



YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2014
10.00 am - 12.15 pm in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward
Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 252739

Present

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chairman)
Councillors Peggy Mullock (Vice Chairman), Andy Boddington, Hannah Fraser,
Robert Macey, Kevin Pardy, Kevin Turley, David Turner, Tina Woodward (Substitute)
(substitute for Robert Tindall) and Paul Wynn (Substitute) (substitute for Vince Hunt)

45 Apologies and Substitutions

- 45.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr Austin Atkinson, Mr Mark Hignett, Cllr. Vince Hunt, Cllr. Robert Tindall and Mr Dominic Wilson.
- 45.2 Cllr Tina Woodward substituted for Cllr Tindall and Cllr Paul Wynn substituted for Cllr Hunt.

46 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 46.1 None were made.

47 Minutes

47.1 Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Young People's Scrutiny Committee held on the 22 October 2014 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

48 Public Question Time

- 48.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

49 Members' Question Time

- 49.1 There were no questions from Members

50 Children and Young People's Emotional Health & Mental Wellbeing: the prevention agenda.

50.1 Members received the report of the Associate Director – Public Health which gave an update on the commissioning and delivery of high quality mental health and wellbeing services for young people in Shropshire.

50.2 The Associate Director Public Health reminded the meeting that the Children and Young People Team within Public Health was responsible for the management of the Healthy Child programme which covered young people from the ages of 0 to 19 and was split into two areas covering young people from 0 to 5 years and from 5 to 19 years.

50.3 The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised the meeting that the services and programmes were categorised around four tiers of provision: -

Tier 1 – which provided universal services and was commissioned by the local authority and currently served 68,500 young people.

Tier 2 – which provided targeted services for children in need aimed at addressing problems to prevent the problem becoming more serious, this service being commissioned by the CCG and the local authority.

Tier 3 – commissioned by the CCG which dealt with young people with moderate to serious mental health difficulties.

Tier 4 - commissioned by the NHS Commissioning Board which dealt with a very small number of young people with very severe mental health difficulties.

50.4 The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised members that the Tier 1 services were delivered through the Targeting Mental Health Support (TaMHS) “Think Good Feel Good” programme which was delivered through primary and secondary schools, the aim of which was to develop a whole school approach on emotional health and well-being through the delivery of an evidence based training programme. She added that the programme was currently being expanded to include the further education sector and to children under school age through the Children’s Centre teams and Health Visitors.

50.5 The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised that, following concerns raised by secondary schools, a self-harm pathway, guidance and risk assessment had been produced. In addition, a self-harm, peer support, targeted intervention 10 week programme ‘Signature Strengths’ had been developed. Professionals and school staff had been trained to deliver the programme at Tier 2 level, to prevent needs escalating and requiring support from Tier 3 specialist services and this was currently being trialled at Meole Brace, Belvidere and Mary Webb Schools.

50.6 The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised the meeting that the TaMHS team was currently working with Health Champions to provide a focus on emotional and mental health as part of its work.

- 50.7 A Member asked whether there was any parental involvement within the scheme. The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised that there was some limited involvement and that it was planned to extend this in the next phase of the programme
- 50.8 A Member commented that the figures showed that the number of young people with mental wellbeing issues was increasing and asked how the figures were collated. The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised that the figures were obtained from nationwide data contained in the Child Health Information System which showed that 1 in 4 children would exhibit some sort of mental health concern and that 3 or 4 children in a class of 30 would experience some sort of life event, such as bereavement or parental separation, which could lead to some mental well-being issues.
- 50.9 A Member asked whether there were some young people whose problems were not recognised and therefore slipped through the net. The Director of Public Health advised that this was a key issue but the problem was reducing.
- 50.10 A Member queried the level of take up of the services. The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised that currently 2/3rds of primary schools and all of secondary schools were using the services. She added that some small primary schools experienced problems in accessing services as they were unable to release staff to attend training and work was being done with these schools to try to overcome this. She also commented that some schools had their own programmes based on nationally available programmes. She asked for Councillors to champion the services to schools in their areas. The Chair suggested that an email be sent to all Councillors raising awareness of the service. The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services agreed to look into doing this in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Health.
- 50.11 A Member asked how the scheme was funded. The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised that the core funding for the scheme came from the Public Health budget and that some of the services were chargeable. The Director of Children's Services advised that some funding also came from the "early help" budget through funding allocated to Compass.
- 50.12 A Member queried the degree of co-operation between schools and GP surgeries as there appeared to be some gap. The Director of Public Health commented that there were some problems and that these were being addressed with the CCG through GP training.
- 50.13 A Member questioned how issues from young carers were dealt with. The Director of Public Health stated that the Early Help Team picked up these issues
- 50.14 A Member asked whether the services were available to the independent schools in the county. The Locum Consultant in Public Health advised that the TaMHS team had done some work within independent schools. The Director of Children's Services commented that she had regular meetings with the independent schools when matters around children's wellbeing were discussed

- 50.15 The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services commented that it was important to raise awareness of and remove the stigma from mental wellbeing issues.
- 50.16 The Locum Consultant in Public Health invited Members to shadow a member of the team to gain a better insight into their work. The Chair asked Members to let the Committee Officer know if they were interested in attending.
- 50.17 The Chair asked that a further report be brought to the Committee following completion of the evaluation of the programme.

