



2016

ANNUAL REPORT



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Marie Cavanagh
Chairperson

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It is often amazing how the achievements of Children in Northern Ireland bring home what the organisation is all about.

The success of the Children's Services Co-operation Bill; a major child poverty conference; working in partnership with the statutory sector; building capacity through and across the sector during 2016.

The past year has been a year of getting our house in order. It has been a year of renewal with changes in personnel and strategic priorities. I am confident these important changes will equip the organisation to take on the challenges we face working in an increasingly competitive environment.

The organisation continues to provide a high level of service

with fewer resources, and while in 2016 we faced added pressures with a smaller staff team I am extremely proud that we continue to garner support from all quarters, which has allowed the organisation to continue in its role as the umbrella organisation for the children's sector.

The organisation has fine-tuned its strategic plan and I am confident that 2016-17 is looking bright for Children in Northern Ireland. I would like to personally thank my other Board member colleagues and staff who continue to work tirelessly to ensure positive and lasting change for all children and young people.



Pauline Leeson
Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Our vision is to make Northern Ireland a society where all children are valued, are treated fairly and are able to flourish.

Children in Northern Ireland is unique in our ability to work with our members at a local level, but also at a strategic level which enriches and enhances the quality of what we offer to our members.

This year we have made an incredible journey; it has been both turbulent and frustrating in many ways as the organisation, like so many, has suffered from inadequate resources. Notwithstanding this, we have continued in our mission to put children at the centre of policy making in Northern Ireland.

Challenge inequality and facilitate the participation and inclusion of all children and young people.

As Chair of the Child Poverty Alliance, we were delighted to host a major Child Poverty Conference: "Making it Happen" at Stormont in May. Professor Richard Wilkinson, author of "The Spirit Level", joined representatives from across the voluntary and statutory sectors to speak about child poverty levels. The conference also contained inputs from a wide range of other speakers, including Jana Hainsworth from Eurochild,

Goretti Horgan from Ulster University, Mairead McCafferty from NICCY, local and regional government, the health sector and the voluntary sector. We also published a set of 6 key asks for the NI Executive which are:

- » Increase direct resources to children living in poverty and their families.
- » Put in place measures to reduce the outgoings of families living in poverty.
- » Increase funding for targeted early intervention and prevention programmes to alleviate and reverse negative trends such as educational underachievement.
- » Produce a costed child poverty strategy which is underpinned with budget allocation, action plan and oversight mechanism.
- » Use community planning as a tool to reduce child poverty at a local level.
- » Make best use of evidence-informed programmes that work to end child poverty.

Advocate and influence for positive and lasting change.

We were very proud that towards the end of 2015 our extensive advocacy and hard work paid off as the Children's Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 received Royal Assent and became operative. The Act was introduced to the

Assembly as a Private Members' Bill by Steven Agnew MLA. It was introduced to improve co-operation amongst Departments and a wide range of bodies as they deliver services aimed at improving the well-being of children and young people.

Build capacity within the children's sector through our regional Learning and Development programme.

Year on year our organisation has seen a significant increase in demand for our Learning and Development programme. We want to continue to create a sector which is strong and who are able to work effectively with children and young people. I am pleased that our organisation is able to adapt and tailor our Learning and Development courses to meet emerging needs.

Illuminate the issues and identify evidence-informed solution.

I am delighted to report that we have continued to respond to policy consultations across a wide range of government departments, despite our small staff team. We will continue to advocate and influence government as well as working with individual MLAs to change policy by listening to and embedding best practice within our work.



Develop networks to share knowledge and collectively achieve positive social change for all children and young people in Northern Ireland.

It is incredibly inspiring to work alongside so many dedicated people who want to see positive change for all children and young people. CiNI will continue to share knowledge and work with others as we firmly believe that by sharing knowledge and working collectively we can achieve more for children and young people.

Work in partnership with others to achieve our mission and vision.

This year we have continued to foster and nurture the relationships we have built up over the years by working

in partnership with government, the statutory sector, our membership, the community and voluntary sector, members of the Child Poverty Alliance, All Party Group on Children and Young People and the Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance.

Once again, it has been my privilege to work with a fantastic Board and staff team, who have always risen to the challenge, overcoming the difficulties of the past year with hard work and commitment. I want to personally thank them all for ensuring that we continue in our quest to be responsive to the needs of our members, and lobbying and raising important issues at the highest level.

