



Minutes for Fermanagh Locality Planning Group

11am-1pm, 9th October 2025

Kindly Hosted By: FODC

Attendance: Donna Gormley, Action for Children; Breege McCaughey, WHSCT; Deirdre O'Connor, FODC; Colleen McCaughey, Career Service; Diane Nobel, Lakeland HomeStart; Maeve Linton, Cherish Sure Start, Kerri Flood, Fermanagh Women's Aid; Martina Granger, Toybox; Rosie Keaney, Mindwise.

Apologies: Mark Roger (Fermanagh LPG Chair); Cheryl McElhinney; Michelle Weir; Michael McLean; Michelle West; Marilyn Trimble; Allen Fleming; Sharon Hasson; Marie Therese Cassin; Fermanagh Gabrielle McAloon and Mairead Taggart.

In attendance: Priscilla Magee

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies. AOB.

Members were welcomed and apologies taken. No AOB noted.

2. **Presentation:** Barbara Wallace, Pathways Programme, QUB presented an amazing opportunity for post primary students who may be care experienced, have had social work intervention which extended beyond 3 months, are an incoming family or a family are experiencing poverty & the child will be 1st generation entering 3rd Level education. Successful students will be offered £1K bursary for each year of their study and many in the past have had opportunities to travel abroad. Members were particularly interested in this opportunity and a long conversation was sparked about the isolation / lack of opportunities that young rural people experience and how this opportunity could ease some of the challenges. Further information can be found at pop@qub.ac.uk & Barbara will answer any questions.



Are you interested in studying at Queen's University?

Are you in the first year of your A-Level course or other Level 3 programme?

Would you like to receive tailored support and encouragement to get to Queen's?

Then the Pathway Opportunity Programme could be for you!

STATISTICS SHOW UNDERREPRESENTATION HIGHER EDUCATION.....

- Parents did not attend university
- Low-income households
- Certain neighbourhoods
- Carers
- Care Experienced
- Refugees/Asylum Seekers/Newcomers



Who?

- For Year 13 pupils/first year students of Level 3 qualification from **underrepresented groups** to support progression to Queen's.

When?

- Delivered as a series of in-person and online events between January and November during the school day – plus a one week summer school on Queen's campus.

Why?

- Builds skills, knowledge and confidence to access, study, experience and progress to University, and specifically Queen's.
- There are also some really useful benefits!

3. Previous minutes and actions

The previous minutes will be sent directly by email to members to check for accuracy and agreement before they are posted on the CYPSP website.

4. Chairperson / Coordinator remarks

The Coordinator shared that she had managed to bring together 7 local Primary Schools in an application to RAISE for 2 Coordinators posts to deliver the holistic Solihull Schools programme within not only the schools but the surrounding communities, with engagement with parents central to this emotional wellbeing programme. The Coordinator felt that this funding stream may be delayed due to the legal challenge as to how DE's proposed funding will be rolled out.

5. Update from WAOG

The Coordinator reminded members that she completes a report bimonthly for the WAOG which includes the ongoing work of the LPGs, highlights of new local projects/ training / initiatives/ good practice and also emerging trend / unmet needs raised from the LPG membership and Hub partners. Therefore, this is the forum where people can exchange information and discuss ideas for collaborative work to support local families which the Coordinator can include in their report and bring to attention of WAOG members.

Review of the role of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) then took place to refresh members of the structure and inform members who have joined recently. CYPSP brings together a range of agencies, including voluntary and community sector organisations that aim to improve the lives of children and young people in NI. Work is led by the Western Area Outcomes Group (WAOG) which is chaired by the WHSCT's Director of Children's Services and consists of a broad range of relevant stakeholders from the statutory and non-statutory sectors with an interest in early intervention and preventative family support services.