51 Scrutiny of the progress in delivering the Council's Financial Strategy

- 51.1 Members had before them the following documents which had been circulated.
- a) Performance report and dashboards relevant to the Young People's Scrutiny Committee's specific remit
 - b) Quarter 1 performance report and dashboards from 15 October 2014 Cabinet meeting
 - c) Financial Strategy report from 30 July 2014 Cabinet meeting
 - d) Quarter 2 Revenue Monitoring Report from 15 October 2014 Cabinet meeting

The Director of Children's Service's tabled an update on the Children's Services Business and Financial Strategy.

- 51.2 The Performance Manager presented the performance data and drew attention to the following: -
- The number of Looked After Children (LAC) had increased year on year
 - The number of children per 1000 with Child Protection Plans (CPP) had risen and was higher than statistical neighbours
 - The number of adoptions of Looked After Children had decreased and was below the target number
- 51.3 The Director of Children's Services informed the meeting that with regard to Safeguarding and Social care the key areas of service development centred around early help and ensuring support was available at the earliest opportunity, thus preventing escalation to specialist services. She added that the changes were set against the challenge of increasing demand and the need to manage that increase. In the light of a forthcoming unannounced Ofsted inspection it was important that the changes were paced in order that it could be evidenced that changes were achieved within the context of the Council meeting its corporate parenting responsibilities and its statutory responsibilities to keep children safe from harm, and to promote children's wellbeing.
- 51.4 The Director of Children's Services advised that of the savings target of £3,971,000 for the 2014-15 financial year, it was predicted that savings of £3,581,000 would be achieved some of which were covered by one off savings. She then took the meeting through the redesign work that had been undertaken to achieve the savings.

- 51.5 In response to a query from the Chair, the Director of Children's Services provided an update on the proposed savings. She advised that at the end of quarter 2, there was anticipated pressure of around £1million in the savings and some savings would need to be carried forward to the 2015 – 16 financial year. She added that key areas of pressure were the cost of the LAC population and the cost of school transport, both of which were statutory functions, but that redesign work was being undertaken to address the pressures. She commented that it was important that different solutions to the cost of LAC were considered such as, increasing fostering and the use of special guardianship orders.
- 51.6 A Member commented that the continuing trend in the reduction in the number of children with second and subsequent Child Protection Plans (CPP) was positive but the overall increase in the number of referrals to Children's Social Care was less so and asked whether there were any lessons to be learned from other authorities. The Director of Children's Services advised that it was difficult to compare the performance with other authorities as referrals were recorded differently, with some authorities only recording a referral when it resulted in a social work assessment whereas in Shropshire a referral was recorded as soon as it was made regardless of the outcomes. The Head of Safeguarding commented that it was essential that the demand was managed and that both professionals and members of the public felt that they had the opportunity to raise any concerns. She added that it was important to look at the outcomes of any referrals with 45% resulting in a social work assessment being carried out, and a further 27% resulting in a "professional conversation" taking place which may lead to no further action being needed. She also commented that it was important that assessments were undertaken within a set timescale.
- 51.7 A Member commented that a large number of cases referred by the Police resulted in an assessment. The Head of Safeguarding advised that this was mainly due to the fact that the type of cases referred by the Police tended to be those of a more serious nature which would require an assessment.
- 51.8 A Member commented that there was no update on "closing the gap" or educational achievement data. The Director of Children's Services commented that this was due to the timing of the report with some items previously covered, whilst others were scheduled for later in the year as national data is available.
- 51.9 A Member commented that within the Quarter Two Revenue Monitoring report was reference to the closure of a children's home and asked for further details. The Head of Safeguarding advised the Committee that following extensive work and looking at the wider LAC Strategy proposals were being considered to de-commission one of the three children's homes currently run by the Council. Places would be transferred to the remaining homes and this would result in the nett loss of 1 place, and a resultant reduction in the unit cost of places. She added that, alongside this, work was being done to look at the procurement framework for block placements and also the pilot at Havenbrook aimed at reducing the number of LAC. In response to a question, the Head of Safeguarding confirmed that she had held a meeting with staff regarding the proposals.

51.10 A Member commented that reductions in the pupil population would result in pressures on funding and schools would have to look at economies of scale. The Director of Children's Services reminded Members that schools' funding came through the dedicated block grant which had to be fully spent. She added that over time this would reduce in line with the reduction in the pupil population. She added that work was being done with schools to plan for the future. The Deputy Portfolio Holder for Children's Services commented that the decline in pupil population was not evenly spread throughout the County and was in fact rising in some areas and that this must be taken into account in future planning.

52 Work Programme

- 52.1 The meeting received copies of the Committee's current Work Programme and the Cabinet Forward Plan.
- 52.2 The Chairman asked Members to let her know of any other topics they would like added to the Committee's Work Programme.

53 Date of Next Meeting

53.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Young People's Scrutiny Committee would be held on Wednesday 17 December 2014 at 10.00am.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: