

Children, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Committee

1st October 2019

Cabinet Members' Briefing

Connecting Families

The Council's Connecting Families Service continues its great work supporting families with multiple and complex needs. The service has exceeded its target to engage with 700 families, and is on track to be able to claim payment by results for outcomes for 700 by December – 3 months ahead of plan. The team received positive feedback from the National Audit Office following a spot check visit and continues to rank in first place in the South West performance figures, whilst rising to 3rd place nationally. MHCLG has confirmed continuation of funding for the programme nationally as part of the one year spending round, although no details have yet been received for specific local allocations or conditions attached to the funding.

Schools building projects

The Council has recently completed a number of primary expansion projects to provide additional school places, which are needed due to housing development and general population growth. For Climate Emergency, the ability for parents and children to walk, cycle or use public transport wherever possible to reduce car journeys is a key element to reducing carbon emissions. A total £7.5m of grant funding was invested by Bath & North East Somerset Council to expand Castle Primary School in Keynsham from 210 places to 420 places, to expand Whitchurch Primary by 105 places, and construction of a new teaching block at St Nicholas Primary School, which completes the project to expand the school from 280 places to 420 places.

Community Resource centres

Panel members may be aware that Sirona Care and Health has given 12 months notice on the contract to run community resource centres and extra care facilities in Bath and North East Somerset. The Council is looking at options for how these services will be managed in the longer term, but there is no direct impact on residents or tenants who receive support through these services, nor does it impact on the security of the jobs of staff employed in these services, though they will have a change of employer. We will keep the panel informed as future plans are developed.

Delayed Transfers of Care

The LGA recently led a peer review of the local system across the RUH, Bath and North East Somerset and West Wiltshire, examining how we are working to tackle delays for patients ready to leave hospital. They explored with a wide range of stakeholders the initiatives that are underway to try to ensure that the

system flows smoothly and that people are enabled to return home to independence or move on to alternative forms of care and support as appropriate. We await formal feedback and will develop an action plan with partners to pick up the learning from the review.

National funding settlement and Brexit

An early indication of a one year settlement that continues existing levels of grant funding for local authorities is welcome as a short term measure, but leaves a substantial level of uncertainty about how the underlying pressures and challenges might be addressed in the longer term. Local services are continuously updating their risk assessments and plans to respond as and when final details of EU Exit are confirmed. Clearly there continue to be a lot of unknowns.