1-on-1 mentoring continued via Zoom and through using the gamer account (where any young person does not want to be seen on screen). OCN Level 2 Youth Work has continued via Zoom, supporting 15 young people. Starting to plan for meeting outdoors in groups of 6, practicing social distancing, etc. Still open for referrals. Mental fitness issues being reported by parents.</p>	Mark to send Mia a list of who provides fuel poverty stamps in the Armagh area
Member Agency	Jude (Clanrye Group): Moved to remote service delivery. ICT & Customer Service courses ongoing, Family Support Level 1 Personal	

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<p>Updates & Unmet Needs in the Armagh Area (Continued from previous page)</p> <p>Member Agency</p>	<p>Development course running, as well as Gimme5 (in conjunction with SHSC on Monday evenings). A tutor delivers gardening sessions via Zoom with parents & children attending together (Packages dropped off to houses): been very successful. Emerging Issue: job loss and the effect on the whole family. Currently offer CV and Interview Workshops aiming to reach more people locally. Family Mentors offer support to the wider family on issues arising as a result of unemployment. Listening Ear service ongoing remotely. Trying to come up with new courses to maintain interest. Parents report not having equipment to successfully complete / submit schoolwork.</p> <p>Gemma (Barnardo's DCYPPP): Working remotely, some of the team on furlough. Initially contacted all families to ask the best way to maintain engagement due to different circumstances. Increased engagement with the service during lockdown but also had some individuals uncomfortable using video conferencing to communicate so offer audio calls. Fundraising taken place via a TV Ad campaign and have offered families a one-off support for electric, specific items for young people, fuel on a means basis. Currently creating mental health & wellbeing packs to send families to support young people. Continuing to meet the ever-changing needs of young people and their families. No new referrals received recently. (Previously a lot of self-referrals or Community Access referrals.) Any young people with no access to technical equipment have been provided with this through the service.</p> <p>Mia (Arke Sure Start): Continue to deliver services as much as is possible. Biggest challenge was closing group programmes, e.g. Two Year Programme. Weekly family support calls and doorstep visits ongoing, onsite 1-to-1s to families with a particular crisis. Increase in demand for food vouchers and fuel support. Still accepting referrals and registering new families, particularly ante-natal. Post-lockdown may continue to offer some ante-natal services online as access is easier for mums. Recently agreed a regional Sure Start staged approach to service resumption in line with the NI Executive five-step approach. Much increased range of online programmes offered. Positive uplift in funding for this year. Locally, in-house policies have had to be implemented on social distancing. Challenge will be to integrate families on site post lockdown. Feedback from parents on current issues: (i) Sleep problems & lack of routine and subsequent effects on mental health (They are hoping to do something around Sleep Scotland) (ii) Children wanting to go out but cannot, and feeling anxiety when they are in public (iii) Difficulties building relationships over virtual mediums (iv) Parents worry about their children transitioning back to school and programmes (v) Parents feeling under pressure with home schooling and children stressed about work, separating home from school (vi) Parents now seeing current life as the new norm and some becoming more socially isolated (vii) Some families not having resources for crafts activities (Have sent art packs and linked with the Book Trust, to send out books).</p> <p>Michelle (Women's Aid Armaghdown): Childcare Worker still has appointments with children via Skype. Making up boredom boxes to send out to local children & families. Domestic Abuse strongly highlighted in the news recently, have received donations which have been sent to mums and children in the service. No increase in referrals, women possibly not feeling in a safe position to self-refer.</p> <p>Nikki (Start360): The Targeted Life Skills service has moved online and is available on Facebook for those between ages 11-25. Running Chat & Chill sessions, offering co-facilitated Zooms sessions, and reaching more isolated young people. Issues include different sleep patterns and lack of routine. Happy to help other agencies with any assistance in the community. Planning for further programmes moving online and tweaking delivery to suit young people's preferences. Working with Futures Project, available to ages 16-24: also moved</p>	<p>Send job loss related referrals to Jude (jude.keenan@clanryegroup.com)</p> <p>Send any referrals through to Gemma (gemma.finn@barnardos.org.uk)</p> <p>Gemma to send an e-mail to Jacqueline to forward on accessing the service</p> <p>Any members working on COVID-19 Helpline can signpost any pre-school age queries to Arke.</p>

