

Belfast Area Outcomes Group

**Tuesday 1st April 2025 at 9.00am - Marrowbone Youth Centre Premises,
11 Gracehill Court, Belfast BT14 7RG**

Minutes

1. Welcome & Apologies

Sarah Meekin

Marie Cavanagh

Caroline Rutherford

Maxine Gibson

Valerie Maxwell

*If patterns of non-attendance they will need to review.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising from previous meeting on 14th November 2024

Amendments to minutes- None- accepted as accurate record.

3. Action Log

	<u>Action</u>	<u>Status</u>
1	Minutes from October Outcomes Meeting to be shared next week	Completed
2	Ms Rutherford to share information on the previous Integrated Services/ 'Health Care Zone' model trialled in BT14 to Mr Largey	Completed.
3	EIS team to allocate funding relating to DFC/BCC anti-poverty activity	Completed
4	Ms Gibson to share information with the minutes/quarterly return	Completed.
5	BAOG Action Plan 2024-27- 1 week for feedback on Action Plan. To be presented to locality planning groups for feedback- plan is for this in the next fortnight-	Completed.
6	Parent feedback forms to be shared with Sure Starts and locality leads to share as far as possible. – Parent	Completed

	feedback forms shared- online survey put out to locality groups	
7	Re: Seamless Pathway Graphic Design CHR Knockbracken to be approached and feedback discussed in January	Completed and samples gained.
8	Information on numbers of families being dispersed into BCC/BHSCT areas by central government...Dr Murray	
9	Quantity of Activity delivered via BCC hard ship fund activity delivered via Outcomes Group structures ... Gerry Largey	
10	Information re school avoidance issues to be circulated by LPG coordinator	
11	Meeting with Aidan Dawson AIPB Chair and PHA chief Executive to be arranged on data matters.... Gerry Largey	
12	Circulation of CYPSP regional Plan	
13	Circulation of CYPSP BAOG update with updated hub and training figures. LPG coordinator	
14	Updated Seamless Pathway document with design and Logos included to be circulated to Outcomes members Gerry Largey	

4. Matters Arising

Racial tensions Dr Murray noted that regional information indicated that current dispersal policies mean he feels there are 400 families dispersed in every council area and this is growing. They plan to share the data with them- to be shared next outcomes meeting.

5. Chairperson's Business

Children with Disability - There is a lack of short breaks and residential provision for families with CWD; causing immense pressure and stress s.

This will continuously reviewed by health community to better support families and parents of CWD. This is early intervention and therapeutic support at early stages, short breaks and residential placements- this is topical and on the agenda.

Mr Largey noted that DE have completed a consultation on the SEN strategy with a focus on developing earlier intervention approaches. There are a number of 'levels' of need identified. There is a move to piloting approaches in localities, some of which are in Belfast, on new ways of planning support for children without the need for educational psychology inputs.

Racial Tension-

No large scale issues currently being reported, though ongoing small scale issues reflecting issues and concerns relating with migration and supporting the integration of newcomer families into Belfast continue to be raised.

Local FS hubs continue to deal with families affected by tensions albeit at a lower level than previously- BCC has released open funding calls for services in Sandy Row, Woodvale, Inner West and Connswater areas, which are deemed by BCC as hot spots likely to have recurring incidents. Available funding is to look at intervention work and this is what they are trying to manage. At a broader level BAOG will continue to keep a focus on these matters.

Anti-Poverty Strategy-

The Chairperson indicated the welcome on behalf of BAOG, the focus and investment of BCC on anti-poverty initiatives. For example the recent anti-poverty forum organised by BCC which the Outcomes Group and Hubs were heavily represented in and BCC's 2024/2025 1 million pound hardship fund investments. BCC have issued 170k in practical supports for families to the hub network and meal support for children in social economy day cares across the city. This activity is delivered on behalf of BCC via the Outcomes Group FS hub network and is a model for common purpose activity and spend. An update on the quantum's associated with this activity, will be provided to the June meeting.

