

CVS Falkirk & District Third Sector Health and Wellbeing Forum
Wednesday 5 March 2025
10am to 12pm
Via MS Teams

See Appendix 1 for list of attendees and guest speakers.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Eloise introduced herself and welcomed attendees to the Forum, the first of 2025. Other attendees introduced themselves.

2. Review of Previous Minutes

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting held on 4 December 2024.

3. Developing a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Plan for students

Eloise introduced Sarah Tervit, Head of Inclusion & Student Services, Forth Valley College (FVC), responsible for all campuses. She shared her presentation entitled “Creating a FVC Mental Health & Wellbeing Plan for 2025-30” and the following points were noted:

- i. The current plan expires at end of academic year to be replaced by a revised version for 2025 – 30. Sarah was looking develop it and seek input from the community, by harnessing its expertise.
- ii. The plan aligned with strategy outcome one – “We will deliver an excellent student experience for all learners” – satisfaction, retention, supportive environment, and using data to enhance decision making.
- iii. FVC has c.12,500 student across Falkirk, Stirling and Alloa. A mix of full-time students, flexible and distant, with most service users from the full-time population.
- iv. The majority are aged 16-19, some under 16 and fewer older students.
- v. Slide 5 provided a breakdown of the population, noting age bands and demographics. And slide 6 the picture of mental health disclosures at FVC which could result in adjustments to learning & support and counselling referrals. It had been noted that the number of students in crisis had risen dramatically.
- vi. With the current plan due to expire, FVC was keen to build on work undertaken to date to create a culture of understanding around the impact of mental health on educational attainment and ensure staff will had the skills to manage mental health disclosures appropriately. It was keen to empower students to share disclosures and be able to access robust services to support them and their mental health needs. The college was also keen to forge strong partnerships with other stakeholders to make accessing support and information as easy as possible for students experiencing poor mental health.
- vii. There is no additional funding available from Scottish funding council for in service provisions.

A discussion took place which covered some concerns and experiences of a number of Forum members, with comments as listed below. Sarah offered to meet with any Forum members offline to discuss these areas in more depth.

- i. What proportion of ethnic minority groups are represented in the full and part time populations; plus, how frequently do they access services.
- ii. The demand and disclosures related to mental health had gone up, was the appropriate counselling support in place for this? Sarah confirmed that FVC no longer offered counselling onsite but have outsourced to an external agency 'The Talking Rooms' which has resulted in reduced waiting lists. Plus, experience has shown that many students do not require counselling, rather support in coping strategies which was supported by onsite non-therapeutic mental health mentors.
- iii. Could students within the college work to support each other via a peer mentoring scheme or work as volunteers to support own mental health as well as others.
- iv. The strength of asset-based coaching, such as the GROW model was recognised by LGBT Youth Scotland, in supporting young people and streamlining services.

Post Meeting Note – An email was issued to Forum members on 11 March 2025 which included a link to a survey to enable Sarah to gather more intelligence.

The Forum members were split into three breakout rooms to discuss responses to specific questions regarding the (expiring) Plan commitments. The results of which were shared with Sarah and Forum members on 11 March 2025.

4. Engagement to inform a Single Point of Access for Children and Young People

Eloise introduced Norman Philip, Project Officer with Falkirk Council. He outlined the following points in relation to the potential creation of a Single Point of Access for Children and Young People.

- i. The background to the project relates to feedback that Falkirk's community mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people have waiting lists and are not always the appropriate service for an individual, so the idea of a single point of access was being considered.
- ii. A vast amount of input was being sought on this, in the first part from the agencies themselves, the workforce that make the referrals, and the young people.
- iii. In the second part were wider groups of individuals, including families and parents.
- iv. A core goal was to get more input from young people's voices.
- v. Feedback from agencies to date outlined that they don't always know which other agencies are supporting an individual. Consequently, how can work be joined up and undertaken respectfully to reduce the chance of an individual having to repeat their story.
- vi. There are three questionnaires in place, one for parents, one for young people, and one for agencies.

- vii. Norman was also committed to gathering the information by other means, such as focus groups, taking into account language barriers.

Eloise acknowledged the amount of work undertaken to date on the development of this single point of access group – a lot of data has been shared and the rationale for creating the service and information on how referrals come into a service.

Post meeting note - Details of the three questionnaires were shared via email on 11 March 2025 and Forum members encouraged to complete the relevant one.

5. Partner Health and Wellbeing Updates

Eloise provided a high-level update, the main points to note were:

- i. Input was requested by Forum members with links to the development of the Macmillan One to One service, these would be fed back into the Steering Group. Lived experience was particularly valuable. Eloise would bring feedback to the Forum at regular intervals.
- ii. On 28 March a Wellbeing Open Day would be taking place at Bonnybridge Community Hub.
- iii. On 24 March the Voluntary Sector Children's Services Forum (VSCSF) would focus on gaming and gambling harms. All welcome.

Post meeting note – The full CVS Falkirk update was circulated to Forum members via email on 11 March 2025.

6. Any Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 4 June 2025
tbc

Appendix 1: Attendees & Guest Speakers

Attendees:

Eman Hani	Central Scotland Regional Equality Council
Gillian Gunn	Strathcarron Hospice
Michelle Candlish	Linking Lives UK
Fiona Bartlet	Health Improvement Team
Steve McQueen	Sustainable Thinking Scotland
Zander Gray	Forth Valley Sensory Centre
Ania Sandland	Central Wellbeing
Humara Basir	Central Advocacy Partners
Kelly Tulloch	Healthcare Improvement Scotland
Lilian Campbell	PLUS Forth Valley
Kirsty McEwen	Linkliving
Christine Bell	Cycling Without Age
Mehar Shagufta	Playlist for Life
Janette Galloway	Dennyloanhead Community Centre
Jackie Turnbull	NHS Forth Valley
Jessie-Anne Malcolm	NHS Forth Valley
Sandra Lyon	The Conservation Volunteers
Safia Ali	RISE Forth Valley
Barry Jordan	LGBT Youth Scotland

Guests Speakers:

Sarah Tervit	Head of Inclusion & Student Services, Forth Valley College
Norman Philip	Project Officer, Community Mental Health & Wellbeing, Falkirk Council

CVS Falkirk & District Representatives:

Eloise Wilson	Partnership Development Manager
Kerrie Hoggan	Business Manager

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