This interagency work via the WAOG has led to the development of an associated [Action Plan \(2025-2028\)](#) which has identified the need and priority for early intervention and preventative family support services:

The Coordinator included the CYPSP regional priorities & reasoning / outline of WAOG's 3 Year Priorities in the agenda (below):

| Overarching CYPSP Priorities 2025-2028 | Western Area Outcomes Group Priorities – 2025-2028 |
|--|---|
| Early Intervention/ Early Help family support for all | Early Intervention/ Early Help family support for all Children with Disability |
| Early Intervention mental health & emotional wellbeing | Early Intervention mental health & emotional wellbeing |
| School Disruption | School Disruption |
| Poverty/Cost of Living | Poverty/Cost of Living |
| All above underpinned by Voice of Young People | |
| NOTE: This is a live plan and will be reviewed and refreshed based on emerging issues for children, young people and families across the area on an ongoing basis. | |
| This Plan has been aligned with Fermanagh and Omagh Council Community Plan, Derry/Strabane Community Plan and Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan to add value, collaboration and avoid duplication. | |

Western Area Outcomes Group Funding Proposal 2025/26

The WAOG as part of the CYPSP has identified the ongoing need for additional service development and provision in family support services, specifically early intervention and prevention.

More Detail of the Key Outcome areas identified in Plan

- Families can access support at point of need as soon as possible (Including practical family support)
- Improve early help/ access to support for children with disability/additional needs and their families
- Young People & Families have improved resilience and early access to EMHW support at the point of need
- Young People and parents receive support at an early stage in respect of emotional based school avoidance
- Provide timely support to vulnerable people in the community in respect of food, fuel, housing poverty and cost of living crisis

Discussion into Funding Spend From WAOG for the Omagh LPG: Ideas for Collaborative Spend Before 31st March 2026

After setting the context for the £1000 funding which has been assigned to the LPGs the Coordinator outlined some of the ideas which had been previously suggested if funding from WAOG became available which would align with the priorities:

- Priority 1: Early Intervention, Early Help, Family Support for All.
Suggestion: Online sessions for families and practitioners are bought in from experts such as Rebecca McCullagh Eden Consultancy in regard to parenting a child with Autism and everyone is invited.
- Priority 2: Improve Early Intervention for Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs of Children and Young People
Suggestion: The new emotional wellbeing programme which the MDT SW have designed is rolled out as a Train the Trainer module for Community / Voluntary Groups. This roll out would also include, a short session on how to organise, facilitate & evaluate the programme, providing online templates which can be used universally, including standard, easy to fill reporting cards of outcomes. This further session reflects the fears / concerns that practitioners appear to have about delivering face to face programmes,

even though many have received substantial training but do not deliver, thus losing skills and confidence.

- Priority 3: School Disruption
Suggestion: Funding to help with venue hire / refreshments for a bringing together of local organisations that can support families.
- Priority 4: Poverty / Cost of Living
Suggestion: Funding to help with venue hire / refreshments for a bringing together of local organisations that can support families.

Discussion then took place as to the detail of these suggestions and how they would be collaboratively delivered on, other suggestions which align with priorities were also welcomed.

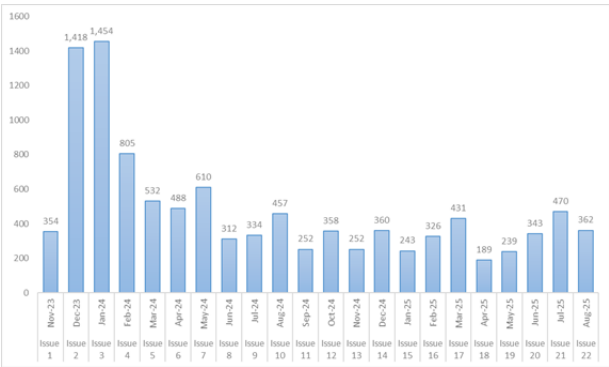
Some of the members who also sit on Omagh LPG suggested that a conversation be had with Mairead Taggart, Health Improvement, Neighbourhood Renewal. Mairead had previously designed and facilitated collaboratively a School Project called LEAD - Learn Education, Advise and Develop in 2 post primary schools which was very well accepted and had positive outcomes. The LEAD Project targeted Year 8 after consultation with the students (School Council) & staff as to the issues they were experiencing.

