

Minutes of a meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 14 February 2018 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 4.35 pm
Concluded 7.15 pm

Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT
M Pollard D Smith	Mullaney Peart	Ward

VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

Claire Parr Church Representative (RC)
Joyce Simpson Church Representative (CE)

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Kerr Kennedy Voluntary Sector Representative
Tom Bright Teachers Secondary School Representative

Apologies: Councillors Engel, Sajawal, Shaheen and Tait and Sidiq Ali (Parent Governor)

Councillor D Smith in the Chair

48. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

All Members who were Governors disclosed this in the interests of transparency.

In the interests of transparency Cllr Dale Smith also disclosed, specifically in relation to the matters on the Agenda, that he was a Governor of Canterbury Nursery and a Trustee of the Kirklands Trust.

In the interests of transparency, Councillor Peart disclosed that she worked with children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and a member of her family accessed SEN services.

In the interests of transparency Councillor Mullaney disclosed that she worked in childcare and a member of her family accessed SEN services.

In the interests of transparency Claire Parr disclosed that a member of her family accessed SEN services.

49. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

NO ACTION

50. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

No referrals had been received.

NO ACTION

51. PROGRESS REPORT ON CHILDREN'S CENTRE CLUSTERS

The Strategic Director Children's Services submitted **Document "AA"** which detailed the progress made by the Children's Centres in respect of seven new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which had been introduced from 1 April 2017. The report also outlined the progress made in respect of the integration of Children's Centres and Health services.

In response to a question, the Strategic Director clarified that this was a report in respect of the performance of the Children's Centres relative to Key Performance Indicators. The outcome of the consultation on Prevention and Early Help (which would inform the future arrangements of the Children's Centres (CC)) would be considered by the Executive in April. The consultation on this issue had closed on 12 February 2018. Over 700 responses to the consultation had been received and these were currently being analysed. He was unable to comment on that issue at this meeting as sufficient time was needed to properly consider the responses received and the options for moving forward. Sufficient time had been programmed to enable the necessary analysis and assessment of all the representations.

In presenting the report, the following issues were highlighted:

- There were seven new KPIs relating to:
 - Contact with those 3 year olds not accessing early education at Age 3, for which the target was 95%.
There was generally good take-up of three year old places but some of the most disadvantaged were not accessing this entitlement. It was too early to assess at this stage if the target was being met but this KPI had certainly made this issue a strong focus for workers and had led to an issue with mobility in the city being identified.
 - All family support cases being underpinned by a robust 'Signs of Safety' Action Plan.
Signs of Safety was generally well used although further development was considered possible. It was acknowledged that it would normally take up to three years for the impact of this model to be demonstrated.
 - Reduction in the levels of obesity in Reception age children, the target for which was -10%.
 - Reduction in the numbers of missing/decayed/filled teeth in Reception

age children, the target for which was -10%.

There were specific programmes in place to support these initiatives and more data was expected to be available in the Summer term. In terms of oral health there was a significant difference in the figures for the most advantaged and most disadvantaged communities.

- Increase the percentage of expectant mothers who set a smoking cessation date further to referral by midwives, the target for which was 25%.

All the Children's Centre Clusters (CCCs) now had staff trained to support expectant mothers in quitting smoking. Again, more robust data on the results/achievement of target would be available in a few months time.

- Increase take-up of 2 year old places in education.

Take-up was now 76% across the district although there was a wide range of variation between different areas. Children's Centres and the Families Information Service were working in partnership to encourage the most disadvantaged families to access this entitlement.

- Improvement in the levels of Reception age children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) by 2020 with a specific focus on those eligible for free school meals.

The percentage of children achieving a GLD had increased, although the gap between the national average figure and the Bradford district had not narrowed at this point. There was a focus on the take-up of 2 year old places and early language development. A pilot scheme was being undertaken in Holme Wood to assess the impact of intervention at the age of 12 months if there were concerns about potential speech and language delay.

- There was much closer integration with health services and this was underpinned by the Integrated Care Pathway (ICP) approach. A lot of the work had been driven by the CCCs, with integrated action plans being produced. This was considered to be a significant area of progress.

A Member commented that the Children's Centres were to be congratulated on the great work they did. It was believed that one of the reasons they were so successful was due to services being located under one roof. If this model did not continue the concern was that many parents would not be able to access the services. Problems were being experienced in terms of accessing dentists. It was considered that if the Children's Centres were lost this would lead to increased costs for the public purse later on.

