**Third Sector Forum: Children and Families**

Tuesday June 17th 1pm

Present: Helen Davis (WLYAP), Garry Walker (The Larder), Victoria Isbister (VSGWL), Hazel Tyson (Circle), Angela Douglas (Play Works), Wilma Murray (COWL), Fiona Brown (WLDAS)

Apologies: Zoe Brown (NSPCC), Daisy Drop In, Tracy Kerr (VSGWL)

**Agenda**

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Helen opened the meeting and welcomed those who could attend today.

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

No comments on previous meeting notes. Helen reminded everyone that meeting paperwork is attached to the calendar invite so that it can be easily found prior to meeting. Helen thanked everyone who had sent information to Children services for annual report. West space site is live and ongoing process to update information. Visit [www.westspace.org.uk](http://www.westspace.org.uk) to view the site, feedback / additions are welcomed.

1. **Agency Presentation:** Child poverty co-ordinator, Corinne MacPhee:

corinne.macphee@westlothian.gov.uk

Helen welcomed Corinne to the meeting and advised how forum was made up of network of people with shared interests. Helen spoke about the ongoing concerns around child poverty, referencing the recent report. Members introduced themselves and spoke about the services their organisations provide and how they impact local communities.

WLYAP: Variety of services inc signposting: One of the Partnership Projects it’s Roots set up as CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service) waiting list can be 2 years, so this service fills a gap, providing interventions and support for Children and families.

The Larder: Some services provided: clothing rails, food parcels, community meals, pantries, catalyst kitchen, youth training. Workers are mental health trained. Funding – some services funded only until March. Link in with other projects. Strathbrock and Blackburn café sees families rather than young people. Also hosts Booze free sessions for over 18’s on the last Friday of the month.

Simply play / Playworks: Services include children’s work with and without parents, cooking groups, community garden (grow eat and share), cold immersion therapy. Also a ROOTs partner agency – each org brings expertise to support families through play. Active outdoors i.e. den building etc. Play on the Way new initiative, help school attainment, walking kids to school. Substantial summer programme.

COWL: Peer support groups for young people, secondary school groups termly, young carers champions, primary school worker, ROOTs partner, young adult carer 16-24yrs, adult services run also.

WLDAS: Young persons counsellor (12-18yrs) to work with young people at higher end of spectrum who are getting into difficulties with their substance use. May have home trauma or issues. Wraparound services, partner with WLYAP and Circle, working to upskill people’s knowledge. Grief matters service for anyone who has suffered sudden or unexpected death. Art therapy – traditional talking therapies can be quite difficult for some people, art can help discover emotions. Family matters for families affected by others substance abuse.

Circle: Substance abuse support, family support, wraparound services. Work mainly in family home, identify needs and what would benefit plus break down barriers and provide LLTTF course (Living life to the full) which can build confidence. Encourage parents to access local networks. Also looking at funding and sustainability. Have vouchers and passes.

This was a snapshot of the breadth of services who attend forum. Corinne started in January, post funded by NOLB (No one left Behind) and the base of her role is to understand what is offered within West Lothian then find the gaps. Also to make sure people know about services. Also working on projects inc Children and Families dashboard on council website – pulling together all information. Recently added in link to VSGWL Service locator. Looking for feedback – what would be useful to add to this? Also attends various groups such as Local Employability Partnership and Child Poverty. Corinne said she’s happy for people to reach out to her with queries.

1. **In work poverty project update**: CAB: Karen Nailen: No update received
2. **Feedback from other meetings**
3. Children & Families Strategic Planning group meeting: CHF annual report reflects accurately the work being done in the third sector. Next meeting is June 23rd. Simon (Children’s First), Simon (Play Works), Helen (WLYAP) and Wilma (COWL) will attend which is a good representation of Third sector.
4. Alcohol Drug Partnership: Figure 8 project have a lot of background knowledge of substance use and consultancy and have an evaluation role now reviewing the whole family PSP. This work impacts on a number of agencies . New action plan has been produced for the ADP.
5. Community Safety group: May 13th PDSP. Standard reporting, fire service had major concerns due to the hot weather (fires).

