

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **CHILDREN, ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Friday, 23rd October, 2020

**Present:-** Councillors Vic Pritchard (Chair), Michelle O'Doherty (Vice-Chair), Jess David, Ruth Malloy, Mark Roper, Andy Wait, Paul May and Liz Hardman

**Co-opted Members:** Kevin Burnett and Chris Batten

**Also in attendance:** Lesley Hutchinson (Director of Adult Social Care, Complex and Specialist Commissioning), Sarah Watts (Complaints & Data Protection Team Manager) and Christopher Wilford (Director of Education, Inclusion and Children's Safeguarding) and Sian Walker-McAllister (B&NES CSSP Independent Chair)

Councillor Kevin Guy, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

#### **31 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Lucy Hodge and David Williams (Co-opted Member) had sent their apologies to the Panel.

#### **33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Paul May declared an other interest in respect of agenda item 10 (Director's Briefing) as he is a non-executive Sirona board member.

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

There was none.

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

There were none.

#### **36 MINUTES: 15TH SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record (subject to matters arising being resolved).

## 37 B&NES COMMUNITY SAFETY & SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

Sian Walker-McAllister, B&NES CSSP Independent Chair introduced this report to the Panel.

She explained that in June 2018, the government announced that all local authorities would need to make arrangements to replace their Local Safeguarding Children Board by September 2019. The government wanted each locality to have access to a team of Safeguarding Partners, who work collaboratively to strengthen the child protection and safeguarding system. The government specified that these Safeguarding Partners would be a team of key professionals from three sectors: the local authority, the Clinical Commissioning Group, and the Police.

In response to this, B&NES redefined its safeguarding arrangements to take a holistic approach and combined its responsibilities for community safety and safeguarding children and adults. B&NES replaced the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), Local Safeguarding Adult's Board (LSAB) and Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) with the B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP), which meets the statutory requirements of the three Boards it replaced.

She stated that the Annual Report covers the transitional period as the BCSSP became operational in September 2019, up until that point the report only reflects on the work of the LSCB and LSAB.

She said that the Strategic Plans for the LSAB, LSCB and RAG run through to 2021 and their priorities have been taken up by the BCSSP as they are still relevant to mitigating risk and providing assurance. The delivery mechanisms have altered to align with the new BCSSP governance structure.

All members of the BCSSP have worked extremely hard to establish the groups and sub-groups within the partnership and transition from the previous three boards as smoothly as possible to reduce impacting on delivery. There have been complexities in this process, but as shown in the report, there have been substantial achievements and the dynamic of the Partnership has been positive.

She informed the Panel that Healthwatch had been consulted on the report and had given their approval to it. She added that the report had already been presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board.

She stated that the report details the achievements, plans and priorities of the Partnership and the work carried out by its Sub-Groups and partners.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what the strengths and weaknesses of the new arrangements are and is the new way of working better at safeguarding children and adults in our area.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that she felt that the new arrangements have led to a better dialogue between all agencies and had enabled the 'Think Family' approach to be at the forefront of everyone's work. She added that the arrangements have

highlighted that particular focus should be given to children in need and their transition into adulthood.

She acknowledged that the Partnership has a large agenda to cover and that the intention is to hone down the strategic plans to enable a better use of time for all partners.

Councillor Andy Wait, referring to the chart on page 24 of the report, commented that a substantial number of years are covered by the age range 18-64 and that he would like to see these figures broken down if possible.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that this range is normally used as it covers adults of a working age. She said that she would look at how the range can be broken down for future reports with a particular reference to mental health.

The Director of Adult Social Care, Complex and Specialist Commissioning added that the format of the report is standard and that they could look to provide additional information on a local level.

Kevin Burnett asked if any of the Sub-Groups of the Partnership were involved with the work of Operation Encompass.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that the Domestic Abuse Sub-Group was.

