

CYP Voluntary Sector Reference Group Meeting

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: Tuesday 12th March at 1:30pm – 3:30pm

Venue: Hybrid – Teams online and Kendal Rugby Club

Present:

In Person: Co-Chair - Becky Wolstenholme – CYA (BW), Co-Chair - Lisa Handley – Family Action (LH), Laura Fitzgerald – Brathay (LF), Dani Leslie – Carlisle Eden Carers (DL), Juan Shimmin – CYA (JS), Anna Witty – CYA (AW), Ian Holmes – RCN (IH), Sian Rees – Westmorland & Furness Council (SR), David Morris – Sexual Health (DM), Jane Wheeler – Cumberland Council (JW), Jen Chambers - PAC Therapy (JC), Sarah Bowman – TNLCF (SB), Hannah Gill – The Rock Youth Project (HG), Paula Ward - Angel Advocates (PW), Niall McNulty – Anti Racist Cumbria (NM)

Online: Laura Goad – CDEC (LG), Steve Greenway – Cumberland Football Association (SG), Jane Callow - NISCU (JC), Jenny Soulsby - Carer Support Carlisle + Eden (JS), Gem Webb – Stomping Ground (GW), Joanne Mills – Cumbria YFC (JM), Ben McGregor - Wave Forward (BM), Tracy Cheesbrough – CCF (TC).

1. Meeting Format/ Ground Rules

- No planned fire drill, (BW) highlighted emergency exits and other housekeeping.
- Hybrid Meeting – will be recorded for notetaking only.

2. Group introductions.

Becky Wolstenholme (BW) started the meeting and attendees present introduced themselves to the group.

Main agenda

3. Westmorland and Furness Council Childrens Services Update – Sian Rees (Strategic Lead: Childrens Services)

Draft 'Ambition for Every Child' to be shared with the minutes.

(SR) shared information on the recent organisational changes due to the restructure where services have been disaggregated and restructured. (SR) discussed the challenges and opportunities this presents, including gaps in staffing and the need to create new services while maintaining existing ones, emphasising the importance of embracing change and finding opportunities for improvement. (SR) outlined priorities for the future, such as improving attendance and achievement, quality of social work practice and early help, outlining a lack of available school places, focusing on providing sufficient places for special educational needs, in care young people and working closely with parents, children, the voice of the child and partners. (SR) invited feedback on the draft plan (Ambition for Every Child Plan) outlining 5-year ambition, priorities and the next 18 months of action and offer to answer any questions or provide further information.

Action – **CYA will share the Ambition for Every Child Plan with the minutes and Questions from the group can be sent to anna@cya.org.uk and will be sent to Sain.**

Becky Wolstenholme (BW) asked about how they plan to work with other partners, how do we as a group fit in and how do you see us working better together?

(SR) Explained this will be through the development of their strategic approach. Partners can identify areas in which they feel they can contribute and get involved once the strategic document is in place. (SR) also suggested forums may be set up to support those documents.

The group raised the question of a link on the website with key information of people, groups, and partnerships so partners know who they should be contacting – emails of key people and groups. (SR) outlined that some of that information will be available in the strategic documents.

(BW) Raises the question - How are the councils working together to benefit the young people?

(SR) explained there are areas that are still working collectively, for example safeguarding is still one partnership, there will be other areas of common agreement to work together in the future.

(SR) reflected on experience of disaggregation and discussed that things will come together eventually. The importance of adapting services to fit the needs of diverse communities was emphasized, along with the value of learning from smaller organizations' collaboration practices. Overall, there's a commitment to ongoing dialogue and sharing of experiences to ensure effective service delivery for young people.

The group raised the issue of diversified communities, explaining not the same processes work in all areas. The importance of understanding data from all areas was raised, shaping the priorities around the family hub approaches in each area. It is a necessity to consider local contexts and identities when developing services and policies and the challenges of gathering and understanding local data are acknowledged but stressed the importance of doing so to tailor services effectively. The value of hyper-local intelligence and collaboration with local partners to address community-specific needs was highlighted.

4. Cumberland Family Wellbeing Transformation – Jane Wheeler (Senior Manager Early Help and Think Family)

The presentation will be circulated with the minutes.

Jane Wheeler (JW) began by acknowledging the ongoing organisational changes in Cumberland and the challenges they bring, particularly in adjusting to new structures and leadership. (JW) stressed the importance of feedback from staff and stakeholders in navigating these changes effectively. The need to focus on improving services for children and families, shifting the approach from solely social care-focused to a broader perspective encompassing various aspects of support was highlighted.

(JW) discussed 'The Family Wellbeing' programme, which is aimed at enhancing support for families and children by soliciting input from the community. This programme seeks to address significant gaps and opportunities for improvement in the journey of children and families, highlighting the need for collaboration and shared responsibility.

(JW) explained the importance of gathering information from various sources, including direct interactions with families and young people, to inform decision-making and service provision effectively. The value of community engagement and encouraging stakeholders to participate in shaping services and policies is vital. (JW) encouraged the group to visit the website and share the survey with young people. Familywellbeing@cumberland.gov.uk Visit the website www.cumberland.gov.uk/children-family-services.