Helen asked if anyone had any concerns? Fiona spoke about attendance at Drug related death Forum yesterday. Thankfully a reduction in numbers from the previous meeting. Police rep also hadn’t reported any out of the norm issues. It was noted there are more young people presenting to GPs with bladder issues (related to ketamine use). Good that there are no alarming spikes currently (referencing bad drugs episode earlier in year). Usual issues across the board - cannabis use is very common – is there complacency and apathy? Different strength of strains. At that age, young people are developing so impact of usage will not be known until they are older.

Corinne asked Helen whether their conversations have impact / promote real change? Helen said maybe not initially, but do once they build relationships. Often speak about budgeting and costs of lifestyle choices and impact on mental health. Benefits of peer support lived experience, were mentioned also SOL the new Aid and Abet project – ex offenders. The Early intervention and prevention subgroup recognises that preventative and education work is not funded enough. Yet tackling this would potentially bring down treatment costs. Gala season – this can bring increased drink levels for teenagers.

1. Food Network: No longer funded by Council which will have an effect on many projects. [West Lothian Food Network – West Lothian Food Network is a registered charity in Scotland No. SC053304](https://westlothianfoodnetwork.org/) Ray and Helen have completed Robertson Trust and Lottery funding applications now bank account open. Will be organising training from Jamie Oliver Ministry of Food – train the trainer.
2. Climate Action Group (Jocelyn): No update. [Welcome - West Lothian Climate Action Network](https://wlcan.scot/)
3. Child Poverty Steering Group: No update.
4. **The Promise (Caroline)**: No update. Helen was at Young Scot awards last night and the Promise was mentioned. [The Promise](https://thepromise.scot/)
5. **Mental Health Oversight Group**: Restructuring and changes. Helen involved in revamp of prevention group. Mapping exercises. Westspace part of this. Lots of resources. June 24th next meeting of the prevention group.
6. **Whole Family Wellbeing Fund**: Numerous projects having an impact around West Lothian. E.g. Kidz Eco who presented at the recent health and Wellbeing conference at Winchburgh Academy, ACT – partner with justice. 1:1 referrals, lower level ASB, lots of 10/11yrs olds. Funding for these projects started at different times, some will have funding ending in March 2026, others a little later but discussions are currently taking place at WFWF meetings to look at the legacy of the work.
7. **Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian: (Victoria)**
* Third Sector Strategy Group forum: July 31st
* Successful volunteer event 2 weeks ago: 3 categories of awards. Lots of social media traction.
* Events and news: Naloxone Training June 23rd: [Events from 23 June – 25 June](https://www.voluntarysectorgateway.org/events/): Feedback given on benefit of event. Discussion around needles (needlestick concerns) or nasal spray (not as fast working yet easy to dispense). Sometimes 1 kit might not work due to the synthetic nature of drugs, 2 or 3 kits may be needed. WLDAS can dispose of out of dated kits and sharps bins can be supplied at request.
* [Homepage - VSGWL Locator](https://westlothianlocator.org/)
1. **Members updates**
* Check out member websites for summer activities. Funding was dispensed throughout groups in West Lothian who applied through W.L. Council’s Summer funding for Children and Families.
* Gingerbread support: [Home | Gingerbread](https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/)

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| August 19th | Amy Campbell TBC | YGAM – free training for staff working with children and young people  |
| October 14th | Tess Hamilton TBC | HMP Addiewell |
| December 16th |  |  |

**Actions**

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| Helen will follow up on the West Space resources and send on once received | Helen |
| Connect with Tess at Addiewell to arrange agency presentation at future meeting.  | Victoria |
| Feedback to Corinne on CHF dashboard – what do you think should be included | Direct |
| Invite Corinne to future meetings (Completed) |  Victoria |