

Minutes

LARNE/CARRICK LOCALITY PLANNING GROUP
FRIDAY 24th June 2022
10.30AM, VIA ZOOM

Attendees:	Roy Beggs	BB / Sure Start
	Catriona Fitzsimons	Start 360
	Francesca Verzelli	AMH
	Margaret McLean	ROC
	Lynn McKenzie	Mencap
	Kiri McLaughlin	Fresh Minds Education
	Margaret Armstrong	Barnardos
	Natalie McGrath	Network Personnel
	Karen Bruce	MEA
	Lynsey Poole	Larne Area Community Support
	Sinead Mc Cormick	NHSCT
	Caoimhe Kelly	NHSCT

Apologies:	Tracey Wishart	Aware NI
	Kyleigh Lough	Mae Murray Foundation
	Fiona Stanton	Family Support Hub
	Phyllis Lewis	EANI
	Pauline Coates	PSNI
	Rhonda Duddy	AEL
	Denise McVeigh	MEA
	Alwyn Honan	EANI

1. Welcome and Apologies

Chairperson, Roy Beggs, welcomed all to the meeting. Introductions made and apologies were noted as above.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Updates from last meeting: Sinead gave a few updates following matters arising from the previous meeting.

Uniform Exchange Scheme information issued. Now open for donations at any one of 3 drop offs in Larne or 1 in Carrick. The donated uniforms will be available to those in need, free of charge from Mid and East Antrim Community Advice Centre local offices, from Larne Market and Pop-Up shops in each town during the month of August. The poster was sent to membership but will also be included in the member updates after the meeting. Uniform Exchange link:

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/uniform-exchange please also see member update document

- Sinead had been advised by Shelley from Larne and Carrick Contact Centre that they are running a school uniform scheme for parents to drop of the uniforms their kids no longer use. Donations are welcome to be dropped off at Shelly House, 13 West Street, Carrickfergus from Tuesday 21st June. Uniforms will be sorted and available for free from 19th July to 19th August. – please see member updates also
- In light of the cost of living crisis and the increasing costs of school uniforms, please find information on the Education Authority Grants school uniform grant in the following link. Please note the closing date is toward the end of July.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants/apply-for-free-school-meals-uniform-grants>

- **CYPSP Conference – Wednesday 15th June - Contributing to Developing Happy, Healthy Children & Young People** Over 200 attendees attended the Tullyglass for the event. Guest speakers covered the span of childhood. The work of the LPGs was presented by Lynsey.
- **Inaugural NHSCT PANTS Awareness Week was held over 13th – 17th June** PANTS programme is an initiative by NSPCC to provide child friendly messages around the topic of sexual abuse. Partnered with NHSCT to roll out programme. Over the course of 4 days, 300 miles were covered visiting 18 schools, 4 nurseries, talking to approx. 1300 kids about the PANTS campaign. Schools and NHSCT used social media to publish the visits. Positive verbal feedback from schools. 2 schools and a pre-school in Carrick were visited.
- **PlayPods** – Since last meeting Denise McVeigh has been working on information re the play pods. She is unavailable for the meeting but will get the information out when she is available.

Roy reminded members of the importance of the collaboration of CYPSP organisations, even if members are be unable to attend, maintaining connected to the group helps promote best work of each organisation and supports better understanding of local services available.

3. **Guest speaker – Karen Bruce, MEA**

Introduction:

Karen Bruce, Environmental Health Officer involved in Mid and East Antrim Council's Health and Wellbeing team was invited to be the guest speaker at the session. Karen works particularly in the area of energy efficiency and providing support for families in the area of 'danger in the home'. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's energy efficiency service offers bespoke advice and guidance to help householders take steps to be safe, warm, and well. The service can include home visits, onward referrals to grant schemes and support services for families who are vulnerable.

Accidents in the home:

Karen provided the group with some recent home accident statistics – 70,000 people in Northern Ireland attend A&E each year and 17,000 are admitted to hospital. Of these people, 70 die every year, and 41% are victims of accidental injuries/home safety accidents. Also there are a high level of accidental injuries in the home which go unreported. Karen outlined the typical categories of home accident that happen most frequently in Northern Ireland: Risks of slips, trips

and falls; burns and scalds; fire related accidents; carbon monoxide poisoning; hypothermia (cases of hypothermia are increasing particularly due to rising energy costs); ingestion/poisoning button batteries particularly dangerous for children.

