

BELFAST OUTCOMES GROUP MEETING

Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 2.00 p.m.

Ground Floor Conference Room, Knockbreda Wellbeing Centre

Name	Organisation	Present	Apology
Ms. Kerrylee Weatherall (Chair)	Belfast HSC Trust	✓	
Statutory Sector			
Mr. Paul O'Neill	Early Years, Belfast HSC Trust		
Dr. Michael Murray	Safeguarding, Belfast HSC Trust	✓	
Mr. Gerry Largey	Hub Lead, Belfast HSC Trust	✓	
Ms. Charlene Mitchell	LPG Coordinator	✓	
Mr. Brian O'Kane	NIHE, Belfast Area		✓
Ms. Katherine Calvert	Education Authority		✓
Ms. Barbara Porter	PHA		✓
Ms Kathy Watters	Belfast City Council	✓	
Mr. Declan Davey	Youth Justice Agency	✓	
Ms. Marie Cavanagh	HSCB Belfast Local Commissioning Group	✓	
Ms. Marie McAuley	Health Improvement Team, BHSCT		
Mr. Kevin Hawkins	PSNI		✓
Community Sector			
Ms. Nicola Verner	West Belfast Community Rep.	✓	
Ms. Natasha Brennan	South Belfast Community Rep.		✓
Ms. Julie Jamison	North Belfast Community Rep.		✓
Ms. Tracey Wilson	East Belfast Community Rep.	✓	
LPG Chairs			
Ms. Bronagh O'Dwyer	East Belfast LPG		✓
Ms. Deirdre Walsh	West Belfast LPG	✓	
Ms. Natasha Brennan	South Belfast LPG		✓
Ms. Claire Allen	North Belfast LPG	✓	
Voluntary Sector			
Mr. Peter Bryson	Save the Children		✓
Ms. Caroline Rutherford	Extern		✓
Vacant	Vacant		
Mr. Avery Bowser	AFC		✓
Partnership Sector			
Ms. Roisin McCooey	Belfast Childcare Partnership		✓
Mr. Jackie Redpath	Belfast Strategic Partnership	✓	
In Attendance			
Ms. Maxine Gibson	CYPSP		✓
Ms. Nichola Creagh	Department for Communities		✓
Ms. Dawn Vance	Department for Communities		
Ms. Bronwyn Campbell	Regional FSH Lead	✓	
Ms. Valerie Maxwell	CYPSP Support		✓
Ms. Louise Dickson	CYPSP Support		
Dr. Sarah Meekin	Head of Psychology, BHSCT		✓
Mr. Mark Conachy	Assistant Head of Psychology, BHSCT		✓

Summary of Actions:

1.	Family Support Hubs	Collated quarterly summary report to be shared in July 2023.	Gerry Largey
2.	Early Years Workstream – Education Inequalities Sub-Group	Overarching / cross-over of themes – to be reviewed in the new year.	All / Kerrylee Weatherall / Gerry Largey
3.	Membership	To be reviewed.	Kerrylee Weatherall
4.	Jones Report	Send out information re: Options Appraisal document and Consultation details.	Kerrylee Weatherall / Gerry Largey
5.	Belfast Family Support Hub Data	Update Report / Data from the EIS Team to be shared in advance of next meeting.	Gerry Largey
6.	NICON Conference	If attending, Chair will raise issues feedback at this forum.	Kerrylee Weatherall
7.	One Young World Conference	Kathy Watters to circulate information re: conference. Complete.	Kathy Watters
8.	Gerry's presentation re: Jones Report	Members to send comments/opinions re: presentation to Gerry.	All
9.	'How do we Better Together' Event – coming from Jones Report and in preparation for consultation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 to 3 planning sub-groups to be held by 2nd week in October Extraordinary BAOG Meeting to be scheduled for 3rd week of October for final discussion and plans. <p>Event to be planned for 2nd week in November – decision needed re: date / half-day / full-day etc. To be held centrally, i.e. City Hall – accessible to all.</p>	Kerrylee Weatherall / Gerry Largey / Kathy Watters
10.	Reduced / Amended School Timetables / lack of classroom assistants - issues raised at LPGs and FSHs	Chair to make contact with Elaine Craig EANI re: concerns raised by members and partners. Previous workshop – Need to re-visit. Possibly add onto agenda of above November Event.	Kerrylee Weatherall

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies are recorded in above table and the Chair welcomed all in attendance.

