



Minutes for Fermanagh & Omagh Locality Planning Group

11am-1pm 11th June 2024

Online via Microsoft Teams

In Support: Priscilla Magee & Paula Kee

Attendance: Mark Rogers (Extern); Sharon McGillion (Traveller Health Development Worker); Diane Noble (Home Start, Lakeland); Mairead Taggart (Neighbourhood Renewal Co-Ordinator for Health); Martina Grainger (Toy Box); Samantha Gallagher (Community Advice); Rosie Keaney (Mindwise); Patricia Flanagan (Oak Healthy Living Centre); Sarah Rooney (AWARE Community Outreach Team); Ciara McMaugh (Tiny Life); Winnie Kelly (LAST Sure Start); Monica McIntyre (Department for Communities); Ryan McGee (NI Youth Service); Michaela O'Hagan, (Emotional Wellbeing Team in Schools); Charlene Mullan (Action for Children); Deirdre O'Connor (Poverty Officer, FODC); Carol Blackwood Smyth (Family Mediation); Carol Follis (PCSP)

Apologies: Michael Mclean (Action Mental Health); Lisa McGarvey (Action for Children); Edel Fox (Women's Aid, Omagh); Kerrie Flood (Women's Aid Fermanagh); Terrie McSorley (WHSCT Family Centre).

1.	<p><u>Welcome And Apologies</u></p> <p>Welcome was extended to all in attendance and a round of introductions took place. Apologies noted as above.</p> <p>The Chair explained that this was a different type of meeting bringing together both Fermanagh and Omagh membership. A joint meeting had been requested by some members to establish if there were any marked differences between the two geographical areas and was there good practice/ learning that could be shared.</p>
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2.	<p><u>Actions from Previous Meeting</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A list of Counselling services for Fermanagh / Omagh has been sent to members. 2) Marie Theresa Cassin (Cedar Foundation) has sent paper on background as to suggested reasons there could be a rise in autism diagnosis. 3) Priscilla is currently mapping Play Therapy Services. 4) Digital Safeguarding Training held in Limavady at the start of June 2024 was well attended and the WDSSG hope to roll the next training out in October 2024 in the Fermanagh and Omagh area & invites will be sent online. Thanks was extended to PCSP who have been funding refreshments and venue for this training and without their assistance, this training would not have been possible.
3.	<p><u>Introductions & update from Chair on past LPG work / progress of funding from WAOG. AOB Taken at Number 9</u></p> <p>Mark Rogers (Chair) explained that the purpose of today's meeting was to bring together all the members for the first time to understand the commonalties and difference between the two areas. The meeting was an opportunity to support each other and learn about good practice with the hope that collaboration might follow.</p> <p>Mark shared the news of EXTERN Services in the West, which has been delivering support for the last 25 years. Mark continued that there would be changes to contracts over the next few months. EXTERN would be spending the next few weeks supporting the families in this change and access other supports were necessary in the intervening period. Members described the positive impact for families that EXTERN had in the area for so many years.</p> <p>Mark passed to Priscilla for an update of the funding for HOPE Youth Groups and HOPE Domestic and Sexual Violence given by the Western Area Outcomes Group (WAOG). Priscilla listed the groups that had been supported, the training they had been</p>

offered and the in-house projects they were able to implement with the funding.

Winnie Kelly (LAST Sure Start) raised that regionally across Sure Start staffing remains a massive issue because people are not being attracted into posts because of Terms & Conditions and Pay. This is in comparison to the South of Ireland where childcare workers' wages are higher and it has been announced that they will receive a further pay increase. South of Ireland also have a stronger Childcare Strategy in place and any practitioner who lives in proximity to the Border can make their choice.

Priscilla queried if Colleges were offering training opportunities, which were attracting people into the occupation, and were there any monetary awards for progressing through qualifications? With Playgroup Leaders now having to train to NVQ Level 5, it is a big financial commitment to progress. Winnie spoke on the Ace Scheme where many childcare staff came from which has not ran for 10/15 years and was not replaced. Winnie noted that working with small children is a unique and rewarding job but staff have to be dedicated and have a love for the job.

Diane Noble (Home Start) spoke about a post on social media about the South West Regional College who held an engagement event with Early Years and Childcare providers around apprenticeships for their students. Mairead Taggart (NR) said this would be very useful for the NR area and asked Diane to send through a link or post contact details into chat.

