

BELFAST OUTCOMES GROUP MEETING
Via MS Teams
Wednesday 1st July at 11.00 a.m.

Name	Organisation	Present	Apology
Ms. Carol Diffin (Chair)	Belfast HSC Trust	✓	
Statutory Sector			
Mr. Paul O'Neill	Early Years, Belfast HSC Trust	✓	
Dr Michael Murray	Safeguarding, Belfast HSC Trust	✓	
Mr. Gerry Largey	Hub Lead, Belfast HSC Trust	✓	
Mr. Brian O'Kane	NIHE, Belfast Area		✓
Ms. Caroline Karayiannis	Education Authority		✓
Ms. Barbara Porter	PHA		✓
Ms. Cate Taggart	Belfast City Council		✓
Ms. Patricia Muldoon	Youth Justice Agency		✓
Mr. Danny Power	HSCB Belfast Local Commissioning Group		✓
Ms. Natalie Killough	Parenting Coordinator, BHSCT	✓	
Community Sector			
Ms. Nicola Verner	West Belfast Community Rep.		✓
Ms. Natasha Brennan	South Belfast Community Rep.	✓	
Ms. Julie Jamison	North Belfast Community Rep.	✓	
Ms. Tracey Wilson	East Belfast Community Rep.	✓	
LPG Chairs			
VACANT	East Belfast LPG		✓
Ms. Deirdre Walsh	West Belfast LPG	✓	
VACANT	South Belfast LPG		✓
Ms. Katrina Newell	North Belfast LPG	✓	
Voluntary Sector			
Mr. Peter Bryson	Save the Children		✓
Ms. Caroline Rutherford	Extern	✓	
Mr. Martin Walls	Guide Dogs	✓	
Avery Bowser	AFC		✓
Partnership Sector			
Mr. Jackie Redpath	Belfast Strategic Partnership	✓	
In Attendance			
Ms. Una Casey	CYPSP Support	✓	
Ms. Helen Dunn	CYPSP	✓	
Mr. Jim Girvan	Community Representative	✓	
Mr. Martin Sloane	Locality Planning Group Coordinator	✓	

Summary of Actions:

Topic	Action	Responsibility
Interpreting Service for Family Support Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Diffin will follow up on this issue and feedback at next meeting. 	Ms. Diffin
Covid 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts, significant increased needs for families, increased costs for organisations, concern re: next steps – Ms. Diffin to take all issues raised away for regional discussion at either CSIB and/or CYPSP. Health Visiting/reduced referrals to SureStarts – Ms. Diffin to feedback to Child health service. Emotional HWB Report and Reporting process – Ms. Diffin to write to Maxine Gibson to enquire re: timescale and request permission to use/add to the report for Belfast Outcomes Group purposes. Outcomes Group will complete parallel paper. All surveys, feedback from families etc. undertaken by member agencies and any other local organisations, re: Covid 19 and impacts etc. to be forwarded to Una Casey. Ms. Casey will scope out results from surveys, provide summary paper and identify 3/4 key issues. Ms. Diffin to arrange extraordinary meeting in July and forward date to all as soon as possible to discuss Ms. Casey's findings and agree the Belfast Outcomes Group next steps. Carol Diffin to follow up with call to Caroline Karayiannis EA to see if she could attend the next meeting to provide update from Education. Ms. Diffin to enquire if a rep from Youth Service could also attend. 	<p>Ms. Diffin</p> <p>Ms. Diffin</p> <p>Ms. Diffin</p> <p>All</p> <p>Ms. Casey</p> <p>Ms. Diffin</p> <p>Ms. Diffin / Ms. Karayiannis</p>
Summer period Service Provision for children and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance/insurance issues – Carol Diffin, Paul O'Neill and Gerry Largey to discuss further and see what can be done to address this issue from a Trust perspective – escalate to Dept. if necessary. 	Ms. Diffin / Mr. Largey / Mr. O'Neill