LEARNING

STATS FOR 2015/16

29

TYPES OF
COURSES

47

WORKSHOPS



1006

PARTICIPANTS



TRAINEE FEEDBACK



"

Everything was fantastic – the case examples were most useful to put theory into context. Therapeutic interventions make so much sense and I now have confidence in the work I am doing.



"

Thank-you so much for this training. I have learnt so much and look forward to applying in my day to day work. Really excellent day!



"

Excellent trainers and resources. Most worthwhile course I've been on, personal and professional skills for life.



"

By far the best training I have been involved with. A serious nature to the training was met, without exhausting or being emotionally challenging.

INFLUENCING

CiNI aims to influence the policy development and policy cycle agenda in a way which effectively promotes and represents the rights and needs of all children in Northern Ireland.

This is achieved through providing policy analysis and direction on public policy consultations, policy briefings for members on important issues and hosting consultation and information sharing workshops and member meetings.

This year we have responded to consultations from the Department of Health on the Health and Social Care Reform and Transformation and the Innovation Scheme. We also responded to the Domestic

Violence Offence from the Department of Justice, the Children's Strategy from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, Programme for Government and the Childcare Strategy.

CiNI are the National Network Partner for Eurochild in Northern Ireland. Highlights this year included meetings in Brussels and contributing to the Eurochild's strategic priorities. We also partnered with our sister organisations Children in Scotland, Children

in Wales, Children England and Eurochild after the EU referendum result to highlight how every effort must be made to protect and promote children's rights. The press release was covered in the Guardian newspaper.

The Child Policy Information Service also continued as a key communication tool in influencing policy and legislation impacting on the lives of children and young people. The service continued with weekly Political Updates and fortnightly e-Briefs which included news from the Northern Ireland Assembly, consultations, research reports and events.

Social media continues to be an avenue for the dissemination of our work, informing our members and other interested parties on the issues affecting children and young people. We now have over 4,000 twitter followers and over 1,400 Facebook likes. We will continue striving to increase our social media presence to ensure our message is heard.



COLLABORATION

CiNI continues to play a key role in the development of a network of strategic relationships that collectively achieve positive social change for children and young people in Northern Ireland.

Our key partnerships are:



Steven Agnew
MLA
Chair of APG

All Party Group on Children & Young People

CiNI are the Secretariat to the All Party Group on Children and Young People which was chaired by Chris Lyttle MLA until September 2015 when Steven Agnew MLA was nominated as the new Chairperson. The APG continues to provide a forum to enable cross party discussion and co-operation on issues affecting children and young

people but it's also about raising the profile of children's issues and to work with the children's sector to facilitate better co-ordination between the sector and government. This year the APG hosted the Child Poverty conference and received presentations from government officials on the Children's Strategy and the Childcare Strategy.

Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance

CiNI co-chair the Children with Disabilities Alliance (CDSA) with Disability Action NI. This year the group hosted a hustings event in partnership with Mencap NI and consolidated its work with the production of 6 key asks for 2016-2020.

The key asks are important issues that, with political will, can be taken forward over the next Assembly term to deliver real change for children with disabilities and their families. The key asks are:

- » Family Support
- » Short breaks
- » Reasonable Adjustments
- » Childcare
- » Poverty
- » Listening to children with disabilities and their families

Child Poverty Alliance

CiNI chair the Child Poverty Alliance. The Alliance has some 60 organisations that come together to raise awareness of child poverty issues. We were delighted to host a major conference on child poverty with keynote speaker Richard Wilkinson, author of *The Spirit Level* who discussed the growth of structural inequality in our society and its impact on children and young people. The conference also looked at what was happening to end child poverty at a European level, in the Statutory sector and central Government.

The conference closed with how community planning examples from Scotland could help tackle child poverty at a local level.

Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP)

CYPSP is a multi-agency partnership of senior representation of statutory/voluntary/community organisations, Councils and government departments involved in delivering services to children and families.

A single partnership covers all of Northern Ireland.

There were two meetings of the CYPSP in 2015/16. These took place on 12th June and 30th November 2015.

The statutory basis for CYPSP and the Children's Services Plan is **The Children (1995 Order) (Amendment) (Children's Services Planning) Order 1998**.

Children in Northern Ireland are a core member of CYPSP and a long term supporter of the Children's Services Planning process.

