

**Regional Facilities for Children and Young People Stakeholder Reference  
Group Meeting**

**Thursday 16 January 2020, 2pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Declan McGeown	Chief Exec., Youth Justice Agency, DoJ (Co-Chair)
	Eilís McDaniel	Director of Family & Children's Policy, DoH (Co-Chair)
	Joan O'Hara	Programme Manager, Regional Facilities Prog Team
	Fiona Lennon	Regional Facilities Prog. Team
	Deborah Boardman	Regional Facilities Prog. Team
	Alicia Toal	VOYPIC
	Caroline Rutherford	Extern
	Stanley Booth	Mindwise
	Charlie McAuley	Mindwise
	Eamonn McNally	Children's Law Centre
	Iain Black	VOYPIC
	Judith Brunt	HSCB
	Kerry Malone	BASW
	Michael Burns	DoH
	Marian O'Rourke	NISCC
	Paula Rodgers	Include Youth
	Peter Reynolds	NIGALA
	Ronan McGinley	Start 360
	Teresa McAllister	SBNI
	Tom Teggart	DoH
 <b>Apologies:</b>	Colm Walsh	QUB
	Maurice Leeson	HSCB
	Paul Millar	Barnardos
	Sara Donnelly Clegg	NIHRC
	Tracey Gillen	NIACRO
	Vivian McConvey	PCC

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Declan McGeown welcomed members to the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Stakeholder Reference Group and introduced Marian O'Rourke as the new NISCC representative and Iain Black VOYPIC who was present to co-present at agenda item 5. Apologies were noted.

### **2. Minutes of last meeting and actions arising**

The minutes of the last meeting on 7 November 2019 were agreed and Declan provided an update on the action points arising. One action point in relation to an update on international models of best practice remained outstanding from 12 August meeting. BASW advised this was to be raised at National Committee level. It was agreed this action point would be carried forward to the next meeting and that the Programme Team would follow up.

### **3. Programme update and service design proposals**

Joan O'Hara provided the group with an update on the current programme position which is nearing the end of Phase 1. Joan advised that the draft service design proposals will be presented to the Programme Board at the next meeting on 27 January for final sign off. Following which, due to the cross cutting nature of the project, the Programme Team will seek approval from both the Health and Justice Ministers, the Health and Justice Committees and the Executive. It is anticipated that these proposals will form the basis of a public consultation in spring this year. Joan also gave assurance that the proposals and consultation would take in views from children and young people. Declan thanked the Programme Team for their work in taking forward this challenging role and invited members to put forward any comments. The need for a future plan to engage with children and young people and their families was raised and Declan agreed that this was vital in the programme going forward and advised that the Programme Team would ensure that all key stakeholders including children, young people and families would be engaged and consulted with so that their voice could be heard.

#### **4. Update on engagement with children and young people**

Declan McGeown invited Alicia Toal to present on the Review of Regional Facilities- Youth Consultation Report which was circulated to members. Alicia provided an overview of the report which was based on data collated by Dr Colm Walsh from a series of focus groups and interviews with children with experience of Lakewood and/or Woodlands between October and December 2019. Alicia advised that 34 young people aged 13-21 took part with 38% having experience in JJC only, 44% in Lakewood only and 18% in both Lakewood and JJC. In presenting the findings of the report Alicia highlighted the following key points;

- **General perceptions of integration**

While some comments were positive both young people and parents expressed reservations relating to the rationale, mechanics of operation and staffing. Also more clarity was required regarding proposed integration on the site.

- **Population in the new facility**

While a tiered system was welcomed with privileges at opposite ends, there was no consensus on how this should be differentiated, however age and/or need were most commonly cited.

- **Prevention**

Most participants felt their placements could have been prevented at an earlier stage, with family support, mediation, care staff, substance abuse and mental health services and good relationships considered key.

- **Relationships**

The importance of good relationships, consistency and feeling of security at all stages and spaces was a common theme.

- **Panel**

The introduction of a Multi-Agency Panel was generally perceived as positive giving an opportunity for young people to have their voice heard and understand the process.

- **Step Down**

As preparing to leave secure accommodation was considered a significant issue ranging from relationship continuity to basic needs such as mental

health, addictions and education services, a step down approach was welcomed.

Declan McGeown and Eilis McDaniel thanked both Alicia and Colm for their work in producing this high quality and insightful document and it was agreed that the Programme Team would further consider the involvement of children and young people including the inclusion of a child friendly document in the forthcoming consultation process.

