



**Notes of Western Area Outcomes Group**  
**held on 25 October 2023**  
**at 10 am via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

Mr Tom Cassidy, Director of Women & Children's Services, Western Trust [Chair]  
Mr Kevin Duffy, Assistant Director [Children's Health & Disability], Western Trust  
Mr Mark Rogers, Programme Manager Children & Family Services, Extern  
Ms Rioghnach Murphy, Barnardos  
Mr Paul Kellagher, Children's Services Manager, Action for Children  
Mrs Angela Wade, Directorate Business Manager, Western Trust  
Ms Claire Lynch, Children & Young People's Co-ordinator, Derry City & Strabane District Council  
Ms Deirdre Hasson, Education Authority  
Mrs Brenda MacQueen, Dry Arch Children's Centres  
Ms Aileen McGuinness, Chair of Derry Locality Planning Group  
Ms Muriel Bailey, Director of Family Support Services, Parenting NI  
Mr Paul Sweeney, Locality Planning Co-ordinator  
Ms Bronwyn Campbell, Regional Family Support Hub Co-ordinator  
Ms Rachel Armstrong [on behalf of Shane Breen, Assistant Director]  
Mr Pat Armstrong, Head of Service [Governance Lead for Family & Child Care], Western Trust  
Mrs Valerie Maxwell, Children's Services Planning & Information Manager  
Ms Helen Sheils, Head of Community Services, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council  
Ms Donna Downey, Service Manager [Early Intervention]  
Mrs Priscilla Magee, Locality Planning Co-ordinator  
Ms Mairead McMullan, Western Child Care Partnership Manager  
Dr Josephine Deehan, Western Local Commissioning Group  
Ms Elaine Forrest, Personal Assistant, Western Trust

<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies</b> Mr Shane Breen, Assistant Director [Integrated Care Systems], Western Trust Ms Julie Wilson, Acting Head of Service [Gateway, Public Protection and Early Intervention], Western Trust
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	<p>Mr Paul Ryan, Area Manager - Foyle Office, Youth Justice Agency  Mrs Monica MacIntyre, Department for Communities  Ms Edel Fox, Omagh Women's Aid  Ms Alison Wallace, Strategy Manager, Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership  Ms Kim McLaughlin, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council  Ms Fiona Teague, Head of Health Improvement, PHA  Ms Sarah-Jane Goldring, Peace Co-ordinator, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Notes of Previous Meeting held on 30 August 2023</b>  Notes of the previous meeting were approved, subject to the following amendment:-  <u>Task and Finish Group</u>  Ms Lynch proposed that the role of Chair be rotated every two months. She agreed to be a Chair, if the role was rotated.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising from Previous Meeting</b>    <b>Online Child's Rights Training</b>  Ms Lynch advised that she had made contact with UNICEF and they had agreed to input to the WAOG Action Planning workshop arranged for 28 February 2024 at 10 am. She asked members to hold 7 &amp; 14 March 2024 in their diaries from 2 pm for UNICEF's online Child's Rights training. She said other training dates would be available if members were unable to attend on these dates.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Chairman's Remarks</b>    <b>Update on Membership</b>  Mr Cassidy welcome Ms Valerie Maxwell, Children's Services Planning &amp; Information Manager to the meeting, who was assisting the Outcomes Group in the absence of Ms Una Casey. He advised members that Mrs Lisa Storey was currently on maternity leave and he would advise of her replacement when appointed.    <b>Review of Children's Social Care Services - Professor Ray Jones Report</b>  Mr Cassidy referred to the briefing session with Professor Jones arranged for 9 November 2023 to discuss his independent report on Northern Ireland's Children's Social Care Services. He encouraged members to view the report in advance and to take the opportunity to respond to the consultation. Mrs Maxwell advised that Professor Jones was linking with all the regional Outcomes Groups. Ms McGuinness proposed a meeting with the Chairs of Locality Planning Groups to allow for a response from the community and voluntary sector.  <u>Action</u>  ➤ Mrs Magee and Mr Sweeney to arrange.</p>

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### **Task and Finish Groups & Local Planning Groups**

