

**EAST AYRSHIRE COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP
OFFICER LOCALITY GROUP CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE-TUESDAY 26
JANUARY 2010
COMMITTEE- MONDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2010**

THE INVOLVEMENT OF INDEPENDENT SECTOR PROVIDERS

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 *For Scotland's Children* (Scottish Executive 2001) encouraged children's services to be viewed as a single integrated system based on the development of local models for translating strategic, integrated working into multi agency delivery.
- 1.2 To facilitate the involvement of the independent sector, an annual conference was held and at a later stage a Children's Services Provider Forum established.
- 1.3 Evaluations confirmed that the annual conferences were well received; however, attendance levels and some anecdotal evidence suggested that the Service Provider Forum did not manage to meet the needs of all constituent organisations and the Forum ceased operation around 2007.
- 1.4 Involvement with providers continued through commissioning / Service Level Agreement arrangements. Early Education and Childcare providers were also connected to children's service planning through the Childcare Partnership established in 1999. The Early Years Framework (SG December 2008) and Community Health Partnership arrangements superseded this and the Childcare Partnership was formally wound up in June 2009.

2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 Independent sector providers continue to be connected to planning processes through Service level Agreement arrangements. A number of peer Forums also operate and Officers attending these maintain a two way flow of information and in some cases provide a secretariat function.
- 2.2. However service providers, in particular Early Education and Childcare, have expressed concern at what they perceive to be a lack of direct representation in the planning structure and process.
- 2.3 The Principal Officer Children and Young People convened a meeting of providers to discuss this matter on the 14 October 2009, the minute is attached for information and the main points are summarised below.
 - Providers strive to keep abreast of current policy and planning but can find it difficult to easily locate the relevant information;

- Some providers have experienced duplication in consultation / information gathering;
- Securing representation is a concern in terms of both the number and diversity of providers and the demands on individual organisations;
- Establishing and maintaining a communication loop is critical but can be time consuming;
- In terms of the Officer Locality Group gathering information from providers, consideration could be given to building this into SLA's;
- A Voluntary Sector Provider Forum to meet twice or three times per year may support a two way flow of information between providers and the Officer Locality Group and also provide an opportunity for providers to share Best Practice.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 Below are three proposals for the Officer Locality Group to consider. Although the models are presented for Officer Locality Group consideration they are potentially equally relevant to the Child Protection Committee.

3.1.1 PROPOSAL 1

The development of an Independent Sector Children's Services Provider Open Forum

Membership:

Open to all local and national independent sector childcare providers operating across East Ayrshire.

Meetings:

2/3 per year

Terms of reference:

Given that this could be a large group with some areas of commonality but some discrete issues, terms of reference could most usefully focus on information sharing from the Officer Locality Group to the Forum and vice versus but also amongst Forum members themselves.

Issues:

With a potentially large group, consideration would need to be given to who would provide a secretariat function to the Forum and the subsequent time/workload commitment and how the nominated officer would be connected to the Officer Locality Group. Timing of Forum meetings to fit in to the Officer Locality Group and Sub group cycle would facilitate information sharing. Costs of venues and any hospitality would probably need to be met by the Officer Locality Group. A decision would require to be made regarding distribution of Officer Locality Group and sub group minutes to the Forum.

3.1.2 PROPOSAL 2**The development of an Independent Sector Children Service Provider Forum comprising of elected representatives from provider groupings/communities of interest.****Membership;**

In considering the possible constituent membership of a Forum in relation to the Officer Locality Group and its sub groups, a number of provider groupings/communities of interest could be built around the undernoted.

Early Years Early Intervention Sub Group – community of interest would include the Early Years Forum, Out of school Care Network, Daycarers, Childminding Forum and independent play and leisure providers.

The GRIFEC (IAF) community of interest may include Youth Advocacy Services, Befriending, Who Cares, Action for Children, Blue Triangle, Young Carers, Hansel Alliance, Enable, Capability Scotland, Cornerstone Care, young people's addictions services etc.

Corporate Parenting community of interest – Fostering and Adoption Forum

Young People community of interest – Yipwrold.com, the Zone, North West Youth Project, SACRO, Wise group and other youth training / employment services and perhaps uniformed organisations etc.

The examples above are not exhaustive and care would need to be taken to ensure all potentially interested providers were made aware of the Forum and how to have their views represented.

Each community of interest could be supported to elect one or two members to represent them on the Forum. Including one representative from each sub group, this would create a Forum of around 12 members. This smaller Forum may allow for more in depth discussion of children's service planning issues. A forum such as this may be also be able to take on other duties such as organising an annual event.

Meetings:

2/3 times per year to fit in with the Officer Locality Group and sub group meeting cycle.

Terms of reference:

These would require to be very clear to ensure members had their constituent organisations mandate and that feedback was made to all constituent groups and not just representatives own organisations.

Issues:

Support would be required to assist communities of interest to elect representatives. In addition, the issues of the secretariat function, timing of meetings, minutes and venue costs as described at proposal 1 would also apply.

3.1.3 PROPOSAL 3

The Officer Locality Group to remit each of the sub groups to identify their community of interest and make appropriate arrangements for representation/ consultation.