<u>Action</u> <u>by:</u>	
	<p>1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>Ms. Diffin welcomed everyone to the meeting, a round of introductions were made and Ms. Diffin informed everyone of membership/attendance changes – Kelly Maxwell has resigned, Jackie Redpath is representing Nicole Verner today, Des Marley NIHE has left and the new NIHE rep. is Brian O’Kane who is unable to attend today and Maggie Andrews has also resigned. Ms. Diffin explained the reason for the postponement of meetings and delay since last meeting due to pressures as a result of the Covid19 pandemic. She felt that today’s meeting should be an opportunity to look at resetting services, discuss how member agencies have managed during this time, any lessons to be learned and next steps for the Belfast Outcomes Group.</p>
	<p>2. Minutes and Matters Arising from last meeting of 18th February 2020</p> <p>Ms. Diffin asked attendees if they had anything pressing to discuss from the previous meeting or if they were happy to move on as most of the actions will be on today’s agenda. The actions from the previous meeting need to be amended.</p> <p><i>Action: Interpreting / FSH - Ms Diffin will follow up on this issue and feedback at next meeting.</i></p>
	<p>3. Impact of Covid 19 on Service Provision and Activity Updates across the Covid period to date</p> <p>Ms. Diffin stated that there has been a lot of innovation re: service provision during this period. She began this section by giving an update from the Trust perspective and will give an opportunity for members to provide updates following this.</p> <p>Ms. Diffin provided a detailed update from the beginning of lockdown on 23rd March 2020, e.g. services stood down and moved to virtual platforms, IT challenges, issues re: provision of laptops to staff, rotas drawn up for staff working from home / small groups only in workplace, all front door services moved to virtual except child protection / breakdown of placement cases - concerns had arisen re: growing number of families under pressure so some 1:1 meetings in these cases, swift reorganisation of services/staff, staff redeployed in to Residential Services, Family Centre was closed, Health Visitors and School Nurses redeployed into Acute hospitals and Covid-testing pods, substantial redeployment across the Sector and reprioritisation of workloads, situation has evolved over the period, some staff back in planning phase for way forward, creative online tools have been developed by Children with Disabilities service - resources to families and in-reach work to families, New ways of working developed to try and meet the needs as best as possible, there is a growing concern re: the levels of vulnerable children and families in the community, Paul O’Neill has been involved in Early Years and Daycare work with the HSCB and DOH, Gerry Largey and Martin Sloane have been involved with this group also. Mr. Largey added that there is a huge amount happening across the Trust which will impact on all re: supporting vulnerable families / CwD etc. Ms. Diffin invited the group to raise any queries which she may be able to follow up on. She acknowledged the concern re: huge level of disruption and change for everyone in the community / delivery of services.</p>

Ms. Walsh spoke re: daycare and the growing concern for children in the community, lack of certainty re: what provision they will be returning to and how to accommodate that, also re: protecting staff. Mr. O'Neill has been a good help re: providing some information.

They have kept in contact with some families and provided food parcels, tablet devices, gas, electricity etc. They have received some money for this and reckon this will be a big issue over the summer months. She advised of the cost implications re: the new regulations re: provision of additional items, e.g. sanitisers etc. Ms. Diffin appreciated these points and recognised there is a balance to be made between keeping staff and children safe and providing necessary services. She is mindful of the regional concerns re: Covid and what next, not just health concerns and has highlighted the significant needs across these families.

Action: Impacts, significant increased needs for families, increased costs for organisations, concern re: next steps – Ms. Diffin to take all issues raised at today's meeting away for regional discussion at either CSIB and/or CYPSP.

Ms. Brennan echoed Ms. Walsh's points. She informed that Paul O'Neill had attended the South Belfast LPG Meeting and was able to provide answers to some of their questions. She recapped some issues from her area, particularly re: parents at home with children. She highlighted that some parents have asked for respite in terms of Mental Health issues, she asked for guidance and support re: something safe to be provided for children during this time – not daycare but respite support for these vulnerable families. It was noted that there will be a meeting soon to discuss childcare provision and guidance over summer period, re: children going back to school and the lack of home school engagement, and families working who now need daycare who never required before, engagement with EA required. There have been increased referrals to Family Support Hubs for essential support – poverty issues, stress re: loss of jobs and income. What can Belfast Outcomes Group do to support these families and children? Ms. Diffin agreed that resetting the daycare agenda, people going back to work and issues re: schooling are all particular challenges and provided an example re: a very low percentage of children on the CPR having attended school.

Ms. Wilson spoke from a SureStart and an East Belfast perspective. She advised that SureStart had also moved to virtual services which has went very well, they have provided practical support such as food and resources, family support is provided by phone and doorstep visits, they have undertaken a survey with parents and received 100 responses, there has been some interesting learning, some families have been engaging more via virtual services than they would have before, hospital referrals have been very helpful however just 3 referrals from Health Visiting, they have linked in with the East Belfast Coronavirus Group which has enabled a lot of things, they are seeing some exacerbated trauma, i.e. children with additional needs – some extremely worse and some are actually coping better at home, survey has shown real outcomes in terms of child development and reaching milestones mostly due to parents spending more time with the children, there is however a lot of anxiety for some children, no one will fix these issues individually, need collaboration.

With regards Health Visiting, Ms. Diffin advised that there have been reduced services in terms of visits, e.g. face to face. They have been targeting new babies and families of concern. They hope to be back to a fuller service by September 2020 but there will

be some impact with regards to referral rates as services reset.

