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| **North Locality Local Alliance Group Meeting**  **Minutes**  **7 June 2023**  **at 10am held as a Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting** |
| **Meeting attendees:** |
| **Chair**: Kath Saunders (KS), Head of Locality & Strategy, North Locality  **Attendees**: Liz Scott (LS), Family Link Worker (CCP); Stuart Gosney (SG), Team Manager, Education & Early Help, North Locality; Lauren Thomas (LT) Clinical Lead, REACH; Nicola Blair (NB), Business Manager, Libraries & Engagement; Karen Johnson (KJ), Social Prescriber, Gillingham Medical Practice; Zoe Monaghan (ZM), Service Manager, Social Care, North Locality; Samantha Craig (SC), Inclusion Lead, North Locality; Cllr Carole Jones (CJ), Elected Member; Karen Wrixon (KW), Headteacher, William Barnes Primary School; Jamie Keast (JK), Support Co-Ordinator, Homestart Blackmore Vale  **Minutes**: Alice Ellis (AE), North Locality Business Support Team |
| **Apologies:** |
| Cllr Jane Somper, Elected Member; Paul Mattocks, Assistant Headteacher/DSL, Sturminster Newton High School; Amanda Conolly, Service Manager, Education & Early Help, North Locality; Cllr Pauline Batstone, Elected Member; Verena Cooper, Innovation and Development Lead, The Blackmore Vale Partnership |

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| **No.** | **Actions** |  |
| 2.1 | Send list of those attendees requiring access to the Teams site to KS | **AE** |
| 2.2 | Speak to Alice Deacon reference request for job/role description for Chair | **KS** |
| 4 | Email Amanda Conolly or northlocality@dorsetcouncil/gov.uk with updates or information if you can’t attend the next Mental Health Working Group | **ALL** |
| 4 | Add ‘Priorities/Working Groups Stock Take’ to agenda for the next meeting | **AE** |
| 5 | Make contact with the Digital Team and Holly Loxton ref attending next Poverty Working Group. | **SC** |
| 5 | Make request for LS to be sent sign-on forms to access the Partnership Site | **AE** |
| 7 | Partnership Event summary document to be shared on LAG Hub | **AE** |
| 7 | LAG to work up an action plan or feed into the current action plan reference items raised at the Partnership Event | **ALL** |
| 7 | Future Partnership Event discussion to be added to the September agenda | **AE** |
| 8 | Can LAG Funding be used cross border – question to be asked of other LAG Chairs and Alice Deacon | **KS** |
| 8 | Link to site/LAG funding form to be shared on LAG Hub. | **AE** |
| 10 | Circulate copy of new CYP and Families Plan when available | **AE** |
| 10 | Link to Libraries Strategy to be shared in North LAG channel of the LAG Hub | **AE** |
| 10 | Share SEND survey link on North LAG channel of LAG Hub | **AE** |
| 10 | Rebecca Watson, Family Hubs Project Manager to be invited to September meeting | **AE** |
| 10 | Family Hubs presentation to be shared on North LAG channel of the LAG Hub | **AE** |

| **No** | **Item Minutes** |
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| **1** | **Welcome, apologies and introductions** |
| **2** | **Minutes of last meeting and actions** |
| **2.1** | 2.1 - Add members to the LAG Teams site – KS asked those attendees who didn’t have access to the Teams site, to pop a message in the chat for the meeting so that access could be granted. AE shared the link to the site for the attendees to try and access. ACTION: AE to check all attendees have access and request this if required. |
| **2.2** | 3 - Chair and Vice Chair needed for the group – Alice Deacon (Head of Locality, Chesil) was now leading on LAG activity for Children’s Services. CJ asked if she could be sent a job/role description for the Chair so that it could be shared on social media. ACTION: KS to speak with Alice Deacon to see if this would be possible. |
| **2.3** | 6 - Circulate date of next Mental Health Working Group meetings – Meeting held on 16 May 2023. An invitation for the next working group would be sent – July 2023 |
| **2.4** | 9 - Date to be found for combined Partnership Event and LAG Meeting – Event took place on 29 March 2023 |
| **3** | **Chair and Vice Chair Updates**  KS is currently holding the role of Chair, but the LAG should be independently chaired. The North LAG is the only one in Dorset which isn’t independently chaired. KS hasn’t been able to give the LAG the time it needs to move forward as quickly as we would like. KS advised that she has approached some individuals. Cllr Batstone is vice chair but other commitments mean she hasn’t been able to attend as much as she would like – and is keen for other members to volunteer!  A video is being produced which can be shared on social media to try and generate some interest.  The LAG should be about turning words into actions.  Please let know KS or AE know of any new contacts for the LAG. |
