

East Belfast LPG Meeting

Thursday 14th March 2024
Microsoft Teams
10am

Name	Organisation	Present	Apology
Charlene Mitchell	LPG Coordinator, BHSCT	✓	
Bronagh O'Dwyer	LPG Chairperson, NOW Group	✓	
Alex Barnes	Life Charity	✓	
Carla Magee	Eastside Learning	✓	
Josephine Gibson	Health Visiting, BHSCT	✓	
Gillian Hamilton	Eastside Learning	✓	
Kathy Watters	Belfast City Council	✓	
Linda Armitage	EBCDA	✓	
Lois Corbett	OSE FSH Coordinator	✓	
Marcela Vielman	Save the Children	✓	
Roisin O'Neill	OSE FSH Coordinator	✓	
Bridget Tiernan	CAMHS, BHSCT	✓	
Sinead Tumelty	BHSCT	✓	
Julia Carson	W5	✓	
Stephen Rafferty	Universal Programme, Dept. of Communities	✓	
Stella Laughlin	Universal Programme, Dept. of Communities	✓	
Jennifer Heverin	LPG Administration, BHSCT	✓	
Charlotte Gunton	LPG Administration, BHSCT	✓	
Caoimhe McKenna	Papyrus		✓
Carol Scullion	Action Mental Health		✓
Chloe McCann	Toybox		✓
Gareth Maguire	Sport Changes Life		✓
Judith Thompson	Toybox		✓
Marie-Therese Cassin	Cedar Foundation		✓
Michele Muldoon	Now Group		✓
Nuala McStravick	Bryson Energy		✓
Pamela Hughes	Kids Together		✓
Peter Bryson	Save the Children		✓
Phil Lindsay	Barnardo's		✓
Sinead Campbell	Advice NI		✓
Tracey-Ripley McElvogue	East Belfast Sure Start		✓
Joy Robinson	Aware NI		✓
Jenny Potter	Now Group		✓
Wendy Stewart	Action Mental Health		✓

Summary of Actions:

	Topic	Action	Responsibility
	Counselling Services	Topic to be added the next East Belfast LPG Agenda	Bronagh O'Dwyer / Charlene Mitchell

	<p>1. Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Chair, Bronagh O’Dwyer opened the meeting by welcoming those present and facilitating a round of introductions.</p>
	<p>2. Previous Minutes from 25th January 2024</p> <p>Action from last minutes regarding Sub-Group for Counselling is on this week’s agenda to be discussed.</p> <p>Minutes agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and no amendments required.</p>
	<p>3. Presentation – Stephen Rafferty, Department for Communities</p> <p>Following a discussion at the last East Belfast LPG regarding some confusion around the move from legacy benefits to Universal Credit, Stephen Rafferty kindly agreed to present at today’s meeting and give some guidance.</p> <p>Universal Credit was introduced in 2017 for new claims. Now everyone on benefits and tax credits will be moving to Universal Credit.</p> <p>The move was initially started as a pilot will 500 participants who were offered lots of support. Following this the scheme was rolled out on 16th October 2023 to all tax credit customers and this is currently ongoing and due to end around April.</p> <p>Process: A migration letter is issued to customers who then have 3 months and 1 day to make their claim. The letter states this date as well as what they need to do next. If no action is taken then reminders are issued via text and letter at weeks 3, 7 and 10. If no response had been taken by the final date then they are removed from the claim process.</p> <p>Support: There are various avenues of support throughout the transition process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific teams have been set up within the Universal Credit centres to take phone calls. They can be contacted on 0800 012 1331 - NI Direct page: www.nidirect.gov.uk/movetouniversalcredit - Jobs and Benefits offices - Referrals can also be made to onward support based on individual circumstances. <p>5-week Waiting Period: The first Universal Credit payment is made 5 weeks after submitting the claim. If anyone is struggling in this time there are a number of options to help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contingency Fund Grant. This is not repayable. - Advance Loan. This can be up to £100 and is repayable over 12-24 months. - Discretionary Support. This can be a loan or grant depending on circumstances.

Transitional Protection:

If following the switch a person is assessed as being entitled to a lower amount than they were receiving on their tax credits, then a top-up will be awarded to bring them up to their original amount. This will erode over time until the amount will be back to the Universal Credit assessed amount.

