



## Minutes for Omagh Locality Planning Group

11am-1pm, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Kindly Hosted By: Youth Sport Omagh

Attendance: Imelda Muldoon, WHSCT Early Years Team; Seana Connor, Action for Children; Charlene Monaghan, South West College; Mairead Taggart, WHSCT; Deirdre O'Connor, FODC; Louise Armstrong, SWC; Johanne Doherty, SWC; Allen Fleming, EAYS, Sean Curneen, Youth Sport Omagh & Maire Therese Cassin, Cedar Foundation.

Apologies: Gail Clark (Omagh LPG Chairperson); Cheryl McElhinney; Breege McCaughey; Stephen Sweeney; Michelle Weir; Michael McLean; Michelle West; Rachel Harkness.

In attendance: Priscilla Magee

### 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies. AOB.

Members were welcomed and apologies taken. No AOB noted.

### 2. Guest Presentation: Johanne Doherty, Charlene Monaghan & Louise Armstrong, Programme Support Officers, South West College.

#### Youth Scape Presentation – Johanne Doherty

Youthscape launched in 2018 as a programme to empower 14-24 year olds who are most marginalised in Fermanagh, Tyrone and Donegal. The programme was awarded almost €4 million of EU Peace 1V funding under the Children and Young People's strand by the Special EU Programmes Body. With this funding, South West College, Donegal Youth Service and TIDES Training & Meditation pooled their resources and specialist knowledge to design and create a programme that has seen 635 young people completing so far.

Youthscape's mission is to empower young people with skills for personal development, citizenship and good relations. Participating on the 6-month programme enables them to set personal goals, socialise with peers from different communities, and receive tailored support to address their barriers. Young people can achieve their OCN Level 1 Maths & English & progress onto other course such as Step Up.

The project can support pupils experiencing school avoidance in partnership with the school & family. To date, 62% of young people have been able to rejoin mainstream education or further their education at college or university after completing Youthscape. In addition, 11% have gone into employment, with a further 17% joining another specialist programme (e.g. Employability) to continue the work to help

them achieve their goals. Ongoing independent monitoring by Queens University has found that the benefits of being on Youthscape and similar Peace IV programmes have included increased respect for diversity, a more positive attitude towards minority ethnic groups and other communities, more self-esteem, more resilience and self-awareness, willingness to engage in positive help-seeking behaviours, more civic engagement and participation and support for peacebuilding.

[Youthscape – a Peace IV programme helping young people through unpredicted challenges | South West College](#)

### **StepUp Getting You Into Learning or into Employment**

For 16 and over and eligible to work in NI, a range of flexible, individualised support is now available to help re-engage with skills and education in order to access employment. Step Up provides an opportunity to build confidence, explore career options, build on existing skills, gain qualifications while also benefiting from one-to-one mentorship. Other help includes supported work experience, action planning and careers advice.

The length of time spent on the Project is agreed with the student. The Step Up Programme offers anyone aged 16+ a choice of 4 pathways, designed to meet various employment and training needs. Help is available with Mentoring, Childcare & Travel costs.

#### **PATHWAY 1: COLLEGE CONNECT +**

Designed for those aged 16-24 not in education, employment or training.

**Participants will:** Develop an individual learning plan; receive support up to a Level 1 qualification; receive mentorship & receive free expert 1-2-1 career guidance by SWC Careers Advisors; learn new skills

#### **PATHWAY 2: COLLEGE CONNECT 24+**

Designed for anyone aged 24+ who is unemployed or economically inactive and looking to build their skills to enter employment. This Pathway is designed to give you confidence and to develop skills.

**Participants will:** Develop an individual learning plan; receive mentorship; receive free expert 1-2-1 career guidance by SWC Careers Advisors; learn new skills.

#### **PATHWAY 3: DISABILITY ACTION ROUTE TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT (DARE)**

Designed for anyone aged 16+ who has a disability or is neuro divergent.

**Participants will:** Receive support through mentorship, job coaching and action planning; develop an individual learning plan; receive free expert 1-2-1 career guidance by SWC Careers Advisors; learn new skills

#### **PATHWAY 4: WOMEN RETURNERS ACCESS PROGRAMME (WRAP)**

Designed for women, who are currently unemployed or economically inactive, wishing to return to education to refresh skills, to upskill and to build confidence.

**Participants will:** Receive support through mentorship, job coaching and action planning; develop an individual learning plan; receive free expert 1-2-1 career guidance by SWC Careers Advisors.

Currently there are 2 sessions for women to introduce them gently into the College - Holistic Health & Wellbeing & Craft and Conversation. [Step Up | South West College](#)

### **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 completes a report bimonthly for the WAOG which includes the ongoing work of the LPGs, highlights of 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.