Members felt that this was a way forward as all 4 priorities sit within the auspices of schools and would complement the RAISE funding proposal.

The Coordinator agreed to contact Mairead and suggested if any member had any further ideas for the funding to contact her.

6. Updated Progress on LPG Action Plan

- Number of people who have clicked on the FYI 2024/25 (Relates to all 4 priorities)



- Emotionally based School Avoidance Parent Peer Group established (Priority 3 School Avoidance Priority)



- Participation in 16 Days of Action including information stands being set up in foyers of hospitals, DSV messages/ sign posting being posted on Social Media & organisation of Technology Facilitated Abuse awareness raising training session (below) (Priority 1: Early Intervention, Early Help, and Family Support for All).



- Organisation of Fermanagh Youth Networking Event (Relates to all 4 priorities)



7. Family Support Hub Update

Seána introduced herself and made people aware that she is temporarily co-ordinating the Omagh Family Support Hub from start of April 2025 covering her colleague Karen Duffy's maternity leave. Seána provided an update on the purpose and role of the Hub including threshold to raise everyone's awareness. Seána shared that she has been busy networking and building relationships since coming into post with different services to ensure right representation at the Hub Networking Meetings.

Seána shared that families availed of free funded summer schemes again this year over the summer, provided by FODC that were in need. Hub Partners were able to complete applications on behalf of families. The Hub continues to be busy with different reasons for referring such as parenting support, emotional and behavioural difficulty support for primary and post primary school children, counselling services for families, one to one support for young people, adult mental health support, financial support etc. There are waiting lists in the area for example: one to one support in relation to Parenting support,

emotional and behavioural difficulty support for primary and post primary school children, and one to one support for young people.

The Omagh and Fermanagh Family Support Hubs have been chosen once again by FODC to receive funding through their Discretionary support scheme. FODC has approved funding of £5000 each for both hubs for the purpose of alleviating poverty within families who are impacted. Seána shared this should be available within next couple of weeks.

The Omagh and Fermanagh Family Support Hubs have put in a proposal to WAOG to receive funding to address unmet need and improve access to early intervention supports.

8. FODC Poverty Update

WRAP Programme 2025/26: Fermanagh and Omagh Poverty Support Programme (WRAP) will run from November 2025 - end March 2026 supporting 200 households throughout the District. The programme involves an 8-week programme of bespoke support, including a household energy efficiency assessment, and will be supplemented with vouchers for participating households. The programme will be delivered by 6 x CVS organisations with Fermanagh Rural Community Network (FRCN) being the lead organisation. FRCN is now accepting referrals from local organisations supporting vulnerable households.

Debt Support: LPG members are reminded that there is a Debt Support programme running within the District. Delivered by Community Advice Fermanagh and Omagh Independent Advice Services, the project aims to increase the reach of debt support in the area, and aims to work in partnership with statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations in the district to encourage individuals impacted by debt to take up debt advice and support as early as possible. Flyers for the work being taken forward by both organisations are attached.

Cost of Living Support: FODC has produced a new leaflet "[Worrying About Money](#)" in partnership with the Independent Food Aid Network. The leaflet signposts individuals to various sources of support available locally and is available in hard copy, as attached. Please contact

deirdre.oconnor@fermanaghomagh.com if you would like to have some delivered to your office.

Alternatively, there is an online/interactive version available at

<https://www.worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/fermanagh-and-omagh>. As always, further information about additional [Cost of Living support](#) for residents can be accessed via the [Fermanagh and Omagh District Council](#) website.

Financial Wellbeing Project

Are you struggling with your personal finances?