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<p>Updates & Unmet Needs in the Armagh Area (Continued from previous page)</p> <p>Member Agency</p>	<p>online. Offering OCN Level 1 in Personal Development: a lot of young people seeking to upskill themselves through this. Also looking at the potential of producing podcasts. Can offer group support sessions on Targeted Life Skills online.</p> <p>Elizabeth (Early Years - Toybox): Providing support to families over phone & e-mail, mostly emotional support on financial difficulties and keeping children busy and healthy at home. Videos updated regularly on Facebook. Continuing to support parents with pre-school and P1 applications. Permitted to do garden gate visits, if necessary, but not needed to date. Continuing to support Roma families by maintaining contact, signposting, reassuring, etc.</p> <p>Shirley (CAPS / NIACRO): Working at full capacity owing to no travel, offering weekly 1-to-1 support to parents & children. Encouraged by how parents have adapted to new roles and put boundaries in place that previously they would not have done. Helping with practical and emotional support, signposting, helping with schoolwork and connecting with schools. Involved with the AdviceNI helpline as a volunteer with poverty a major issue for families. No consistent message coming from local schools.. New referrals much harder to engage, as no physical meetings with the service or worker. Challenge will be the service getting back into schools, owing to social distancing. NIACRO Family Links is still operating, to make contact with families who have a member in prison.</p> <p>Billy (PCSP): All normal PCSP work has ground to a halt, now working on the COVID-19 Support Helpline, dealing with signposting and referrals. Now planning ahead for the 'new normal', thinking about how to get back into schools and community groups. Might be a possibility that they will bring external sources in to deliver programmes & workshops they would have normally delivered.</p> <p>Kelly (ABC Council): Currently working on COVID-19 support, but also looking at how things can be done differently within Neighbourhood Renewal areas in the Armagh area going forward. Currently liaising with local community groups to ascertain their needs, in order to prepare related programmes. Any suggestions on online delivery welcome.</p> <p>Alex (ABC Council): Some Sports Development workers re-deployed to Helpline. Delivered a range of indoor leisure & sports development online sessions via the Get Active YouTube Channel and Facebook Page. Doing a weekly update circular to local sports clubs and liaising with Sports governing bodies on phased re-openings in line with NI Executive guidelines: offering checklists, etc. for clubs & coaches to prepare. Planning for outdoor sessions from June, coinciding with the re-opening of car parks within local parks (non-equipment, non-contact) targeting families Employability Programme (LEAP), which traditionally would have taken place in Neighbourhood Renewal areas, now being re-purposed to LEAP Online - Further details to follow.</p> <p>Matthew (Cedar Foundation): Moved online to a private Facebook page, with approx. 150 members now. Continuing work with young people aged 0-18 with an acquired brain injury, physical disability or autism. Now working better together within the organisation and increased engagement with parents & young people via the various programmes offered: Motivational Monday (5 ways to wellbeing), Try It Tuesday, Work-Out Wednesday, Thursday Quizzes, Friday Minecraft (proven really popular with young people). Summer Schemes cancelled this year so planning alternatives. Parents anxious about their children being out in public places. Lockdown has given a lot of learning and will be keeping some of their new programmes on post-lockdown, e.g. Minecraft. No new referrals currently being taken.</p>	<p>Contact Nikki (nikki.cullen-hunter@start360.org), if any community/group sessions needed</p> <p>Contact Billy (william.stewart@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk) if there are any needs they can assist with</p>

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<p>Updates & Unmet Needs in the Armagh Area (Continued from previous page)</p>	<p>Jacqueline (SHSCT): Congratulated the community on the response to the COVID-19 crisis. Heavily involved in the COVID-19 Helpline initially with referrals to the Council Hub and community groups. Need to engage younger people more with the older people in the community. SHSCT Bereavement Helpline launched last week. Working on some ongoing funding applications with groups. Some groups have made contact on potential new initiatives. Exploring what the future for Community Development will be like post-lockdown. Recently tried to make contact with Job & Benefits Office on support for Roma families not coming forward to request help. Vibe Church have delivered food parcels to some Roma families. Need to get the COVID-19 message out better and in different languages to BME families via a WhatsApp group or Facebook page. Contact Jacqueline for any help needed. West Armagh Consortium provide fuel support for those in need locally. SVP still provide some support. Some COVID-19 Groups in other areas have raised fuel as a big issue.</p> <p>Aileen (EA Youth Service): Currently delivering 4 essential services, as agreed by DoE: (1) Eat Well Live Well - Delivery of food parcels to young people across NI - 270 boxes across the ABC area weekly. Youth Workers deliver in Armagh on Wed., giving them an opportunity to link in with the young people. (2) Stay Connected - Online referral service for young people aged 9-25 needing additional support in relation to isolation / loneliness, boredom, mental health support, physical health support, etc. Young people are linked to a youth worker for support. If anyone has any young people who need support, please signpost them to this service. (3 & 4) Regional FLARE and START programmes. £2.5K funding secured from Neighbourhood Renewal to deliver a programme (via Facebook and Zoom) in the Armagh area: young people receive an activity pack with resources for gardening, baking, arts and crafts, sports workshops. Also hoping to have group work sessions with young people through Zoom, to continue engagement with Epicentre members.