



## **Antrim/Ballymena Children's & Young People's Strategic Partnership Locality Planning Group minutes**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2025 at 2.00 p.m.**

**Venue: Fresh Minds Education,  
Unit 5, Enterprise Park,  
The Heartspace, 58 Greystone Road, Antrim, Co. Antrim,  
BT41 1JZ**

### **Attending**

<b>Mervyn Rea</b>	Chair
<b>Gerry McVeigh</b>	Co-Chair Start 360
<b>Margaret Purdie</b>	Health and Wellbeing Officer (Antrim/Ballymena), NHSCT
<b>Emma McElhone</b>	Health & Wellbeing Manager NHSCT
<b>Linda Wylie</b>	Health and Wellbeing Programme Support Officer, NHSCT
<b>Claire Kelly</b>	Action for Children Family Support Hub
<b>Wendy Burgess</b>	Northern Connections Start 360
<b>Sharon Doherty</b>	RAISE Programme Department of Education
<b>Will McDowell</b>	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
<b>Maurice Nixon</b>	The King's Trust
<b>Tina Gregg</b>	Ballymena & Little Steps Surestart
<b>Aine Wallace</b>	Fresh Minds Education
<b>Catherine Burke</b>	Fresh Minds Education
<b>Nigel Montgomery</b>	Education Authority Youth Service
<b>Sharon Caldwell</b>	Home-Start Antrim District
<b>Pat Ruddy</b>	All About Us
<b>Bronte Mayo</b>	Patient and Client Council

### **1. Welcome & Apologies**

Mervyn extended a warm welcome to everyone and a thanks to Aine for providing the venue.

#### **Apologies:-**

Tara McAleese – Mid & East Antrim Borough Council  
 Kyleigh Lough -Mae Murray Foundation  
 Karen Brownlow – Ballymena South Community Cluster

Siobhain Murphy - A Safe Space to be Me  
Jude McNeill – MEA Council  
Tara McAleese - MEA Council  
Pamela McClelland – Impact Network  
Paula McLaughlin - NICMA

## **2. Minutes of Last Meeting**

Agreed as accurate.

## **3. Matters Arising**

None

### **Speaker (Emma McElhone NHSCT Health & Wellbeing Officer – Sexual Health)**

Emma provided an overview of her role within the NHSCT Health & Wellbeing Team on sexual health.

There was an explanation of the sexual health PHA regional action plan which was launched last year and about a number of campaigns that has taken place as part of this. Emma has facilitated a number of different types of training across the NHSCT including sexual orientation and gender identity training, HIV training and traffic light training (sexual behaviours of children & young people).

Emma also promotes and coordinates the C-Card scheme by working with organisations that support young people. The C-Card (Condom Distribution) Scheme is a confidential sexual health service for young people aged 16 – 25 years in Northern Ireland. The scheme provides free condoms, lubricants, support and advice at convenient times and in a variety of locations locally. Organisations working with young people (16-25yrs) are encouraged to attend 2 day training course to train up as c-card providers. Emma also supports the roll out of RSE programmes (relationship and sex education) which are PHA funded and can be delivered in 4 x 2hr sessions to young people (aged 12+).

The NSPCC Pants campaign was also explained, which some members have been involved with in the past. Currently preparing for Talk PANTS Fortnight (May 2025) and are encouraging organisations who work with children aged 3-8yrs old to sign up. There are a number of upcoming webinars taking place online for more information on the Talk PANTS campaign. Emma also facilitates the Northern Digital Safeguarding Group which is made up of a number of organisations working with children & young people looking at online safety and the links to mental health/sexual health etc. Currently planning a conference with the Western Trust Digital Safety Partnership on online scams – see attached flyer.



#### 4. **Family Support Hub Update – Claire Kelly**

Claire extended her thanks for the Christmas Toy donations which were much appreciated.

Claire said that referrals in Ballymena were quiet in December and also currently.

Claire indicated that the Family Support Hub are currently recruiting for two new members of staff.

