



**Notes of Western Area Outcomes Group**  
**held on 26 October 2022**  
**at 9.30 am via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

Mr Tom Cassidy, Director of Women & Children's Services, Western Trust [Chair]  
Mrs Joan Byers, Interim Assistant Director [Children's Health & Disability], Western Trust  
Ms Lisa Storey, Child Development Interventions Co-ordinator, Western Trust  
Mr Mark Rogers, Extern & Chair of Fermanagh Locality Planning Group  
Ms Claire Lynch, Children & Young People's Co-ordinator, Derry City & Strabane District Council  
Ms Lisa McGrath, Mencap  
Mr Stephen Lowry, Dry Arch Children's Centres  
Mr Paul Ryan, Area Manager - Foyle Office, Youth Justice Agency  
Mrs Elizabeth Campbell, Assistant Director for Transformation & Pathfinder, Western Trust  
Ms Aileen McGuinness, Chair of Derry Locality Planning Group  
Mrs Priscilla Magee, Locality Planning Co-ordinator, Western Trust  
Ms Una Casey, Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership  
Mrs Angela Wade, Directorate Business Manager, Western Trust  
Dr Josephine Deehan, Western Local Commissioning Group  
Mr Pat Armstrong, Head of Service [Governance Lead for Family & Child Care], Western Trust  
Ms Muriel Bailey, Director of Family Support Services, Parenting NI  
Mr Paul Sweeney, Locality Planning Co-ordinator, Western Trust  
Ms Judith Searle, Interim Assistant Director of Children's Services, Barnardos  
Mrs Monica MacIntyre, Department for Communities  
Ms Bronwyn Campbell, Regional Family Support Hub Co-ordinator  
Ms Helen Sheils, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council  
Ms Elaine Forrest, Personal Assistant, Western Trust

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**Apologies**

Mr Paul Kellagher, Children's Services Manager, Action for Children  
Mrs Linda Watson, Caw/Nelson Drive Community Association

	<p>Ms Mairead McMullan, Western Child Care Partnership Manager  Ms Jane Collins, Early Years Organisation  Ms Mairead McGilloway, Head of Service, Western Trust  Ms Alison Wallace, Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership  Mrs Mary McCann, Fermanagh Women's Aid  Ms Deirdre Hasson, Education Authority</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Chairman's Remarks</b></p> <p>Mr Cassidy thanked members for facilitating the earlier meeting time of 9.30 am. He said poverty was becoming very real with anticipated tax rises and public spending cuts which would impact on families members worked with on a daily basis. He thanked everyone for their hard work in supporting local families and communities.</p> <p>Mrs Magee reported that Fermanagh &amp; Omagh District Council had cancelled the arranged Halloween fireworks display and were reinvesting the funding into poverty projects. Ms Lynch advised that Derry City and Strabane District Council had launched a fund of £300,000 for people in crises.</p> <p>Ms Casey advised that a link was being shared with members to the Cost of Living Crisis Guide which contained local resources and supports for families and children. Members can arrange for information to be added to the guide, via Ms Casey, as it's being updated regularly.</p> <p>Ms Storey reported that parents of unwell babies and children who were technologically dependent, were being impacted by higher electricity costs.</p> <p><u>Membership Update</u></p> <p>Mr Cassidy welcomed Mr Stephen Lowry, Dry Arch Children's Centre, and Ms Lisa McGrath who was replacing Ms Joanne Sweeney as the representative from Mencap. Mr Cassidy recorded his thanks to Ms Sweeney for her contribution to the Outcomes Group.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Notes of Previous Meeting held on 31 August 2022</b></p> <p>Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>UNICEF Child Friendly City</b></p> <p>Mr Cassidy said there were efforts to move forward on proposals in Derry &amp; Strabane District Council, but these would have an impact on Fermanagh &amp; Omagh District Council who may wish to link in. Mr Cassidy enquired how we could engage families and children in relation to feedback on the work of the Outcomes Group. Mr Sweeney said he would consider this, but suggested engagement with young people via the Locality Planning Groups.</p>

Ms Lynch said there was a need to get smarter at trying to identify what youth structures were in place, what was already happening, and who were the audience we wished to address, so structures could be linked together.

Mrs Magee said she sat on EA Youth Voice and young people wished to discuss rural transport and Autism Cafes.

Ms McGuinness noted that not every child attended a youth club and said there needed to be sensitivity around engaging all projects and not just EA projects. She said we needed to engage with the whole community and streamline multiple structures and monitoring frameworks.

Mr Cassidy said this would be a very important group in the future to maximise ability to deliver services, and said given that there were so many engagement forums, asked if we could begin to get feedback from Family Support Hubs in the first instance.

Ms Casey reported that a workshop had been held a number of years ago that looked at existing forums and linkages, and agreed to send the workshop papers to Mr Cassidy to view.

Mr Ryan advised that their newly appointed Youth Participation Officer, Ms Megan Spence, was setting up youth participation forums and making linkages.

