

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLANNING  
MINUTES OF ANTRIM LOCALITY GROUP**

**TUESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2017 AT 2.00PM  
IN HOMESTART ANTRIM**

<b>Attending:</b>	Mervyn Rea	<i>Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council</i>
	Davina Clements	<i>Family Mediation NI</i>
	Gemma Lutton	<i>CYPSP (Minute Taker)</i>
	Janine Gaston	<i>SACN</i>
	Joanne Cleary	<i>Little Steps Surestart</i>
	Kelly Forsythe	<i>Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council</i>
	Mary O'Connell	<i>Homestart Antrim</i>
	Noel Gallagher	<i>EA NI Youth Service</i>
	Nicola Newbury	<i>Children's Contact Centre</i>
	Pamela Shields	<i>Oasis Antrim</i>
	Sandra Anderson	<i>CYPSP</i>
	Sinead Brady	<i>Empower Project NRC</i>
<b>Apologies:</b>	Clare McFarlane	<i>Start360/NDACT Connections</i>
	John McLeod	<i>NHSCT – MASTS</i>
	Kyle Duncan	<i>Autism NI</i>
	Pamela Davis	<i>SACN</i>
	Petr Zvolsky	<i>NHSCT</i>
	Selena Ramsey	<i>CYPSP</i>
	William Smyth	<i>AYICC</i>

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mervyn welcomed everyone to the meeting today and apologies were noted.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes were agreed as being a true and accurate recording of the previous meeting held on **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017.**

## **MATTERS ARISING**

No matters arising.

## **PRESENTATION – DAVINA CLEMENTS, FAMILY MEDIATION NI**

Mervyn thanked Davina for attending the meeting today and invited Davina to make her presentation to the group.

Family Mediation NI was formed in 2014 with funding from NHSC Board. Family Mediation NI is a provider of impartial, non-judgemental confidential family mediation throughout Northern Ireland. The service is provided to families who have a child under 18 years on a free capacity. The main area of work is for those parents who are separating. Families can self-refer and Davina noted this is a popular option with a lot of referrals being received. Referrals are also coming from court and solicitors.

The separated parent's mediation will cover 4 sessions to look at the situation and Davina provided information on these. Throughout this there are 2 separate opportunities with each partner to explain the process. A contract is set up in the child/children's best interest. Help is given to parents to look at present/future and how to manage and look at co-parenting. This process was explained and Davina noted families can be signposted to other services if required.

Direct Child Consultation is also carried out. Workers will meet with children and parents need to free children up to take part in this. Preparation work will be done with parents and worker will meet with children and feedback. Teenage children very much want to be involved in the process. Mediator specialists are trained in working with children and understand it is important to hear the Childs voice in the process.

Those families coming through court during their separation and receiving legal aid will get the service free of charge. 4 sessions for parents with children under 18 years are also offered free of charge.

Mediators are based throughout NI and sessions will be carried out as close to families as possible. Discussions took place around the service and questions answered by Davina.

For further information Davina can be contacted by emailing [Davina@familymediationni.org.uk](mailto:Davina@familymediationni.org.uk) or on 028 9024 3265.

## **UPDATE – EDUCATION SUBGROUP / COLLECTIVE IMPACT WORKSHOP**

Pamela attended the recent Collective Impact workshop held in Antrim and provided some feedback on this. The main focus of the workshop was to identify how they are going to measure the impact work is having on young people. Another meeting has been arranged.

Sandra provided information on the Botvin Lifeskills Training. The training empowers children to deal with different situations and outcomes of those who take part will be more resilient, have better self-esteem and is a very highly researched programme. For children who have availed of all themes it has been proven that the information stays with them for 12 years after the programme. Some Schools in Antrim will be implementing this programme.

## **FEEDBACK – FAMILY LINKS PROGRAMME**

Sandra provided an update on the 10 week Family Links Nurturing programme currently being delivered to a group within Homestart Antrim. 10 parents are attending the programme. Information of the programme content was shared with topics covering nurturing the parent, empowering the parents, positive discipline, praise, choices/consequences, self-awareness, self-esteem, empathy and appropriate expectations. Each participant receives a puzzle book which they can take away after the programme to reinforce some of the messages and techniques learnt. Feedback from parents verbally has been very positive and the learning and support from other parents is very powerful.