2. Chair's Business

- **Membership**

Mr. Largey advised the Education Underachievement and Inequality Group / Child Protection partnership are seeking to have a rep from that group sit on the BAOG to create better connectedness with regards to education and the interfaces between both groups and their action plans. Mr. Redpath explained re: the Early Years Workstream and the Education Inequality Subgroup and the cross-overs with BAOG work and overarching themes, however, he indicated that the workstreams are currently being refreshed and none of the sub-groups have met in sometime. He suggested that this matter should be reviewed in the new year. [See Action Table.](#)

Overall membership to be kept under review. [See Action Table.](#)

- **Children's Services Review Report**

There was discussion re: the upcoming consultation on the Jones Report, i.e. the option appraisal document released last week, 53 recommendations in the report, consultation will be on the Department Website on Friday 15.09.23, all members were encouraged to take time to review and respond to the consultation. An alternative proposed option has also been added to the options appraisal, not recommended by Professor Jones with regards adding Child Health into the proposed Arms Length Body. Ms. Weatherall will share the link to the consultation with the group upon receipt. [See Action Table.](#)

- **Departmental Workstreams**

Ms. Weatherall explained the workstreams have now all been set up, and most have commenced with their first meeting. She noted that the C&V Sector will be an extremely important part of this work and may be asked to participate in the future. Ms. Weatherall outlined the various workstreams for the group. She also mentioned the new workstream in respect of 'Family Support / Early Help' which could straddle with our 'earlier intervention' work and may require C&V in co-chairing capacity. The Terms of Reference and Workplans have all been finalised. It was advised that there will be a formal selection process. He added that the new workstream appears keen to recognise the importance of work of the C&V Sector. Ms. Campbell added that she will be able to provide some updates re: this and on the re-purposing of the CYPSP sub-groups.

- **Anti-Poverty Letter**

Mr. Largey mentioned that a letter has been received from Belfast City Council with regards the City Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy actions for the autumn/winter . He indicated that there will be tranches of money available and that the last tranche of monies had come through Family Support Hubs. There will be monitoring

requirements. Some issues were raised with regards the monitoring process. Mr. Largey agreed to follow up and respond to the letter.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising from previous meeting on 28th June 2023

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Most of matters arising have been completed and are recorded as such on the minutes.

- The Belfast Agenda / BAOG Shared Activity workshop is scheduled for tomorrow, 13.09.23.

- Family Support Hub Data: this was to have been disseminated, however, there have been some workforce and system issues which has caused a delay. The CYPSP quarterly regional and Belfast reports are currently available for information. Mr. Largey agreed to carry this action forward and share the data for the next meeting. [See Action Table](#).

4. Funding Pressures on Community and Voluntary Sector - Update

No issues were reported currently but people are very vary for the new year. Members noted that a freeze on recruitment remains in place and they are worried about future budget cuts. Ongoing recruitment issues with regards uptake and short-term contracts also.

Ms. Verner mentioned the DoH Core Funding Stream. This has been picked by NICVA and has representation from the Department and the Civil Service. A number of organisations have provided individual submissions to EQIA and NICVA. Closing date was 30th September and no update as yet. She was unsure if the EQIA assessments will be published by DoH.

Ms. Walsh noted that the DfC contracts are for 2 years but they do not yet know if the money has been received for the second year.

Ms. Weatherall commented that there does appear to be some ongoing nervousness around funding and budgets. Ms. Walsh also added that big funding organisations appear not to be providing funding or giving the same levels of donations in the north of Ireland and provided some examples re: same. Ms. Cavanagh added that there are problems with the core funding overall which underpins all direct services and the impact could be huge.

Ms. Weatherall apprised of the upcoming NICON Leadership Conference which she will be attending. There are a number of guest speakers from across the UK and Ireland, including Ms. Weatherall, Ray Jones and Peter Toogood. There will be various workshops, e.g. Poverty. Ms. Weatherall agreed to raise all relevant issues at this forum. [See Action Table](#).

'One Young World' Conference – Ms. Verner mentioned this event which Belfast is hosting this year and will take place on 2nd October in the Waterfront Hall. 2,200

young people are attending from each country along with global leaders and others to discuss subjects such as climate, education, food prices, mental health, peace etc. Ms. Watters advised that BCC are offering 20 scholarship places at the event for 18-30 year olds. Ms. Watters agreed to circulate information. [See Action Table.](#)

5. Jones Report – Update re: Consultation / Engagement Activity

Mr. Largey provided a PowerPoint presentation to the group (draft copies circulated on the day and returned).

Mr. Largey spoke to each of the slides in detail, including Terms of Reference, background to the review, main findings, stages and phases, analysis for NI, current demand pressures, benchmarking, direction of travel, escalating concerns, workforce difficulties, waiting lists / unallocated cases, considerable increases in workloads – child protection focus, staff retention issues, growth in LAC population and placement costs, recommendations and thematic reflections throughout the report, senior management and leadership proposed changes, governance and accountability, resetting the agenda and rebuilding services, endemic and systemic crises, Courts and children in Care, option appraisal recommendations and newly added option re: integrated care systems which is not supported by Prof. Jones, new proposed structures, consultation process, 53 recommendations, next steps, challenges for BHSCT.