The 2015/16 meetings covered the following areas -

» **Co-ordinating Services**

The significant work of the Outcomes Groups, Regional subgroups, Locality Groups and Family Support Hubs in coordinating services to children, young people and their families was reviewed by CYPSP. In particular the CYPSP noted the excellent work of the Family Support Hubs (http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Annual_Report_Card_-2015_16.pdf).

» **The production of a refreshed plan to cover 2014-2017**

This plan is a refresh of the original CYPSP plan with the intention of a full new plan being developed to cover the same time period as the Programme for Government. CYPSP members were keen to align the plan with the Programme for Government direction. (http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/cypsp_plan_14_17.pdf)

» **Changes in membership/governance/structures**

Some minor changes were agreed to the membership of CYPSP. Statutory sector reform reduced the number of statutory agencies and hence the potential membership was reduced to reflect the new arrangements. This included, for example, the reduction of Education Library Boards from five to one Education Authority.

» **Regional Sub Groups**

CYPSP also agreed during the year to review the regional subgroups and move from being standing groups to a 'task and finish' approach. (<http://www.cypsp.org/regional-subgroups>)

» **Implications of the Children's Services Cooperation Act**

The original Bill had proposed to put CYPSP on a statutory basis. This had not made the final version of the Bill but remained a position members would like to achieve. The introduction of the Duty to Cooperate will have significant implications for how we do business in the future. The role of CYPSP in enabling the effective delivery of the duty to cooperate was a focus of discussion for members in CYPSP and one which will continue into 2016/17.

» **CYPSP & the Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP)**

A formal linkage was agreed between EITP and CYPSP to bring the two

processes closer together. (<http://www.cypsp.org/early-intervention-transformation-programme/#ffs-tabbed-22>)

» **Children's Strategy**

The CYPSP is keen to ensure a proactive role in the development of the new Children's Strategy. June Wilkinson from the Department of Education attended a CYPSP event to cement links between CYPSP and the development of the strategy. This engagement will continue in 2016/17.

» **Outcomes Based Planning**

CYPSP has supported Outcomes Based Planning since 2004 and continues to maintain a comprehensive information system for monitoring the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland. The NI outcomes reports are held on the CYPSP website. (http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/cypsp_northern_ireland_monitoring-2015.pdf) The information team worked with the Executive Office to build functionality within the information system to show UNCRC indicators on the maps against each high level outcome. This current intention is for this to be live next year.

» **Governance**

In terms of governance CYPSP updated its memorandum of understanding with SBNI and NICCY.



Locality Planning in the Southern Area

There are six Locality planning groups working across the Southern Area including: Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Dungannon and Rural Dungannon (amalgamated in February 2016), South Armagh and Newry.

A key focus of each locality group is to improve outcomes for children and young people. Young people, parents and communities are encouraged to play an active role in both identifying and addressing local needs in partnership with voluntary and community organisations and statutory agencies.

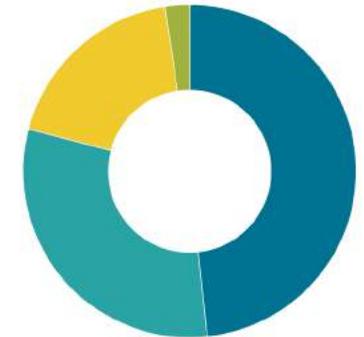
In June 2016, a new Locality planning group

was launched in the Newry and Mourne area. The group seeks to address the main areas of need for children and young people and includes membership from voluntary, community and statutory organisations. This new group availed of the CYPSP mapping system training at the end of August 2016.

One of the main goals of this locality approach is to encourage positive working relationships between organisations to deliver better outcomes for children and young people. This can clearly be seen in the range of activities and events organised in the Southern Area over the past 12 months.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH IN THE SOUTHERN OUTCOMES AREA

● YOUNG PEOPLE	610
● PARENTS	388
● PRACTITIONERS	234
● VOLUNTEERS/STUDENTS	30
TOTAL	1262



ACTIVITIES & EVENTS IN THE SOUTHERN AREA

Activity	No. of People
Young People attending Volunteer Fair	600
Parents attending School Uniform Fair	30
Parents attending Facts and Fun day events: Armagh, Keady and Dungannon	200
Practitioners attending Toxic Childhood Conference	149
Practitioners attending Disability and diversity training	12
Practitioners attending Cultural Competence training	15
Agencies engaging in Safe Places in Banbridge and Dungannon	30
Parents participation in Dungannon	68
Practitioners attending CYPSP mapping system training	35
Practitioners attending Domestic Violence awareness raising sessions	50
Families attending Tooth fairy event in Keady and Armagh	50
Milkshake and Maths (Portadown)	10

