

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
7 SEPTEMBER 2016
7.30 - 9.45 PM**



Present:

Councillors Mrs Birch (Chairman), Brossard (Vice-Chairman), Ms Gaw, Mrs Hamilton, Peacey and Mrs Temperton
Ms C Barrett, Children's Social Care Representative
Miss V Richardson, Teachers' Representative

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Ms Hayes, Mrs McCracken and Virgo
Mr R Briscoe, Parent Governor Representative

Also Present:

Andrea Carr, Policy Officer (Overview and Scrutiny)
Ian Dixon, Head of Targeted Services
Sarah Holman, Transformation Project Manager
Jillian Hunt, DAAT Co-ordinator
Lorna Hunt, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care
Rachel Morgan, Senior Adviser
Hannah Morris, Team Manager
Mairead Panetta, Head of Safeguarding, Bracknell Forest Council

13. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 8 June 2016 meeting of the Panel were approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman, save for it had not been recorded that Miss Richardson had sent apologies and Mr Briscoe had been in attendance.

Matters Arising

The number of secondary fixed term exclusions had been expressed as a percentage of school population in the minutes and the Chairman requested the actual numbers were circulated to Members.

The Chairman requested that data for the last three years of primary school fixed term exclusions was circulated to Members in order to note whether there had been an increase in numbers. Ian Dixon agreed to circulate numbers and explained that percentages had been used to enable like for like comparison and to align with DfE data releases.

14. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest, nor any indication that Members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

15. Urgent Items of Business

There were no items of urgent business.

16. Public Participation

No submissions were made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

17. Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel on 22 June 2016 were noted.

Lorna Hunt, Chief Officer, Children's Social Care, agreed to clarify at the next Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel whether the number of children Becoming Looked After 2015-16 (originating home address) was linked to the lack of a Children's Centre in both Harmans Water and Crown Wood.

18. Substance Misuse involving Children and Young People

The Panel considered an update on the progress regarding the recommendations made following the review of Young People's Substance Misuse Services. Full details of the progress made was set out in the report and included:

- The new local drug and alcohol website was now live and in response to the recommendations had a specific section for young people and accessible information for parents. Jillian Hunt, Head of Drugs and Alcohol Services, said she was working with Drug and Alcohol Action Teams in West Berkshire and Wokingham who were interested in piggy-backing onto the new website. A Member advised that she had reviewed the website and found it to be very user-friendly with good signposting links.
- A substance misuse peer mentoring scheme had not yet been introduced and was being discussed as part of the Transforming Early Intervention & Prevention Project.
- A short online training course was now available to Bracknell Forest Council staff to enable newly qualified and established teachers to detect early signs of substance misuse. Details of the online course had been circulated by Chief Officers to encourage participation and it was suggested that the course was promoted through available channels.
- Substance misuse prevention sessions were provided in schools as required starting in year 6 and the Young People's Substance Misuse Worker would be delivering sessions at Bracknell & Wokingham College.
- A lot of work was being undertaken to look at closer family-wide substance misuse working practices between Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care and a model that Hertfordshire County Council were delivering was also being looked at to understand their approach. Hertfordshire had been successful with their Department for Education's Innovations funding bid and another full bid to include the Council had been made and the outcome would be known in a few months.
- The development of a Berkshire-wide substance misuse data sharing protocol to enable comparisons with other local authorities had not yet been progressed.

The Chairman thanked Jillian Hunt for the update and said she had been reassured by the progress that had been made.

19. Quarterly Service Report

The Panel considered the latest trends, priorities and pressures in terms of departmental performance for the first quarter of 2016/17 (April to June 2016).

The report highlighted significant improvement during the quarter across the 4 strategic themes. Of the 32 actions, 30 were on target to be achieved by their completion date with notable progress from the previous quarter identified across the following themes:

Value for Money - Spending was within budget and original approved savings was on target to be met. This was ahead of the schedule of 31 March 2017.

People have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive – The percentage of primary and secondary schools rated good/better by OFSTED had exceeded the current expected targets, currently set at 80% and 67% respectively. Benchmark data was not included in the report as results had to be reported in line with government guidelines. All eligible early years settings had also received good/better ratings.

The vacancy rate for teachers was showing a reduction in vacancy rate from 17% (January) to 8% as at 30 April 2016 which indicated a positive review of the incentives as a contributory factor:

- Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) - 12 recruitment fairs, 31 applications were received – 6 successful appointments.
- Secondary School Direct partnership secured 27 trainees for September. Sixteen primary School Direct trainees for September 2016 across 12 schools.

Members commented that these were very positive results but queried if any of the recruited trainees had not taken up their post in September. They would be furnished with an answer.

In relation to education provision, a Local Authority pupil premium Champion had attended all schools to increase awareness with intensive input to targeted schools. Additionally, 3 mainstream schools were currently being supported to become 'autism friendly' – Garth Hill College, Birch Hill Primary and Whitegrove Primary.

People live active and health lifestyles - The Ofsted action plan had now been incorporated into the Quality Improvement plan. The new formula-funded contract for the Adult Education budget had been announced and was on target to be implemented by September 2017 which should enhance service delivery and outcomes in this respect.