Claire also mentioned Solihull Parenting programme which will take place for ten weeks from 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2025 at Dunsilly Hotel. This is for parents/carers of toddlers to teens. There are 12 places in total available for same.

#### 5. **Member Updates**

##### **Tara McAleese – Mid & East Antrim Borough Council**

- **Nov**

**Wander Women** – First hike in a monthly series building confidence and connection for women outdoors.

##### **Early 2025**

- Buggy Babies Carrick (a group initially set up through National Walking Month back in May) are still going strong and have just been granted £350 to run sensory play sessions by MEA Loneliness Network.
- Further Multiply finding will see us running Hill Skills Sessions, an Orienteering programme for adults and a BioBlitz (Biodiversity Day!)

##### **Will McDowell – Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council**

##### **(1)EVAWG – Grants available**

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/grants-funding/community/ending-violence-against-women-girls-change-fund/>

The EVAWG Change Fund will be administered and supported by Council and will provide grant funding up to a maximum of £25,000 to successful community

groups operating within their local district. The minimum grant awarded will be £1,500. Funding can be applied for within three tiers of support:

- Tier 1: grants up to £1,500
- Tier 2: grants up to £10,000
- Tier 3: grants up to £25,000

**(2)EVAWG Conference on 6<sup>th</sup> March in Mossley Mill – half day event – details to be released – guest speakers, Q&A sessions**

**(3)Homicide, Coercive control and Suicide Timeline**

An interactive training session with Professor Jane Monckton Smith OBE on Friday 7 February, focusing on The Homicide Timeline and The Coercive Control Suicide Timeline - frameworks for understanding risk escalation patterns in intimate partner relationships where coercive control and stalking are present.

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/community-initiatives/ending-violence-against-women-and-girls/homicide,-coercive-control-and-suicide/>

**Wendy Burgess – Start 360 Northern Connections Service**

The Northern Connections Service are currently delivering our Dry January Feel Good February Campaign. This aims to get individuals involved by either cutting down or abstaining from alcohol and feel the benefits. Please feel free to follow our work on our social pages DrugsandAlcoholNI.

Northern Connections continue to deliver our drug and alcohol awareness sessions to young people, professionals, parents and sporting groups. If anyone would benefit from these please get in touch.

Northern Connections are attending a variety of community events with promotional stands to help support communities around alcohol and drug concerns and signpost to support if required.

**Aine Wallace & Catherine Burke – Fresh Minds Education**

Aine mentioned that they currently have two therapists and two practitioners working in the neighbourhood renewal programme. Parenting programmes and retreats are available.

There are two Counsellors based across schools. Data states that there is a measurable impact for all. This could run for another year.

Aine also told us about Path to Hope Workshop, Glimmer crafting sessions and resources for bereaved children and families. Glimmer boxes can be applied for by filling in a request form. An especially curated box will be made up specifically for each child. Colouring books are also available. Please contact Aine for any support.

## **Margaret Purdie – NHSCT**

Margaret again highlighted the forthcoming Autism Cafes. These will be promotional information sharing events. The first café will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2025 at the Joey Dunlop Centre from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon. Margaret will keep partners updated when all details are finalised.

Margaret also mentioned Solihull Parenting programme which will take place for ten weeks from 19th February, 2025 at Dunsilly Hotel. This is for parents/carers of toddlers to teens. There are 12 places in total available.

Programmes delivered by Parenting Focus – There are some spaces available on programmes for parents living in the Northern Trust areas.

Parenting Childrens Challenging Behaviour	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> Jan	7-8.30pm x 6 weeks via zoom
Walking on Eggshells	Wednesday 22nd Jan	7-9pm x 8 weeks via zoom
PHA OPYT Northern	Monday 3rd Feb	7-9pm x 8 weeks via zoom

If anyone is interested in information in training staff in incredible years programme please contact Kate McDermott –Health & Wellbeing Manager/CDIC

## **Tina Gregg – Little Steps Surestart**

Tina said their Parenting Education programmes are proving very popular. The Solihull programme will be running in Antrim. The Nurturing programme has also been popular. Their services have been very busy covering only three areas.

