

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Tuesday, 19th September, 2017

**Present:-** Councillors Alison Millar (Chair), Matt Cochrane (Vice-Chair), Sally Davis, Liz Hardman, Michelle O'Doherty, Peter Turner and Lizzie Gladwyn

**Also in attendance:** Richard Baldwin (Divisional Director, Children & Young People Specialist Services), Margaret Simmons-Bird (Head of Education Improvement), Dami Howard (Safeguarding Children & Adults Boards Business Support Manager) and Helen Hoynes (School Organisation Manager)

**Cabinet Member for Children & Young People:** Councillor Paul May

#### **16 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **17 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Co-opted Panel Members Andrew Tarrant and David Williams and the Strategic Director for People & Communities had sent their apologies to the Panel.

#### **19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In relation to agenda item 10 the Chair stated that the majority of the Panel were Governors at local schools and therefore did not see a need for individuals to make a declaration in this respect.

#### **20 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

#### **21 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

There were none.

#### **22 MINUTES - 11TH JULY 2017**

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

## 23 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People addressed the Panel. A copy of the update can be found on their Minute Book and as an online appendix to these minutes, a summary of the update is set out below.

### Academies / Multi-Academy Trusts

Midsomer Norton Primary School became an academy on 1st September and Farmborough CE Primary is working towards a conversion date of 1st November. We anticipate a number of Primary Schools joining the Bath and Wells Multi-Academy Trust in the spring of 2018 and we know that schools in the Chew Valley area are looking to form a 'hub' of the Lighthouse Trust (based in Gordano). As the number of maintained schools reduces (having now fallen below 50% of local schools, hosting less than 40% of pupils) we need to consider the future role of the Local Authority in Education – both in terms of reviewing how we ensure a sustainable supporting infrastructure for the remaining LA schools and how we transition to a role which is less about supporting schools and more about being a champion of parents and vulnerable children. I will be keen to hear all stakeholders' views as we contemplate those changes.

### Swainswick Primary School

I anticipate finalising a Single Member Decision this month to commit a capital project (£723,000) to replace some very poor condition temporary buildings at Swainswick Primary School as we continue to support maintenance and replacement of the poorest condition buildings and to expand and provide new places where necessary.

### Camerton School

The consultation on the proposed closure of Camerton School commences this month and the results will be considered by Cabinet in December, allowing time for a decision to be confirmed in time for formal closure in August 2018. With only 7 pupils on roll for September 2017, the remaining pupils are already attending another local school within the same federation.

### Children's Centres

I visited Parkside Children's Centre in August to understand the issues with the building and the views of service users about the proposals to relocate the service to another site. A Single Member Decision on relocation is expected this month. We are hoping that the current Youth Offending Service offices at 12 Charlotte Street, adjacent to Parkside, can be made suitable to bring the Children's Centre together with the Family Intervention Service from 117 Newbridge Hill in a better facility than either of them currently occupies. Youth Offending Service staff would be hosted in other Council offices and continue to see young people flexibly in a range of local venues as they do now.

I have also agreed to proposals for the future management of a number of other Children's Centres, reducing our overhead costs in line with the previously agreed direction of travel.

### Schools Forum

He reported that the funding for Mental Health Support within schools had reduced from £58,000 in 2015/16 to £50,000 in 2016/17 and that he would be interested in finding out the proposed allocation for 2017/18.

He informed the Panel that a policy report considering the Medical Need of Schools was discussed and wondered if this was something the Panel should at least have sight of.

He explained that it appeared that the Government had decided upon a shift of position with regard to funding arrangements for schools. He said that no reduction would be made and that funding would be capped with an increase of 0.5%. He stated that the final decision in relation to funding would be given by the Schools Forum and that some schools may receive a further 0.5% for SEND.

### Home to School Transport

He said that a review of Home to School Transport was due to take place and that it would be important for the Panel to see the outcomes of it.

### Disadvantaged Children

He said that he had approached the University of Bath and Bath College to discuss effectively engaging with them more and in particular assessing what provision can be made through both organisations for disadvantaged children.

### YMCA Nightstop

He wished to highlight to the Panel this overnight foster service. He explained that it provides emergency temporary accommodation for young people aged 16-25. He added that the scheme is looking for further hosts and would welcome suggestions of how this could be promoted.