In response to questions/issues raised by Members, the Strategic Director said that:

- Families referred to the CC Family Support Teams would not necessarily need a Family Support Plan and their needs would often be met through other services provided by the CC.
- It was not possible at this stage to gauge the impact on the achievement of KPIs of changes to Early Help and Prevention (EHP) services. This was a difficult situation and the service would do their best it could.
- 'Better Start' came under a different funding regime and was currently on Year 4 of 10.
- The potential impact of changes to Early Help provision had been discussed

with the Better Start Board and the Big Lottery Fund and there was a willingness to discuss with the Authority what might be done to help mitigate any impacts.

- Health Visitors were by far the largest source of referrals. Integrated working assisted in addressing many of a family's needs.
- In terms of Signs of Safety; this model/approach required a cultural shift in how support was provided to families and for confidence in its effectiveness to build; it would be fairer to say that the impacts would begin to be seen after 3 years rather than it would take 3 years to imbed.

Representatives of the Children's Centre Clusters, specifically the Lister Park, Airedale/Wharfedale and West Bradford Clusters were in attendance at the meeting and were given the opportunity to address the Committee (they also tabled a proposal document):

- It was believed that the proposals (in respect of EHP) put forward for consultation were disjointed in comparison with existing arrangements and that it would be far better to build on what was already being done.
- The Nursery Schools had submitted proposals for an alternative model.
- As leaders of the Children's Centres since 2004 it was considered that they were well qualified and well placed to contribute knowledgeably to the debate.
- It was considered that, as proposed, the links with schools and health were not clear and that they needed to be central to the structure, location and delivery of services.
- The report presented to the Committee highlighted the varied work undertaken by the Children's Centres and the impact they had.
- It was important that services were provided in the right locations. The CC staff knew their communities because they worked in the heart of them; it was important that all this knowledge was not lost. The people were more important than the buildings.
- The advantages of these proposals were in addition to those identified in relation to Option 3 put to the Executive.
- The figures in the tabled document were estimates but the aim had been to move more staff out of the central team and have a cluster type model with approximately 20 hubs based on smaller geographical areas. There would be up to 126 frontline staff and fewer manager and support staff roles.
- Health Visitors, School Nurses and Oral Health Workers would be co-located; this was considered to be very important.
- The closer the service could be to the community the better it could meet their needs.

In response to Members' questions they stated that:

- The biggest concern in reducing resources would be in respect of safeguarding.
- The evidence of the impact the CCs were having on GLD and health targets had been presented; there was no mention of KPIs in the new proposals and it was not known how these could continue to be met.
- The work undertaken in increasing take up of places and inclusion was considered to be critical to improved achievement of GLD.
- It was not considered that it would be possible to meet the requirements of the

- KPIs under the new model.
- It was believed that head teachers valued the work undertaken and would want hubs in school; a significant amount of such work was already undertaken by a lot of schools and they knew how important it was. A number of CCs were already co-located in schools. There were a number of 'good' schools in the district that had excellent links with their community.
- It was vital that what was good about the existing provision was retained as far as possible.

In response, the Strategic Director said that:

- The contribution of the Nursery Schools was valued.
- Whilst noting that there had been more than 700 representations in response to the EHP consultation that needed to be analysed/considered, he gave a commitment to consider the points put forward.
- The present KPIs for the CCs were included within the Prevention and Early Help Outcome Framework and the proposals stated that early childhood development would be a priority going forwards.
- The Service was working closely with Public Health and wider health colleagues to build on the 0-5 integrated care pathway and the integration of health visiting and school nursing in the proposed model.

The Strategic Director answered further questions/comments from Members:

- The indicative budget had been approved in 2017 and the principle and approach in respect of EHP agreed in June 2017. The future arrangements would be a decision for the Executive.
- In terms of clawback, a strong indication of the Department for Education's stance had been gleaned from information in the public domain as a result of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. Where the space had continued to be used for the benefit of families with young children, eg: as part of a school or nursery setting, clawback had not been invoked.
- Discussion was taking place with the relevant agencies, such as those in the voluntary sector, in respect of contractual arrangements where timescales may not align with the implementation of new arrangements.

Members commented that:

- The detail still needed to be established and it was good that the CCC heads were talking to officers to try and develop the best proposals possible in the circumstances to improve outcomes for children.
- The achievements reported were very positive after a number of years where the situation had been stagnant and the Authority needed to be very careful that this progress was not lost.