| **4** | **Mental Health Working Group Update (Stuart Gosney on behalf of Amanda Conolly)**  Meeting held on 16 May 2023 with a small attendance. The group needs a greater attendance to ensure traction. Many of the actions are in progress or have been completed. Attendance at the Rural Mental Health Meeting Group is now in place and the CAMHS CYP Pathway Workshops are underway with Claire Shiels and other representatives. A meeting invite will be sent out for a further working group at the end of July. ACTION: Please email Amanda Conolly or northlocality@dorsetcouncil/gov.uk with updates or information if you can’t attend.  KS advised that a stock take of the priorities and working groups will be added as an agenda item for the September meeting. ACTION: Add ‘Priorities/Working Groups Stock Take’ to agenda for the next meeting. |
| **5** | **Poverty Working Group Update (Sam Craig)**  SC had a conversation with Sam Wilton reference the meeting which took place in April which mainly focused on food poverty and the need to link up with all the foodbanks/larders etc.  Next meeting is due to take place on 20 July 2023. Will need to look at the lack of and cost of transport and the impact this has on social isolation.  Need to make some further links in the Sherborne area.  Families can’t always afford to have internet access and this is having a big impact on accessing services. CJ advised that the Vale Pantry have some Vodafone mobile phone sim cards still available that could be used if required. KW asked if those on benefits are entitled to a reduced rate on internet costs etc? SC responded ‘Yes’, but it’s knowing what, where and when.  The Household Support Fund is still available and doesn’t have to be accessed through Citizen’s Advice.  NB advised that the public are not aware of the Dorset Digital Doorway Offer. Could the Digital Team have a presence at the LAG or this working group? ACTION: SC to reach out to the Digital Team and Holly Loxton ref attending next working group. NB to contact SC about sharing the information with schools.  CJ advised that the Vale Pantry have a number of dedicated Citizens Advice appointments which can be used if required.  CJ added that the ‘larder services’ in the area aren’t having much of an impact at present.  CJ highlighted that parents sometimes just need funds to put fuel in their car.  CJ reported that there was a good meeting held with Sovereign Housing and they also have a digital support offer, plus there is some funding for Sovereign Housing clients.  LS asked to be added to the Partnership Site and LAG Hub so that she can access/find/share all information. ACTIONS: AE to request that the necessary sign-on forms for the Partnership Site are sent to LS. KS recommended contacting northlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk if specific information was required.  CJ asked if there was a ‘chat’ function in Teams which the LAG could use. The North LAG channel in the LAG Hub Team can be used for conversations and sharing of information. AE suggested that links to the minutes and agendas are shared in the channel to encourage use. |
| **6** | **Teenagers at risk of Exploitation Working Group Update (Zoe Monaghan)**  Currently working on a couple of projects. SG and Inclusion are trying to bring together schools where students are being impacted by adults of concern who are crossing school areas and targeting vulnerable children and young people (CYP). This piece of work is in the early stages.  Cross border work needs to be improved with links in Wiltshire and Somerset. We need to be able to map what is going on for our CYP. Some funding has been identified through Future Roots to do more formal networking with Wiltshire and Somerset. Kelvin Connelly [Service Managing – safeguarding in education] has been trying to make links across the county. Would welcome volunteers and attendees for a networking group.  This is a live and key issue for North. Any information partners can share is useful. A date for the next meeting will be circulated. |
| **7** | **Partnership Event Feedback (Stuart Gosney)**  This event was about networking, coming together and meeting new faces and services. Took some time to look at each town and identify the good and the ‘even better if’ in terms of services and support for CYP. This piece of work had already been completed within the North Locality Team (Dorset Council) but it was important to see if partners thought differently and be able to identify what service could be brought alongside to support.  ACTION: Summary document to be shared.  There are common themes across all the towns. How do we support/manage them? The LAG needs to take ownership and make links to combat some of the issues raised. ACTION: LAG to work up an action plan or feed into the current action plan.  The question of whether a similar event is held but open it up to families was asked. This would need to be held in each town (reference above issues with transport). The Library in Gillingham was a brilliant space to use, but there weren’t people from the Sherborne area. KS thought it would be good to do something before Christmas to keep the momentum going. Perhaps 2 events a year. The drop in style was more helpful. Will need help with finding venues. ACTION: Add to September agenda for further discussion. |