Councillor Matt Cochrane suggested that all schools be emailed regarding the scheme and the need for further hosts.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she agreed that the future role of the Local Authority in Education needs to be addressed and that she felt that schools were looking for input from the Council and suggested whether a loose federation was worth investigating.

Councillor Paul May said this issue was also on his agenda to discuss with the Universities as to the possibility of them providing some support to schools.

The Head of Education Transformation added that by Summer 2018 there could be just five schools that are not connected to a Multi-Academy Trust.

Councillor Peter Turner asked if the Council had considered using the Prince's Trust for helping young people to find a job, provide support for starting a business or getting into further education and training.

Councillor Paul May replied that he would be interested to hear more about the work of the Prince's Trust. He added that the Metro Mayor would be accountable for the funding of Adult Education, Levels 1 & 2.

Councillor Lizzie Gladwin said that she could provide the Cabinet Member with contact details of a widening participation group that targets disadvantaged young people and those that feel that university is not right for them.

Councillor Paul May replied that he would welcome receiving those details.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for his update on behalf of the Panel.

## **24 LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chair wished to thank all parties concerned with the production of the report especially Reg Pengelly, Independent Chair and Dami Howard, Safeguarding Children Boards Business Support Manager. She commented that the content of the report was quite large and asked if there was any way in which it could be reduced.

Reg Pengelly replied that the content is largely prescribed by Ofsted, but they were looking at ways it could be reduced and for the Executive Summary to be expanded.

The Chair asked if in the future editions a glossary could be included.

Reg Pengelly replied that he was sure that one exists and that they could look for this to be included in future editions.

Councillor Liz Hardman gave her congratulations to the LSCB for their part in the recent Ofsted inspection. She asked what is the anticipated impact on our LSCB in light of the review of governance and safeguarding assurance arrangements as the Children and Social Work Act 2017 abolishes the requirement for Local Authorities to establish LSCBs in their current form.

Reg Pengelly replied that a Government review of LSCBs and Serious Case Reviews had been carried out and the recommendations that were made had been accepted. He added that the two main components of the review were Scrutiny and Co-ordination.

He explained that statutory guidance was due possibly towards the end of the year, but more likely in the Spring of 2018 and that on receipt of this there would be a huge amount of work to do.

He thanked Councillor Hardman for her praise in relation to Ofsted and said that he believed that they had made a fair judgement. He also wished to praise the quality of

the partnership bodies across the local area and all of the officers who are willing to work to the utmost of their ability.

Councillor Michelle O'Doherty commented that the number of Children in Need had risen from 580 to 684. She asked why had this figure increased so dramatically and what extra resources are needed to deal with this.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that demand had increased across the country for young people in need of Child Protection Plans or Fostering. He added that at this stage there was no indication for a need to request further resources as the figure locally was projected to normally be 650 – 700.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked where and when is it planned to put together an action plan to address the three Ofsted recommendations.

Reg Pengelly replied that the LSCB were already aware of the issues raised by Ofsted and were carrying out a thorough process in relation to child sexual exploitation and training for licensed premises. He added that in terms of data this was an area of frustration and the Board were looking to address this within the next 12 months. He said that the inclusion of further information within the Annual Report was recognised, and had been added within the 2016-17 Report and that in particular the issue of Private Fostering was known.

The Safeguarding Children Boards Business Support Manager added that all the recommendations were being taken forward through the LSCB business plan which was monitored quarterly and available to view on their website.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care assured the Panel that work on these matters was underway prior to the inspection.

The Safeguarding Children Boards Business Support Manager said that all schools had taken part in the Annual Safeguarding Audit and the Council's Private Fostering Lead had contacted all schools who were unsure about the numbers of children they had privately fostered. The Council and LSCB have developed a Private Fostering Action Plan and a lot of work to clarify understanding of this area has since taken place.

Councillor Peter Turner noted that the LSCB says it will monitor the impact of changes on the welfare of children and young people as a result of the contract with Virgin Care. He asked if any changes were anticipated.

Reg Pengelly replied that the LSCB were alert to possible risks and had invited a Virgin Care representative onto the Board.

Councillor Peter Turner asked if the transfer of staff from Sirona had been successful.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that it had.