Further to which it was:

Resolved -

- (1) That the Executive be requested to take account of the views expressed by the Committee in respect of the future of the Children's**

Centre Clusters as follows:

- (a) The Committee recognises the imperative for meaningful contact and assessment of the needs of children and their families at their house door and therefore the need for an appropriate number of frontline workers.
 - (b) The model should be applied flexibly in different parts of the district.
 - (c) Further consideration should be given to the implications of the retention and cost of under used buildings.
 - (d) Further consideration should be given to the alternative model put forward by the Nursery Schools.
 - (e) The Committee calls for greater co-operation between partners to link IT systems and improve the pathway of referrals.
 - (f) The Committee recognises and expresses thanks for the commitment and skills of those supporting our young people and families.
- (2) That the Chair lobby the Government, on behalf of the Committee, to review its funding proposals which clearly have a detrimental impact upon those children and families in greatest need and the areas of greatest deprivation.

ACTION: *Strategic Director, Children's Services*
 Interim City Solicitor
 Scrutiny Lead

52. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS 2017 - EARLY YEARS TO KEY STAGE 5 - FINAL REPORT

The Strategic Director, Children's Services submitted **Document "AB"** which detailed some of the key outcomes for Bradford pupils from the 2017 results of national tests and teacher assessments from Early Years to Key Stage 5.

The report explained that: a lot of the information was based upon the Statistical First Release (SFR) data; the 2017 national averages had been included for comparison, where available; and the Key Stage 4 (KS4) and Key Stage 5 (KS5) data was based on revised data published on 25 January 2018.

The Strategic Director and the Headteacher of a local Secondary School highlighted the following:

- Early Years was recognised as a critical stage and there was a lot of on-going work in this area.
- There had been an overall 6% rise in the number of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) at Early Years Foundation Stage since 2015.
- The greatest improvement had been achieved by boys. (which reflected the positive impact of the initiatives targeted at this group).
- The gap in Phonics at Key Stage 1 (KS1) was being closed and Bradford was now just below the national average, this was positive progress on the right trajectory.
- In KS1 the overall proportion of those achieving the expected standard in

Reading, Writing and Maths had increased. The gap with the national average had widened slightly in Writing and decreased slightly in Maths.

- In KS2 there had been an increase of 10% in those reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths which was a very positive development and a clear indication that the Authority's strategies were having an impact. There was some work to be done in terms of the Writing element but significant improvement had been made with this in 2016.
- Bradford had moved up the Standard Rankings in terms of its performance compared with all other local authorities apart from its results in Writing.
- Officers were proud of the progress being made with outcomes but it was stressed that there was no complacency.
- For KS4 and 5; Progress 8 was considered to be a much fairer measure of attainment, particularly for urban authorities like Bradford; it measured the progress made between KS2 and KS4 for each pupil which was then aggregated to a whole school score and then further aggregated to a score for the Authority as a whole. Bradford was now ranked in the top third of authorities.
- Almost a quarter of Bradford Schools had results falling within in the top 10% of schools nationally and there had been a general upward shift overall.
- The overall Progress 8 score for Bradford was +0.02 which was a significant move forward.
- Bradford was the most improved at +0.17 in comparison with neighbouring urban authorities.
- In comparison with statistically similar local authorities, Bradford ranked second and again was the most improved.
- The overall average attainment score was slightly below the national average, this being achieved despite the overall ability level of pupils on entry being lower than the national average.
- At KS5 the Value Added Scores ranked in terms of school indicated an interesting difference compared with the top and bottom performers at KS4 level. The reasons for this were not known but it was thought that perhaps students at relatively poor performing schools prospered at KS5 due to being in smaller and more motivated classes in contrast to their KS4 experience.
- In terms of broad general level vocational qualifications (Applied General) 81% of providers in Bradford had recorded a positive Value Added Score; 63% were rated as 'above average'; 19% as well above average and only 2 out of 27 providers being 'below average'.
- In respect of 'Tech Level' occupation specific vocational qualifications, the Bradford average points score was above the national average and 91% of providers had a top average points score rating of 'Distinction*'. It was noted that the figures for Bradford College were affected by (and skewed the overall average for Bradford) the significant numbers in each cohort.

In response to a Member's question it was explained that:

- The difference in performance between providers with two or more schools could be partially explained by some Trusts having set up schools from the beginning whereas others had taken on existing schools.

Members made the following comments:

- The results showed that the Bradford district was a good place to bring up and educate children.
- There was no information provided in respect of pupil retention rates.
- The improvement in performance across the board was welcomed. The commitment to the Bradford Education Covenant and the efforts to improve outcomes was making a difference.

Members also exchanged views in respect of what influenced children in respect of whether they chose to stay in their existing school or move to an alternative provision for KS5 and the impact of their previous performance on this decision.

The Strategic Director said that the aspiration was for there to be more choice for Post 16 education in the future.