Discussion took place on the briefing session organised with the Outcomes Group and Professor Jones on 9 November 2023 at 3 pm. Mr Duffy said members needed to use this time wisely and consider what they wanted from the session. Mr Cassidy said it was his opinion that community and voluntary sector groups should take the opportunity to respond to the consultation which was open until 1 December 2023. Mr Armstrong stated that this was an important consultation. He said Hubs were dependent on a number of voluntary agencies to make it work. He stated that the Outcomes Group had an important role in having a clear strategy on Early Intervention. Following discussion, issues noted were:-

- Recruitment crises with experienced, skilled staff leaving the community and voluntary sector to take up posts in the Trust. How can the community sector be supported?
- Workforce strategy needed across statutory, voluntary, and community sectors.
- Cost of living crises.
- Deprivation levels.
- Rurality issues.
- Pay disparity.
- Contracting and procurement.
- Innovative ways to engage with children beyond 4+ years i.e., consider new service.

Mrs Campbell said with regard to the expansion of SureStarts - 44% of children were in the 5 - 10 age group. She said the infrastructure was there, but investment was required.

Ms Downey encouraged members to look at the website of Leeds City Council. She reported that the organisation had been under special measures, but had turned this around. She said a group, including herself and Mr Armstrong, had undertaken a fact finding visit regarding their Early Intervention Strategy. Ms Downey apprised members of the pressures within Family Support Hubs. She said there was now a waiting list and areas such as Omagh and Fermanagh were experiencing the impact of this.

Mr Kellagher advised of the need to be careful when interpreting statistics. He said many families in rural areas were unable to afford diesel/petrol, and would, therefore, be unable to travel to parenting sessions.

Ms Hasson reported a similar scenario in the Education Authority regarding funding, staffing etc. She said there needed to be closer liaison between partners as various organisations were dealing with the same families.

Mrs Maxwell advised that there was a link on CYPSP website to free online Solihull course for parents and young people and these were proving to be very useful.

Action

- Mrs Maxwell to share link with members.

Update on Strabane, Derry, Waterside, and Limavady Locality Planning Groups

Mr Sweeney reported that additional Autism Social Café events had been organised to support families on their autism journey. Ms Downey said there was need to re-energise and promote locality planning in order to create solution focused dialogue.

Action

- Ms Downey advised she was planning to meet with Mr Sweeney, Mrs Magee, and Chairs of the Locality Planning Groups in the near future.

Update on Fermanagh & Omagh Locality Planning Groups

Mrs Magee gave an update on her work in Fermanagh and Omagh LPG's. She advised that she was working with Fermanagh and Omagh Council in relation to how they could extend their Hardship Fund, and promote food banks, including accessibility. She advised that she was meeting the Council's Poverty Officer to discuss. Dr Deehan commended the work of the Autism Social Cafes and reported that she had attended the Omagh event whereby 29 organisations were in attendance. She noted partnership working was key and said there was much more support for families now compared to ten years ago. Mrs Maxwell advised of a new section on the Translation Hub in relation to food banks and practice.

Action

- Mrs Maxwell to share link with members.
- Mrs Maxwell agreed to link with Ms Downey to share information on key funding opportunities.

Task and Finish Groups

Mrs Maxwell to arrange a meeting to take forward the work of the Task and Finish Groups. She said other people could be identified as champions and could also be members. Chairs to contact Mrs Maxwell with meeting dates and she will endeavour to link in.

Action

- Mrs Maxwell to obtain Task and Finish Group contact details from Ms Casey.

Mr Cassidy requested three or four main issues from both Locality Planning Groups before the next meeting as he said the focus needed to be on priority issues as a collective group. Ms Lynch detailed the current linkages and different sets of governance networks.

Action

- Ms Downey, Mr Sweeney and Mrs Magee to prepare prioritised list before the next meeting.