Mary noted it is very encouraging that there are 3 couples attending the programme. Mary runs a family group every Wednesday and would see parents who are also attending the Family Links programme. Parents are building relationships and forming friendships and feedback coming from parents is very positive.

## **UPDATE – FAMILY SUPPORT HUBS**

It was noted lots of referrals are being received for the Antrim area and from Crumlin Integrated School with special needs. There is a lot of pressure currently on the School with a Facebook page set up from an outside source which is negative.

Comments were made in relation to the Family Support Hubs procedure and the feedback from referrals. It was noted there are no discussions at following meetings or anytime on the referrals agencies pick up and no real exit strategy in place. Sandra noted to try and get correspondence from Family Support Hubs or for a representative to attend a future meeting.

**ACTION: Sandra**

## **MEMBER AGENCY UPDATE**

### Mary O'Connell – HomeStart Antrim

Volunteers have received a lot of training and some volunteers have left Homestart Antrim. The family group is very busy and Mums think it's great. The Food Values programme being delivered is in week 2 and Mary has secured funding to deliver more in the next 12 months.

### Noel Gallagher – EA NI

Education Authority is going through a lot of change and staff are returning to posts from secondment. Noel is currently working with all Schools and providing training.

### Janine Gaston – SACN

SACN are finishing delivering programmes and planning for the next year ahead. New training calendar is being released at the end of April. Small grants will be opening on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and closing on 3<sup>rd</sup> May for £1000 projects. Criteria has changed from previous years and new criteria has been added for applications. Janine provided information on community work with some initiatives rolling into April. One evaluation project with the ministry of defence is on-going for 18 months, being delivered to veterans and their families and children. The document should be ready Mid April.

### Pamela Shields – OASIS Antrim

OASIS Antrim work with 3 strands.

- 12-14 year olds disengaged in education.
- 14-16 year olds providing education and reengaging back into education.

- 16-19 year olds who have moved onto education and employment. Group part of youth advisory group. Pamela is linking with PeoplePlus NI for funding.

Women's programme on Thursday morning 'Time for the Girls' have 15 attending. An invite was uploaded to Facebook inviting people to come along. Pamela noted there is the need for a befriending programme. People are isolated and have low self-esteem/confidence. Pamela is looking to put in an application to get funding for this service. The Foodbank has had to move premises. Food is now located in the Elim Church Antrim. Members were asked if they know of premises that are empty to give suggestions.

#### Davina Clements – Family Medication NI

The waiting list is about 8 weeks at present.

#### Sinead Brady – Empower Project

Sinead is continuing to plan activities and workshops and planning provision for April onwards. Sinead is working with the Crumlin Parents Support Group and it is hoped to have a Family Fun Day in Crumlin in April around Autism Awareness Month with a range of activities on offer.

Information was provided on the Autism Expedition in Crumlin Primary School taking place on 29<sup>th</sup> March from 6pm – 7.30pm. All exhibitors will be in one venue for families so they are aware of the services available to help support them. Over 6000 flyers have been printed and Sinead is currently carrying out leaflet drops in local areas and information will also be uploaded to the Empower Facebook page.

#### Kelly Forsythe – Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

Funding is starting to wrap up for the current financial year. Energy Efficiency has closed for applications with the Warmth Scheme being the only one remaining open for referrals. Members were advised if they are working with any families who are living in cold conditions to refer them

to the scheme. Information was provided on Home Safety and it was noted the Home Safety Officer Emma has come across families who have a child with mobility issues. Any organisation can refer into Emma and a home visit will be arranged. Keep Warm packs are available and any organisation can let the Council know where there is a need to give these out in the Antrim & Newtownabbey Council area. There are packs for both children and adults and Kelly provided information on the contents of these. Kelly wants to make more connections with organisations for the Keep Warm packs, more funding has been received from PHA and more packs will be ordered. Kelly will be visiting Foodbanks in a number of areas and attending Antrim Schools meeting.

#### Joanne Cleary – Little Steps Sure Start

Programmes are finishing up for the current financial year. Joanne highlighted new programmes will be running from April – August and the calendar is very busy over the coming months for Little Steps Sure Start.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Nothing noted.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 at 2.00pm in Homestart Office, Antrim.**