Monica MacIntyre (Dept for Comm) acknowledged that staffing appeared to be an issue across the board. Monica suggested engaging with the Labour Market Partnership through Fermanagh & Omagh District Council who are the body taking forward employment issues for the area. The Partnership may be able to work with Colleges and Jobs and Benefits Offices to see what schemes are available. Deidre O'Connor (Poverty Officer) asked a few members to identify themselves to Priscilla and she would then link in with Kieran McElroy or Roisin Montague and co-ordinate a meeting.

Action: Members to contact Priscilla if they wish to be linked up with the Labour Market Partnership through FODC.

	<p>Winnie advised that due to the high level of need of children in schools they require more classroom assistants so schools are attracting people because they offer better Terms & Conditions than Community and Voluntary sectors.</p> <p>Rosie Keaney (MINDWISE) advised that she attended an online Seminar 'Buy a Better Start' which spoke on a 10 year funding project with the Lottery and was all about joined up working for early intervention and prevention to ensure there were no barriers for people.</p> <p>Action: Rosie to look out information and share with group.</p> <p>Priscilla spoke on the Thrive Conference held at the start of June. Ryan advised he would be keen to hear more as they have early intervention services across youth service in Omagh, Fermanagh and Mid-Ulster and have youth centres for age groups 9 to 13 and 14 to 18. They also do work with age group 4 to 8. Ryan advised if anyone needs support in terms of joint up collaborative work he has a team of 20 staff across the area. These youth workers do detached, outreach and centre based work and would be more than happy to help.</p> <p>Mairead Taggart (NR) advised she would be interested in working with Ryan as they have many areas that could benefit from his expertise. Mairead advised that the Emotional Well-being Team within Schools have approached her about duplicating the Leap Project in Fermanagh. The Project worked well in Omagh and she looked forward to working to this again. Michaela confirmed that she has asked Stacey to gather information on this to ensure it falls within their remit as they are only a Pilot until June 2025.</p>
4.	<p><u>Update on FYI / FSNI</u></p> <p>FYI continues to be distributed monthly. In Month One there were over 1,000 hits but this has fallen to around the 300 mark. Priscilla noted issues with email addresses bouncing back or the email is in excess of the recipient's mailbox.</p> <p>Priscilla advised that a small working group are encouraging Social Work Teams to search the FSNI database for services and if they are aware of an organisation where information is not current or not included to contact the FSNI Team.</p>

5.	<p><u>Update from Family Support Hub / FODC Poverty Officer</u></p> <p>No Hub representative at meeting.</p> <p>Priscilla noted that the Hub was extremely busy with families and Shauna McKenna has recently moved to the NOW Project and her post is currently being covered by Lisa McGarvey until someone is appointed.</p> <p>Deirdre O'Connor (Poverty Officer) confirmed that the Cost of Living Support organised by FODC has now been completed and there has been no confirmation of a new budget. Deirdre advised that she attended an event with DFC who are going out with a consultation but they are still waiting on a full equity impact assessment (due today). There will be a 12-week process so they will not get any indication about funding going forward until after that point.</p> <p>Deidre spoke on funding also received from DFC that they used very effectively last year on the Social Supermarket funding as part of the WRAP Programme. They received first quarter funding up front but this is not enough to be able to run the same programme as last year and without funding they can't roll out last year's model out. Deirdre advised that they are hopeful about this funding but it will be end of September / October before they receive any clarity.</p> <p>Deirdre has worked with a group across the board on developing a draft Anti-Poverty Strategy for the District. The Strategy went through the Committee and Council last week and will go out for public consultation. The working group will then be stepped down and a wider anti-poverty network will develop out the lower level detail of actions. Deirdre will share the Draft Anti-Poverty document and welcomes feedback.</p> <p>Priscilla noted that herself and Donna Downey meet with FIS and Gateway Teams in Enniskillen once a month to offer support as both teams are experiencing staffing issues. Deirdre was invited to meet both teams and spoke about her work and the use of food banks which was very useful. The Autism Early Intervention Team Lead also met with both teams to discuss their work.</p>
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Free School meals Online portal opens on 18th June 2024. Samantha noted that the earnings threshold for free school meals on Universal Credit (£15,000) is lower than legacy benefits (just over £16,000). Samantha asked the group to be mindful (especially this summer) that the move to Universal Credit is still happening and Income Support is moving to Universal Credit from July 24, there will be invitations to people on income related ESA with housing benefit and child tax credit. Anyone on ESA only or ESA with anything other than tax credits and housing benefits should not be moving over. Evidence for free school meals is also different with Universal Credit and it's your most recent full statement from your journal (no screenshots) and with legacy benefits it's a proof of benefit letter required.