Resolved-

- (1) **That the report on the performance of Bradford's Children and Young People in Key Stage tests for 2017 (Document "AB"), which highlights the improvement in attainment for Bradford's young people, be welcomed.**
- (2) **That all Elected Members be requested to continue to encourage families in their wards to become more actively engaged with their children's learning and attendance in order to further improve their children's learning capacity and resilience.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Children's Services

53. PROPOSALS FOR THE RESTRUCTURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) SPECIALIST TEACHING SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND

Previous references: Executive, Minutes 9 and 73 (2017/18)

The Strategic Director, Children's Services submitted **Document "AC"** which presented the revised proposed model for the restructuring of SEND (Special Educational Need and Disabilities) Specialist Teaching Support Services for children and young people with SEND to improve their educational outcomes. The model had been significantly amended further to feedback from the initial consultation process and due to the implications of the new National Funding Formula.

It was explained that:

- The consultation on the revised model would be open until 28 February 2018 and a further report would then be considered by the Executive in April 2018.
- The revised model was based on a locality model comprising four areas, with a High Incidence Team and a Low Incidence Team. High incidence covered the most common needs of which there were the highest numbers. The Low

- Incidence Teams would be located centrally.
- This option would be 70% funded from High Needs Block and 30% from traded services across the entirety of the SEND function.
 - It was stressed that this provision was just one part of the whole SEND service which included Education Care and Health Plans (ECHPs), school places and the development of the SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) School.

The Deputy Director, Education, Employment and Skills responded to Member's questions:

- The Low Incidence Team had recently been restructured and it was not proposed to reduce the staffing any further.
- A number of vacancies were currently being carried.
- All posts were stated as Full Time Equivalent.
- The locality split was part of the consultation; there were certain areas where there were higher numbers of low incidence cases. The aim was to provide flexibility and to ensure that staff were available in the areas where they were needed.
- The model would be constantly under review in respect of funding and it was not possible to predict whether this would change in the future.
- The Equality Impact Assessment indicated that there was not expected to be any significant negative impact in respect of any of the protected characteristics and no disproportionate impact on any particular group.
- There would not be any additional funding in 4 year's time; the funding would just be what had been expected at this point, until then adjustments were having to be made to close the £2 million per annum High Needs Block funding gap resulting from the new National Funding Formula which was to be introduced from April 2018.

A representative of the Unite Union put forward a number of questions and concerns as follows:

- It was questioned why there had been separate consultations on Early Help and Prevention and SEND as this was considered to have caused confusion.
- How many children were waiting for ECHPs? The demand for these was rising.
- No feasibility study had been undertaken in respect of the 30% traded services model; how was it known that this was achievable and what was the back up plan if there was a shortfall?
- How much was traded within the current model?
- Portage would be cut by 50% this would leave only 4 people to handle ECHPs for Reception children; there was already a significant backlog. There would be an impact on the Authority's ability to undertake the work within the appropriate timeframe.

The Deputy Director responded with the following information:

- Although the model of delivery may end up being similar, the consultations in respect of Early Help and Prevention and SEND were around two very distinct and separate issues; the SEND consultation was about addressing achievement and attainment and the Prevention and Early Help was about the

- provision of wrap around support for vulnerable families.
- The Authority was on target to convert all SEN statements to ECHPs by the nationally imposed deadline.
- The process for ECHPs had been changed, with effect from 1 January 2018, and had resulted in a more effective system.
- On the basis of the information currently available, officers were confident that the 30% traded services funding model was viable.
- There would be one point of referral whether for high or low incidence need. Often a child would have several different needs and each child would be considered as an individual. The two teams would work closely together but it was not believed that a locality model was the best option for low incidence.
- A significant number of representations had already been received in respect of the proposed cuts in portage; these would be considered when the feedback to the consultation was assessed.
- The figure of 25 posts was Full Time Equivalents.
- The Service was already working in many of the ways described and teams operated flexibly in conjunction with colleagues. These proposals would just change how it was organised and should cut down on duplication and facilitate a more joined-up approach.
- The revised model was expected to be considered by the Executive at its meeting to be held on 5 April 2018.

Resolved –

That Document “AC” be noted.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Children’s Services

54. CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18

The Committee’s Work Programme 2017-18 (**Document “AD”**) was presented for Member’s consideration.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair expressed thanks to Judith Kirk, the Deputy Director – Education, Employment and Skills, who was to leave the Authority shortly, for her contribution to and work within the district. He wished her well for the future.

Resolved -

That an item be added to the Committee’s Work Programme in respect of those young people who do not attend mainstream school and are being educated in alternative provision.

ACTION: Scrutiny Lead

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER