

Clackmannanshire Children and Families Forum

December 8, 2016

Notes

Present: Anthea Coulter, Liz Rowlett – CTSI, Dave Budd – Volunteering Matters, Jo McCorrison – Central Carers, Maria Brownhill – Play Alloa, Wilma Wallace – Home-Start

The following issues were highlighted during discussions

Befriending

Play Alloa (PA) considered a befriending service and has some funding to pilot it 1:1 befriending. However, volunteers are wary and young people don't want 1:1 as it's what they get already. They prefer opportunities to be more social.

PA has a buddies group and a list of events that happens every week. They don't brand people with polo shirts and lanyards. Youth clubs and befriending has been the most successful shift they have made.

PA came to end of third sector intervention fund last March but have renewed with Children in Need. BIG has changed so they can't apply for continuation as you can only have two grants in a row.

Adult group meets Monday nights.

They have 142 families on their books but not enough staff

Dave Budd goes to the SVE Children and Families Forum. Volunteering Matters befriending project is not the same as PA's. He doesn't want to recreate something which already exists. He thought there would be more joint working in Clacks.

Joint working

Regarding funding, organisations are not applying together. Previously, in another post, Dave has joined with other organisations to put in joint bids.

People in Clacks are becoming less precious about their own services. Things have changed over the past five years. People aren't looking for funding together because of concerns about information sharing.

Organisations are small and have to cherry pick but staff are resilient

Looked After Children

There is a Looked After Children Group meeting scheduled for December 9. We need to push the message that we are all working together. Clacks Council elected members want a response to the high numbers of looked after children as it is the third highest in Scotland. There was a spike in 2008 that has never come down. Council are trying to find out why this is.

There is confusion about why children are accommodated. Home-Start works with children to prevent them from being accommodated but there are children that do need to be looked after and this constantly needs ironing out. Volunteering Matters could really help here.

VM has contacted social services in Clacks to look for support for their project.

Wilma has asked Anne Pearson to visit to see what they do but so far has had no response, although the Council has problems. The children and disabilities team is rebuilding.

There is a carers support group.

We could approach the council as a collective so that officers can come and see how the sector operates.

PA has contacted the Care Inspectorate to set up another group. They are overloaded with referrals. There has been information about the benefits of play but they don't have the capacity to do anything more. There are children whose school attendance is 40%. PA can help but can't put it all on volunteers.

Young Carers

Clacks has approximately 120 young carers aged 8 to 18. They may apply for more workers next year. Activities include arranging short breaks for young carers and help with things like putting people through their drivers' test.

Groups are run after hours in Alva Church Hall

Funding

Home Start has carried out a Cost Benefit Analysis of its activities

Council being asked to clarify possible effects of funding cuts to third sector organisations working with children and families. ALEOS had a 9% cut a few years ago.

Last time Home-Start took a 14% hit. Some of this came from housing but it was all in the one SLA (service level agreement). There were housing support officers who had been effective in sustaining tenancies.

PA is hoping that they will get some funding from Education. They get funding from Youth Services but not from Education.

Short sightedness of local authorities raised as an issue

AC attends the strategic partnership group – Chris Sutton will lead the next meeting. Wilma might go in her place next week.

GIRFEC

It would be handy to have the latest version of Forth Valley GIRFEC paperwork. The links on Clacksweb aren't good. Falkirk is better.

Concerns were raised about organisations working with people that we don't know about, for example, hobby groups and Sunday schools. People don't understand GIRFEC or think that it's relevant. Home-Start can deliver training.

Dave had a younger person's project in N Lanarkshire where they used apps, which could be the way forward. If adults are difficult to reach it might be a good idea to target children as they are entitled to be healthy and safe.

Gardens

Volunteering Matters distributed Action Earth grants. Money can be spent on equipment and seeds to develop greenspace.

PA thinking about creating a sensory garden

Jo McCorriston has some info re a grant for gardening that she will check out.

Other issues

Cutting a problem

Training:

Social services could do training on the different types of meetings people go to when they come into contact with services. If workers don't understand the different types of meetings they go to how will they tell people?

PA has delivered challenging behaviour training

Should we do a themed month in the summer?

PA has a Clacks parents and families group that people can drop into. Attendance not as high as it could be. We can all help promote it.

There will be new welfare officers going into secondary schools

Clackmannanshire Children and Families Forum

March 6, 2016, 10:00 – 12:00

Play Alloa

Agenda

- Notes from last meeting
- General update
- Funding
- Children and Families – feedback from Alliance meetings
- City Deal
- Kaye Hills, Clackmannanshire Council – Introduction to the Attainment Challenge

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