Action – Sarah Bowman (SB) offered to share details at their Cumbria Wide Funders Network Meeting.

(JW) also went through the key questions to consider as a group -

- What do you think works as effective in early help for children, young people, and families?
- What is the priority risk and needs that we can address sooner in early help? What are we hearing? What worries us about our families?
- What are the opportunities to build upon?
- What equality, diversity and inclusion needs should we be considering?

Action - thoughts and comments welcome from the group please email familywellbeing@cumberland.gov or jane.wheeler@cumberland.gov.uk T:07577402932

To conclude (JW) advocated for a consultative and collaborative approach to driving positive change within the council, with a strong emphasis on improving outcomes for children and families through community engagement and shared responsibility.

5. Sexual Health Services Update – David Morris (Sexual Health Outreach Worker)

David Morris (DM) provided a detailed overview of their role in sexual health services across the county, managing five clinics that offer various services such as contraception, STI testing, and treatments. Work includes education initiatives, including school assemblies, talks with teachers, and engagement with diverse groups such as LGBTQ+ communities and the travelling community. (DM) also explained they collaborate with local groups to promote sexual health awareness and provide support. The approach highlights accessibility and de-stigmatization of testing, highlighting the ease and simplicity of the process. (DM) then went on to discuss the importance of comprehensive consultations, including addressing sensitive topics such as safety in relationships and sexual assault. Currently outreach efforts, extend to schools, universities, youth groups, and other community organisations, aiming to provide information, support, and access to services.

(DM) discussed efforts to improve accessibility and awareness of sexual health services, particularly for young people. They are integrating sexual health services into the NHS Trust and are in the process of redesigning their website to make it more user-friendly and engaging, especially for younger demographics. They aim to provide comprehensive information and access to services, including testing and contraception. Additionally, (DM) explained efforts to reach underserved populations, such as the LGBTQ+ community and those with learning disabilities. (DM) also mentioned plans to offer HPV vaccines in schools and collaborate with other organisations to promote sexual health and well-being.

(DM) welcomed collaboration with other organisations and emphasized the importance of listening to and understanding the needs of diverse groups to effectively promote sexual health and well-being.

Action – CYA will share school contacts with DM and share posters with the wider group.

6. CAFs – Zero Carbon Cumbria Project – Laura Goad (Director – CDEC)

The presentation will be circulated with the minutes.

Laura Goad (LG) CDEC discussed their participation in the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership, which currently includes over 80 organisations aiming to make Cumbria carbon-neutral by 2037. This is a 5-year programme with The National Lottery Community Fund. (LG) discussed the diverse representation within the partnership, including environmental organisations, local authorities, universities, and grassroots groups, all working towards a just and fair transition to

carbon neutrality. (LG) highlighted the importance of youth involvement in the initiative, with specific focus on engaging young people in decision-making processes related to transportation, buildings, and land use. (LG) went on to explain activities like the Youth Climate Summit, happening every year, last year's was in Kendal; this year it will be held at Whitehaven Academy on the 5th of July. This is led by young people; they design workshops and lead the whole day.

Action – Anyone interested in signing up to get in touch with Laura Goad.

(LG) discussed the link in with Great Big Green Week that happens on June 8 – 16th. Explaining to the group that they can contact Helen Attewell to find out more information or get involved. (LG) discussed her role in ensuring youth voices are heard at a strategic level, including sitting on the Strategic Oversight Board. They emphasize the intention to involve a wide range of young people, not just activists, in shaping the direction of the project, including through citizens' juries and assemblies.

(LG) highlighted the Youth practitioner's forum, they are wanting to look at how we engage the young people, those who are interested can join in with the meeting. (LG) highlights that CAFs are looking at pulling together a partnership for the Climate Fund from The National Lottery Community Fund, linking action to everyday lives and impact, stressing that organisations do not have to be environmental; it's about just getting involved.

(LG) concluded by stressing the collaborative and inclusive nature of the initiative and its potential to achieve meaningful change by 2037, invited anyone who is interested to get involved.

Action Sarah Bowman – to share climate action funding link from The National Lottery Community Fund.

7. Nursing Cadet programme – Royal College of Nursing – Ian Holmes (Project Coordinator)

The presentation will be circulated with the minutes.

Ian Holmes (IH) started by sharing history of the Scheme, starting in Wales, and now across the Northeast and North Cumbria. Funded by NHS trust, the group now have 1000 Cadets nationwide. (IH) explained that they have funding for 20 young people in North Cumbria. They are looking at those harder to reach young people who may have a barrier before getting into health care, in particular nursing. (IH) explained that the Nursing Cadet Programme includes 40 hours of blended learning, 20 hours observational placements, uniform and welcome pack, travel expenses for placements includes parents expense costs, careers and what's next for career pathways and cadet alumni. Made of three parts, learning module, practical module, and clinical observation placement; the age range is 16-25 and first aid kits are secured for those on the programme. The programme builds confidence, the cadets meet new people, build skills, get career ready, and volunteer. More information can be found on the website - [Nursing Cadet Scheme | Professional Development | Royal College of Nursing \(rcn.org.uk\)](#)

The group is looking for a Northwest Youth Partner to reach 20 young people and offer the programme to them. The programme costs £12,500 for 20 places, no qualification, they can sign up for level 2 with partner organisations if they choose too.