Ms. Cavanagh fed back from the regional workstream which she attends and provided updated re: Integrated Care Systems (ICS) (the new option appraisal) which is supposed to replace the LCGs which is awaiting Assembly approval and needs wide support. Aim to establish 5 x IC Partnerships alongside the Trusts – AIPB don't have budget yet but are looking at local priorities and interfaces between hospitals and GP Services. She spoke to Health Inequalities and need for early intervention. Similarities to CYPSP structure which had not been looked at, i.e. Regional – AIPB – Local – Community. Ms. Campbell noted that CYPSP are trying to get involved in that Pilot also and are definitely aware of this medically minded model. Ms. Cavanagh mentioned that the pilot may change and may not just be medical with involvement from community planning, C&V sector etc. Considerable discussion ensued across the group.

Ms. Weatherall iterated the need for the Outcomes Group to work at pace as this is now an opportunity to act, get evidence together and advocate for what we want to do. This Consultation is a real opportunity for us all to submit our opinions. She encouraged all members to read the review and the option appraisal paper and consider what it means for 1. Statutory sector and 2. C&V Sector.

Ms. Weatherall asked the group to hand back copies of the draft presentation and asked them to provide their opinions on the presentation directly to Mr. Largey. [See Action Table.](#) Some members shared their opinions at this time:- overwhelming read; more hopeful, changes needed; support needed for the review – not overall agreement at the launch; what does it mean for Belfast - need to align with Belfast Agenda; ICS seems far away (ICS presentation at CYPSP on 4.10.23); want focus on 'better together' partnership working; discussion re: previously discussed proposed BAOG event – what does this review mean for us – crises in Belfast:

drugs, homelessness, CSE, mental health; need to focus on the required system changes for access to early help across Belfast and region; massive issues re: GP appointments and getting referrals to Services; GP Federation can be linked in; drugs massive issue across Belfast.

Consensus received from those present for BAOG to hold an event to discuss all of these issues – ‘how do we better together?’ / heat mapping work / presentation.

Event to be convened in second week in November for community and Voluntary Sector – central Belfast location – guest speaker to be sought. 2-3 sub-groups to be convened in October. [See Action Table.](#)

Deadline for consultation responses is 01.12.2023.

6. Update on Belfast Agenda / BAOG Shared Activity

Workshop planned for tomorrow to focus on projects and aligned work. This is the second workshop facilitated by Chris Marsh and feedback has been positive with regards approach taken. A further workshop is planned for 03.10.23. Mr. Largey advised that the intention is to move at pace with this also, to build out common language and themes. All agreed they were happy with this approach.

7. LPG and FSH Updates

Ms. Mitchell provided the LPG update. She noted that all of the issues discussed at today's meeting have been raised previously in the LPGs. No meetings were held over the summer period. Main issues are cost of living pressures, debts, practical financial support, uniform/PE kits, funding cuts, recruitment freezes. Massive issues continue to be raised re: education – school attendance, reduced timetables. Also, re: increased drug use by children, young people and parents.

A host of training is coming up re: school based anxiety, supporting emotional wellbeing and managing behaviours, challenging teenage behaviours, LGBTQ+ - awareness for families. CYPSP also shared info re: their Translation Hub and Youth Wellness Hub.

EANI – working to rule – bigger gaps re: provision in schools. Some parents have had to give up work when kids not in school all day – leading to more poverty. With regards previously discussed issue re: reduced and amended timetables, Mr. Largey advised that EANI has acknowledged this problem and a workshop has been convened. He noted that emotional and wellbeing support is a serious issue and that a number of classroom assistants are needed and school are reporting that they cannot fill these posts, even when they are in receipt of funding and they don't have the capacity to meet the needs. Ms. Weatherall agreed to liaise with Elaine Craig, EANI and feedback re: all issues raised and suggested inclusion in the November event.

8. Any Other Business

- Rooms / Venue Suggestions - Gerry to source a venue for next meeting.

9. Dates of Future meetings

Thursday 16th November 2023 at 2pm in Save the Children

Date and time:	Venue:
Tuesday 13 th February 2024 at 2pm	TBC
Thursday 18 th April 2024 at 2pm	TBC
Thursday 27 th June 2024 at 2pm	TBC
Tuesday 10 th September 2024 at 2pm	TBC
Thursday 14 th November 2024 at 2pm	TBC