Strong, safe, supportive and reliant communities - the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub was now live as of 16 May 2016 and early indications showed this multi-agency model was effective. All children receiving a service from Children's Social Care were entitled to an advocate and a new postcard had been created with input from young people to help promote the service to support capturing young people's views. The Signs of Safety model training was underway with identified Practice Leads and social workers accessing the 2 day training. This model was adopted within all child protection case conferences with positive feedback received. The number of foster carers recruited had exceeded the current target. There were a number of community outreach initiatives in progress and a Transitions Coordinator within the youth service (now fully integrated with Early Help Services) ensured timely engagement with targeted young people based on need/vulnerability. The current performance around Not in Education Employment or Training was set at 3.5% which indicated early progress towards achieving the end of year 5% target. The move of the Elevate

Project to the Learning & Achievement section and Department for Communities and Local Government funding were contributory factors in improving performance.

Members felt the actions in the report in terms of the four strategic themes were specific and clear but their related comments in some areas were too general and did not appear to be measurable. This would be taken back to the Performance Team.

As the traffic light indicators were not displayed owing to an ICT glitch, a complete copy of the QSR would be re-circulated.

Areas for improvement

There were currently only 2 areas identified for improvement with the following actions in place to resolve during the coming quarter:

- Performance in relation to Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being completed within 20 week timescales was presently operating at 85%. A further plan was in place to improve performance substantially and this would be closely monitored. Work was therefore on target to ensure all children convert to EHCP by 2018 which was currently within the stated target.
- Refurbishment work in relation to care leaver accommodation had been suspended due to the works exceeding the budget. This was currently the subject of a report which would be presented to Corporate Management Team to inform next steps.

Members considered the outcomes of Ofsted school inspections which had taken place from the academic years 2012-13 to 2015-16:

- 6 schools (15.3%) were rated as Outstanding
- 25 schools (64.1%) were rated as Good
- 7 schools (17.9%) were rated as Requiring Improvement, and
- 1 school (2.5%) was rated as Inadequate
- Of the 10 schools that had been inspected in the academic year 2015-16, 5 schools had moved from Requiring Improvement to a rating of Good, 4 schools had remained the same and 1 school had moved from Good to Requiring Improvement.
- The percentage of all schools inspected that had a current rating of Good or better was 79% which meant that approximately 74% of all children were in a school rated Good or Outstanding.

Lorna Hunt presented Members with an overview of the work undertaken relating to Children, Young People and Learning:

- The SiLSiP (Say it Loud, Say it Proud) residential in August had been very positive with good engagement from young people. Thirteen children aged 11-17 years had attended including one care leaver who had attended as a young volunteer and who intended to pursue a Child Care course at College.
- Two DfE Innovation Fund bids were through to the final stage – the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Model and Cornerstone Foster Care (recruitment, training and mentoring).
- The School Support Services and Early Intervention & Prevention Transformation Projects were both due to go to Gateway Reviews at the end of 2016.
- Nationally there were plans to change the assessment and accreditation of social workers, by 2020, to include workplace assessments, online knowledge tests, simulated observation and written assessments.

Mairead Panetta, Head of Service, Safeguarding and Hannah Morris, MASH and Duty Team Manager, presented Members with an update on the progress of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

- MASH successfully launched on time on 16 May 2016.
- Children's Social Care, Thames Valley Police (TVP), Health and Education staff were co-located in the MASH and virtual partners included DAAT, Community Mental Health Team, Housing and Probation.
- The team structure included 1 Social Worker, 1 Family Worker and 2 Admin staff.
- Referrals to MASH were made from agencies including Police, schools and local authority services, or members of the public via e-mail and the online referral form.
- The total number of contacts in the first 3 months was 1,829 which was in line with numbers prior to the launch of the MASH.
- Confidential MASH criteria included early checks for S47 referrals to check with other agencies/departments if the individual was known to them, NSPCC referrals, children/young people who have been trafficked/at risk of exploitation, transient families, issues of domestic violence and missing children.
- The total number put through Confidential MASH in the first 3 months was 24 and the low number was as a result of thorough screening. 15 progressed to referrals and the remainder were stepped down to Tier 2 having had no CP concerns identified in Confidential MASH episode.
- Positive feedback about the MASH had been received from TVP who thought the Bracknell forms were clear and simple and they liked the processes in place.
- An example was given of increased joint working between the MASH family worker and a youth worker supported a young person over the summer and prevented escalation.
- Future work would include Midwifery to become more involved and would include overseeing the vulnerable pregnant women's monthly meeting by the MASH manager.
- Multi-agency joint visits would take place, as would unannounced visits if there was no response to an initial contact.
- Schools could refer to MASH without completing a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) which was very positive as the family CAF in particular was very time consuming. The CAF would still be needed in some cases and the online referral form made it clear when that would be necessary.
- To-date there were no major issues with the process or services delivered and all feedback had been positive as had the impact on the Duty team.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the update and said the work being done was much appreciated. The Chairman also suggested the success of the MASH should be promoted to give people the confidence to use it.