## 5. Update from WAOG

Review of the role of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 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 between the LPG members as to the detail of these suggestions and how they could be collaboratively delivered on, other suggestions which align with priorities were also welcomed.

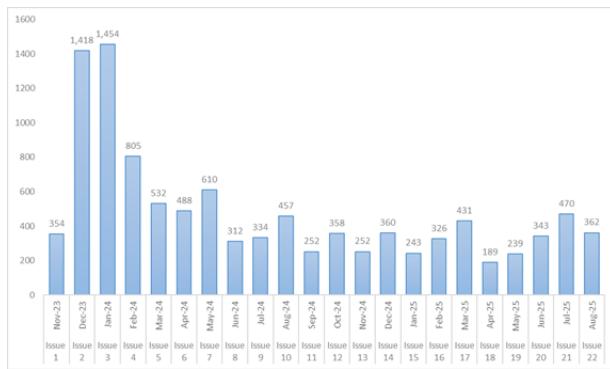
A new suggestion came from Mairead Taggart, Health Improvement, Neighbourhood Renewal. Mairead had previously designed and facilitated collaboratively a School Project called LEAD - Learn Education, Advise and Develop in 2 post primary schools which was very well accepted and had positive outcomes. The LEAD Project targeted Year 8 after consultation with the students (School Council) & staff as to the issues they were experiencing. Collaboratively, it was decided to focus on emotional wellbeing & mental health, bullying, vaping and healthy eating. A full day was set aside to bring local organisations / groups into the school to interactively engage with the students. Both staff and students felt the day was very worthwhile with evaluations from the day very positive.

A long discussion then took place in regard to rolling LEAD out again in the Omagh area and everyone present was in agreement that this was the way they wished to spend the funding from the WAOG utilising the 4 priorities for the focus of the work and involving any LPG member who would like to take part. It was suggested that the Dieticians in Health improvement may wish to take part as well and may contribute a healthy snack.

## 6. Updated Progress on LPG Action Plan

Time was spent reviewing the progress of action within the Omagh LPG Action Plan:

- Number of people who have clicked on the FYI 2024/25 (**Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 4**)



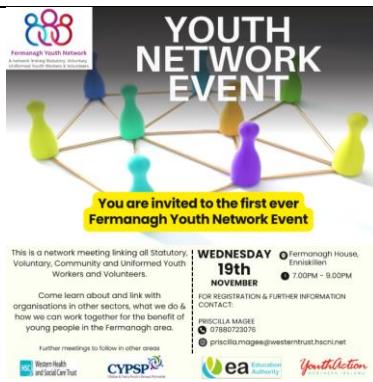
- Emotionally based School Avoidance Parent Peer Group established (**Priority 3 School Avoidance Priority**)



- 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 Priority 2: 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

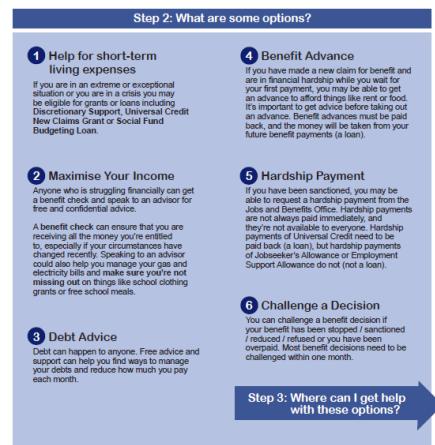
WRAP Programme 2025/26: Fermanagh and Omagh Poverty Support Programme (WRAP) will run from November 2025 - end March 2026 supporting 200 households throughout the District. The programme involves an 8-week programme of bespoke support, including a household energy efficiency assessment, and will be supplemented 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](mailto: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.



## 9. FODC Community Planning Update

There was no update from Community Planning.

## 10. Agreed update for next WAOG

- Sharing of good practice / new initiatives or developments

Good Relations, FODC have run very successful Small World Cafes which are workshops providing a safe space for participants' to meet people from different backgrounds & parts of the world. Also, offered by FODC are sessions for practitioners from the Law Centre in regard to the legal aspects of incomers residing in NI and cultural awareness raising of the Arab culture.

- Unmet need / emerging trends

ERANO who engaged with new-comer families based in Omagh has closed its doors.

## **11. 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 planned for March 2026

## **AOB**

Next Meeting: Omagh LPG, 09.12.25

Health Improvement Equality & Involvement, DBS Office, Western Health & Social Care Trust, Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital, Omagh, BT79 0NS