

MINUTES OF LARNE AND CARRICKFERGUS LOCALITY PLANNING GROUP MEETING

WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2022, SMILEY BUILDINGS, LARNE AND VIA ZOOM, 10AM

Attendees:	David McAllister (Chair)	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
	Roy Beggs	BB / Sure Start
	Michael Grimason	Princes Trust
	Denise McVeigh	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
	Melanie Maxwell.McIlroy	Network Personnel
	Lynsey Poole	Carrickfergus Community Forum
	Maureen Morrow	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
	Laura McCaughey	Impact Network NI Ltd
	Fiona Stanton	Action for Children
	Pauline Coates	PSNI
	Bernie McGarry	Northern Health & Social Care Trust
	Andrea Graham	Northern Health & Social Care Trust
	Lynn McKenzie	My Community (MenCap Pilot)
	Rhonda Duddy	Access Employment Limited
Apologies:	Bob Loade	Larne YMCA
	Kyleigh Lough	Mae Murray Foundation
	Kiri McLaughlin	Fresh Minds Education
	Sarah Johnston	Carrick YMCA
	Valerie McKenzie	Education Authority
	Kelly Taylor	Home Start East Antrim
	Karen Hillis	Action Mental Health
	Francesca Verzilli	Action Mental Health
	Catriona Fitzsimons	Start360
	Michele Campbell	MEACAS

Welcome and Apologies

Chairperson, David McAllister, welcomed all to first Hybrid meeting. Introductions made and apologies were noted as above.

Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting held on Friday 24 June were agreed.

Guest speaker – Michelle Campbell, MEACAS

Apologies sent

Family Support Hub Update

Family Support Hubs are returning with Hub meetings to face to face this month for the first time since Covid-19. They will continue to be face-to-face on a quarterly basis, the next one being January 2023.

The Hubs have recently renewed all partnership agreement forms with our network of services. We have been updating the paperwork for these since March 2022 and have now officially completed this. It is always our goal to consistently expand this, if anyone would like further information on signing up as a Hub partner, please contact myself or any member of the Hubs.

We have welcomed a new team member, Nicola McCoy, who now covers the Coleraine/Ballymoney/Moyle area. If you have any queries for support in this area you can contact Nicola at Nicola.McCoy@actionforchildren.org.uk

As previously mentioned, we are hoping to spread more awareness off the Hubs within the area now that restrictions are all lifted, we have a few events booked into the calendar starting with the Multi-Agency Meeting arranged by the Foodbank to discuss the 'Cost of Living Crisis' and what support is available in the area.

In regard to referrals, we have seen a significant increase in referrals in 2022. In-home ASD and ADHD support is requested which often goes unmet. In addition, play therapy is frequently requested for cases of children requiring 1-1 support under the age of 10 this is a highly sought-after service however, we have no partnership agreements for this across all Hubs in the Northern Trust. As always support for mental health is in high demand.

The Hubs are working to highlight the lack of translation services across the Northern Trust. As the Hubs have no translation services of our own, we rely on external services to bridge this gap. Claire Larkin the Hub Service Co-Ordinator has been working closely with the Regional Hub Co-Ordinator to highlight this gap and how this limits support for non-English speaking families. The Hubs record this need in our quarterly stats, to provide evidential reports of translation services needed. We have been made aware of the Ukraine Assistance Centre's which have been set up to give advice on key services including health assessments, education, jobs, benefits, housing, immigration. These are set up in Ballymena, Belfast, Craigavon and Newry, should you have a Ukrainian family who requires support with same.

The Hubs are anticipating a difficult winter for many families financially due to increases in the cost of living. Action for Children have a Cares at Christmas Toy Appeal, in which we will deliver some toys to families in need and also hope to link in with the local food banks for their Christmas food hampers and organise to deliver these to families also.

With AFC staff now hybrid working a few offices within the Larne premises have now become free if anyone requires office space or knows of anyone requiring rooms with access to a creche, training room and family room.

Roy asked re: English speaking classes for parents. Denise and Lynn updated the group that Carrick YMCA run classes.

ACTION: Denise to share details of classes running in Carrick YMCA with Fiona.

Unmet need discussion

This will be a regional agenda item going forward. It is hoped that this will help to improve reporting to and from the Northern Area Outcomes Group (NAOG) and identify gaps in services

that cannot be resolved at LPG level and needs to be pushed further up the chain. In addition it is hoped it will encourage partnership working and improve outcomes.

Fiona Stanton again highlighted that funding was coming to an end and no other service is offering counselling at the moment. This will be an unmet need. In-home ASD and ADHD support is requested which often goes unmet. In addition, play therapy is frequently requested for cases of children requiring 1-1 support under the age of 10 this is a highly sought-after service however, we have no partnership agreements for this across all Hubs in the Northern Trust. As always support for mental health is in high demand.

Larne Foodbank manager is attending a meeting next Tuesday in town hall. Concerned about unmet need. People may not know about foodbank or apprehensive to ask for help. Numbers using food bank are going up, in one session last week there were 58 families. Referrals can come from anyone within the community or MLAs, Doctors, Jobs and Benefits. Give out Non-perishable foods, vouchers for butchers in Larne and other shops in town for necessities. Criteria is proof that you are in need – do not have to be on benefits, mostly families on basic wages and can't cope with bills including Agency staff, people paid off or those not on set hours.

People can self-refer. There is an Emergency number for when the foodbank is closed and they will try to deliver. Also give advice about helpful contacts. If anyone is available next week email foodbank next week info@larne.foodbank.org.uk. Asda in Larne do food collections.

Maureen added that Antrim Coast Lions and Charity Shop in Carnlough can take Foodbank deliveries.

Lynsey Poole asked Maureen re: food bank voucher not covering the increased cost of bread and potatoes. Maureen was aware that it was a problem and said that it has been increased over the last few weeks.

Roy highlighted that Larne Foodbank has extra items that other areas do not have, as usually just non-perishable. It is usually 3 vouchers per 6 months so people do not become reliant on.

Lynn McKenzie highlighted that there is a need for Parent Support for kids with Learning Disabilities – peer support, particularly for those at the start of their journey. Parents need Support for learning disability - peer support, what services are available. Due to lack of Health Visiting problems are being picked up in pre/primary school e.g., speech & language or developmental delays.

Lynn has funding for Carrick and would extend to Larne. Especially pre-school age parents to meet as a group. £15,000 funding available for Carrickfergus this year and £20,000 for next year. Maureen mentioned that in the rural community they are also under a lot of pressure, increasing costs for farmers. If anyone is in contact with these families keep in mind that these people may need help.

Action Plan Update

Bernie gave an overview of the Survey sent out in June. Suggestions for the group's budget included:

- Youth Information Fair
- Inclusive event e.g., Sensory Santa
- Training opportunities
- Community based event
- Wellbeing events
- Small grants opportunities

The group discussed the suggestions made and decided to move forward with trying to organise the Youth Fair. Fiona Stanton said there has been an increase in those aged 16+ referring themselves to the Family Support Hubs.

If anyone is interested in organising a Sensory Santa Trail, please get in touch with Lynn McKenzie.

Action: Bernie to contact schools about Youth Fair before next meeting.

Member Update and Information Sharing

Please see Members Update template.

Any Other Business

Bernie referred back to the survey to discuss the meeting format going forward. The majority of people voted to have a mixed approach to our meetings, some online and some face to face.

Following the first hybrid meeting, those in attendance agreed to keep this meeting format going forward.

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Friday 18 November at 10.00am, Carrickfergus Town Hall. It is hoped that an online option will be available too.

ACTION: David to book and check IT in the Town Hall