Rachel Morgan, Interim Head of Standards and Effectiveness, presented Members with an update on examination results. Members were asked to note that national benchmarks for 2016 had only been confirmed for KS2; all other benchmarks were for 2015:

- Early Years and KS1 results were above the national average in all areas.
- In relation to Early Years Foundation Stage, the national average was 69% - 14 schools were above the average by 10% and 7 schools were below the

average but not to a significant extent. For Pupil Premium Grant pupils, the gap had widened by 1.9%.

- In relation to Year 1 Phonics, 8 schools were above the national average of 81% by 10% and 8 schools were below the national average, with the lowest being 74%.
- In KS1, 1 large and 1 medium school were significantly below the National Consortium of Examination Results national average for combined reading, writing and maths.
- In KS2, the local authority average for maths was 66% which was a disappointing 4 points below the national average of 70%. The local authority average for writing was 75% which was one point higher than the national average.
- KS2 results for reading were 1 point below the national average of 66%; it was noted that the reading test was very hard and a reading project was being launched in order to improve the figures and outcomes.
- In KS4, the percentage of 5 A*-C including English and maths was 64.6%, an increase of 1.6% on the previous year and higher than the national average of 56% for 2015.
- Neighbouring local authority data was being validated and would be confirmed by January 2017 and could be used to show a comparison with Bracknell Forest results at that time.

20. **Families in a Strong Community Project**

Sarah Holman, Transformation Project Manager, delivered a presentation in respect of the impact of the Families in a Strong Community Project and future plans for sustainability of volunteering. The presentation was supported by a case study which was attached to the agenda.

- The Families in a Strong Community Project feasibility study ran from April 2015 to August 2016 and looked at delivery methods of very early intervention in 3 deprived areas of Bracknell Forest.
- The cost effectiveness of training volunteers from within the community, using volunteers to support a professional in running friendship support groups and offering targeted training to volunteers and families had been investigated.
- As a result, a dedicated volunteer training scheme had been developed which saw participation from some vulnerable parents.
- Volunteers were able to shape community support and Family Partner Workers set up and ran Friendship Support Groups in various community venues.
- Relationships were built between families, some of whom were very isolated, and between support mechanisms and families.
- Volunteers benefited from training and workshops, new friendships and support, raised expectations of family life and, in the case of 3 volunteers, employment as a direct result of their voluntary activity.
- Supported families benefited from decreased isolation, increased friendships and self-confidence, non-judgemental peer-to-peer support and professional support if needed.
- Parents who attended the Post Natal Depression Groups completed the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale and 5 months later their scores had decreased significantly from when they had started.
- Moving forward the volunteer training scheme will be run by the charity Involve for wider use across Bracknell Forest.
- Linking into the Community Learning Strategy, on-going training to both families and volunteers would be offered.

- Funding was being sought from the Better Care Fund to continue the scheme for a further 12 months.

The Chairman thanked the Transformation Project Manager for her interesting presentation and commented she was particularly glad to see the work being done in relation to post natal depression which gave good outcomes for families and children.

21. **Update on the "Staying Put" Policy**

An update regarding the "Staying Put" policy for Looked After Children who wished to remain in their foster care placement past the age of 18 was given.

- The possibility of Staying Put should be identified as early as possible with all involved parties so that a pathway plan could start when the child reached 16 years of age.
- The policy included details of the housing benefit available to young people Staying Put and of the allowance paid by Bracknell Forest to the former foster carer. Members were advised there was currently one young person Staying Put in an in-house foster placement and one in an independent foster placement.
- Members were pleased to note that if the young person attended university, a daily retainer was paid to the carer so that the young person had a home to return to during the holidays.

Members were advised that carers felt supported by the teams throughout the process and the Independent Reviewing Officer had been positive about Bracknell Forest's arrangements for Staying Put.

22. **Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Review of Child Sexual Exploitation**

The Panel considered the draft report of the review of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) undertaken by a Working Group of the Panel.

The Chairman praised the work of the Working Group which had been very well led by Councillor Mrs McCracken and said it was a very strong report with excellent recommendations, in particular:

- Closer work to be undertaken with parents to raise their awareness of CSE including education to help them manage their children's use of the online world.
- The awareness and use of the CSE screening tool and prevention work with children and young people identified as having Level 1 vulnerabilities.
- The monitoring and management of unauthorised school absences and fixed term exclusions to be strengthened, with a particular emphasis on undertaking return interviews.
- A fluid rolling programme of incremental and age appropriate prevention be pursued to raise awareness levels and provide children with the resilience and knowledge to identify grooming and make safe decisions around internet use and relationships.

Lorna Hunt thanked all those involved in the large piece of work and for the very comprehensive report.

23. **Next Review Topic/Working Group**

The Panel was invited to select the next review topic and establish a working group to undertake the review, when resources became available, with reference to the 2016/17 Work Programme.

The Panel agreed that the next review topic would be Early Intervention and the Working Group would include Councillors Mrs Hamilton, Mrs Temperton and Mrs Birch. It was agreed that a scoping session would take place before the end of the year.

24. **Executive Forward Plan**

The Panel considered and noted the scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Children, Young People and Learning.

CHAIRMAN