The group suggested looking at this more strategically to make it sustainable, one organisation to have duty of care, youth organisations would have to recruited.

Action to bring ideas to the next meeting – (BW) asks collectively how do we best proceed so one organisation can lead and young people can be placed within it?

8. Better Tomorrows Youth Work Qualification Update – Juan Shimmin (CYA Grants and Programmes Manager)

Juan Shimmin (JS) from CYA provided an update on the Youth Work Qualification training initiative. He announced that CADAS has successfully completed the 4th group of assessments, resulting in a total of 51 youth qualifications attained over the past two years, bringing the total youth workers trained to 64 over three years including the pilot project run with NYA in 2021. Gratitude is expressed to CADAS for their outstanding work, as they move back to their core activities. Additionally, (JS) reveals that 35 new youth worker posts have been funded by Cumbria Community Foundation across the county. Thanks are extended to the Better Tomorrows Programme, spearheaded by David Beeby, and supported by the Cumbria Community Foundation.

(JS) explained that the National Lottery Community Fund has granted funding for another 5 years, with CYA leading the initiative. The qualification programme will now be facilitated by 'Your Edge' and will be available online. Applications have recently closed, with 32 individuals enrolled and a waiting list in place for the upcoming intake in September, for training commencing in October. To enhance accessibility, evening webinars for Level 2 qualifications have been scheduled, allowing participants to progress to Level 3 if desired. 'Your Edge' will also offer in-person training days, with the first session on the 22nd of April. Additionally, the University of Cumbria is launching a Level 4-6 apprenticeship programme this year, and applications are now open.

Action - CYA to disseminate information about the degree qualification once available.

(BW) acknowledged the remarkable progress made over the past three years, stressing that the commitment is to deliver high-quality youth work. Thanks is given to all involved.

Action - If you know anyone who would be interested in the training, please contact juan@cya.org.uk

Thanks to CYA were given from the group.

9. Updates arising from the Wider Third Sector

No updates received from the wider Third Sector.

10. Apologies

Helen Davies - Safety Net, Cllr Neil Hughes, Eamont + Shap, Leigh Williams- CADAS, Mary Biddle – Youth Presence, Mandy Taylor-West Cumbria Development Officer, Guy Thompson - HAF Project Officer CC, Catherine Burn – Carlisle Mencap, Katrina Stephens – WAF, Stephen Harkins – Carlisle KEY, Lorraine Smyth - ACT, Linda Hunter – Aspatria Dreamscheme, Nicola - Cumbria Cerebral Palsy, Andy Halsey – Music Links, Cameron Wilson – Active Cumbria, Ken Messenger - Cumberland Council, Sandra Keaveney – NADT, Elaine Truckell – TRACS, Deborah Hunter – Cumberland, Mike Sunderland – British Canoeing, Annamaria Madera – CandLE, Helen Davies – Safety Net, Lyn Cavaghan- Always Another Way, Matthew Douglas- Oaklea Trust, Emma Williamson – Cumberland Council, Kara Smallman- Cumbria Academy for Autism, Toni Spence – Euphoric Circus, Mandy Morland – Oaklea Trust, Helen Carter– Francis Scott

11. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on the 5th of December 2023

(BW) addressed the group to ask if there are any amendments or changes to the minutes that need to be made.

Minutes of the last meeting 19th of September 2023 were accepted.

12. Finance Update

(BW) the funding balance for the Voluntary Sector Reference Group currently sits at £4831.

13. Any Other Business (sent in advance) – Lisa Handley (Co-Chair)

1. Brief update on Neglect Action Plan:

- VSRG Deb entered the Action Plan, updates were obtained, and a copy will be shared with the group.

Action – Copy of the Neglect Action Plan to be circulated to the group.

2. Planning session:

(LH) explained that a Session has been scheduled to plan for VSRG. It was agreed that an annual agenda plan would be the best moving forward. If anyone would like to share any ideas on monthly topics, please email anna@cya.org.uk

Action - Members online asked to provide feedback on attending virtually versus in person.

3. Dates and format:

- Meetings planned for June, September, and December.
- September date changed, moved by a week.
- It was suggested that presenters attend in person.

4. Mental health subgroup:

- Jen Chambers (JC) proposed setting up a subgroup or steering group focused on mental health.
- Suggested engaging with existing networks such as CYA and Mental Health Champions Meetings in the south.

No further business.

Meeting closed.

Note: The above minutes are a condensed summary of the Voluntary Sector Reference Group Meeting and may not capture all details discussed during the meeting.