Would your staff like a Debt Awareness Session?

Would your group users benefit from a Financial Well Being Clinic?

Omagh Independent Advice Service is delighted to offer One to One Advice, Financial Well Being Clinics and Information Sessions to the general public and to all interested local voluntary and statutory groups. Our project will provide advice and representation on the following:

- Benefit Entitlement Checks
- Better off Calculations
- Budgeting Advice
- Free, confidential Debt Advice

If you would like to avail of our services and help us arrange a Financial Well Being Clinic in your area please contact us on: 028 8243252 or Email info@oiaas.co.uk

Community Advice Fermanagh

www.communityadvicefermanagh.com

028 6632 4334

Money and Debt Advice

- **Confidential Help** - Talk to experts who will guide you without judgement.
- **Personalised Plans** - Get a debt plan tailored just for you.
- **Support and Advice** - You don't have to face debt alone; help is available.

Advice for you

- **Housing Rights** - We help you understand your rights as a tenant, and homeowners.
- **Employment Rights** - We offer advice on your rights at work, from pay to workplace conditions.
- **Crisis Support** - We provide advice and referrals for those facing housing or financial emergencies.

Maximise your income

- **Benefit Entitlement Check** - We help you find all the benefits you're entitled to.
- **Firm Help** - We assist with completing forms correctly so we know these can be at times complicated and confusing.
- **Consumer Support** - We offer advice to save money and handle consumer issues.

Step 3: Where can I get help?

Each of these services offer free and confidential advice.

Omagh Independent Advice Service
Free, confidential & independent advice on benefits, employment, housing, debt and more
028 6632 4334 | info@oiaas.co.uk | www.oiaas.co.uk
Help with options: 000000

Community Advice Fermanagh
Free, confidential & independent advice on benefits, employment, housing, debt and more
028 6632 4334 | www.communityadvicefermanagh.com
Help with options: 000000

Advice NI
Providing free, confidential & independent advice on benefits, personal/business debt, EU Settlement Scheme and more
0800 315 4044 | advice@advice.org.uk | www.advice.org.uk
Help with options: 000000

Christians Against Poverty
Debt counselling charity
0800 338 0008 | info@capuk.org | www.capuk.org
Help with options: 0

Make the Call
Benefits advice line for Northern Ireland
0800 232 1271 | makeitcall@nri.gov.uk
Text ADVICE to 07994 405 248
www.nri.gov.uk/make-call-service
Department for Communities
Finance Support Service
Supports people who live in Northern Ireland and need short-term financial help
0800 587 2750
www.nri.gov.uk/finance-support

Interactive version:
www.worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/fermanagh-and-omagh

Other Support

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council - Cost of Living Support
Information and guidance about local and regional services and supports
www.fermanaghomagh.com/costofliving
costofliving@fermanaghomagh.com

Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Information and support for housing, homelessness, National Energy Action and the N OI Savings Network
www.nie.gov.uk

MoneyHelper
Support with debt, benefits, money management and pensions
0800 138 7777 | www.moneyhelper.org.uk

Action for Children Family Support Hubs
Support families & professionals to early intervention services within their community ensuring access to the right help at the right time
Fermanagh: 028 6632 4151
Omagh: 028 8255 5465
www.familysupportni.gov.uk

South West Age Partnership (SWAP)
A network for older people's groups and individual older people
storing@southwestagepartnership.co.uk
07955 787 456 | www.facebook.com/swapnetwork

Women's Aid
Information, support and accommodation for women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse
Fermanagh: 028 6632 8898
fermanagh@womensaid.org.uk
Omagh: 028 8224 1414
www.omaghwomensaid.org

Mental Health and Money Advice
Helping you understand, manage and improve your mental health and money issues
www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org.uk

NI Consumer Council
Information on your consumer rights, ways to save money, and guidance on debt support services
www.consumeradvice.org.uk

Worrying About Money?