In response to the dangers within the household, Mid and East Antrim's Home Safety Service offers informal risk assessments in homes, free advice, information and equipment (available to families who are on particular income support) and onward referrals to other relevant schemes and services who might be able to provide support to those living in unsafe home environments i.e. referring families onwards to health visiting teams, occupational therapists etc. Karen gave examples of equipment provided to families of under 5s to create a safer home environment such as fireguards, stairgates, carbon monoxide alarms, cupboard clips and TV straps. Karen also highlights that the home safety Service relies on referral partners for support for example Citizens Advice NI, NI fire service and the Northern Health & Social Care Trust

Addressing the issue of Fuel poverty in NI:

Households are spending more than 10% of their income on heating/fuel costs. 2 in every 5 households have been affected in NI. Karen highlighted risk factors for poverty surrounding rising cost in energy: our climate, lower incomes, rising price of fuel.

The energy Efficiency service offers the following services in order to prevent fuel poverty: Free advice and guidance on home energy; condensation advice; use of a thermal imaging camera to highlight where heat might be lost; Onward referrals to grant schemes and support services; home visits for those who might require more support; energy efficiency equipment e.g. radiator keys, chimney balloons etc.

Schemes to support energy efficiency:

- **Affordable warmth scheme;** Home owners and private tenants eligible if their gross income is below £23000 (some benefits are excluded from income). It is a prioritised scheme – looking at heating scheme, window glazing etc. Improvements can include wall and roof insulation, upgrade to heating system and replacement windows. Landlords contribute 50% of cost towards the scheme. During question and answer, Roy enquired if many landlords were willing to contribute to the affordable warmth scheme – but Karen highlighted that while some landlords choose to, not as many currently contribute as have historically done so.
- **NI Sustainable Energy Programme NISEP:** Fully funded and partly funded grant options for energy – income for these schemes is higher so open to more families but criteria changes each year. Karen advised it would be beneficial to apply early to this for families as there is a surge of applications in winter and this initiative opens now in July. Only time of the year for NISEP's grant/heating systems. By the time approval etc it is more beneficial for families to 'get ahead' of the heating issues that might arrive by winter. Referral form is available for the team: Name, address, contact number. Fairly basic information is taken from families before being processed and the team will then decide whether applicants are eligible.

Link to NI Sustainable Energy Programme <https://www.uregni.gov.uk/news-centre/nisep-list-schemes-20222023-published>

- **Heater lending scheme:** For households with broken boilers, waiting on grant approvals

or unable to pay for oil/gas. Households provided with efficient electric heaters to heat individual rooms. 160 of these heaters available within MEA. Other initiatives supported by the organisation: Oil stamp scheme – saving for home heating oil by buying £5 Stamps and Oil Buying Clubs within communities in MEA. Clubs can be supported to get up and running.

Karen also highlighted a number of community programmes supported by the MEA council:

- **Sew energy efficient:** Sewing machine lending resource to encourage people to come together, possibility of developing a new skill. There is a possibility to create draught excluders
- **Cook Slow Eat Well:** This group promotes making low cost nutritious meals making a slow cooker. Offered out to locally based groups. Slow cookers/ingredients provided to low-income and vulnerable households. Over 260 slow cooker packs distributed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Cookbook available to download from council website.

Link to Council's slow cookbook https://issuu.com/meabc/docs/5039_slow_cooker_cookbook

- **Cooking with toddlers:** Encouraging toddlers to get involved with cooking from a young age, encourages healthy eating from a young age.

ACTION: Sinead to share presentation

4. Family Support Hub Update

Fiona Stanton provided a report and highlighted that there has been an increase in referrals to the Family Support Hub.

The Hubs presented at the recent CYPSP Conference.

The Hub received tickets to Swan Lake ballet performance hosted by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council were recently distributed to families within the Larne/ Carrick area.

<https://cypsp.hscni.net/family-support-hubs/>

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/how-we-can-help/our-local-services/find-our-services-near-you/family-support-hubs/>

5 Information Sharing

Sinead provided some information on events/reports.

Save the Children Family Support programme. In response to the pandemic (financial issues/cost of living) 228 Households referred and 547 Children supported. £56430 Supermarket vouchers allocated, £6,720 Argos Vouchers etc. In the Mid and East Antrim area 49 Households referred and 112 Children supported. £22,857 in funds were provided to the area. Existing funding until the end of June – so a few more families may still benefit from this movement.

ACTION: Sinead to share report

6. Member Updates

Please see member update document

7. AOB

Considering CYPSP Budget: Roy asked attendants to consider about how they might like to distribute the £2000 CYPSP Budget for this year before the next CYPSP Meeting. Different options were proposed such as small grants, similar to last year's use, or a community based event or training opportunities.

Issue of Format of the next meeting: Meeting in-person or online. Online option minimises travel time but opportunities for informal discussions are reduced. Roy suggested a compromise with an in person meeting but also having a laptop, meeting possibly in the town hall. Lynn highlighted the Hybrid mode might be difficult for the virtual members to engage. It was also acknowledged that it may depend on wider circumstances at the time.

ACTION: Sinead to send out Citizen Space/survey to ask for opinions about the format of the next meeting.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is

Wednesday 14th September 10:30am

Venue/format TBC