Samantha advised that there was a positive win in terms of Cross Border benefits refusing to allow the benefit personal independence payment for people who couldn't show a genuine and sufficient link to the United Kingdom. People moving from one side of the Border to the other were being told they weren't resident in Northern Ireland long enough to claim PIP which isn't accurate if you can prove a genuine and sufficient link. Samantha advised that they presented a case and won. Samantha advised members if they were dealing with anyone moving from DLA to PIP or have moved into the jurisdiction and need further help they offer services free of charge.

In terms of trends Samantha advised that working poorer is still the biggest bulk of their work. Scams are on the increase and there is a lot of referrals into their debt services with really convincing scams. This service is also free of charge. An increase in employment of consumer issues is a bit of a concern with the loss of BT in the area.

Samantha advised that she is feeding into the DFC's Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Farming communities moving to Universal Credit is a massive issue. Samantha advised that the system does not work for self-employed people and people in seasonal work. Advice NI and Step In, Dungannon are now on board.

There is a new all Island Social Security Network created and will look at not only Cross-border but the fact that things are done

	<p>differently in the North and the South and will look at what can be learnt from each other. Samantha advised that the network was being run by University of Ulster and they have invited her as their guest speaker to speak about social security</p> <p>Priscilla advised that Period Products has been launched and products are free of charge and available in local libraries and library buses. Winnie asked if organisations can collect in bulk from their local library and Priscilla advised that she contact her local Library.</p> <p>Sarah Rooney (AWARE) advised that she was just back from Maternity Leave. AWARE have support groups all across the North (Omagh, Enniskillen and Strabane/Derry). There are many enquiries weekly in Fermanagh but it is getting people through the door and the recruitment of volunteers. Anyone struggling with anxiety, depression or bi-polar (is not dependant on a diagnosis) or anyone caring for someone who is struggling can attend because it gives them insight. Sarah asked if anyone is looking further information or has any questions they can email her and she can deliver fact sheets or literature.</p>
6.	<p><u>Emerging trends or pressures on services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10/10 new fad for young people using mobiles <p>10/10 is a new trend for young people. 10/10 turns mobile phones into a walkie talkies so young people can go onto anybody's phone and there is no way of switching it off.</p> <p>Priscilla spoke on the digital training that took place at the start of June 24 and was attended by nearly 80 people. New trends are constantly emerging and as soon as you get on top of one the next trend is behind it so they are trying to keep digital safeguarding training live and interactive and are trying to have experts come and speak at training.</p> <p>Michaela noted that EWTS across the Western Trust are finding an emerging trend around sexually harmful behaviour in terms of teenagers and sharing explicit images with their peers in exchange for gifts/money. Michaela spoke on the long-lasting consequences and advised that they are trying to build a resource that looks at the emotional health and wellbeing and consent and around language that's being used with young people.</p>

	<p>Exploitation and grooming of young boys appears to be on the increase.</p> <p>Michaela advised that EWTS have regionally reached out to colleagues in Belfast who have the same needs and spoke on the introduction of AI world. They are trying to stay as informed as they can and stay within their remit. Priscilla noted that young females using pornography is an emerging issue and families don't know how to react to this.</p> <p>Priscilla noted that there was many issues and suggested at the next Western Digital Safeguarding Steering Group meeting enquiring if we could fund Marcella Leonard to deliver another session on harmful sexual images, as her training was excellent last year.</p> <p>Mairead noted that they have discovered through working with Community Groups that some Community Leaders have a broad overview of what is right and what is wrong. At a meeting, a Community Leader was not aware that it was illegal to have sexual images of yourself on your own phone, so they hope to roll out awareness training to all their Community Leaders. Mairead noted that any group that feed into the Community and are engaging with children on a daily basis need to be aware of issues that are causing problems for children. Priscilla to link in with Mairead when she knows the date for PCSP as this is 3 full days training and will have better insight and is always well received by people.</p>
7.	<p><u>Update on Digital Safeguarding Training / Speak Up For Babies / Plans for Future Autism Support Cafes</u></p> <p>Digital Safeguarding already discussed.</p> <p>Speak Up for Babies is being regionally celebrated this week and the West held their celebration event last Friday to start of the week. The event included three speakers; Ray Nethercott, Paediatrician, Professor Nicola Doherty and a Mum who spoke on her experience of breastfeeding two very sick, low weight babies. There were stands which were well attended.</p> <p>Priscilla advised that she had sent an email asking people to take photographs of themselves with their organisational pledges and asked everyone to return these if possible this week.</p>