| **8** | **LAG Inclusion Fund - £100,000 (attachment circulated prior to the meeting)**  We recognise as a Local Authority that attendance is a key issue. Post pandemic it has become even more of an issue, attendance has taken a dip. This funding is to enable work around belonging, helping CYP and families to feel a sense of belonging. It is available from the early years right through to post 16. Embedding good attendance in the early years is vital for establishing great attendance throughout a child’s educational journey.  A central workshop was being held today, Amanda Conolly is attending.  KS asked for requests relating to innovative and creative projects. School shaped provision is not always right for every child. More children are home educated. Concerns that families feel this is the only choice. We need to understand why this is and what would it take to get a child back into school. SC added that there is a gap that needs to be filled. What have partners heard about different schools? What is on social media isn’t always the case.  CJ asked what is certified as alternative provision as there are some great provisions however families can’t afford the transport to an alternative provision. There is further work happening within Dorset Council to refine the offer around alternative provision and this will be shared with LAG members in due course.  This funding is not about paying staff in schools, it’s about trying something different and thinking outside the box. This is an opportunity to pilot ideas, it’s not a long-term sustainable fund. If it’s a schools bid, ideally there needs to be community involvement.  The sign-off of the funding should be made by the Head of Locality (KS) and the LAG Chair. KS can’t do both, this makes it even more important to find a LAG Chair. KS advised that she would like SG to be involved as he understands the needs around inclusion.  KJ asked if the funding could be used for cross border work, especially in Gillingham. ACTION: KS to ask question of other LAG Chairs and Alice Deacon as this funding is for Dorset children.  Need a sub-meeting before the end of term. KS made a request for volunteers to attend and asked Dorset Council colleagues to spread the word.  AE advised that the online request for funding form was now available on the Partnership Site. These was also a link to the reporting form which would need to be completed once the funding is used. ACTION: Link to site/form to be shared on LAG Hub. |
| **9** | **Dates of Future Meetings**  Wed 20th September 23 – 1.30pm - 3pm  Wed 29th Nov 23 - 1.30 - 3pm - in person – possible full partnership event Wed 20th March 24 – 10am – 11.30am  Wed 12th June 24 – 10am – 11.30am |
| **10** | **AOB**  KS asked if there were any updates from partners.  LT – REACH are currently going through a tender process. New service will be from 1 November.  From January 23, REACH have received funding to target the North Locality as little to no referrals had been received. Since carrying out this targeted work the referral rates have soared. Schools don’t want to be seen as having a drug problem. Once it is known that REACH is a free service with a 2-week waiting list then referrals start rolling in.  Recently supported an incident in Shaftesbury and have supported all students in Gillingham School. Have education pathways available whereby CYP can complete L2 and L3 courses.  CJ commented that it seems adults can only have REACH support and not wrap around support from other services at the same time. Is that the same with CYP? LT advised that it’s a chicken and egg situation, is it mental health leading to substance misuse or substance misuse leading to mental health? The service does need to be more inclusive and will cover mental health in the future. LT confirmed that the service do attend Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings when requested/required.  KS added that Early Help is everyone’s business. A TAF is crucial to bring together support and they don’t need to be administered by Dorset Council. A family can request a TAF with any professionals and any professional can instigate a TAF.    KS advised that the new CYP and Families Plan has just been signed off. It is a 10-year plan which has come through the Strategic Alliance which is fed by all the LAGs. ACTION: Circulate copy when available.  NB – Libraries have just published proposals reference the new strategy for 2023 to 2033. NB encouraged attendees to look and give feedback. The plan is with the Overview Committee and will expect Cabinet sign off in July. ACTION: Link to be shared in North LAG channel of the LAG Hub  KS advised that the Parent Carer Survey for SEND was open until 26 June 2023 and encouraged those present to share it. ACTION: Share survey link on North LAG channel of LAG Hub.  KS gave a quick update on Family Hubs. The North are due to be the next area and there was a meeting taking place at the end of the week. There was a new Project Manager, Rebecca Watson. ACTION: Rebecca Watson to be invited to September meeting. KS described the Family Hub concept. ACTION: Presentation to be shared on the North LAG channel of the LAG Hub.  KW asked if she could invite the new Revd Mary Gubbins (Sturminster Newton Benefice) to the next meeting. This was agreed. |