Third Sector Forum: Children and Families

Tuesday October 22nd 1-2.30pm

Chair: Helen Davis (WLYAP)

Note taker: Victoria Isbister (VSGWL)

Wilma Murray (COWL) Tracy Kerr (VSGWL) Douglas Guest (Circle)

Caroline Doyle (WLC) Karen Nailen (CAB) Gareth (Broxburn Utd)

Hazel Tyson (Circle) Fiona Brown (WLDAS) Mark Vance (WLDAS)

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Apologies

Helen opened the meeting and Tracy advised that the meeting would be recorded for minute taking purposes. Apologies received, Victoria Isbister (VSGWL), Raymond Branton (Play Works), Dorothy Terhune (NCT) and Zoe Brown (NSPCC).

1. Agency Presentation: Tackling Child Poverty: Caroline Doyle

Please see slides.

Helen thanked Caroline for presentation and asked a question on engagement, reflecting on her local experiences. How do you address barriers for accessing support, such as childcare and travel? Caroline spoke about the reliability and accessibility of transport and the working group who reevaluate and review targeting outreach provision. There has been a recent advertisement for a dedicated advisor who will hopefully be in post in the next couple of months. Child poverty development worker Ainsleigh is working with colleagues in access to employment in addition to working on online resource which details what childcare facilities are available in one central place. Stigma – people don’t want to ask so always working to encourage open dialogues. Frontline staff involved in programme of training including poverty sensitive language training.

1. Action note from previous meeting, actions and matters arising.

Previous minutes agreed as correct.

1. Westspace. Helen updated from mental health operation subgroup. Soft launch of Westspace website did happen end of September at Winchburgh Academy event however it continues to be a big piece of work to fully develop the website. It was decided to develop presentation slides and a pack which can be circulated to all areas.
2. Police consultation – how do people want information, and do they feel included – uncertainty as to what this action was.
3. Circulate Child poverty minutes – completed
4. Interest in forum chair position – nothing received. Helen advised that she is happy to continue in role however her position within WLYAP is uncertain so nominations would be very welcome.
5. Meeting dates 25/26 – sit in middle TSSG – November and February cancelled as agreed. 7/9 people in survey voted for meeting every 2nd month.
6. Circulate details about CMH event – nothing received
7. Feedback from other meetings
8. **Children & Families Strategic Planning Group:** Busy agenda, lots of discussions and presentation from Circle about Fathers project inc pregnancy and post-natal support for families with substance abuse issues.
9. **Alcohol Drug Partnership**: Limited resources within team. Executive committee currently, looking to set up operational group additionally.
10. **Whole Family Approach PSP**: Number of services funded from this with a variety of posts and positions secured until March 2026. Evaluation work to be done.
11. **Community Safety group**: Changes in Council have led to some breakdown in communication between partners. Pathway rebuilding ongoing. Helen is looking ahead to season i.e. fireworks. Email Helen directly with any issues and she can feed into groups.
12. **Food Network**: Over 20 organisations now, some new members joined. Data now being recorded on FORT system. Continuing to look at Sustainability. WLYAP still finding high demand for food as are all members.
13. **Climate Action Group**: Neil and Jocelyn been active in community and holding events.
14. **Child Poverty Steering Group** (Karen, CAB): No recent meetings
15. The Promise (Caroline / Douglas)

Caroline has a new role and will attend meetings when she can. Douglas suggested setting up a meeting and creating an Agenda set by Third sector to move the project along rather than waiting for a meeting date. Helen agreed.

1. Mental Health Oversight Group

Event in Sept Howden Park. No update from Alan re trauma board.

1. Whole Family Wellbeing Fund

18 services funded, review of funding and update from WLC Laura Cain (Social policy) good to see networking between projects. Still no inspection date.

1. Third Sector Strategy Group

Current reps on quarterly Children and Families strategic group are Children’s First, WLYAP and Play Works. Raymond finishes at the end of the year and has nominated Simon Henderson. Nothing raised by members present however should be highlighted to wider forum.

1. Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian
2. **Funding**: Communities and Mental health wellbeing fund Year 4 applications now welcome. Recorded Q&A on website or get in touch with Alan.
3. **Community centre review**: Working with Joint Forum of Councils to discuss situation and share knowledge.
4. **Social media** – Becoming aware of more and more volunteer opportunities on social media. Volunteer Scotland is the most effective place to advertise opportunities, and this can be done with a simple form on VSGWL website. VSGWL do receive volunteer enquiries regularly so if we know we can signpost people, keep us in the loop so we can help you.
5. Tracy attending **Children's Services Network Meeting** in Glasgow Thursday and will feedback anything relevant.
6. Members updates

Helen asked members present for feedback about forum, keen to make any changes to help attendance. Wilma suggested time of year re lack of members present and that has had positive feedback regarding forum. Helen spoke about various staffing issues she was aware of - which is a reason to continue forum meetings. Helen spoke about benefits of the wellbeing event for sector leaders held at the Gateway in June. It was opportunity to share stresses, difficulties and experiences. A second Wellbeing event was held Oct 8th.

1. Date of next meeting: 1-2.30pm \*Hybrid\* at the Gateway: Tuesday December 17th:

Mince pie / cake for anyone attending in person!

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| Circulate Anna’s details and link for posting Org info | Tracy / Helen |
| Guest speaker spring 2025 – Tackling child poverty update | Victoria / Helen |
| Circulate WestSpace Pack when ready – mid to late Nov | Victoria / Helen |
| Interest in forum chair position | All members to Victoria or Helen |
| Forecast 2025 meeting dates | Victoria (done) / Helen |
| Whole Family wellbeing fund slides | Victoria / Helen |
| Children and Families strategic group rep – any objection to Simon Henderson taking over from Raymond? Also open to nominations. | Victoria / Helen |
| PDSP deputy reps – nominations open | All members |
| The Promise meeting | Helen, Caroline, Douglas |
| In work poverty Project update | Karen CAB December |