Action: Ms. Diffin to feedback to Child Health service.

Ms. Dunn noted that the work of the Hubs is crucial, she advised that funding has been confirmed for next year with some additional funding for emergency situations. There is a meeting this afternoon to confirm details and an IPT will formally come out to Ms. Diffin in due course. The regional FSH Scorecards will be out in the next couple of weeks and will be available on the CYPSP website. Ms. Dunn then informed the group that this is her final meeting with the Outcomes Group as she will be moving posts and wished to thank colleagues for their support. Ms. Diffin thanked Ms. Dunn on behalf of the Belfast Outcomes Group for her tremendous support to the group and to the Family Support Hubs, congratulated her on new post and wished her all the best in the future.

With regards the impacts of Covid 19, Mr. Walls wished to reiterate the vulnerability aspects, isolation issues and the impacts of education at home on children and young people with sensory disabilities, complex needs, visual impairments etc. Children's Services within Guide Dogs have moved from face to face to virtual parent and family sessions – a lot of the parents have not been available, various issues such as digital divide, busy lives. There is some concern for parents re: blind/visually impaired children not being accounted for in the discussions re: going back to school and limited information available re: school readiness. Ms. Diffin agreed that there has been a particular challenge re: the closure of special schools, she advised that Michael Murray has been involved in some discussions and may be able to provide an update.

Mr. Redpath acknowledged that the community sector has stepped up during this period with regards food / essential resource provision. It has been reported in the news that regional participation in online learning has been around 50%, however, Mr. Redpath noted that in some Greater Shankill Primary schools, this figure was as low as 11%. In terms of the Community Planning Partnership, there has been three stages to address this pandemic – 1. Emergency response, 2. Interim stage and 3. Current – moving to Recovery Phase. He mentioned that Shankill has also completed a survey and he is aware of a number of other surveys taking place, e.g. Parenting NI and Save the Children – some of these show similarities re: impacts and others highlight differing parental concerns. Mr. Redpath suggested a quick, scoping exercise to look at the commonalities and differences. Feedback from LPGs and FSH should also be included.

At this point, Ms. Casey advised that she is a member of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing group who are currently undertaking a scoping exercise in relation to some of these surveys and others, and are pulling a report together. All of the issues raised today have been highlighted within the report. She felt that Maxine Gibson, Chair, would be happy to share the report with the Outcomes Group. There has also been feedback regionally via the Locality Planning Group meetings, both positive and negative and similar to those raised earlier, e.g. young people enjoying extra time with families, parents enjoying extra time at home, lack of stress re: school e.g. bullying, increasing anxiety re: returning to school and potential reduced hours/bubbles, massive issues with CwD population. Members agreed they would like to have sight of this report.

Caroline Rutherford provided an update from Extern – resources such as fuel, food, electricity, kitchen items etc. have been provided to families, a hardship appeal was

launched, staff made available for some emergency incidents, survey completed in order to plan way forward and Ms. Rutherford provided some response examples re: MH/anxiety, a lot of face to face work and respite, has been challenging trying to engage group sessions – google classrooms not great, zoom better, 50% of young people have not engaged – ‘fun’ element need and changes to teaching techniques.

Ms. Diffin advised that Mr. Girvan had to leave meeting early but read out his typed comment re: us having an “*opportunity to put children & young people planning into centre agenda across agencies to learn lessons from this crisis and develop coordinated pathways into recovery. Its important EA are part of this discussion as summer programmes will really help build social and emotional well-being before going back to school.*” Ms. Diffin suggested that an extraordinary meeting is convened in July to discuss these issues.

Ms. Newell advised that staff at Ashton have been working remotely. At the start of the pandemic, there was a lot of online engagement but this has dropped off a bit in recent weeks. They have been using zoom for 1:1 meetings, challenges, quizzes etc. Some young people did not want to engage, however, some incentivisation has increased engagement, art packs have been provided, resources have been delivered, online dance and drama activities have been produced. There has been less interest from children and families of children with additional needs. With regards childcare and remote working, she felt there will be considerable mental health impacts. There has been difficulty interpreting the government guidance and they have been liaising with Education Authority re: their guidance also. She informed of recent correspondence from the Minister re: the programme for 9-13 year olds and the planned EA interventions which will replace regular summer scheme intervention and will be aimed at targeted groups only. She highlighted the lack of clarity from both the Department and the Education Authority.

Ms. Jamison noted that they have also come across some issues re: guidance in terms of children going back to school and related anxieties, particularly in relation to children on ASD spectrum.

