

South & East Belfast Virtual Locality Planning Meeting
Tuesday 20th October 2020
10.30am

Attendees:

Natasha Brennan	Chair/LORAG
Natasha Moore	South Belfast I FSH
Martin Sloan	LPG Coordinator
Jennifer Heverin	LPG Administration
Jane Turnbull	Forward South Partnership
Rosy McLean	Inner East FSH
Charlene Mitchell	Outer South and East FSH
Karolina Morgan	South II FSH
Barbara Smith	Scaffolding Project
James Scott	BDACT
Bronagh O'Dwyer	NOW Group
Heather Larkin	SENAC
Clare Humphrey	Barnardos
Barbara Smith	Scaffolding Project
Amy Ashe	EBCDA
Judith Searle	Barnardos
Glenn Thomas	East and South Belfast DPCSP
Laura Forte	NIACRO
Anne McKay	Mornington Community Project
Gerard Rice	LORAG
Mary McManus	East Belfast Independent Advice Centre
Angela Johnston	GVRT
Joan Henderson	Solas
Joe McGovern	Extern

Apologies:

Stephen Cruise	Oasis
Joan Devlin	Belfast Healthy Cities
William Olphert	Chinese Welfare Association
Jonathan Cockroft	EANI
Gareth Maguire	Sport Changes Lives
Kara Bailie	QUB
Debbie Sterritt	BHSCT
Natalie Killough	BHSCT
Laura Feeney	Save the Children
Jeanette Ingram	Windsor Women's Centre

1. Welcome and Introductions

Natasha Brennan opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance. She also outlined what was hoped to be achieved from the meeting today: exploring what the key issues are for children and young people, and how the LPG can play a role in supporting organisations.

Natasha asked if everyone had read the minutes from the last meeting and if there were any amendments required. There were not. The previous action points were also discussed, some of which will be discussed further within this meeting.

2. Education in South Belfast – Jane Turnbull/Natasha Brennan

See attached presentation. If anyone would like more information on this, please contact Jane Turnbull at: jane.turnbull@forwardsouth.org

3. EA Youth Service – Alan Wilson

Unable to attend

4. Poverty – Barbara Smith, Scaffolding Project

Established in 2017, the Scaffolding Project in an Urban Villages programme in Inner East Belfast. It is a collaboration of community, voluntary and statutory organisations working together to alleviate poverty.

They primarily look at 3 key areas: families, food and fuel and these are addressed in 3 key ways: to alieve the impact of poverty; to try prevent it; and to implement measures that will help people move beyond the situation they're in.

Their Crisis Fund exists through donations. During lockdown they examined how they could best support families with this and as a result they issued gas and electricity top ups as well as emergency food vouchers.

During the summer, Scaffolding normally provides food for children via summer schemes, but as there were no summer schemes this year, it was a relief that free school meals continued throughout the summer months. Scaffolding also put together a summer food programme, looking at nutrition for children. There was also a short programme around fresh food where they delivered fresh fruit and vegetables to people, which enabled them to have conversations with people on their doorsteps. Food vouchers also continued to be available throughout the summer.

The School Uniform Project moved online this year. Parents were able to select uniforms online then arrange a time and date for collection. There were a total of 102 orders placed. Due to the success of the project they hope to continue this at other times of the year. Scaffolding also partnered with School Days uniform shop on the Newtownards Road and vouchers for new uniforms were also distributed to families. Barbara advised they are currently going through a process of community reengagement. A survey has been sent out asking 3 key questions around the experiences of the community partners in terms of what type of poverty they are seeing, what their response is and how they are able to respond to any gaps in provision. This piece of work will probably continue until the end of the year.

A cookery club took place that looked at how to help families manage their budget and take place in online cooking classes.

Overall Scaffolding work primarily with organisations in inner East Belfast, but not exclusively.

Anyone who would like more information can contact Barbara at:
barbarasmith@eastsidepartnership.com

Martin added that he is wishing to form a sub-group on the topic of poverty. Those who expressed an interest in joining were Barbara Smith, Joy Poots, James Scott, Charlene Mitchell and Bronagh O'Dwyer.

ACTION: Invite to be sent to a Poverty Sub-Group Meeting

5. SENAC Presentation – Heather Larkin

Special Educational Needs Advice Centre (SENAC). Support families throughout NI. They give independent advice and advocacy on special education needs to advance the education of SEN children and safeguard their, and their parents, rights.

They offer a number of different services but their core service is their advice line.

This is open to anyone seeking advice regarding a child's education at school.

Another service offered is their tribunal representation service for parents that enables them to appeal EA decisions that were made for their child.

Their advocacy service will support parents communicating with their child's school.

This can be helping them put together correspondence, helping them decide which questions to ask, knowing their rights as a parent and how to have positive engagement with the school.

Most issues during lockdown were isolation, dissatisfaction with lack of contact with school and sharing of education support from school – generally children's work is individually tailored but this did not happen during lockdown.

Now children are back at school there are different issues including a significant rise in anxiety among children.

SENAC spoke to EA regarding how they will be supporting SEN children returning to school and EA advised that children's emotional support was their primary aim.