KEY STATISTICS FROM THE FACTS AND FUN DAY EVENTS

One of the highlights of the year was the three Facts and Fun day events for parents and practitioners. The outcomes for the events were:

1. Improved partnership working
2. Improved families and practitioners knowledge of support services available to them within the area. (This is one of four priority areas identified by both Armagh and Dungannon LPG and links to Outcome 5 of the Southern Outcomes Group's Action Plan).
3. Improved signposting for families by practitioners



40

practitioners have increased their knowledge of services in the local area



123

parents took part in participation and better aware of services in the area



44

families were informed about PCSP



9

families joined the library



16

families registered for Employers for Childcare Vouchers



4

families registered for parenting courses

Participation

During the past year the Participation Network has continued to develop work in supporting a range of decision makers to engage effectively with children and young people, their parents and carers. This work is underpinned by the ASK FIRST standards, developed by the Participation Network and endorsed by The Office of the First and deputy First Minister and the Health and Social Care Board. Thus we have been:

- » Producing young person friendly versions of policy documents for a range of Government Departments and other bodies including: the

Office of the First and deputy First Minister; Foras na Gaeilge; Safeguarding Board NI; Department for Culture Arts and Leisure and the Department of Health.

- » Designing and undertaking a consultation with young people and communities on proposals to develop a youth volunteering scheme for the Police Service for Northern Ireland.
- » Undertaking a comprehensive scoping exercise on co-production for the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

Children's Order Advisory Committee (COAC)

Children in Northern Ireland is represented on the Children's Order Advisory Committee (COAC) by Kathryn Stevenson, Head of Legal Services at the Children's Law Centre.

COAC Meetings were held on 15th October 2015, 28th January 2016 and 12th May 2016. Since October 2015, COAC has been chaired by the Honourable Mr Justice O'Hara, Judge of the Family Division in the High Court in Northern Ireland. During this reporting period, a number of key initiatives have been developed under the recommendations and guidance of COAC, as follows:

The Care Proceedings Court Pilot - Improving Children's Lives:

Following a joint DHSSPS/DOJ scoping exercise on the operation of the Family Justice System, which highlighted delay as a key issue in terms of the length of time taken to complete some care proceedings and the detrimental impact that delay can have on the children involved,

both Ministers agreed a staged approach to reform of Family Justice, including the establishment of a Care Proceedings Pilot. The pilot commenced on 30th December 2015 within the Western and South Eastern Trust areas. It will run for 12 months and encompasses cases in each of the 3 Court tiers, including family proceedings cases commenced in Londonderry and Newtownards District Judge's Courts, cases transferred to the Family Care Centre and also to the High Court.

DAD Factor Report¹:

In October 2015, Ms. Pip Jaffa and Ms. Joan Davis attended COAC to present the findings and recommendations of this briefing paper. The paper details the views and experiences of some fathers with involvement in family proceedings in Northern Ireland and highlights how fathers can improve children's outcomes. The full report is available at <http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/ImportanceofFathersBriefingPaperFinal.pdf>

¹ Dad's Direct & Sneddon, H. (2015) The Dad Factor in Northern Ireland: How Fathers Improve Child Outcomes. Briefing Paper. Belfast: Dads Direct.

Review of Personal Education

Plans guidance:

Work is ongoing within the Department of Education to revise guidance relating to the use of personal education plans for looked after children. It is intended that the revised guidance will be piloted in schools. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is also working on a report following its evaluation of the effectiveness of PEPs. COAC has asked to be consulted on the content of any revised Department of Education guidance developed in this area.

Use of video links in Secure Accommodation Applications at Lakewood Unit:

The DHSSPS drafted and widely circulated an options paper on the use of video links at Lakewood for consideration by members of the judiciary, family barristers and solicitors; members of COAC and the Health and Social Care Trusts. An analysis of responses to the options paper was considered by COAC.

A consensus was reached and it was agreed that a proposal would be drafted by the Chair and submitted to Lord Justice Gillen to inform this aspect of the ongoing Civil and Family Justice Review. Further operational guidance is being developed by the NICTS to regulate the use of SKYPE, video links and other audio visual communications technology in the family courts.