Social Work

The Chairperson provided an update on the range of pressures associated with Children's Community Services. These are challenging times, as recognised in the independent review of children's services. The pressures of workforce depletions, increasing demands on services and the complexity of issues that families present with show no signs of easing. There has also been industrial action related to workload all trusts with negotiations continuing between workforce and the chief SW officer leading on attempts to find ways of addressing these pressures. Updates on any escalation that could impact services will be provided.

The Chairperson emphasised that despite the pressures that BHSC remains confident in the systems to support families and protect children. It is critical that Gateway referrals, still need to happen if there are concerns and if any practical issues in making contact Mr Murray and Mr Largey are contacts. It doesn't matter if

there is a shortage. BHSCT have a statutory duty to respond to CP concerns and will continue to do so.

Ray Jones Review:

When the Outcomes Group last met in November, the review conference was to happen and this has. At this conference the minister announced he brought the review to the executive for ALB and they declined. They wanted education and Youth justice to be involved and for there to be ongoing discussion. Last report was 2 weeks ago, further executive meeting was held and although some departments expressed commitment to an ALB, there was not sufficient executive support for progress on an ALB at this stage.

6. Presentation: Statutory SW issues impacting Belfast and Seamless pathway.

A draft version of the Seamless pathway has been sent to the Belfast Trust Board and discussion recently at AIPB reflected there is much enthusiasm for more collaborative approaches to working to support families and meet need. The trust board were very excited and aware of the 5-10yr strategy, though acknowledged it is a ground breaking approach from an HSC perspective.

This concept was brought to AIPB on Friday and whilst there is no investment with the board they were keen to have a view with other early intervention initiatives to join the dots. They felt it had potential and they would escalate as a priority for investment and activity.

NISRA at the AIPB meeting produced a programme they have been building on with data. The Chairperson reported that the data they have now to access is phenomenal. They felt they had a good feel with heat mapping etc., though they had a range of stats for suicides in areas etc. all broken down. BAOG/BHSCT are trying to gain this information and share this.

Ms Weatherall plans to meet with the AIPB lead on this and get this information to enhance Outcomes Group planning. Ms Weatherall noted she is continuously asked on the growing LAC population, AIPB had a different focus with 'details' such as LAC growth broken down, as part of the deprivation and impacts across multiple domains. This was the most sophisticated data programme she has seen. Review to move forward with groups.

BCC leadership committee, all chief executives of BCC and probation, the trust, NIAS and police have asked to meet and review statutory priorities they can agree. There was a recent vulnerability meeting last week and Complex lives and seamless pathway were on the agenda.

The Consultant linked to this work (Chris Marsh) had led on a presentation on vulnerability and the pathways work to this city leadership group. There was cross sector enthusiasm to the seamless pathway, this is early formation and needs signed off, though their leaders are interested in investing in the Seamless Pathway- early

indicators were yes this may well be an area for collaborative activity and investment.

7. Work Stream Update:

There are 9 work streams in total. Of particular interest to the Outcomes Group Agenda are

Workstream One which has a focus on the 'front door' to Social Services and the issues associated with waiting lists for various services.

Workstream 6 called 'Reset and Rebalance' which deals with the funding issues and priorities and of the Voluntary and Community Sector in terms of the funding arrangements required to make the Reform Board effective.

Work Stream 9 is the Family support work stream: It is led by Deirdre Mahon and Jacinta Linden – There is considerable activity around consideration to a regional Family Support models and the issues associated with developing this.

A number of task and finish groups have been set up across all work streams. For example, Sub Group 3 in Work Stream 9, is gathering data from existing networks and FS hubs. They are collecting information on services, area coverage, funding sources, and the structures and tasks of work streams. This sub-group is led by Maxine from CYPSP

8. LPG Activity Report Update:

Ms Weatherall noted recurrent issues being reported relating to school avoidance. This encompasses both anxiety based school avoidance among children and issues relating to restricted timetables being implemented by schools which particularly impact upon Cand YP with learning or behavioural needs. Pre Covid the same issues had led to workshop style meetings with Colin Reid and relevant managers in EA and in differing forms this remains a concern across the LPG structures.