Councillor Lizzie Gladwin commented that it was welcome that the eviction of two vulnerable families had been successfully averted as a result of partnership work, but asked how many other vulnerable families have been evicted.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that no vulnerable families have been evicted. He added that homelessness is an increasing issue to be aware of and said that the Council works well with Curo on this issue.

Reg Pengelly added that the relationship between Curo and the Connecting Families Team has strengthened.

The Chair asked if the priorities for the CSE and Missing sub group fully address the recommendations of the Ofsted report.

Reg Pengelly reminded the Panel that the LSCB Annual report predated the Ofsted inspection and so the actions within the Report do not include those relating to the Ofsted Report, however as discussed these are being acted upon.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that a new, slightly smaller contract had recently been undertaken by Barnado's and they would provide expertise to officers on this matter.

The Chair asked would this work interact with that of Willow.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that there are several tiers to this area of work with Willow focussing on early intervention, whereas Barnado's through BASE (Barnado's Against Sexual Exploitation) work with young adults that have been abused.

The Safeguarding Children Boards Business Support Manager added that the LSCB were currently funding the CSE Lead Officer post.

The Chair asked the Cabinet Member to note the Panel's concern that the transfer to Universal Credit and subsequent potential six week delay in receiving money creates a potential child safeguarding risk and ask that he raise the matter with the local MPs and Government.

Councillor Sally Davis asked to what extent do professionals now have a better understanding of the complexities of domestic abuse, poor parental mental health and alcohol/drug misuse so that children are not being taken off a Child Protection Plan only to go back on again.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that he believed that there is a better understanding of these particular issues now and that training and awareness has increased alongside the improvement of available data.

Councillor Sally Davis commented that the Council has now agreed to investigate exempting Foster Carers from Council Tax and asked what other measures might be needed to encourage more foster carers so that we can place children within B&NES close to their schools and family networks.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that this is indeed a good challenge to make and that it would be better to have more carers available locally. He added that the Council has improved its use of Facebook and Twitter to highlight this work and as such had seen a 40% increase of interest in this role.

The Chair asked how many applications to become a foster carer were successful.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that it was around 50% and was not always determined by the assessment of the applicants, it could be decided by the size and safety of the property concerned.

The Chair said that she was aware of one children's home within B&NES but that it has no B&NES children living in it.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that this was a privately run facility that the Council has no involvement over who can live there. He added that it would be inspected by Ofsted independently.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked what the Council were doing about accommodating B&NES children with SEND in B&NES schools given that we have the fastest growing population of SEND in the South West outside Torbay. He also asked why we are accommodating non B&NES children in B&NES special schools when we don't have enough space for B&NES children and would the plan for a specialist ASD SEMH free school help to address the over-capacity in B&NES schools.

Councillor Paul May replied that aside to the disruption that this scenario can cause families there are major budgets involved. He said that he would look to activate more local provision as this would be welcomed by a range of parties. He added that the facilities and services for SEND locally are very good.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care added that as the schools in question were Academies they would administer the admissions.

Councillor Paul May said that the route for Free School Funding was still open and that the Council was preparing a case at the present time. He said that he would share this with the Panel as soon as he could.

The Chair asked how the Directors within Children's Services would respond if a Social Worker approached them to say they had too many cases.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care said that he was sure that the response would be sympathetic and that they would then discuss if there was anything different that could be done to help the situation. He added that the Duty Team had recently been restructured.

Councillor Liz Hardman said it was surprising to read about the risk of children with autism presenting a risk of sexual harm to other children. She asked what improvements are expected in ensuring that children are protected from the risk presented by other children.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that the figures concerned were low and that training and awareness were taking place.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how are we ensuring that the 37% of young people leaving care and not in employment, education or training are having their needs safeguarded.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that officers are prepared to challenge themselves further on this figure and have taken steps to redesign their template for this work.

The Chair asked if the LSCB has received an analysis of the number of the children who repeatedly go missing and the action being taken to reduce this.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that the data available now has improved from 12 – 18 months ago. He said that there was a duty to carry out a return to home interview to see if risks can be reduced. He stated that long term engagement was key to improving relationships.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked to what extent is there evidence that looked after children who are repeatedly missing is linked to CSE.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that it was not as strong a link as may have been previously thought.

Councillor Peter Turner asked why the LSCB's budget appears to be so underspent with regard to the SWCPP Manual.