Kevin Burnett asked if the Partnership had worked on the issue of Food Poverty.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that the Early Help Sub-Group had been involved on this issue and had worked on highlighting appropriate resources to those that need them.

Kevin Burnett asked if there was guidance within schools on how to escalate Child Protection concerns.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that the Escalation Protocol was currently under review. She added that this had been raised at a recent meeting of the Child Protection Forum and that good feedback had been received from the Forum regarding the officers that addressed them. She said that following the review she anticipated that a much smoother process would follow.

Kevin Burnett asked if further comment could be given regarding Case Reviews and the matter of what to do when services are offered but not accepted.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that this is an issue that cuts across both Children and Adults. She said that the Partnership were looking at ways of approaching families and whether use of the Mental Capacity Act should be considered. She added that this work will continue over the coming year.

Councillor Paul May asked why the funding received from the Police was of a lower level.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that as a rule across Partnerships the Police do not input as much funding. She added that there was an underspend of their budget currently and that they were looking to generate more income where possible through training.

Councillor Paul May asked if the Partnership had to deal with any cross-boundary issues.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that the Partnership has recognised links with both Swindon and Wiltshire and that she has a good relationship with all the Local Authority Directors for Children & Adult Services.

Councillor Jess David asked what the role of the B&NES Hate Crime Review Panel was.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that the Panel is chaired by B&NES Council Community Safety Team and its role is to work on how incidents can be prevented and to look at incidents that have occurred. She added that SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality) addressed the recent Child Protection Forum and that they work closely with schools. She said it was important to report incidents if observed.

The Chairman asked how plans for training were progressing in the current climate.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that income had been lost due to training being delivered virtually, but that resources had been targeted to where they were most appropriately required. She added that she expected training and income from it to pick up over the next year.

Councillor Paul May asked how we can ensure that the voice of the child is heard within schools.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that this was absolutely crucial to the role of the Partnership and would be a focus point for the report next year.

Councillor Kevin Guy asked if there was a particular area of work that she would like the Panel to shine a light on.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that she would give that proposition some thought and reply in due course.

Councillor Ruth Malloy commented on the very important work of two groups mentioned within the report - 'Got Ya Back' river safety campaign with partners and students and the #NeverOK Campaign promoted in schools and colleges which conducted a survey on bullying. She asked if schools and universities were involved in this work.

Sian Walker-McAllister replied that the local universities and colleges were and that it was a credit to have them involved. She added that she would reply in writing with more detail on this issue.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note and endorse the Annual Report and Executive Summary for the BCSSP.

## **38 CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNUAL COMPLAINTS & FEEDBACK REPORT**

The Complaints & Data Protection Team Manager introduced this item. She explained that the report informs the Panel about the number and type of complaints and representations, including compliments, received between April 2019 and March 2020 by Children's Services.

She stated that the number of complaints to each team remains relatively consistent with the exception of the Duty Team which saw a significant increase in the number of complaints during 2019 – 20. She added that analysis of the complaints received each month has been carried out to determine whether the increase correlates to any issues with service delivery; however, there is no immediate explanation.

She informed the Panel that the primary purpose of the complaints procedure is to give the service the opportunity to put things right for the individual complainant when they have gone wrong. She added that the statutory guidance also states that:

All local authorities should provide a system for:

- o The dissemination of learning from complaints to line managers;
- o The use of complaints procedure as a measure of performance and means of quality control; and
- o Information derived from complaints to contribute to practice development, commissioning and service planning.

She said that to achieve this there are systems in place to collate and then disseminate information gathered at the conclusion of each stage of the procedure.

She stated that a total of 92 complaints about Children's Services were recorded under the Children's Social Care statutory complaints procedure or the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure and 6 enquiries were received from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

She said that the total number of complaints received across the service had decreased during 2019 - 20; however, the distribution of complaints across the three stages and referrals to the Ombudsman remain consistent and the percentage of complaints which are escalated to Stage 2 remains very similar.