Eligibility:

- If a person has over £16,000 in savings they normally will not receive Universal Credit, however, if they are switching from Tax Credits, this rule will not apply and they will still be eligible for a Universal Credit application.
- Self-Employed people will enter a start-up period and there will be no taper on earnings.
- A full-time student can also apply if they are moving from legacy benefits.

Deductions:

- Although Transitional Protection will be applicable, deductions will still be made for any outstanding debts such as rent arrears, court fines etc. This deduction can be up to 25%. However, anyone struggling to manage can speak to the debt management team.

4. Matters Arising

- **Counselling Services**

The gap in counselling services has been raised with Belfast Area Outcomes Group, however the plan is for LPG to pull together information on what counselling services exist in East Belfast and where there are gaps. This topic will be added to the next East Belfast LPG meeting agenda.

- **Community and Schools Networking Event**

Although not as big a turnout as hoped due to industrial action, good contacts were still made and feedback from both the primary and post-primary schools was very positive.

Thanks was extended to Eastside Learning for hosting the event.

5. FSH Updates

FSH Area:	Outer South & East Belfast
Timeframe:	23 rd Jan- 14 th March
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	104
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	April 23 – March 24 - 362
Source of Service Requests:	46- Self 7- HV 6- School 16 - Community 2- Ed Welfare 5- GP 7- Voluntary Org 3- CAMHS 0- Social Worker 3- Nurse
Key Gaps identified:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for teenagers- one to one, mentoring• School avoidance/ refusal• Therapeutic support, mindfulness• Long waiting lists for counselling that exceed hub time scale
Key Successes identified:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• COL funding• Great partnership working within hub
AOB for Sharing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruiting for new OSEB coordinator underway.

FSH Area:	Inner East Belfast
Timeframe:	26 th January 2024 – 14 th March 2024
Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:	January – 42 February – 31 March – 27
Number of Service Requests Received to date:	From April 2023 - 264
Source of Service Requests:	Health Visitors, Self-referrals, GP's, Schools, Community and Voluntary, EWO's, CAMHS, Social Workers, Gateway. Community Paediatrics.
Key Gaps identified:	
ASD pre-diagnosed support for Young People Therapeutic Support – children, young people and adults. Scaffolding Project.	
Key Successes identified:	
BCC Hardship Fund Bryson Cost of Living Initiative	
AOB for Sharing:	

	<p>6. Members Updates</p> <p><i>Marcela Vielman – Save the Children</i> The Early Years Grant through the Belfast City Council Hardship Fund enabled 19 children within 14 families to be supported.</p> <p><i>Kathy Watters – Belfast City Council</i> £80,000 has been granted for Summer Provision for children with additional needs, which equates £20,000 per area. It is currently in the planning stages discussing the best way to roll this out. The group was asked for their suggestions and the consensus appeared to be allocation to exiting groups already working with children with additional needs or to give to existing summer schemes to extend their provision to include children with additional needs.</p>
	<p>7. LPG Updates</p> <p><i>i) LPG Membership</i> In order to have an up to date LPG mailing list and to comply with GDPR regulations, a Microsoft form has been circulated. It is vital that all members wishing to remain part of the Locality Planning Groups complete this list by 19th April 2024. If you do not complete your name will be removed from the mailing list and membership will cease.</p> <p><i>ii) CYPSP</i> A reminder that The CYPSP Youth Wellness Web and Translation Hub are available and have a range of resources. Translations – Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) (hscni.net) Youth Wellness Web – Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) (hscni.net)</p> <p><i>iii) Reduced Timetables</i> Reduced School Timetables and school attendance is still very much an issue and a scope/survey is being planned for each area of Belfast to analyse the problem.</p> <p><i>iv) Venues</i> If anyone has any venues that future LPG meetings could be hosted in please let Charlene or Bronagh know.</p>
	<p>8. A.O.B</p> <p>It was announced that Barbara Smith from the Scaffolding Project / Eastside Learning will be leaving her role. A special thanks was extended to Barbara for all her contributions to the East Belfast LPG and to the work she has carried out throughout East Belfast. We wish her all the best for the future.</p>

2024 Dates for East Belfast LPG Ordinary Meetings

DATES	TIME	VENUES
25 th January	10am	78 Mersey Street
14 th March	10am	Microsoft Teams
9 th May	10am	TBA
TBA	10am	TBA
19 th September	10am	TBA
21 st November	10am	TBA