Reg Pengelly replied in terms of the SWCPP Manual that B&NES acts as a brokerage for the South West and receives money in from 12 other Local Authorities.

The Chair asked if the Panel could see the Board's risk register.

The Safeguarding Children Boards Business Support Manager said that she would send the latest version to the Democratic Services Officer.

Reg Pengelly added that the register related to risks against the Board, not children.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the Annual Report, Executive Summary and Business Plan.

The Chair again offered thanks on behalf of the Panel to all involved within the work of the LSCB, especially Reg Pengelly.

## **25 SCHOOLS ORGANISATION PLAN UPDATE**

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked if the proposed expansion of Bathwick St Mary C of E Primary School by 105 places to accommodate pupils generated by the MoD Warminster Road development was sufficient.

The School Organisation Manager replied that discussions had taken place regarding an expansion of 210 places, but as the development has only just begun the figures would be kept under review.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked where further developments were planned that would have an impact on school numbers.

The School Organisation Manager replied that a full review of the plan would be brought to the Panel in Spring 2018. A report would come to the Panel in March followed by the Cabinet in May. She added that all schools will be sent future projections when known to allow them to plan accordingly.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked what impact is the free school and academy agenda having on officers' ability to plan school places over the next three years.

The Head of Education Transformation replied that the main issue of concern was that as academies they have the ability to change their admission numbers individually. She added that the majority of them have sought the view of the School Organisation Manager.

The School Organisation Manager added that good working partnerships exist across the Local Authority with both Schools and Academies

Councillor Michelle O'Doherty asked when the new school within Bath Western Riverside would be built.

The School Organisation Manager replied that the development of the school was linked to occupation of dwellings on the site and that the figure concerned had not yet been reached.

The Chair asked how the opening of Abbot Alphege Primary School at the former MoD Ensleigh site had gone.

The School Organisation Manager replied that there had been a good intake for the reception class and that a mixed age class was also being run at the present time.

The Chair asked about the progress of the Mulberry Park Primary School at the former MoD Foxhill site.

The School Organisation Manager replied that it is under construction and will open in September 2018.

The Chair asked about the opening of the Somerdale Educate Together Primary School.

The School Organisation Manager replied that it has opened with a reception class of 30 and some Year 1 places.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the report.

## 26 CONNECTING FAMILIES UPDATE

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care gave a presentation to the Panel regarding this item. A copy of the presentation can be found on their Minute Book and as an online appendix to these minutes, a summary of the presentation is set out below.

### Connecting Families Criteria

- Parents, young people & children involved in crime or ASB
- Children & young people who have not been attending school regularly
- Children & young people who need help
- Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion & young people at risk of worklessness
- Families affected by domestic violence & abuse
- Parents, young people & children with a range of health problems

### Measures of success

- Family members in work (for 26 weeks plus)
- Children and young people in the families regularly attending school and doing well ( Attendance 90% for 1 year )
- Reductions in youth crime and anti-social behaviour caused by the children and young people within these families (reduction of 33 % over 6 months)
- Reduction in domestic abuse within these families (reduction of 50 % over 6 months)
- Reduction in mental ill-health and families are healthier
- Reduction in the numbers of children admitted to care/ staying in care
- Increase in effectiveness and timeliness of child protection measures where needed
- Reduction in substance / alcohol abuse
- Parents are being better parents and C&YP are ready and fit for school

### Key principles of family support

- We may need short or long term help and support from services when we face life's difficulties or challenges.
- We want support to be practical, hands on and professional.
- We want workers to listen to us and be supportive.
- Want workers to work with us in partnership, sharing power and decision making.
- Want workers to promise what they can achieve and keep their promises.

### Payment by results & outcomes

- We are requested to work with 700 families by 2020 (140 per year). To date we have attached 527 (and been paid for) against our target of 452 so we are exceeding our target in this area.

- We have claimed 212 payments by results to date, against our target. Which means we are 9/152 LA's and 2nd against benchmarked areas of a similar size.
- We have not yet had a Spot Check from National audit, however we receive an internal audit every time we claim to ensure we are making robust claims
- Ofsted said that Connecting Families provides an outstanding service, with excellent direct work with children. An annual family feedback report demonstrates the impact of this service, ranging from practical support, such as gaining employment and maintaining housing tenancies, to confidence building and improved relationships.