She added that in 2018 – 19, 9% of Stage 1 complaints were escalated to Stage 2, in 2019 – 20, this figure was 7%.

She explained that the Local Government Ombudsman (LGSCO) considered 6 complaints during 2019 – 20. The Council was required to respond to the Ombudsman's enquiries on two of these complaints. One complaint was upheld. The

Ombudsman closed three complainants without any further investigation and the complainants did not pursue the final complaint.

She informed the Panel that a total of 53 compliments were recorded during the year from children, young people and their families and colleagues working in partner agencies. This is a significant increase from the previous year when 36 compliments were recorded. This is possibly due to the Celebration Newsletter that has been introduced in Children's Social Care which celebrates positive feedback and encourages staff to share the feedback they receive. She added that compliments reflect good practice and provide valuable information which can be considered alongside complaints to help establish where the strengths and weaknesses of the service are.

The Chairman said that the service should be commended for the number of compliments received. He added that he was a little concerned that a high proportion of complaints related to the attitude or behaviour of staff and asked for attention to be given on this over the coming year.

The Complaints & Data Protection Team Manager replied that work was underway to address this and to establish where possible if there has been an incident or whether it is a complaint about the message that is being given.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if comparable data with other Local Authorities could be within the report for next year.

The Complaints & Data Protection Team Manager replied that no performance indicators are required for Children's Services, but they were looking to set some local benchmarking figures and will endeavour to include that information in the report next year.

Councillor Paul May commented that he was assured by the report that the system was working and commended the officers involved.

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

## **39 MUSIC HUB**

The Director of Education, Inclusion and Children's Safeguarding introduced this report. He explained that the B&NES Music Service employs approx. 54 staff, the majority of whom are part time Peripatetic Instrument & Vocal Tutors. He added that the Service works with approx. 2200 pupils and 66 of B&NES's 82 Secondary, Primary, Junior, Infant and Special Schools each year.

He informed the Panel that the Music Education Hub (MEH) in B&NES is a group of interested representatives from schools and musical organisations in B&NES and that they are responsible for ensuring that the National Plan for Music Education (NPME) is delivered across the B&NES area.

He stated that the Music Service is the Lead Organisation for the MEH which attracts funding from Arts Council England (ACE) to deliver musical activities to ensure that every child has an opportunity to engage with music between the ages of 5 and 18.

He said that in May 2019, ACE commissioned a review of the B&NES Music Service. This review was undertaken by A P Benson consultancy firm. The review made several recommendations on how the Arts Council grant is currently being used to deliver the MEH in B&NES and how the Music Service was being operated.

He explained that the core issues identified by the ACE review fundamentally concluded that the Arts Council grant was not being used effectively to deliver the outcomes expected for a MEH and that too much of the grant was being used to support the Music Service and that the service delivery model was not financially sustainable in the long term. It also concluded that the MEH itself needed to be empowered with more of the ACE grant to achieve the expectations of the NPME and have wider strategic impact and increased avenues of delivery.

He stated that since October 2019, the Music Service and the MEH have been supported by Nick Howdle, Head of Wiltshire Music Connect and that Nick has worked alongside the two Co-Managers to carry out a detailed analysis of the delivery of the MEH and the Music Service.

He said that a redesign of the music service delivery model and a review of its processes had been completed to ensure that it will be more efficient in accounting for its use of finance. He added that this activity is designed to free up a significant percentage of the ACE grant, both (time and finance) to enable the MEH's to expand scope for delivery and capacity to deliver the NPME and ensure that the music service is viable.

He stated that the original objective was to pilot these new ways of working from September 2020 to demonstrate to ACE that the B&NES music service and the MEH were on a journey of improvement. He explained that these timescales have been impacted by COVID 19 and the A P Benson report is not yet completed. However, the current interim managers of the Music Service and Nick Howdle must be commended on the work they have achieved in a short amount of time.

