

Strabane LPG Note

19.1.23

10:00am Teams

Present:

Judith Searle (Chair, Barnardo's)

Paul Sweeney (WHSCT)

Rose O' Brien (EA)

Dawn Mc Kendry (NOW)

Carol Stewart (DC&SDC)

Susan Doherty (DC&SDC)

Shauna Spence (AFC)

Shauna Devine (FSH)

Mary Mc Nichol (RAPID)

Sorcha Friel (Holy Cross)

Sharon Callaghan (Barnardo's)

Apologies

Donna Downey, Lorraine Montague, Fiona Mc Cauley, Sarah Dillon

Updates

Mary updated on the priority groups highlighting that work was ongoing with the Health Promoting Families programme in the Artigarvin area and the youth work with the Victoria Bridge Young Farmers Group. These services are welcome additions to rural areas and are having good attendance levels. Mary stated that she was very pleased with the response to these programmes to date and Paul took the opportunity to thank Mary and RAPID for their capacity to engage these groups.

Carol indicated that there might be some funding NIP programme through the PHA to initiate programmes designed to support young people's mental health in two local schools, Strabane Academy and Holy Cross. The BBHF will be the delivery agent for this support.

Dawn updated on the work of NOW sharing that involvement in the LPG has really supported them to reach a greater number of referrals for young people. Dawn shared that 156 jobs were identified in the third quarter for young people and that there were ongoing developments with the Youth Service and JDO's.

Rose was keen for Dawn to link in with EWO service so that the potential for programme could be maximised in schools.

Shauna updated on the work of the Family Support Hub where it remains very busy providing support services for over 35 families with 103 direct benefit and 120 indirect beneficiaries. Referral rates are high. Shauna also indicated that there is a need for bereavement services development for families in the area, whilst Foyle Hospice and CRUISE provide vital information resources, a face to face service would also be beneficial.

Sorcha also expressed an interest in the service connecting with Holy Cross College possibly via the school SENCO.

Action Plan

Paul had circulated the action plan for comment. There was agreement that the timing so close to the Christmas and New Year break may have been difficult. After some discussion, it was felt that at the next meeting, which is face to face the plan, can be discussed further. Susan commented that the basis of the plan seemed good and that it was important not to over-reach so that it remained relevant to all the agencies involved.

UNICEF CFC Programme

Paul spent some time discussing the development of the UNICEF CFC programme and how the LPG could work within in. Initially the training would be key, however, as the plan progressed it is envisaged that further work relating to embedding the principles of a child's rights approach can be progressed.

Rose, Sorcha and Shauna expressed an interest in the training for staff.

Paul agreed to link them into future training. Mary had suggested linking in with NWCP at Artillery Street and Peter Allen might support this process.

Autism Social Café

Paul and Sharon updated on the Autism Social Café event to be held in Strabane on the 24th Feb in DC&SDC building. A working group had been set up with Lisa Storey from Health Improvement and an invitation extended to all members. The event is a continuation of other recently held events where services have come together for the benefit of parents whose children have or are awaiting an autism diagnosis.

From a LPG perspective, we hope to build on this event to continue to support parents and children concerned. Dawn highlighted the positive benefits of this type of event and her organisation would attend to highlight some of the creative elements of their service for families.

Sharon indicated that Barnardo's would be hosting an Autism conference to highlight the growing need around this issue.

Poverty and Cost of Living Crisis

This impact of poverty on children and families remains on the LPG agenda as this is a constant feature in the lives of people in the locality. Shauna highlighted the Emergency Response fund provided by AFC for fuel and food vouchers. Carol also highlighted the voucher scheme through the local Council that has been very successful in supporting vulnerable families over the Christmas period.

Local businesses in the Strabane area had also contributed through clothes and food that helped families over this period. Barnardo's had provided 225 snuggle packs to families including fleeces, coats, hats and jogging bottoms. Overall, the response from organisations such as AFC, Barnardo's, Save the Children and local businesses provide a collective approach to supporting the families affected by the cost of living crisis. Shauna also indicated that the Housing Executive's oil saving scheme remains in place where people can contact the scheme to access discounted oil prices.

Next meeting: 09/03/2023

Time: 10:30

Venue: Education Welfare Service Building, 41 Derry Road Strabane BT82 8DX