There was further discussion re: the EHWP group's report and Ms. Diffin explained the escalation processes, i.e. gold, silver and bronze, before it is approved and finalised, timescale for same is not confirmed. Ms. Diffin agreed to contact Maxine Gibson to clarify timescale for the report and to seek permission to use information from her report and add to same. The Outcomes Group can then review the report along with all other feedback from Hubs, LPGs, families, young people, surveys and highlight the 3/4 key issues for them to undertake more in-depth work. Mr. Redpath suggested that this information is also fed back to Nigel Grimshaw (LH Board) and the Trust, PHA and EA.

Action: Ms. Diffin to write to Maxine Gibson to enquire re: timescale of their report and request permission to use/add to the report for Belfast Outcomes Group purposes.

Action: Outcomes Group will complete parallel paper. All surveys, feedback from families etc. undertaken by member agencies and any other local organisations, re: Covid 19 and impacts etc. to be forwarded to Una Casey. Ms. Casey will scope out results from surveys, provide summary paper and identify 3/4 key issues.

Action: Ms. Diffin to arrange extraordinary meeting in July and forward date to all as

soon as possible to discuss Ms. Casey's findings and agree the Belfast Outcomes Group next steps.

Action: Carol Diffin to follow up with call to Caroline Karayiannis EA to see if she could attend the next meeting to provide update from Education. Ms. Diffin to enquire if a rep from Youth Service could also attend.

At this point, Ms. Diffin asked Mr. Murray to provide an update re: special schools, in absence of Education Authority. Mr. Murray reiterated that the impacts on Children with Disabilities, both physical and learning, have been considerable. He advised that these children and their families depend on the Special Schools which have all completely closed in Belfast since the beginning of the lockdown. Some in-roads have now been made, with School Nurses providing training re: PPE, BHSCT and SHSCT area school now open, priority list of 16 children has been drawn up, still some issues re: social distancing and transport, have been told will be up and running in September, nothing is totally resolved but discussions are ongoing and frequent. Mr. Murray enquired after a contact name in Education Authority – Ms. Karayiannis is the rep. at Outcomes Group and Michael Hogg was also suggested. Ms. Diffin would also be happy to liaise with Una Turbitt if necessary.

Mr. Sloane provided an update from Locality Planning Groups. There have been 3 meetings since March, joint South and East, joint North and West and a separate North meeting, all have been done virtually and have been very well attended. The main issues have been raised across all of the groups, both negative and positive: childcare, poverty, education, stress/anxious children, families spending more time together, increase in Child Protection issues, increase in homelessness for 17 to 24 year olds, lack of respite for ASD, digital poverty, BAME community. He explained how members have been delivering services and the anti-poverty initiatives. He acknowledged the considerable community and organisations' responses to the pandemic. He has tried to contact Michael Hogg, EA, and was then signposted to the area reps. LPG Sub-groups have been developed to tackle issues for children and education.

Mr. Largey provided the Family Support Hub update. The Hubs have continued to operate. They are totally dependent on the goodwill of partner agencies and they have been struck by their levels of commitment. He added that there is an urgency for the Outcomes Group to act now, not wait until gaps widen further. There is a huge risk of unemployment / redundancies once the furlough scheme starts to wind down, risks for parental emotional health and wellbeing, different set of distress factors – should be separate to mental health issue. He is looking forward to developing work along with colleagues in July. Ms. Diffin added that the gap will definitely have widened for a lot of children and the growing unemployment, increasing poverty and pressures on services will all impact on the work going on and the priorities. Services will need to be agile and flexible as we move forward.

4. Any Other Business

Ms. Diffin asked if there were any comments. Ms. Casey enquired re: diversionary activities over the summer, not necessarily mental health issues – all have struggled but real impact on everyone.

Ms. Diffin suggested it would be helpful to reflect on the challenges and how far we have come at a future meeting. With regards Resetting Services, she asked if anyone

had anything to add and advised that in August we can look at how to prepare to support families in September.

Ms. Brennan asked if clarity could be sought re: engaging with children and young people during the summer months, outside of the targeted group mentioned in the Minister's correspondence. She notified of insurance difficulties affecting some organisations trying to deliver services to these children and young people within the Government's guidance. Clearer guidance is required. Mr. Largey explained re: the difficulties in more detail – not Daycare services, not targeted group, insurers are making enquiries re: which guidance groups are following.

Action: Guidance/insurance issues – Carol Diffin, Paul O'Neill and Gerry Largey to discuss further and see what can be done to address this issue from a Trust perspective – escalate to Dept. if necessary.

Ms. Diffin thanked everyone for their attendance.

5. Dates of Future Meetings

Date:	Time:	Venue:
Friday 24.07.20	9.30 a.m.	MS Teams meeting
Wednesday 09.09.20	10.00 a.m.	TBC
Tuesday 10.11.20	10.00 a.m.	TBC