

Summary of Actions:

	Topic	Action	Responsibility
	Free School Meals	Email from EA to be circulated.	Jennifer Heverin
	Warm Hub	BCC Warm Hub information to be circulated	Alice McGlone

<u>Action</u> <u>by:</u>	
	<p>1. Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>Deirdre Walsh opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance.</p>
	<p>2. Previous Minutes of 7th September 2022</p> <p>The Minutes from the last meeting on 7th September were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of the discussion and no amendments were required.</p>
	<p>3. Winter Pressures – Information Sharing</p> <p>The Early Intervention Support Team within the BHSCCT met with the 10 Belfast Family Support Hubs to discuss the current challenges facing families. Topics covered included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Information on available practical support ii) What is support/funding is expected to be available iii) Current Hub pressures iv) Gaps in services v) Hub experiences on delivering practical support vi) How families can be best connected to resources. <p>Despite having no information about any financial support, the meeting was very helpful and productive.</p> <p>The Belfast Harbour Commission have donated £1,000 to each Belfast Hub. It is understood the Hubs will have flexibility to spend this as they see fit, which will probably take the form of supermarket vouchers</p> <p>A short discussion took place about Christmas toy donations. It was noted that there are fewer donations coming in this year and that every child deserves a new gift for Christmas. Vouchers are also a good choice, especially for teenagers who are often an overlooked group.</p>
	<p>4. Members Updates</p> <p><i>Piarais McCaffrey – Kids Together</i></p> <p>The GP Federation have funded Kids Together to create a course for children with Autism. The course is aimed at practitioners to discuss their concerns and expectations with the overall aim to have mainstream settings autism friendly and make staff aware of how they can achieve this.</p> <p>The course is a 3 hour session and can be tailored to suit specific requests or groups. It is expected to have around 15 people per group.</p>

Sharon Nelson – Whiterock Children’s Centre

Parents are struggling to submit applications for school meals. One school stated they are having to cover around £500 per month to feed children as applications are taking a long time. The application process is not always straightforward and sometimes parents are not aware of the reasons why they were refused.

Anti-racism training is currently taking place. If anyone would be interested in participating another session could be organised. Please email Sharon for more information at s.nelson@whiterockchildrenscentre.org

Alice McGlone – Belfast City Council

Community centres are open for people to keep warm this winter. A full list of ‘Warm Hubs’ will be circulated.

BCC have agreed to award grants of £500 and £200 for organisations who are currently in receipt of the revenue or capacity grants respectively. In order for these organisations to receive these grants they need to ensure their paperwork and returns are all up to date.

There was a motion to council in October regarding fuel poverty and as a result the BCC have agreed at £500,000 hardship fund. A meeting is to take place shortly regarding how this money should be best spent and administered so more information to follow, however it is likely to be after Christmas before the money is distributed.

Charlene Mitchell – LPG Coordinator

An email has been circulated from the Education Authority stating that some children will be able to avail of free school meals even if they do not normally qualify. In order to benefit from this the child needs to be referred to EA by a ‘key worker’. A copy of this email from EA will be circulated.

Alan Guthrie – GP MDT

Fr. Devlin of St. Paul’s Parish is running a cost of living event on Thursday 24th November from 10am – 12.30pm. Lots of statutory and community colleagues will be involved in imparting advice and information about how to best manage during the cost of living crisis.

The GP Federation are keen to support groups in the community where there are gaps in services and gaps in provisions. There is some available funding to support families with ASD as described above with the Kids Together project.

The West Belfast Partnership Board are currently undertaking their resilience strategy. There is a consultation out at present for questionnaires and they are very keen to get people’s views. The questionnaires can be completed online or via a hard copy.

5. LPG Update – Action Planning

The Sub-Group for the West Belfast LPG Action Plan met on the 5th October. It was agreed that there would be 4 priority areas:

- Children with Disabilities
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Poverty
- Integrated Planning

Discussions took place around what each of these topics looked like and what practical and realistic measures could be put in place to help alleviate some of these problems. However, this initial meeting was laying the foundations and further meetings will drill down into these topics and others in more detail until a fully functioning, working Action Plan emerges.