An update on a conference in Lisburn, which the Children's law centre and parents attended was referenced in developing thinking on this. Among the points made there was an analogy used that if we as adults are stressed in work then we get support or time out and there are mechanisms in place to provide support. Though with a child with issues, they are told to go to school regardless as it is the law.

It was agreed that LPG's would be approached on the most useful way of progressing this issue.

Dealing with potential coercive control, friendships and sexual relationships. LPG's are keen for schools to feed more into local activity on these matters in more structured ways. It was reported that there was a wealth of support on this matter already in schools. LPGs were keen for broader access to the package across communities to help parents support children to feel safer in school.

In response to the range of education related to education related matters, Ms Weatherall indicated that the current RAISE area based programmes in the city are

an opportunity to reshape activity around schools in more community facing ways. In the planning activity to explore what they are doing in Belfast, stakeholder such as LPG's should to put asks forward and one ask coming from programme areas across Belfast may be reducing anxiety in their children's population and how they take this forward.

BAOG and LPGs are actively addressing training and capacity needs as reported by our networks. The Early intervention and Support Team have been coordinating resources to support a range of training activity for staff across sectors.

For example the delivery of parenting programme, though with additional activity delivered in a wide range of training opportunities relating to ASD, CWD and ADHD and school avoidance for example. Mr Largey noted the level of training and investment to this, with feedback loops to the EIS team established, to develop priorities and align activity.

Range of training reflects level of interest and capacity level in this sector: training on- anxiety based school avoidance, neurodiversity, vaping and cultural competence

SBNi also reported as having good online safety training and tool kits for trauma.

9. Family Support Hubs Update:

Mr Largey noted activity levels have escalated coming out of winter as Austerity is being reported as perceived as being as being back by our broader partner networks. A concrete example of this related to the level of anxiety around governmental decisions, which are on hold, or have negative signals coming through on them. There are substantive concerns on the potential impacts on services being widely reported.

Referrals to the hubs are relevant to the need and are appropriate- 89% of people receive a service. There is a 50/50 split in people linked to more than one service, it is an acknowledgement of care being wrapped around these families and it can be more complex. They are looking at where referrals have gone and the capacity of members.

The other thing to note is continued disproportionate percentage of CWD in hubs- 23% have disabilities and others are awaiting diagnosis. They are looking at applications to changing lives initiative and agreed they are keen for this to be available in hubs at that level and the hubs could have resources for children awaiting diagnosis- this is based on need not diagnosis.

10. Action plan:

BAOG for signing off today. The engagement work has been done at hub levels.

Regional children's services plan to be shared once Maxine returns.

Trust working on skill mix and aiming to invest in training places, though this can take up to 5 years. They want to invest in early intervention.

They have the children's reform board and Seamless pathway.

11. Seamless Pathway

Update given in presentation

Ms Weatherall feels they need to test this and start getting this out.

They have some applications for funding, though a lot is aligning their resources and staff, though they will need project manager to review this.

There are around 320 children in kinship care in the Oldpark area alone and they want to support these families and the children who are at risk of coming into care. They want to improve them coming to school getting support.

Ms Weatherall noted they are trying to plan the pilot

Consideration to a wider pilot than just the Oldpark Area.

Next Steps on seamless pathway document:

Document- Initial work with graphics and visuals and if this meets wishes of design group in the next 3-4 weeks, this should be ready to share in live format to agencies involved. They plan for this to go to city planning structures by June/September.

Tracey asked does the action plan complicate this-. They done a lot of work on the pathway, though the action plan complicates the document.

Concrete next steps finish graphics and put out within next 4 weeks once regional plan became available.

Logo- Mr Largey noted they could look at a Belfast outcomes logo potentially or put all the logos on this.

Proposed next steps re seamless pathway document:

- Visuals to be finished
- Draft ready to go for organisations connected for feedback- this isn't a consultation, though does need feedback- within 4 weeks and 8 weeks for feedback- for the end of June- All agreed.
- Cover options for Seamless pathway to be discussed at outcomes- ideas Caroline can be contacted.
- Inter-graphic options decisions- offline individually with people
- Need members to have full document,
- Comms action plan-a lot of work done though needs tightened and gaps filled.