	<p>There has been requests from Social Workers about Autism Support Cafes because of demands on families. It is hoped that these cafes will run from October 2024. Priscilla advised that she has been in conversation with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council about running a Café in Belleek and she hopes to have more information later on in the summer.</p>
8.	<p><u>Availability of Summer Schemes</u></p> <p>For the first time this year, Save the Children were able to help with a small contribution two summer schemes in Fermanagh and Omagh. The ARC Summer Scheme, Irvinestown has run a scheme for more than 20 years. Youth Sport in Omagh aimed to target children with a disability or children who due to family circumstances will not get away on a family holiday or get away for days. Priscilla advised that they had hoped to run a scheme for families and give vouchers to do something within Fermanagh and Omagh but due to the logistics couldn't get it sorted in such a short time.</p> <p>Patricia Flannigan (Oak HLC) confirmed that they did not have the capacity for a Summer Scheme but, do support the afterschool club which opens all summer for parents in that area.</p>
9.	<p><u>Discussion:</u> Any issues / trends / stress points / good practice, which members would like to be highlighted at the Western Area Outcomes Group Workshop to plan next 3 years.</p> <p>Proposed Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Refusal • Neurodiversity • Poverty <p>Michaela noted that School Refusal was the wrong terminology and the correct terminology is Emotional School Based Non-Attendance.</p> <p>Vaping is another issue.</p> <p>The WAOG Action Planning Workshop is being held at the end of the month and Priscilla advised that she will also express to members issues around funding and staffing which is critical. Mark noted that staffing has been raised multiple times and nobody has come up with a clear strategy on how to progress it on.</p>

	<p>Priscilla advised that Speech Therapy in Sure Start are taking on 'Listen to Baby?' a new language programme and finding it very effective. Speech Therapists within Sure Start are looking at adapting this programme, which was created by Mabel Scullion in Lisburn. Mabel is very keen that anyone across the region be trained up on this locally developed intervention so they are able to encourage the family to use it.</p> <p>Action: Priscilla to get more information and distribute to members.</p>
10.	<p><u>Update from Members</u></p> <p>Diane Nobel (Home Start) advised that they have started a new group called 'Families of the World' due to a large increase in families moving into the Fermanagh area. Many are being referred into Home Start and they were struggling to meet this demand with the limit in the number of Volunteers to engage with families. Home Start have received funding through Community Foundation Tele community Fund in February 2024 and the group has been very busy with new families to the Fermanagh area or have had Home Start connection.</p> <p>There is only one Home Start summer group happening during the summer. Diane advised that they received bad news regarding the Good Relations funding from the Council who could not commit at the moment, so they will have to limit some of their activities.</p> <p>Rosie Keaney (MINDWISE) advised that they were organising a Celebration Day for their Project on Wednesday 24th July 2024 from 10am to 1pm at the Museum Pitch beside Broad Meadow subject to weather and if it is wet, they will move to Fermanagh House. They will be focusing on engaging with families and getting people to have fun with their children and going back to traditional values of how to have fun without spending lots of money. Rosie explained that she would like to have services within the community involved to show services they deliver and asked if anybody was interested to contact her.</p> <p>Rosie advised that they do have capacity for referrals for Omagh and Fermanagh.</p>

	<p>Winnie Kelly (LAST Sure Start) advised that they are holding a fun day on Thursday 13th June 2024 from 10am to 11.30am in Grange Park for all registered families under 4. There will be music, story time, wriggle and rhyme, football skills and lots of baby sensory.</p> <p>Priscilla advised that Michael Mclean (Action Mental Health) (an apology), has been funded to do work in Omagh around emotional wellbeing starting in September through Action Mental Health. A company in Omagh has funded them to deliver this training.</p>
11.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>Nothing discussed</p>
	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>13th August 2024 has been postponed to September 2024. Priscilla to forward date.</p>