Councillor Michelle O'Doherty asked if the Music Education Hub was now due to be financially self-sufficient.

The Director of Education, Inclusion and Children's Safeguarding replied that he had presented a budget to the latest steering group and believed that it would be.

Councillor Michelle O'Doherty asked what the long-term delivery plan was for lessons whilst the Covid-19 pandemic was still in place.

The Director of Education, Inclusion and Children's Safeguarding replied that the Service had adapted well and they were now looking to deliver face to face lessons in a safe way and had carried out risk assessments with schools.

The Interim Music Service Manager added that they had tried to gauge over the Summer how people felt about lessons coming back to school. He said that room plans have been devised and risk assessments shared with tutors.

He said that the figures had now doubled for those that want to receive tuition and that this would be delivered either online or face to face to individuals and classes. He added that the review and impact of Covid-19 had opened up a lot of opportunities for the service to continue and widen their delivery.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was pleased to hear that the Service was adapting and returning to lessons where possible. She said that the grant from the Arts Council was vital and had kept the Service going when budget cuts had been put in place around two years ago. She asked what they were able to offer to young people who were not able to pay for music lessons.

The Director of Education, Inclusion and Children's Safeguarding replied that the proposed budget cut did not take place in the end.

The Interim Music Service Manager added that he felt very strongly that music lessons should be available on a wider basis. He added that a redesign of the music service delivery model means that it will be more efficient in accounting for its use of finance and this will free up a significant percentage of the ACE grant, both (time and finance) to enable delivery of lessons to those that can't afford them.

Councillor Paul May commented that the Music Service was well respected across the Council and that he was pleased to see the proposals that had been made.

Councillor Kevin Guy, Cabinet Member for Children's Services stated that the proposed budget cut had not been implemented and that he supported the work of the Service. He added that the intention is to enhance it during his tenure.

Councillor Hardman said that she was pleased that the cuts did not take place and welcomed the comments from the Interim Music Service Manager.

Councillor Ruth Malloy said that she welcomed any effort to widen the offer of lessons to disadvantaged children.

The Chairman stated that it was clear that the Panel supports the work of the Music Service and thanked the officers for the report.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to:

- i) Note the progress being made in delivering improvements to the Music Service and the MEH.
- ii) Note that ACE has commissioned a second report by AP Benson, to examine the progress the Music Service and the MEH is making to deliver the improvements identified in the first A P Benson report in May 2019.
- iii) Note the impact of COVID 19 on the Music Service and its response to ensure that music education was still available to children and young people during the lockdown.



#### 40 DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

Kevin Burnett asked if within the Winter Plan for Adult Social Care there was any reference to how relatives can make safe visits to their family members living in Care Homes.

The Director of Adult Social Care, Complex and Specialist Commissioning replied that the response to the consultation was still ongoing and that there were 125 recommendations to address. She added that in her opinion partnership working over the past six months had been remarkable.

Kevin Burnett said that he was worried that in Dr Laurence's Covid-19 report it says that he is concerned 'that the whole test and trace system will never catch up'.

The Chairman commented that he felt that during the pandemic the working together attitude of the Council, its staff, their partners and residents had been fantastic and that that this had helped to keep case numbers low in general.

Councillor Jess David asked if the Panel could be updated at a future meeting on the figures relating to how many people had received a Winter Flu Vaccination this year.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Adult Social Care, Complex and Specialist Commissioning for her update.

#### 41 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chairman introduced this item to the Panel.

Kevin Burnett asked for updates to be provided at future meetings regarding:

- Former Culverhay School site options
- Looked After Children / Exploitation
- Autism Board

Councillor Liz Hardman asked for the Panel to be updated on the issue of Food Poverty.

The Chairman thanked them for these proposals and said that they would be discussed further by himself and the Vice-Chair at their agenda planning meeting with the Directors.

The meeting ended at 2.50 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**