Natasha Brenna asked if an Education sub-group could also be formed. The volunteers for this were James Scott, Jane Turnbull, Amy Ashe and Claire Humphrey.

ACTION: SENAC to share info with Martin

ACTION: Invite to be sent to Education Sub Group Meeting.

6. PHA COVID Protocols

Natasha Brennan advise she has a contact number for community and voluntary sectors to ring if they have a Covid issue. The advice line will take the details and a consultant or nurse will ring back. Natasha will send details to Martin to share.

ACTION: Natasha to send advice line number to Martin to share.

7. BAOG Update

The last BAOG meeting occurred in September. The main themes, emerging from all LPG's, are those of poverty, education and disability services.

There was discussion around more funding for the FSH's. The Early Intervention Support Team in the BHSCT are currently contacting all the Outcomes based groups to ascertain what support they are providing for children returning to education.

There be extra funding for some of these Outcomes based groups.

8. Members Updates

FSH Area:	Inner East Belfast Family Support Hub
Timeframe:	1 st Sept – 16 th Oct
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	40
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	1548
Source of Service Requests:	Self-referrals, health visitors, GPs, EWOs, CAMHS, schools
Key Gaps identified: play therapy, children being sent home early from school	
Key Successes identified: Virtual parent training courses e.g., Parenting NI, more self-referrals	
AOB for Sharing:	

FSH Area:	Outer South & East Belfast Family Support Hub
Timeframe:	28 th August – 19 th October 2020
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	39
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	1206
Source of Service Requests:	Health Visitors, Gateway, Schools, EWO, Camhs, Self, Community organisations
Key Gaps identified:	
<p>We have received a number of referrals for young people in recent months requesting counselling or other services to help with anxiety. On further discussions with the families we have noticed that a number of the young people have been or are currently being bullied, we have noticed a gap in services available to support young people who are experiencing bullying. A large number of young people experiencing bullying who have come through the OSE Hub have or are waiting for an ASD diagnosis.</p>	
Key Successes identified:	
<p>Hub members are continuing to provide and adapt their services to support families</p>	
AOB for Sharing:	

FSH Area:	South Belfast I Family Support Hub
Timeframe:	August and September
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	August 13 September 15
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	86
Source of Service Requests:	Community Self School (September)
Key Gaps identified: School transport financial support EISS Face to face emotional support for children	
Key Successes identified: Good attendance at Hub meetings CYPSP Covid funding has been a huge support to families facing financial difficulties as a result of Covid Bytes/ BCC tablets were of huge benefit to families who didn't have access to devices for homeworks/ remote learning	
AOB for Sharing:	

FSH Area:	South Belfast II Family Support Hub
Timeframe:	26.08.- 20.10.2020
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	24
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	82
Source of Service Requests:	School- 8, Self-7, Health Visitor-2, Voluntary-1, Senior Mental Health Team-1, RISETeam-2, Sure Start-1, Occupational Therapist-1,
<p>Key Gaps identified: Afterschool Youth activities- due the COVID-19 situation Play therapy- due the COVID- 19 situation Complementary Therapy- due to COVID- 19 situation</p> <p>Parents of 0-4 year's old report high level of their and their children anxiety due to isolation. Usually they look for childcare provision or other activities for this age children.</p>	
<p>Key Successes identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with BCC/Bayts to provide internet access for people who received devices and still don't have an access to internet • Contacted all Hub members to update contact details • Frequent contact with partners to keep updated re: services provision to meet needs of families • Keeping up with completing number of additional monitoring forms re: COVID- 19 situation 	
<p>AOB for Sharing: N/A</p>	

9. A.O.B

- Martin Sloane discussed the meeting he and Joan Henderson had with Clare McKenna from EA on 7th October 2020.

As a group they discussed transitions in all settings, i.e., nurse to primary, primary to post-primary. It was also highlighted that youth with SEN were not attending school on a regular basis as they found it difficult to engage on any kind of structured programme.

Joan advised that when her organisation, Solas first began there were about 50% of children in mainstream education, this is now reduced to approx. 10%. Joan also stated that there is a real fear for parents of schools closing again during a second wave as it will be very tough for young people and families regarding respite care. It was agreed that resources were not adequate. Also advice from DE about reopening schools could have been stronger, especially regarding special schools.

It was agreed there needed to be more engagement between the community sector, SEN services and EA when making contingency plans for any second wave. Claire agreed she will pass on to the relevant people in EA & DE.

Martin stated that it was a good, positive meeting.

Clare McKenna agreed to pass the concerns and issues onto the relevant people. In addition it was suggested that the LPG writes to Alison Keys in EA.

ACTION: Martin Sloane to write to Alison Keys, EA.

- Joy Poots highlighted that pregnant women have free dental treatment both during and one year, after pregnancy. This is now a financial loss to these women with dentist being closed.

There are also issues around partners not being able to attend abnormality scans or the birth, neo-natal visiting restrictions and reductions on Health Visitor/Midwife visits. These issues raise concerns around maternal mental health and it is felt this issue needs further discussion.

ACTION: Neo and post-natal issues to be added to agenda of next meeting.