



Wiltshire Children & Families Voluntary Sector Forum

Minutes

Date	12/11/24	Time	10am	Venue	Online / Teams
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Organisation	Attendee(s)	Apologies
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Damian Haasjes (DH) - Chair	
Wiltshire Portage	Phillip Tansley (PT)	
Wiltshire Dyslexia Association	Caroline Fowke (CF)	
Youth Adventure Trust	Abbie Allender (AA)	
TNB Early Years	Sarah Hawkins (SH)	
Wiltshire Community Foundation	Margaret Firth (MF)	
Barnardo's	Liz James (LJ)	
Wiltshire Council – Family and Children's team	Emily Wood (EW)	
Home Start North Wiltshire	Tania Rackham (TR)	
Elizabeth House	Patricia Podger (PP)	
Families and Childrens Transformation Programme (FACT)	Simon Thomas (ST)	
Daybreak FGC	Debbie Burns (DB)	
Wiltshire Treehouse	Kath Brownlee (KB)	
	Lucy Bracher (LB)	
Spurgeons	Russel Martin (RM)	Natalie Harris, Rachel-Louise Manston

Wessex Community Action	Neil Cotton (NCo)	
Wiltshire Parent Carer Council	Natasha Canales (NC)	
Help Counselling		Amanda Wilkes
Crime Stoppers		Beth Simpson
Wiltshire Play		Jane
CAP UK		Kate Morris
Julia's House		Lisa Bradbury
		Liz Sirman
Fear Free		Natalie Hardy
Alabare		Spencer Whatmore, Vanessa Bedford
Citizens Advice Wiltshire		Suzanne Wigmore
Rainbow Trust		Charlotte Topley
Turning Point		Sarah Boothman
Springboard Chippenham		Jane Boulton

Item	Content	Action by
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>DH welcomed forum members to the meeting.</p>	
2	<p>Wiltshire Family Hubs Update</p> <p>EW provided an overview on Family Hubs. Key highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigators are working to support families in Wiltshire. Registrations are continuing to grow. • There are 16 parenting courses available, with a wish to remove the stigma from suggesting a parenting course is linked to parenting failure. • The Household support fund can be used for a variety of resources. <p>Questions and comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are educational resources available through the household support fund? EK advised that Spurgeons who administer the fund can provide more clarity on this. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the fund be accessed? EW explained that there is a simple form to be filled out. • Have any other organisations had referrals from navigators for family help - In some areas referrals have shot up, whereas other areas have gone down. • What is the current status of the waiting list that was put in place previously. EW explained that though there weren't previously enough navigators to take on the work, fortunately they are now fully staffed and have been able to open for referrals for one-to-one support again. <p>View slides here</p>	
3	<p>FACT Board/ Programme Update</p> <p>ST provided an overview of the FACT programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key question at present is how to use collective resources to intervene and support people at the earliest stage, avoiding crisis intervention later down the line. • Another focus is transitional safeguarding, bridging the gap in support for young people when they turn 18. • Demand is increasing for families and children needing support, and the criteria often means that people aren't getting the support they need early enough. The 'Family Help' project was set up to help people access the right help at the right time. • The All Together platform was also created to provide support via a database of services, community resources and activities. <p>Comments and questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH observed that many of these ways of working are actively being practiced in the voluntary sector. ST agreed and noted that the point is to be filling the gaps where it is not yet being done this way. • LJ asks how resources and funding will be managed for projects like this, as it will require a large input. ST informed that they are analysing the demand in the system currently in order to find the right resources and support. In the long-term, more funding will be required. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MF asked how they are learning right now and responding as a result. ST responds that It's a work in progress that is being addressed and committed to. • TR noted that that the relationship-based way of working isn't always supported by commissioners, and there is an issue there. • NC asks if there is any buy-in from the school environment. Simon says that there was really positive involvement from those that did, but more need to be reached. • DB pointed to how smaller and less funded organisations are facing problems delivering services in the sector. <p>View slides here</p>	
4	<p>Introducing – Wiltshire Parent Carer Council</p> <p>NC introduced herself as volunteer coordinator for the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WPCC are a team of 12 staff with around 20 volunteers, and the organisation currently has over 5,000 parent carers signed up to their newsletter. • WPCC dedicate half of their time to Consultation and Participation, to ensure parent carers have a voice on where changes are needed. The other half is an information service, where they take calls and emails from parent carers to provide advice and signpost for people who need it. • WPCC offer a very small outreach service for those that need a specific level of support and work closely with Wiltshire Council to support the families and parents that need it. <p>If organisations are working with parents or children and think they need extra support, they can direct them over to WPCC for support.</p>	

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5	<p>Organisational updates</p> <p>DH shared two updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Justice Board inspection went well. The next meeting is next month so can share more updates then. • FACT services meeting – there is discussion looking to transition services back out into other areas. Advocating for someone to keep leading in that role and keep the project running. 	
6	<p>Group Updates</p> <p>KB shared about Wiltshire Treehouse programmes taking place in 2025. They are taking referrals now for next year.</p> <p>Tree House Wiltshire - Bereavement support for children and young people in Swindon and Wiltshire</p>	
7	<p>LGBTQ+ Inclusion – Best practice and resources</p> <p>DH introduces the discussion segment posing the question: How do we manage the support for people who are transitioning or are part of the LGBTQ+ community?</p> <p>LJ highlighted training her team has taken part in; Safe-zone training. This covered preconceptions, terminology, case examples and approaches around the subject of LGBTQ+ Happy to find out more and find out costing for those who are interested in that training.</p> <p>Additional points raised in conversation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges finding the right person to deliver EDI training. • Importance of keeping on top of updates • Need to adopt an approach with a focus on the individual and supporting them as a first priority. • Important to create and nurture confidence in our teams so that they feel they can handle situations in the right way. 	LJ
8	<p>Any other Business</p>	

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	No other business	
9	Close DH thanked members for participating in the forum and requested members to get in touch with suggestions or requests for upcoming topics.	