

**LARNE & CARRICKFERGUS LOCALITY PLANNING GROUP
WEDNESDAY 26TH JANUARY 2022
VIA ZOOM - 10.30 AM**

Attending:	Lynn McKenzie	Mencap
	Leah Glass	Northern Health and Social Care Trust
	Sinead McCormick	Northern Health and Social Care Trust
	Pauline Coates	PSNI
	Pamela McClelland	NICHI
	Rhonda Duddy	Access Employment Ltd
	Denise McVeigh	Mid East Antrim Borough Council
	Margaret McLean	Redeeming Our Communities
	Lynsey Poole	Larne Area Community Support Group
	Kayleigh Lough	Mae Murray Foundation
	Shelly McCord	Carrickfergus Child Contact Centre
	Lisa McCloy	Larne YMCA
	Tracy Wishart	AMH
	Sarah Johnston	Carrick YMCA
	Carolyn Benson	Larne YMCA
	Mary Connor	Sensory Kids
	Mark Wilson	Now Group
	Amanda Logan	Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Apologies:	Roy Beggs	MLA/BB
	Valerie McKenzie	Education Authority NI
	Phyllis Lewis	Education Authority NI
	Gabrielle Rawashdeh	PHA
	Karen Hillis	AMH
	David McAllister	Mid East Antrim Borough Council
	Fiona Stanton	Action for Children

1. Welcome & Apologies

Sinead welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting on the 12 November 2021 were agreed and no further changes were identified.

3. Guest Speaker

Carolyn Benson – Larne YMCA

Larne YMCA recognised that they had a number of kids coming along to the YMCA who have either been diagnosed or waiting a diagnosis of Autism. Some of them struggled with the noise and other factors within the existing environment. In response

to this they set up an Autism Support Programme. They offer a varied programme and are very child led. The staff are all experienced in dealing with children who show disruptive behaviour. Feedback from parents has been very positive with a wide range of improvements noted. Carolyn shared a very kind and positive letter that had been recently received from a parent who had a son that attended the club who had been diagnosed with Autism and ADHD.

<https://www.larneymca.com/>

ACTION – Sinead: Share Powerpoint presentation

4. Guest Speaker

Mary Connor – Sensory Kids

Sensory kids is a charity who aim to provide children and young people with a safe and secure environment that will reduce their anxieties, promote their development and help parents to better understand their children's needs. In their base at Houston's Mill in Broughshane they have a sensory room, which provides sensory support, parent support and sensory sessions to the Mid and East Antrim area, and further afield. Mid and East Antrim has recently funded a new website and it is hoped that this will be live shortly. They have recently purchased a Sensory Den, which allows them to deliver their services within local schools etc. Sensory Kids also delivers the programme "What's up with Ally" – which teaches and makes children aware that although all children look the same they may not all react the same. They pride themselves in having an understanding of the needs of children and young people with autism, including actual experiences of those on the autism spectrum as well as informative insight into additional services that are available.

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/Sensorykidsni>

5. Guest Speaker

Mark Wilson – Now Group

Mark shared a presentation for the Now Group based at Carrick and Larne. Their mission is to focus on supporting people with learning difficulties and autism into further education or jobs with a future. They do this by offering a range of services that support people at whatever stage they are at i.e. leaving school or college, unemployed, returning to work or graduates. Job clubs are tailored around the individual's journey to employment and skills assessments are carried out with an Employment Officer to identify each individual's unique career path. They also provide support with drawing up CV's, completing application forms and improving interview skills. Work Officers provide working support for one year whilst the person is in employment.

<https://www.nowgroup.org/>

ACTION – Sinead: Share Powerpoint presentation

Sensory Tasks facilitated by Denise McVeigh

Between each guest speaker, Denise set up a few fun sensory challenges to the attendees of the meeting.

The first one was listening to songs and the challenge was to guess the artist and name the song. 1 point went to the artist and 1 point for the song.

The second one was sight/optical illusion. A picture of an elephant, a lady and how many triangles was shared.

The final sensory task was touch - a DIY Hand Massage.

<https://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/things-to-do/parks/play>

Sinead thanked the speakers for their time and for sharing the information with everyone.

6. Family Support Hub Update

The Family Support are still receiving a high level of referrals for families requesting support for children with a diagnosis and particularly those on the waiting list for an assessment.

They have also noticed a large increase in unmet need where support is needed in the home. Both Action For Children and Barnardos Choices Projects, Barnardos Family Connections and Barnardos EIFSS still have their waiting lists closed due to such high demand for these services. This is resulting in a high number of referrals being recorded as unmet need and adding additional strain onto our statutory services.

Counselling requests for young people are continuously rising and the Family Support Hub are still fortunate to have additional funding to March to try and help meet these demands.