### Next Steps

- The programme's transformation funding encourages whole family with a clear focus on stretching outcomes agreed with local partners, so the management team are focusing on:
  - Work with Social Care to improve step down to Early Help Services
  - Encouraging all Early Help Services to carry out Think Family work
  - Improved links with adult Social Care and other Adult Services
  - To maintain the high level of returns for the Payment by Results record and to apply for the "Earned Autonomy" when we can which will ensure we receive 100% of all the funding available.
  - Drafting and submitted the Maturity Model Document for Early Help in B&NES.
  - Challenges – Peer review in November from West Cheshire & funding or mainstreaming the work post 2020 when the programme is due to end.

The Chair asked how concerning was the prospect of the ceasing of the programme and funding in 2020.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that a contingency plan must be addressed. He added that he felt that the Council should look to evidence to Government that the posts had become indispensable and to gain further funding for them to be retained.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented on how well the programme was working within B&NES and agreed that the Government should be approached so that we can continue to carry out this work.

The Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, Councillor Paul May said that he would consider it a disaster if the programme were to cease and would support a proposal that would give continued funding to Local Authorities that have achieved well.

Councillor Sally Davis said that all political groups should be encouraged to have this area of work in mind during the budget setting process.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to ask that the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People makes a representation to the Government on the success of our Connecting Families programme and to seek further funding following the proposed closure of the programme in 2020.

## **27 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING**

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care gave a briefing to the Panel on behalf of the Strategic Director for People & Communities. A copy of the briefing can be found on their Minute Book and as an online appendix to these minutes, a summary of the briefing is set out below.

### **Exam results**

With the main A-level and GCSE results being released to schools and pupils in August, we have begun to collate and analyse the overall local picture of performance. This is made more complex by the changes to the grading system with GCSE grades A-E being progressively replaced with numbers 1-9. Once a more comprehensive analysis has been carried out of all schools data, we will be able to report in detail, including key measures such as narrowing the gap for pupils eligible for Free School Meals across all the reporting key stages.

### **Bath Community Academy (BCA)**

Every pupil who was in Year 9 last year, moving into year 10, has been offered a place at another local school. Plans are being finalised for the process for identifying and allocating places for the current Year 8 and 9 pupils to transition to new schools for Year 9 and 10 in September 2018.

Work has also commenced to prepare for conversations about the future use of the BCA site, once the Academy vacates in August 2018. This includes a review of the current usage and condition of the buildings on site; conversations with existing tenants of parts of the site, including GLL and Bath Spa University; work to develop a specification for a new Special School, which is a priority need for Bath and North East Somerset and could potentially be located at the BCA site; and a bid to secure additional resources to support the development of a vision for the future of the site, through the One Public Estate initiative (Cabinet Office/LGA). We hope to hear the outcome of that bid this month and will be developing a timeline and process for engagement and development of a vision for the future of the site, which will be shared with the Panel in due course.

### **Youth Connect**

A successful bid to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has secured funding of £20,000 to enable the Youth Connect service to assess the potential to create a staff mutual to take on the delivery of Youth Connect. This will run alongside wider engagement to look at options for the future delivery model in collaboration with local community organisations.

An event was held in the Community Space, Keynsham with local groups who might like to work with the Council regarding Youth Services. A further event is planned for late November with those that have submitted an expression of interest.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she supported the Staff Mutual proposal.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care said that this would not deliver an answer by itself which is why other groups have been approached. He added that an independent consultation was being carried out with young people.

The Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, Councillor Paul May said that the budget in respect of this work had been halved last year and said that risk remains to the future budget allocation. He added that many Local Authorities have has it withdrawn entirely.

The Chair thanked the Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care for the update on behalf of the Panel.

## 28 PANEL WORKPLAN

Councillor Liz Hardman said that she felt that the public need to be more aware of difficulties of the provision of the Youth Service and proposed a report to the Panel for November.

The Chair recalled from the discussion earlier in the meeting that the School Organisation Plan was scheduled to come to the Panel in March 2018.

The Chair proposed whether the Panel should hear formally from the School's Forum in November, especially with regard to School Funding and the Medical Needs policy document.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve these proposals.

The meeting ended at 12.35 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**