Mrs Magee suggested engaging with Professor Laura Lundy, Queen's academic, who had developed principles which could be embedded in our work. Ms Lynch reported that she had already met with Professor Lundy and others. Ms Storey said there was statutory requirement to involve service users and suggested that her Manager, Ms Bronagh McMonagle, Involvement Manager, could be a link.

Ms Lynch said Unicef requested the development of a child's right impact measures across organisations, and said the Council had identified an amount of money to support this piece of work which could be linked to this discussion.

#### Action

- Agenda item for next meeting to allow for a fuller discussion.
- Ms Casey to send papers of previous workshop to Mr Cassidy.

#### **Task and Finish Funding**

Ms Casey reported that all of the funding had been allocated and agreement had been reached with early intervention support immediately after diagnosis and Autism NI were match funding the Outcomes Group's allocation which was very positive.

She said lead bodies had been identified for the other projects and invoices were to be sent to Mrs Wade. She apprised members that Fermanagh & Omagh District Council were contributing funding towards the project based in their area.

	Mr Cassidy thanked everyone involved, including both organisations for their funding contributions.
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Community Planning</b></p> <p><u>Action</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ms Lynch to prepare update for next meeting.</li> </ul> <p>Dr Deehan thanked Mrs Magee for her excellent work. She said Fermanagh &amp; Omagh District Council were concerned about the impact of the cost of living crisis, and also children and young people with Autism. Mr Cassidy commended the Autism Social Cafes for parents and carers of children 5 years and under who were diagnosed or awaiting an autism diagnoses, which was a joint venture with the Health Improvement Department, and thanked Mrs Storey for her input.</p> <p>Mrs Storey said she had phoned parents and carers before and after the Social Cafes for feedback, and reported that all had welcomed this development and were very supportive of it. Mrs Magee said she had also received good feedback from Health Visitors. She said they were hoping to continue with Autism Social Cafes in the future and to have them in other locations with themes for future dates. Mr Cassidy said he was willing, if available, to attend events as Chair of the Outcomes Group.</p> <p>Ms Campbell recommended the video recording which allows someone to experience what a young person with sensory overload experiences.</p> <p><u>Action</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ms Searle to link with relevant staff to enquire how this could be shared with members.</li> </ul> <p>Ms McGrath reported that Mencap had funding for family support work in the Derry City Area and were looking to recruit 50 - 60 families with children with learning disability/global developmental delay/autism, and enquired how she could reach families that needed support, but were not on the radar of statutory services.</p> <p><u>Action</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ms Campbell to link with Ms McGrath regarding project places.</li> <li>➤ Ms McGrath to contact Ms Lynch regarding UNICEF.</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Mr Armstrong provided an update on Safeguarding on behalf of Ms McGilloway, Head of Service. He reported that Gateway had over 1,200 referrals per month, with 9% in the threshold enquiry. He said there were staffing issues and challenges going forward, but staff were looking at the rationale for referrals, linkages with the community and voluntary sector, and noted the Step Up, Step Down Protocol was being reviewed regionally.</p> <p>Mr Armstrong stated that many families were living in poverty and parents were in crisis because of poverty and not because of care to their children. He reported</p>

	<p>that staff were mindful of this when processing referrals. He advised that schools were asking pupils to donate to food banks, when some parents were accessing food banks themselves, and said there needed to be mindfulness and sensitivity around these requests.</p> <p>Mr Armstrong reported that the Western Domestic Violence Strategic Partnership were planning two events in the New Year to highlight domestic violence and information would be shared with members in advance.</p> <p>Mr Cassidy welcomed feedback on Early Intervention Planning Groups.</p> <p>Ms Campbell reported that cases were increasingly complex in the Hubs. Mr Armstrong said the Hubs were key partners and provided a critical interface and without them, the Trust would be overloaded.</p> <p>Ms Campbell highlighted that some young people were missing out on practical lessons at schools, such as Home Economics as their families could not afford the cost of ingredients and said this should be raised with the Education Authority.</p> <p><u>Action</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issue to be highlighted with the Education Authority.</li> </ul> <p>Dr Deehan said she was concerned about staffing in Family and Child Care as staff did an excellent job and Safeguarding was very important. She reported that Fermanagh &amp; Omagh District Council had written to Boards of Governors asking them to keep uniform costs low. She said schools in Scotland had a free school day where a child was not required to pay.</p> <p>Mrs Magee reported that there was a meeting today to discuss referrals to food banks and the need for improved linkage with food banks due to differing opening times and stock availability.</p>
7	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><u>Arrangements for Meetings in 2023</u></p> <p>Mr Cassidy asked members if they were content to meet virtually next year, particularly in relation to anticipated public sector spending cuts. Members agreed to continue with virtual meetings going forward.</p> <p>Mr Cassidy thanked members for their contribution today and reiterated that he was willing to attend events if his diary permitted.</p>
8	<p><b>Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>14 December 2022 at 10 am via Microsoft Teams</p>