Tina said she would encourage any organisation to submit a referral to them if they have parents with children under 4 years who are struggling financially paying bills etc. They still have some Bryson funding and Action for Children Crisis Funding available.

## **Maurice Nixon – The King's Trust**

Maurice indicated that the King's Trust is continuing to support 16-30 year olds. Maurice explained that most programmes are designed for personal

development or to support a young person with their own business. They are specifically designed to develop self-confidence. One off payments are available for the purchase of work kits etc.

Maurice highlighted the PSNI programme for young people 18-30 years. Recruitment begins in February. This is a five day programme which will explain about the application process and give attendees an overview of what the job involves.

### **Sharon Caldwell – Home-Start – Antrim District**

Sharon explained that Home-Start continues to run the Baby Bank in Castle Mall, Antrim. Sharon explained recruitment is necessary at present to help run programmes. They require new parent volunteers and are focusing on recruiting.

The unit in Castle Mall for drop offs is still operational and they assist 15-20 families per week.

### **Gerry McVeigh – Start 360**

Gerry explained that a number of people have been mentioning a lack of space in town for people with Autism to gather. Young people aged 18-25 years require a space for wellbeing activities etc.

### **Sharon Doherty – Department of Education – RAISE programme**

Sharon has been seconded to the Department of Education to lead a new programme called “RAISE”. This is in the consultation stage and will feed into a larger strategic plan.

Sharon remarked that it is great to hear of the amazing work being done. They currently focusing an area profile in Ballymena.

### **Pat Ruddy – All About Us.**

Pat explained that the group continues to work with individuals diagnosed with Autism, a group for young adults and for older ladies and tots has also been established. They are currently working on a project to enable children and young people from the Club to run a café in Greystone.

Pat indicated that the Club was very pleased to receive the CYPSP Small Grant towards their project "Adopt a Granny". Granny's received packs comprising hats, scarves, hand-creams, hot chocolates.

## **Bronte Mayo – Patient Client Council**

The Parent Client Council provides individuals and groups with information and advice regarding queries with Health Care. Advice and signposting is offered re: health inequalities to people who are often afraid to raise concerns. Bronte also explained that Children are able to attend alongside Mum's and Dad's and they can signpost on.

Bronte is also a volunteer with St. Patrick's COI Youth Club and Mums and Tots group and added that she is extremely interested in the Autism Cafes which she will promote on the Notice Board at the Youth Club.

## **Nigel Montgomery – Education Authority Youth Service**

Youth Clubs in the Antrim area take place in Crumlin, Parkhall and Ballycraigy. Attendees are from age 8 – 18 years. They run the Horizons programme which helps with leadership skills and development.

The Youth Clubs in the Ballymena take place at Ballykeel and Waveney.

A new worker is being recruited for Ballee area.

Nigel highlighted the Rural Connection programme. They plan to run a conference to incorporate Ballymena and Antrim rural areas.

Nigel also said that with so many empty and derelict buildings around our towns it would be very useful to renovate a building(s) to provide meeting areas for young folk. They are on the lookout for a suitable benefactor to provide funding.

## **6. Action Plan update 2024-2027**

Action Plan is still very a work in progress. Margaret suggested partners could meet again to carry out more planning.

## **7. Planning budget & Small Grants 24/25**

Three organisations were successful in receiving funding

Adopt a Granny – All About Us

On-line Music Workshop – Mae Murray Foundation  
Empowering Young Voices – Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council.

Margaret indicated that there is a small underspend and it was proposed and agreed that same should be allocated to Family Support Hub for Counselling Services.

Margaret suggested that perhaps a group member would wish to share information and learning on completing and obtaining Grants Applications. Group members suggested NICVA and Pamela McClelland from Impact NI.

#### **8. Any Other Business**

None

#### **9. Date, time and venue of next Meeting**

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 at 2.00 p.m. in Waveney Community Centre.