

## Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on Wednesday, 19 July 2017 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 4.30 pm  
Concluded 5.45 pm

### Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT
D Smith	Engel Tait Thirkill	N Pollard

### NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Chair of Children in Care Council  
Ali Jan Haider - Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group

Observers: Portfolio Holder – Health and Wellbeing

Apologies: Inspector Kevin Taylor and Yasmin Umarji

### Councillor Thirkill in the Chair

#### 1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

#### 2. MINUTES

**Resolved –**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2017 be signed as a correct record.**

***ACTION: City Solicitor***

#### 3. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

#### 4. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

## **Resolved –**

**That it be recommended to the Regulatory and Appeals Committee that the appointment of non-voting co-opted members to the Panel, for the remainder of the 2017/2018 municipal year, be confirmed as set out below:-**

- **Inspector Kevin Taylor - West Yorkshire Police**
- **Ali Jan Haider – Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group**
- **Yasmin Umarji - Bradford Education**
- **The Chair of the Children in Care Council**

***ACTION: City Solicitor***

## **5. B POSITIVE PATHWAYS (INNOVATION FUND) - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) presented a report (**Document "A"**) which updated the Panel in respect of the project resulting from the award of £3.2 million from the Department of Education Innovation Fund in January 2017. Following consultation with the Children in Care Council the programme had been named 'B Positive Pathways'.

The report explained that the programme had three aims:

- (i) To reduce the number of children in care through stronger edge of care provision.
- (ii) To improve the Authority's ability to provide high levels of care within its residential homes through embedding a therapeutic 'PACE' (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) approach.
- (iii) To set up two 'Mockingbird' hubs to improve support to foster carers working with children with more complex needs.

In presenting the report the Deputy Director explained that:

- The programme was being adapted from a successful initiative running in North Yorkshire ('No Wrong Door'). It would be fully funded for the first two years and savings were expected to show from Year 3.
- The 'Mockingbird' model of care was based on a family model, with the local authority acting as the 'grandparent' figure surrounded by a constellation of foster carers, and aimed to deliver resilience in fostering placements. This approach had been used successfully by a number of other local authorities and officers had taken note of their experiences in developing the scheme for Bradford.
- Two pilot projects had been undertaken and the aim was to launch the scheme fully towards the end of 2017.



- PACE training had been taking place across the workforce with a number of staff having also been trained in DDP (Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy). The new approach was starting to have a positive impact.
- There was a significant amount of interest from other authorities in the development of the programme within Bradford.
- A key issue was the recruitment of the right people, both staff and foster carers and this task was in progress.
- The aim was to act more innovatively particularly with the most challenging young people.

He responded to questions from Members:

- Recruitment was underway; large numbers of staff would be changing their roles and this could be a lengthy process.
- A Research Partner had been allocated.
- Cost benefit analysis would be undertaken and the aspiration was that significant savings would be achieved. If the initiative proved successful then funding would continue into Years 3 and 4.
- The initiative in North Yorkshire had resulted in a reduction in the numbers of missing young people, an increase in school attendance and a reduction in incidents of self harm.
- Points of entry for the Police and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) would be included within the hub.
- The largest savings would be achieved by young people remaining with their families rather than coming into care and the placement of Bradford children within the district rather than outside.
- The feedback from local authorities that had already implemented the 'grandparent' role was that it worked effectively; the feedback from both carers and children had been positive. Any issues in respect of complex contact arrangements for particular children would have to be considered as part of the development of the project.
- The participation of foster carers in the Mockingbird model would be voluntary. Some interest had already been expressed by a number of existing carers. People who already had experience of the model would help in explaining how it worked to interested parties.
- The capacity of the residential homes had been reduced as part of the implementation of the new model of care and they were currently at capacity.
- North Yorkshire was Bradford's designated 'Partner in Practice' and would assist with a number of matters such as drafting job descriptions, training and data collection.
- The review of residential provision (which had started in 2015) had already had a major impact and had established a good base for this programme.
- An incremental approach was being taken to recruitment. In the initial stages the residential homes would have significantly more staff than had been the case in the past but this was to allow the capacity for outreach work to take place.



