



## **Minute of Waterside LPG**

**15.03.2022**

**10:00 am on Zoom**

### **Present:**

Paul Sweeney (WHSCT)

Erin Mc Feely (Chair)

Linda Watson (CNDAG)

Martin Deehan (PSNI)

Mary Mc Nicholl (RAPID)

### **Apologies:**

Lucy O'Brien (AFC)

Duncan Lyon (AFC)

Rosin Hamill (Women's Aid)

Martin Reilly (SDLP)

### **Welcome**

Erin opened the meeting, welcomed members whilst recognising the length of time since last meeting, and referred to minute from 19<sup>th</sup> October. Members recognised that this was a significant time lapse since last meeting but agreed minute.

Martin indicated that for future meetings it might be best to link in with the Waterside Neighbourhood Policing Teams, as he may not always be able to attend.

### **Discussion**

Because of the timescale since we last met, this meeting reflected a rich discussion relating to current need and themes. There was discussion relating to some of the

main issues among agencies within the Group with members referencing the following:

- Impact of covid-19 and cost of living increases on mental health within communities.
- ASD service waiting list. Need to amplify this as an emerging theme with CYPSP
- Poverty-the wide reaching effect of poverty on children, young people and families.
- Representation on LPG.

- There was agreement among the members on the growing number of families presenting with anxieties around the increasing costs of living and the impact this had on general sense of well-being. Families are struggling financially and whilst services are providing supports, there is a feeling that this will continue to be an issue for communities.
- Erin/Linda recognised that whilst the funding which came through the WAOG for fuel was welcomed and provided critical support for families there needed to be a more strategic and sustained support to deal with the impact of poverty. The difficulties with navigating procurement was also discussed where members highlighted that this was often cumbersome and inhibitive.
- Paul highlighted that AFC had an Emergency Financial Fund for household bills funded through the BBC. Linda indicated that is useful to have representation from the Family Support HUB at these meetings to highlight the services they provide for families. Paul informed that he had linked in with the HUB and that they hoped to have representation at the next meeting.
- Mary highlighted that they have now achieved healthy Living Centre status and provide a wide range of social prescribing services for families, connecting with MDT social work teams with a view to continuing to make services more accessible for families, particularly within a rural context.
- Linda suggested that it might be useful to consider developing a community asset map to help with service identification and accessibility for families within communities. This led to discussion relating to how the

LPG can become more creative in helping to support families. Paul talked about the model employed by the Department of Communities/ Department of Health / Local Trusts/ Councils and the C&V sector during the first phase of the pandemic to ensure that the most vulnerable received food, fuel, medication and social contact from services. This model saw the administrative complexities managed by the statutory agencies whilst the practical service provision managed by the local community.

- Linda had talked of creative supports like developing the social supermarket concept and the use of vouchers for food and fuel that gave families greater choice.
- Erin indicated that this was a rich discussion and something the LPG to continue to take forward whilst recognising the current difficulties families are facing and their immediate need.
  
- On representation, Linda felt that it might also be useful to have a format where young people could have representation at the meetings so that their views are heard and we can get a better understanding of their range of needs.

**Paul suggested that he would link in with the EA to look at a mechanism for this possibly through the UNICEF Child Friendly Project being developed with the WHSCT/ EA/ and DS&SDC.**

## **Action Plan**

There was discussion about how to progress the LPG action plan and how the previous discussion added to the idea of making sure the action plan is current and reflective of present and emerging need.

- Linda reiterated the idea of a community mapping exercise and talked about the need for summertime provision for children and young people. Linda further indicated that a directory of provision for parent over the summer months whilst schools were off would be a great support for parents and queried extend schools funding in relation to services. Erin highlighted that the EA normally provided a range of summer provision for young people and that it might be useful to link in with Family Support NI to assist with updating mapping of service provision in the area.

**Erin highlighted that it might be useful to have them present at one of our meetings**

**Paul agreed that he would link in with the EA to explore this further.**

### **Member Updates**

- Linda highlighted the work undertaken within the Caw/Nelson Drive area that work for funding of programmes is continuing such as Bo Jingles programme and the Slow Cooker programme, which is a popular programme. The work of the EA youth provision within the dedicated youth club in Caw is continuing to provide valuable support for young people and the difficult challenges they face.
- Mary highlighted that the work of RAPID and the CHILD programme continues to provide support to families in rural communities. Mary stressed the importance of connecting services and strategies between agencies to optimise value and effect for our children, young people and families.

### **AOB**

There were no further issues raised.

**Next meeting:** 06/06/2022 11:00am