</p> <p>Teresa (BCM): Remote working, occasionally doorstep visits with service users who need essentials. Reaching out to churches for donations of clothes for children. Some children & young people are very happy to keep in touch via phone, text, e-mail. Referrals coming from areas they do not cover as other floating supports have stopped taking referrals. Challenge to build a relationship with new referrals, if not meeting face-to-face. Emerging issues: More substance misuse in the home (Increase in Universal Credit has exacerbated this in cases), food banks a lot busier and some people applying to funding that they don't really need. Vicar's Relief Fund in London have recently provided increased funding for housing & shopping essentials. Some service users shielding due to underlying health issues. Extremely busy at present, particularly with emotional support. Parent Connect service still available to assist parents apply for funding.</p> <p>Stephen (West Armagh Consortium – (Via e-mail update): WAC is part of the COVID-19 Community Response Group and are giving assistance in the form of buddy-up service and/or help packages - Criteria is people who are suffering financially due to loss/downturn of employment or people who are isolating with serious health issues and with little or no family safety net. Currently assisting people throughout the city and a small radius out of town.</p>	<p>Joanne to send Bereavement Helpline flyer Jacqueline.Masterson@southerntrust.hscni.net</p> <p>Stay Connected online referral via www.youthonline.org.uk</p> <p>Teresa to share contact info. on funding sources to Joanne for circulation</p> <p>07763818393 or 07759949314 / westarmaghconsortium@gmail.com</p>
<p>Armagh LPG Action Plan Update</p>	<p>Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Currently working towards finalising <i>Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Resource</i>. Printing and upload to CYPSP website pending. Previously scheduled <i>Infant Mental Health Awareness Workshop Series</i> (3 sessions) had to be postponed, owing to COVID-19 restrictions, but are planned to happen in the future. Format & revised dates TBC with Martina McCooney & corresponding trainer.</p>	

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	<p>Supporting Families The group for Needs Assessment for Newcomer Families has not recently met but an online meeting held last week focused on the Roma community to share challenges faced by services in the Southern area and agree how we might support any related current work. Darren will be sending an e-mail out requesting feedback RE: issues parents & workers are facing in relation to home schooling in the current climate, to be fed up to SAOG and the Assembly.</p> <p>'FYI' circulated on a weekly basis due to COVID-19 developments and the increased volume of updates received from members and other contacts across the past 8 weeks. With the recommencement of LPG meetings, 'FYI' will revert to its fortnightly frequency from 28/5 Daily E-mail Updates, which were introduced towards the end of March, will continue for the foreseeable.</p> <p>CYPSP Southern Area Locality Planning recently produced an LPG Info. & Action Plan 2018-2021 Leaflet, which has been printed and also shared digitally, via e-mail, with all LPG members. Plan is for LPGs to re-visit the Action Plan, in reaction to changing needs.</p>	<p>Members to send flyers to Joanne for 'FYI' inclusion</p> <p>Joanne to resend Info. Leaflet via e-mail</p>
Family Support Hub Update	<p>Number of referrals into the FSH in Armagh / Dungannon have reduced in the months of March and April and following a likewise trend in May. (This has followed a similar experience across the other two FSHs in the Southern Trust area.) It is important to highlight, however, that this is not an accurate reflection of FSH activity during the COVID-19 crisis to date, as the number of enquiries to the FSH that have required a response / follow-up via telephone contact has increased.</p> <p>The FSHs have agreed, in partnership with SHSCT Children's Services, Barnardo's and Women's Aid, to provide Domestic Violence & Abuse Early Intervention and Support Services during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>New Outreach Worker, Ann Marie Baxter, has now been duly appointed. However, her commencement date has been deferred because of the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, with Ann Marie expected to commence limited duties on 1st June.</p>	
SAOG Update	<p>The CYPSP is involved with a sub-group across NI on the Emotional & Mental Health and Well Being of Children and Young People and are keen to receive feedback from LPG members as to issues which they are seeing relating to the COVID-19 lockdown.</p>	<p>Feedback to be sent to Darren</p>
AOB	<p>Billy commended the CYPSP on 'FYI' newsletter, which has proven vital RE: answering COVID-19 Helpline queries and signposting.</p>	
Next Meeting	<p>Thursday 2nd July 2020, via Zoom (TBC) <i>Thank you, as always, for your time and input!</i></p>	