- Life coaches and speech and language therapists would also be available within the homes. Research suggested that over 40% of these young people would be likely to have some undiagnosed need and this could contribute to behavioural issues.
- 'Edge of care' referred to those young people who were on the verge of coming into care, the aim was to prevent this happening if possible.
- A number of young people were currently housed in purchased provision outside the district and the aim was to bring them back to Bradford.
- An outline of the six stage process to implement 'Mockingbird' could be sent to Members after the meeting.

Members commented that:

- The residential homes now provided a more traditional homely environment.
- The information on savings and cost benefit analysis should be provided at an early stage to allow the Panel to review progress throughout the programme.
- The retention of Meadowlea was welcomed.

#### **Resolved –**

**That Document "A" and the creation of the B Positive Pathways Programme be welcomed and that the Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) be requested to provide regular progress reports to the Panel to include updates in respect of the outcomes being achieved and the contribution made to strategic priorities.**

***ACTION: Deputy Director (Children's Social Care)***

## **6. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND OFFENDING**

A report was submitted by the Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) which summarised the activities undertaken, to date, in the current year to try to ensure that looked after young people were not unnecessarily criminalised whilst living in residential or foster care (**Document "B"**).

In presenting the report the following points were made:

- Nationally, young people in care were over represented in the justice system although there had been a steady decline in the numbers entering the system formally over the last six years and also in the numbers in custody.
- The protocol agreed between the local authority, the Police and the Youth Offending Team (YOT) was currently being reviewed to ensure that the Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) 10 point check list was followed. Staff needed to consider whether Police involvement was absolutely necessary; if the Police were called to attend then the inclination tended to be towards taking some action; they had a duty to record any crime
- The aim was to ensure that young people in care were not being criminalised for something that they would not be in a domestic family setting.
- Local magistrates were very sensitive to these issues and did provide



- challenge which had resulted in some cases being withdrawn from court
- This approach complemented the on-going work in community residential homes; the YOT had adopted the 'signs of safety' model.
- The majority of call-outs to residential children's homes related to missing children.
- Work was being undertaken with the homes to deal with more in-house rather than using the criminal justice system perhaps via restorative justice/discussion. Reporting strategies were also being looked at to ensure that Police were not contacted too quickly.

He answered Member's questions:

- It was recognised that in a number of cases the young people were victims and/or survivors of offences themselves and this would have an impact upon their behaviour, the new model of care would look to address this.
- The role of the Safer Homes Police Officer would be integral to the new approach; building trust and positive relationships with police officers and providing positive role models.
- The reviewed protocol would need to be re-launched with all residential home staff.
- It was believed that North Yorkshire's 'No Wrong Door' initiative had halved the numbers of young people reported as missing.
- The residential homes would be well resourced and would include access to a designated police officer.
- It was appreciated that residential home staff worked in a high pressure environment and that there was a need for strong team working and robust policies and procedures. Internal sanctions would be available for staff to use within the homes.
- The re-offending rate was in line with national trends. Once a young person had started exhibiting such behaviour this could be a challenging cycle for staff in the homes to break. It was hoped that the new model of care would help achieve a reduction in the numbers. It should also be borne in mind that although re-offending figures had increased fewer young people were being convicted overall. The case load had reduced but the complexity of the cases had increased.
- It was unsurprising that there was an over representation of looked after young people in these statistics when their previous life experiences were taken into account. Vulnerable young people were also more likely to be susceptible to being drawn into offending by others. The Safer Homes Police Officer would take a positive role in this regard.

Members' comments were as follows:

- The CPS ten point checklist was excellent and took into account the past history of an individual which may help to avoid an overreaction in any particular case. It would facilitate an objective rather than reactive approach to this issue.
- This informative report was welcomed.



**Resolved –**

- (1) That Document “B” be noted and welcomed.**
- (2) That the Panel expresses its support for the joint Children’s Social Care/West Yorkshire Police/Youth Offending Team protocol and looks forward to seeing an improvement in outcomes arising from its use and the new model of care being implemented within the Authority’s residential homes.**

***NO ACTION***

**7. WORK PLAN 2017/18**

**Resolved –**

**That the Panel’s Work Plan for 2017/18, Document “C”, be approved subject to the following additions:**

- B Positive Pathways – Progress Report (September)**
- Through Care Strategy**
- Information on financial management skills to be included in the Leaving Care report scheduled for March 2018.**

***NO ACTION***

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.**

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