	<p>➤ Mr Cassidy requested members to prioritise WAOG meetings in their diaries.</p>
6	<p><b>Hubs Update</b></p> <p>Mrs Campbell gave the following updates:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hubs continue to be very busy.</li> <li>▪ Looking at trends in different areas.</li> <li>▪ Q2 highest number of referrals - 512.</li> <li>▪ 47% of referrals had some element of a financial support request.</li> <li>▪ Poverty and financial deprivation incredibly high.</li> <li>▪ 24% are self referrals - families know the existence of Hubs and are accessing them.</li> <li>▪ 29% of referrals related to parenting programmes - this was a big request in the West compared to other Trusts.</li> </ul> <p>Ms Downey said parenting programmes and support was a recurring theme and an ever increasing need. She said some families needed general parenting guidance and support, whereas other families needed to be shown on a one-to-one basis. She reported this was a real pressure in Omagh and Fermanagh. She apprised members that in conjunction with Mrs Bailey they had agreed a couple of pilot programmes on a group basis via Hubs. Mr Kellagher said most of the referrals to Action for Children in relation to parenting support were for one-to-one support. Ms McGuinness stated that one-to-one support was totally needed to meet particular family's needs. She noted that her staff were holding more than they should be and said staff on the frontline needed to be looked after.</p> <p>Ms Downey reported that nearly all the Hubs were on track to meet their target by October 2023.</p>
7	<p><b>Community Planning</b></p> <p>Ms Lynch advised that the report had been submitted and thanked colleagues who had provided information. She detailed the three prioritised actions and said other actions were being taken forward. She stated that the Strategic Growth Plan was linked to the WAOG's action plan.</p> <p>Ms Sheils reported that Fermanagh and Omagh Council were undertaking consultation work around their community plan, and said further work was planned for the next number of months, including identifying leads from actions.</p>
8	<p><b>UNICEF</b></p> <p>Ms Lynch reported that UNICEF awarded a green rag rating for the progress review which was very positive and said they were pleased with the progress being made. Next progress review was due at the beginning of February 2024.</p> <p>Ms Lynch reported that 170 young people and professionals had attended a Youth Voice event, and a child's rights based approach had been adopted in preparing</p>

	<p>the event. She advised that representatives from political parties were meeting to review in detail the feedback from the young people involved.</p> <p>Ms Lynch apprised members that a webinar with the Children's Commissioner had been organised for World Children's Day on 20 November 2023 and invites were being sent out to wider networks. Ms Downey thanked Ms Lynch for her involvement in this event. She advised that Mr Cassidy taking part in a video for a Trust Communication to mark World Children's Day, and said there was an active working group in the Trust sharing ideas and creativity to also mark the day. Mr Sweeney said linkages were being made with the Trust's Participation Forum. Mr Armstrong said the current engagement with children and young people was excellent. Mr Cassidy congratulated everyone involved. He asked if best practice had been shared. Ms Lynch advised that UNICEF was being assessed in Derry and Strabane. She said information could be shared, but not included in progress reports. Mrs Sheils said it was the intention to embed the Lundy model in relation to co-production in Omagh and Fermanagh District Council.</p> <p><u>Action</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mrs Sheils to speak to Ms Lynch.</li> </ul>
9	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Mr Armstrong reported that demand remained constant in Gateway with continuing high levels of complexity and challenging referrals.</p>
10	<p><b>Issues to be raised to Regional Partnership</b></p> <p>Mrs Maxwell referred to the CYPSP's Pause and Reset workshop held on 4 October 2023. She stated there were similar issues across all five regional Outcomes Groups. She agreed to share a link to information from this workshop and said she was awaiting a report from the Leadership Centre on the afternoon session on accountability and leadership. CYPSP were due to meet again on 13 November 2023.</p> <p>She advised that Ms Louise Dickson was linking with a network of young people in the north west and they had adopted the Lundy template in relation to youth participation.</p>
11	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><u>Outcomes Group Funding</u></p> <p>Mrs Wade requested that invoices in relation to Outcomes Group funding be submitted as early as possible to ensure payment in the current financial year.</p> <p><u>Arrangements for Meetings in 2024</u></p> <p>It was agreed that online meetings would continue in 2024, with the exception of the Action Planning workshop 2024/27 which would be an in person workshop on 28 February 2024 at Strabane Enterprise Agency commencing at 10 am.</p>

12	<b>Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting</b> 13 December 2023 at 10 am via MT
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