Some suggestions include:

Each community of interest to elect a representative to sit on the relevant sub group;

Sub groups to meet with their entire community of interest once or twice per year;

Any other arrangements agreed to meet the needs of the sub group and the community of interest.

Issues:

The issues of secretariat support, meeting timings, minutes and venue costs as described at proposal 1 would also apply here.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Whichever model is agreed there are issues for consideration:

- Secretariat
- Communal/diversity of interest
- Representation
- Timing of meetings
- Clarity of purpose

- 4.2 Models 1 and 2 offer the opportunity for 'Forums' to develop into constituted bodies. Model 3 integrates Providers into current arrangements.
- 4.3 An inclusive way forward would be for the children's services seminar to have as one of its objectives discussion and agreement in respect of the proposed models. All three models could be presented to a workshop for the independent sector.
- 4.4 This report will initially be considered and discussed by the OLG Children and Young People on 26th January thereafter the chair of the OLG will update CHP committee members on progress at the meeting on 1st February.

KAY GILMOUR
HEAD OF SERVICE: COMMUNITY SUPPORT

15 JANUARY 2010

**East Ayrshire Council
Consultation with Independent Organisations
Note of Meeting**

**Elmbank Drive, Meeting Room,
Wednesday 14th October 2009 at 10.00am**

In Attendance

(See attached invite/attendee list)

	ITEM	ACTION
1.0	Welcome and Introductions - Purpose of Meeting	
	To consider ways in which East Ayrshire children and young peoples partnership planning structures can better involve the independent sector in meaningful discussion and engagement as part of the planning processes.	
2.0	Overview of Children and Young Peoples Service Plan and Decision Making Structures	
2.1	<p>Jim Lyon (Chairperson) presented an overview of the Children and Young Peoples Service Plan 2008/11 (distributed prior to the meeting). Also the Community Health Partnership arrangements including an overview of the planning and decision making officer group processes.</p> <p>A debate then followed as to how best organisations can be involved or kept informed of planning decisions such as the local GIRFEC agenda and the rollout of IAF, Early Years and Corporate Parenting. A summary of the discussion is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the key organisations keep abreast of all local authority children' services plans so that they can provide and design services in line with the local area needs and objectives. However, it was suggested that it would be beneficial to receive information such as the Children's Service Plan (or a summarised version) and CHP meetings as some found it difficult to find these on the internet. • There were also resource issues for organisations to attend meetings. Also that there were too many organisations to attend the planning groups (including that of other organisations across the East Ayrshire area) many with complex funding streams. • Some groups for example children with learning disability the planning group had been running for a lengthy period of time and key areas of work had not been concluded. Therefore it was unclear what had been done with the issues raised as there had 	

	been limited feedback to date.	
3.0	Continuous Opportunities for Gathering and Sharing (G.O.G.S.)	
3.1	The C.O.G.S. framework was distributed prior to the meeting. Dorothy McAvoy provided a brief overview on the background of C.O.G.S. and the levels in which consultation views are recorded at each stage in the framework.	
	ITEM	ACTION
3.1	<p>There will be awareness sessions to provide information on the model and processes for collating views and feeding back. Initially those organisations which have accessed the sessions will be asked after 3 months to submit collated children's views. Dialogue Youth and Early Education and Childcare will draw these together into a report under the headings of the priorities of the Children and Young Person's Representative Forum. The report will go to the Forum and to the Officer Locality Group which will consider the views which are not the Forum's priorities</p> <p>Both the Forum and the OLG will also feedback to organisations which have contributed views. A summary of the discussion is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of organisations as part of their agreed service level contract have arrangements in place to directly feedback the views of children to the commissioning service. • There were some concerns that C.O.G.S. does not represent best practice in terms of youth advocacy services which support children and young people to express their views themselves rather than through a known and trusted adult. • Organisations which are registered with the Care Commission through compliance with national care standards already gather a significant amount of service user views. 	
	Action: Meeting to be arranged with Youth Advocacy Services to discuss COGS	Dorothy McAvoy
4.0	Consultation with Voluntary Organisations – Developing Proposals	
4.1	<p>In order to develop a set of proposals the key areas require to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable organisations to have easier access information filters on the website for example the Children's Service Plan and the CHP papers. • Avoid duplication of consultation / views gathering processes. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation and the levels of time required (size and demand of individual organisations) • Ensure the feedback loop is followed through - feedback very important but can be time consuming. • Consider the current service level arrangements for example Advocacy if already providing information to meet their contractual obligations. • Introduction of a voluntary provider's forum (to meet bi-annually) would enable an opportunity to share Best Practice and information relating to partnership planning. However, ensure that all providers have an open opportunity to attend the forum for example Carers Centre. 	
	ITEM	ACTION
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further meeting of independent sector providers to consider a mechanism for direct representation on planning groups. 	
	Action: A report on the meeting and the next steps to be prepared for the next meeting of the OLG in January.	Dorothy McAvoy
	ITEM	ACTION
5.0	Papers Circulated prior to meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrated Children and Young Peoples Service Plan 2008/2011 ▪ Continuous Opportunities for Gathering and Sharing (C.O.G.S.) 	
6.0	Future meeting dates:	TBC