The group hope to reconvene in January to examine in more detail and set goals.

6. FSH Updates

FSH Area:	Outer West Belfast
Timeframe:	Sept – Nov 2022
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	Sept – 31 October – 23 Nov (up to 16/11/2022) - 13
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	1450
Source of Service Requests:	School Community GP Self Health Visitor GP MDT CAMHS Health Visitor Speech & Language EWO
Key Gaps identified:	<p>More services / hours for ASD Supports for families / Play therapy</p> <p>Increasing demand for Financial Supports (Food Bank unable to provide Christmas Hampers due to this)</p>
Key Successes identified:	<p>Increase in financial support requests – uniform vouchers and food vouchers big help to families</p>
AOB for Sharing:	

FSH Area:	Greater Shankill
Timeframe:	Sept - Oct
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	Total: 62 Sept :38 Oct : 24
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	1571
Source of Service Requests:	School Nurse School Self Community Organisation Gateway RISE Education welfare service CAMHS
Key Gaps identified:	
Support services for children with disabilities – specifically (ASD) including opportunities for group activities & socialisation.	
Key Successes identified:	
Families experiencing financial hardship have also been able to access vouchers through hub, these have helped with a variety of issues including children’s return to school and the cost related. .	
Various referrals discussed at Hub which required a coordinated approach and were referred to suitable services at a time when families were in need of support	
AOB for Sharing:	
None	

FSH Area:	Greater Falls	
Timeframe:	Sept/Oct 22	
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	56	
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	1861 (until 24 th October	
Source of Service Requests:	School Community CAMHS Self GP MDT Social Worker Gateway	Health Visitor Voluntary Organisation EWO
Key Gaps identified:		
<p>Limited supports for disability, limited child therapy supports. Limited Christmas support i.e. toy appeal access for need.</p> <p>Lengthy waiting lists for additional needs</p>		
Key Successes identified:		
<p>Use of vouchers for families in need this winter including supporting the payment of Christmas gifts.</p> <p>Access to additional funding through Belfast Harbour Commission</p> <p>Return to Face to face Hub meetings (hybrid rota)</p>		
AOB for Sharing:		

FSH Area:	Upperspringfield whiterock FSH
Timeframe:	October to November
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	56 from oct to 16 TH November 22
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	Oct 26 Nov 30 224 referrals to date.
Source of Service Requests:	School Self Health Visitor Mental health practitioner /SW Sure start Voluntary community /community organisations school CAHMS EWO GP

Key Gaps identified:

Childcare continues to be ongoing gap

Families continue to look for practical/financial support due to rising costs of fuel/gas/electricity and Christmas support

Lack of hours allocations for services to support the needs of families coming through the hub, some services have closed due to capacity. Holy Trinity. Kids together Belfast and Ardmonagh Family support have been unable to refer from Sept 22.

Key Successes identified:

Working alongside local food bank to support parents in need with food parcels.

Integrated working voucher to support families in need of support.
Supporting families with uniform vouchers

Working with Children in Need fund supporting families with large household items. You need to register and there is a criteria but a worthwhile service once your registered.

AOB for Sharing:

WCC ESOL classes starting on Monday 12th September 22. On going

5/10/22 action planning meeting for winter pressures.

11/10/22 Meeting with CAMHS

12/10/22 meeting with services Family Support Workers about Christmas appeal support.

7/11/22 consumer council session in WCC.

2/11/22 represented WCC in Whiterock leisure centre at Consumer Poverty event

	<p>7. A.O.B</p> <p><i>Michael Doherty – Glen Community Parent Youth Group</i></p> <p>A Belfast Agenda event was recently held in St. Comgall's. Five priorities were listed that was said to have come from consultations with community organisations, however, many of those in attendance felt that the priorities did not realistically reflect the needs of the community. It was felt that there has not been enough communication with the community and that West Belfast need to ensure that their voices are heard</p> <p>No other business was discussed and the meeting drew to a close with Deirdre thanking all those in attendance and wishing them a Merry Christmas.</p>

2023 Dates for West Belfast LPG Ordinary Meetings

DATES	TIME	VENUES
TBA January		
TBA March		
TBA May		
TBA July		
TBA September		
TBA November		