In the lead up to Christmas the Hubs worked with many families offering support via their financial fund, food hampers kindly donated by local food banks and toy deliveries. Unfortunately, the demand for this was so high they had to stop accepting referrals for financial support in December. It was originally hoped this funding would have carried through to March. Due to being inundated with requests for support from families struggling financially and especially at that time of year, they unfortunately had to advise their Hub Partners that they could no longer accept any further referrals. Sadly, this unfortunately illustrates how many families are struggling financially at the moment.

Some members are possibly aware that the Hub meetings had to be cancelled this month, in the absence of the meeting all referrals were discussed internally and actioned appropriately.

7. Action Plan Update

In light of the end of the financial year approaching to utilise the £2000 budget, members had been asked via email to consider potential uses. Several members sent thoughts through via email prior to the meeting.

- Lynsey Poole, Larne Area Community Support, highlighted the need for mental health support around mental health for teenagers and their parents especially in light of COVID. She cited and an example of the Newry Crisis Café, a peer-based opportunity for young people to engage with other young people and promote positive mental health.
- Shelly McCord, Carrickfergus Contact Centre, and Lisa McCloy, Larne YMCA identified needs around the funding for equipment for sensory rooms

At the meeting further suggestions were discussed

- Lynn McKenzie, Mencap, asked if the Youth Fair could be reintroduced but due to Covid this may not be an option within the timeframe.
- Denise McVeigh, MEA and Lisa McCloy, Larne YMCA shared that the Mental Health Workshops for Primary 7 classes in Schools were a huge success and the feedback from the children was humbling.
- Mary Connor, Sensory Kids NI, shared information about Six Bricks – a Lego based programme, which has proved to be very beneficial to younger children
- Kyleigh Lough, Mae Murray Foundation, suggest that individual groups could apply via application for up to £400 of the funding like other LPG groups.
- Lynn McKenzie suggested facilitating JAM card training for co-ordinated community training to make sports clubs, restaurants, shop keepers, general public etc more aware of Autism etc There is also the option of delivering the JAM Card Training remotely.

In the interests of fairness to all group members, it was agreed that a poll would be circulated following the meeting to allow a vote for 3 broad options.

- A funding application be issued to member organisations which would offer the opportunity to purchase equipment or deliver a workshop etc
- To provide JAM training to the local communities
- To re-visit the 'Growing a Healthy, Positive Me' initiative from last year by way of addressing mental health needs

It was discussed that a Task and Finish group would be required to move at least options 2 & 3 ahead. The tight time frame within which we are working was acknowledged.

ACTION – Sinead: send poll for membership vote

Task and Finish Groups

A range of dates have been sent to members of the existing T&F groups for the Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing and the Poverty group to try to establish a suitable date for both groups to meet.

If anyone else would like to join either group, please get in touch.

ACTION – ALL: indicate if interest to join T&F Groups

8. Members Updates

Please see separate updates as shared by members.

ACTION – Sinead: Share member updates

9. Any Other Business / information sharing

Trauma Training

- Currently ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Programmes are available as E learning. <https://www.ascert.biz/specialist-courses/>

[Level One Adverse Childhood Experiences](#)

[Level Two Developing Trauma Sensitive Approaches](#)

Individual organisations can access at no cost

- An expression of interest will be distributed in next week or so for a 2 day foundation training in the Solihull Approach. Confirmed dates are 4th, 14th March

<https://workflow.solihullapproachparenting.com/trainings/first-five-years-2-day-foundation-training/>

- Kate McDermott (H&W Manager with remit for Children) is exploring a **live** webinar with the Trauma informed network before end of March which will be available for all LPGs. More information to follow.

<https://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk/webinars-schools/supporting-schools-to-become-trauma-informed-and-mentally-healthy-for-all>

If any school members would like to find out more, about with Solihull training or Trauma Informed schools please feel free to get in touch with Kate.

- Save the Children are again working in partnership with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and MEA Council to fund a Family Support Initiative. Community Advice will administer the fund to assist families, with a child aged 5 and under, experiencing financial hardship. The fund aims to have a quick turnaround for each application and will be flexible to the needs of the family. Up to £340 is available per application and families will be assisted with such items as Supermarket or Argos vouchers, or help, to purchase food or household items which are supportive of reducing family stress within the household e.g. pushchairs, cot or single beds and dining tables with chairs. To allow the quick turnaround an email address for the applicant is important so that vouchers can be emailed for quick receipt.

For more information contact 028 9600 1333 or advice@meacas.com

- Digital Safety Week – 8th Feb 2022
 - 3 area Problematic Sexual Behaviours in children, anti-bullying, mental health
 - Targeted social media campaign
 - Training and webinars to be planned post launch.

[Safer Internet Day 2022 - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

- From 1 February 2022, it will be illegal to smoke in an enclosed private vehicle when
 - children and young people aged under 18 are in the vehicle
 - there is more than one person in the vehicle.

It will also be an offence for a driver not to prevent smoking. See NI Direct for more information on smoking regulations in Northern Ireland: nidirect.gov.uk/smoking-laws

10. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as **Friday 25th March 2022 @ 10 am.**