Stanley Booth advised that Mindwise was currently undertaking an audit on their project which provides support for children and young people post custody and it was agreed that once complete he would share the findings with this group.

**Action: Stanley Booth**

Discussion took place with regard to early intervention, services required to address transitional relationships and the importance of joined-up integrated community services in the wider system of change. The integration of services and importance of stability and safety were highlighted. It was agreed that a focus on trauma informed practice and associated training for care workers would work to help alleviate pressures on the care system; in addition to facilitating a better understanding of the care and support required by the children and young people.

Paula Rodgers suggested that the inclusion of a case story to chart the pathway of a young person through the Campus be included as part of the consultation process and it was agreed that the Programme Team would take this into consideration in development of consultation documentation and resources.

**Action: Programme Team**

**5. Update from Independent Chair of the interim Multi Agency Regional Panel**

Judith Brunt and Iain Black presented an update on the operation of the interim multi-agency regional panel for admissions to Lakewood including an overview of the advocacy process. The presentation was based on information collected over 4 months from the establishment of the Panel in September to December 2019. Judith advised that since the formation of the panel the number of panels held had decreased with 10 planned and 4 emergency panels over the 4 month period. Of

the 14 children referred for admission 11 met the criteria for admission and 3 did not. Judith confirmed that there was no unmet need in the October- December period. Iain gave an update on the new advocacy process protocol in place between VOYPIC and the Panel. Iain advised that of the 14 young people presented to the panel only one refused advocacy but later requested support in Lakewood and 2 chose to attend the panel along with advocate. In summing up the following positive outcomes of the panel were highlighted:

- Greater scrutiny on applications and more appropriate use of bed space;
- Integrating of signs of safety approach;
- Early involvement of young person encouraging engagement;
- Early intervention and multi-agency working prevent young people coming to panel; and
- Use of LAC review process and fortnightly panel meetings leading to more planned admissions as opposed to emergency admissions.

Consistency of support packages, e.g. CAMHS/DAMHS, specialist support in secure care and robust exit planning including a step down facility was discussed and were put forward as further options to help support the work of the panel.

Declan thanked Judith and Iain for their presentation and invited comments from the group. Discussion took place regarding the importance of edge of secure care services including the need for meaningful and prescriptive care planning aligning with the framework for integrated therapeutic care and the implementation of detailed multi-agency influenced exit plans for all children and young people. It was suggested that all young people in residential care would have a therapeutic plan which would travel with them and would be adjusted should they move into secure care.

Caroline Rutherford urged caution regarding existing pressures within the provision of voluntary and community sector community based services when a secure bed is not available and the growing need for services for children and young people with ever increasing complex needs. Declan advised that this would be noted for consideration.

## **6. Update on integrated therapeutic framework for looked after children**

Tom Teggart and Michael Burns presented their paper on the Framework for Integrated Therapeutic Care for looked after children which was circulated to the group. Tom advised that the Framework is based on the understanding that all experiences impact upon a child's physical, emotional and social development. The Framework is comprised of systems or organisational commitments and specific delivery approaches with the component parts of the Framework detailed in the paper circulated.

Discussion on these component parts continued and Michael noted that it is their intention to develop standards for each of the domains including associated key deliverables and outcomes evaluation by the end of the year.

Declan thanked Tom and Michael for their work on producing this framework and invited comments from the group.

Stanley Booth noted his support for the introduction of the Framework; however, raised concerns regarding long term support and intervention. Discussion took place regarding possible dependency issues and the point of disengagement. It was agreed that while further discussion is required to look at transition into adult services, gathering evidence of what works and looking at impact and outcomes in wider terms will influence change and improvement of practices.

Kerry Malone stated that the BASW perspective was that this would impact on the professional and that it should align with the work being carried out with the workforce strategy.

## **7. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that due to the St Patrick's Day holiday, the date of the next meeting, which was due to be held on 16 March, would be rescheduled. As a result the next

meeting will now be held on **Monday 9 March at 9.30am in D2 Lecture Theatre Castle Buildings.**

#### **8. AOB**

Paula Rodgers stated that the establishment of a new Assembly will act as a good opportunity to move forward and asked how would the work be progressed. Declan confirmed that now that Ministers are in place this will provide the necessary oversight for decision making in respect of the next phase of the project and the establishment of the Campus. Eilis McDaniel suggested that it would be a positive signal to have joint presence at both the Justice and Health Committees and would also provide a level of certainty for the future development of the Campus.