Financial advice and support is available if you're struggling to make ends meet

Follow these steps to find out where to get help in Fermanagh and Omagh

Supported by

Updated on 22/05/25

Step 1: What's the problem?

I suddenly have no money

- Lost job/reduced hours
- Lost money/unexpected expense
- Disaster (e.g. flood or fire)
- Relationship breakdown
- Money stopped (e.g. failed a medical)
- Sanctions - see option 5

See options **1 2 5 6**

I am waiting on a benefit payment/decision

- Made a new claim for benefit
- Benefit payment is delayed
- Waiting for a benefit decision

See options **1 4**

My money doesn't stretch far enough

- Deciding between food/fuel/mobile credit
- Low income or zero hours contract
- Statutory Sick Pay too low to cover costs
- Facing redundancy
- Not sure if eligible for support
- Change of circumstance (e.g. new baby/bereavement/illness/left partner)

See options **1 2**

I have debt

- Rent or rates arrears
- Gas or electricity
- Credit or store cards
- Personal loans and overdrafts
- Over friends and family
- Benefit repayments

See option **3**

Step 2: What are some options?

1 Help for short-term living expenses

If you are in an extreme or exceptional situation or you are in a crisis you may be eligible for grants or loans including Discretionary Support, Universal Credit New Claims Grant or Social Fund Budgeting Loan.

2 Maximise Your Income

Anyone who is struggling financially can get a benefit check and speak to an advisor for free and confidential advice.

A benefit check can ensure that you are receiving all the money you're entitled to, especially if your circumstances have changed recently. Speaking to an advisor could also help you manage your gas and electricity bills and make sure you're not missing out on things like school clothing grants or free school meals.

3 Debt Advice

Debt can happen to anyone. Free advice and support can help you find ways to manage your debt and reduce how much you pay each month.

4 Benefit Advance

If you have made a new claim for benefit and are in financial hardship while you wait for your first payment, you may be able to get an advance to afford things like rent or food. It's important to get advice before taking out an advance. Benefit advances must be paid back, and the money will be taken from your future benefit payments (a loan).

5 Hardship Payment

If you have been sanctioned, you may be able to request a hardship payment from the Jobcentre Plus. Hardship payments are not always paid immediately, and they're not available to everyone. Hardship payments of Universal Credit need to be paid back (a loan), but hardship payments of Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment Support Allowance do not (not a loan).

6 Challenge a Decision

You can challenge a benefit decision if your benefit has been stopped / sanctioned / reduced / refused or you have been overpaid. Most benefit decisions need to be challenged within one month.

Step 3: Where can I get help with these options?

Access 'Worrying About Money?' leaflets online at www.foodbanknetwork.org.uk/cash-first-leaflets
Feedback? Share your experience of using this guide by visiting www.btljmoneyadvicefeedback

9. FODC Community Planning Update

There was no report from Community Planning.

10. Agreed update for next WAOG Report

- Sharing of good practice / new initiatives or developments

Lakeland Home continued expansion of their group for incoming families.

- Unmet need / emerging trends

Neurodiversity waiting lists / family support

Opportunities for families with children with disabilities to take part as a whole family in community activities.

Retention of staff.

Cost of Living.

Increased use in young people of tobacco pouches as there is little indication of how much nicotine each pouch contains and young people can use these pouches undetected unlike the Vapes.

11.Upcoming Opportunities for Collaborative Working

- The 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Violence, a global campaign aimed at raising awareness & taking action to end domestic violence and gender-based abuse. This annual observance spans from November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to December 10th, International Human Rights Day. Individuals, organizations, and communities come together to advocate for a world free from domestic violence.
- Best Start in Life Group – launch of revised Infant Mental Health Strategy

12.AOB

Next Meeting: Fermanagh LPG, 11.12.25 Kindly hosted by The Arc Healthy Living Centre, 116-122 Sallys Wood, Irvinestown, Enniskillen BT94 1HQ.