Proposed Reform of COAC:

COAC's current constitution, membership

and role was discussed at the Committee meeting in May 2016 with a view towards reform. Lord Justice Gillen attended to present a recommendation within the Family Justice Review Report (which is out for public consultation until 30th October 2016), to replace COAC with a new Family Justice Council or Board, with membership by public appointment, a fresh constitutional remit and its own separate budget. It is proposed that representatives from the judiciary, legal professions, trusts, court service, statutory and voluntary bodies and academia will be invited to seek appointment to the newly constituted body. The terms of reference for this body are likely to take account of the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Family Justice Review.

13th and 14th COAC Reports:

A consolidated report shall soon be published providing an overview of the work of COAC over the past 2-3 years. The report will include key themes such as PEP's, secure accommodation, the Care Proceedings Pilot, developments in electronic communications and COAC's input into the ongoing Family Justice Review by Lord Justice Gillen.

The **COAC Best Practice Guide** is published on the Northern Ireland Court and Tribunal Service website. The link to the guidance is http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Publications/Family_Law_and_Childcare_Literature/Documents/p_COAC_Best-Practice-Guide/COAC-Best-Practice-Guidance.pdf

FINANCES

BALANCE SHEET

as at
31st March 2016

FIXED ASSETS	31/3/16	31/3/15
Tangible Assets	£2,193	£ 3,391
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	£72,950	£154,993
Cash at bank and in hand	£273,134	£122,077
	£348,277	£277,070
CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year	-£66,623	£-43,294
Net Current Assets	£279,461	£233,776
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	£281,654	£237,167
Net Assets	£281,654	£237,167
FUNDS		
Unrestricted Funds	£137,105	£100,407
Restricted Funds	£144,549	£136,760
Total Funds	£281,654	£237,167

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

for the
year ended
31st March 2016

INCOMING RESOURCES	31/3/16	31/3/15
Grants Receivable	£281,753	£363,167
Other incoming resources	£108,192	£83,908
Total	£389,945	£447,075
RESOURCES EXPENDED	31/3/16	31/3/15
Costs of generating voluntary income	£6,232	£20,386
Salaries, pensions & social security	£205,941	£277,932
Insurance	£1,068	£1,018
Light and heat	£2,925	£4,101
Telephone	£5,139	£5,464
Stationery and Printing	£11,686	£14,121
Sundries	£806	£1,296
Training and Seminars	£286	£6,195
Property Rent and Upkeep	£40,807	£45,441
Room Hire and Catering	£5,363	£13,472
Postage	£1,218	£3,157
Computer Expenses	£2,110	£3,853
Motor and Travel expenses	£5,103	£9,176
Legal and professional fees	£48,890	£51,718
Bank Charges	£173	£217
Subscriptions	£510	£478
Resource Materials	£159	
Bad Debt Write Off	£67	
Internet	£2,738	£5,827
Fixtures and fittings	£260	£233
Computer Equipment	£1,394	£1,308
Auditors	£2,520	£2,520
Total	£345,458	£467,913
Net (expenditure)/income	£44,487	-£20,838

CINI STAFF & BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016

CINI STAFF

Pauline Leeson CBE	<i>Chief Executive</i>
Ciaran Traynor	<i>Learning & Development Officer</i>
Ellen Finlay	<i>Policy Officer</i>
Roger Gowdy	<i>Finance & Office Manager</i>
Melissa McMaster	<i>Children's Services Training Coordinator (p/t)</i>
Avril McLoughlin	<i>Children's Services Training Coordinator (p/t)</i>
Julie Bolton	<i>Locality Development Officer</i>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marie Cavanagh	<i>Chair</i>	<i>Gingerbread</i>
Jo Marley	<i>Vice Chair</i>	<i>Bryson Care</i>
Donnie Sweeney	<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>NIACRO</i>
Brendan Whittle	<i>South Eastern Trust</i>	
Joy Poots	<i>Inner City South Belfast Sure Start</i>	
John Hunsdale	<i>Ascertainment</i>	
Muriel Bailey	<i>Parenting NI</i>	
Fionnuala McAndrew	<i>Health and Social Care</i>	
Catriona Regan	<i>Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council</i>	



CiNI
Children in Northern Ireland

Unit 9
40 Montgomery Road
Belfast
BT6 9HL

T: 028 9040 1290

F: 028 9070 9418

W: ci-ni.org.uk

 Find us on
Facebook

 **@ChildreninNI**