

## Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on Monday, 15 April 2019 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 4.30 pm  
Concluded 5.55 pm

### Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Thirkill Engel Tait	D Smith	Humphreys

### NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Chair of Children in Care Council  
 Inspector Kevin Taylor      West Yorkshire Police  
 Yasmin Umarji                  Bradford Education  
 Sue Thompson                  Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group

### Councillor Thirkill in the Chair

#### 35. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interest of transparency, Yasmin Umarji disclosed that she managed the Virtual School (Minute 39).

***Action: City Solicitor***

#### 36. MINUTES

**Resolved –**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2019 be signed as a correct record.**

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

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

### 38. EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The Interim Assistant Director (Children's Social Care Improvement) presented a progress report on the CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) Psychological Assessment and Therapy Team for Looked After and Adopted Children, including information on the allocation of the available finance (**Document "T"**).

The Clinical Lead for CAMHS Looked After and Adopted Children provided a summary of the report which provided information about the second year of operation of the Service. Details were provided about the evolution of the team, the service model and the clinical work undertaken from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018. A comparison of the first and second years of service delivery was also provided. Members were informed that clinical work was divided into Direct Clinical Work and Indirect Clinical Work; where possible client demographics were provided along with baseline and outcome data for Direct Clinical Work. Indirect Clinical Work included the Consultation Clinic for professionals and carers, and Consultation to Children's Homes.

It was reported that whilst referral rates had remained consistent across the two years, the service became saturated with longer-term complex cases and a reduction in capacity. This meant that waiting times for consultation lengthened from four to nine weeks, and the wait for assessment and therapy exceeded 12 months.

Members were informed that due to the increasing demand on the service and the reduction in capacity, two waiting list initiatives had been developed in Autumn 2018 – A Therapeutic Parenting Group and a Family Assessment Clinic.

A discussion took place about access to services for Looked After Children from outside the district who were in placements within the Bradford district. It was reported that there were just over 400 children in these placements and whilst they were not accessing core services, arrangements had been made since June 2018 for their Social Workers to arrange private therapy appointments for them following their consultation. During the discussion a Member stated that she was aware of funding available via the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) for out of area children placed in Bradford and that a review of CAMHS was currently being undertaken by the CCGs. She considered this funding could help to address the workload and offered to look into this.

Members raised strong concerns that Looked After Children were waiting over a year for direct therapy, particularly as concerns had previously been raised by the Panel that waiting times were too long and now they were even longer.

The Clinical Lead explained that Bradford had very low staffing levels, equivalent to 0.3% Therapists per 100 Looked After Children, when compared with the average for local authorities which were 0.8% Therapists per 100 Looked After Children. Following a Member's question she stated that the service employed four whole time equivalent Therapists but currently the functional clinical capacity was two whole time equivalent Therapists, due to one staff member being on maternity leave and one on long term sick leave and neither of these two posts being backfilled. In order to reach 0.8% Therapists per 100 Looked After

Children, Bradford would need to employ an additional 9.4 whole time equivalent Therapists.

In response to questions from Members it was stated that:

- The ability to recruit and retain staff was not considered an issue.
- Funding was required to increase resources.
- The number of Looked After Children in Bradford was increasing and cases were becoming more complex.
- A service review was due to take place in June 2019.

The Interim Strategic Director, Children's Services expressed strong concern at the amount of time that Looked After Children had to wait to access therapy through the CAMHS service and suggested the Panel consider requesting information about the actions that Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) were taking to escalate this matter following their review meetings. She stated that she could also discuss this matter with her colleagues in the Health Commissioning Team as Looked After Children were evidently not receiving the support they needed in a timely manner. She stated that budgets for the 2019-20 financial year had already been agreed so if the funding of any additional resources had not been accounted for it was important to find out how this issue would be funded. She suggested the Panel request to hear directly from senior health commissioners about what actions were being taken to address the waiting list. She also suggested that the Panel could ask the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the outcome of the recent Care Quality Commission inspection in relation to CAMHS provision.

A Member referred to her own personal experience of the delays experienced for ADHD diagnostic services for children and raised concerns that these delays could lead to some families requiring further help as a consequence.

Given the importance of this matter, a Member requested that an interim report be provided to the Panel in July 2019.

#### **Resolved –**

- (1) That the Interim Strategic Director of Children's Services be requested to liaise with the Health Commissioning Team to stress the need for the emotional and mental wellbeing of Looked After Children to be prioritised and to raise the Panel's concerns regarding the waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).**
- (2) That the Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group non-voting co-opted Member be requested to contact the Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust and report back to the Panel on the financial element and provision of CAMHS for Looked After Children.**
- (3) That the Interim Assistant Director (Children's Social Care Improvement) be requested to provide an update report to the Panel in July 2019 and that the Director of Strategic Partnerships and the Head of Commissioning (NHS Bradford Districts Clinical Commissioning Group) be requested to attend the meeting to explain the provision of CAMHS**

for Looked After Children.

- (4) That the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider the outcome of the recent Care Quality Commission inspection in relation to CAMHS provision.
- (5) That the Interim Assistant Director (Children's Social Care Improvement) be requested to present a report on how Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) are escalating concerns following reviews when the emotional and mental wellbeing of a Looked After Child is not being addressed within a timely manner.

***ACTION: Interim Strategic Director of Children's Services/ Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group non-voting co-opted Member/ Interim Assistant Director (Children's Social Care Improvement)***

### 39. VIRTUAL SCHOOL OUTCOMES REPORT 2017-18

The Interim Assistant Director (Children's Social Care Improvement) presented a report (**Document "U"**) on the virtual school outcome for Looked After Children (LAC) for 2017-18. Outcomes for children in care from Early Years to key stage 4 showed an improving picture over time. By the time they leave school, the progress made by children in care compared favourably to the national picture.

The Virtual Head Teacher provided an overview of the report which stated that primary outcomes at the end of Key Stage 1 remained above those nationally for LAC in all four benchmark (expected standard) measures, reading, writing, maths and the combined measure. At the end of Key Stage 2, outcomes for LAC gaining the expected standard in reading had improved by 10 percentage points to within 3% of LAC nationally. Results for LAC in Bradford gaining the expected standard in maths had improved by 9% and were 1 percentage point above LAC nationally. Results for LAC in writing and GPS had improved by 5% and 3% respectively. The average (mean) scaled score across all pupils with a scaled score showed Bradford LAC marginally above pupils nationally for this measure. At Key Stage 4, in terms of Attainment 8, Bradford LAC outcomes in 2018 were above the national and regional outcomes. The score of 19.7 was above the score of 18.7 nationally. In terms of Progress 8 Bradford outcomes in 2018 were above the national comparator.

In response to Members questions, it was reported that:

- The national statistics were published in November but information relating to LAC were released in February/early March, therefore comparisons could only be made with statistical neighbouring authorities in the year following the results.
- The average attendance of LAC in 2017-18 was 96.1%.
- The number of Key Stage 5 Care Leavers that were cited in the report as being not in education, employment or training (NEET) had reduced to nil by November 2017. This was because their next destinations had not been fixed at the time the statistics were collated.
- There was a programme in place to address the issue of any Care Leavers

- within the NEET category.
- LAC were given priority for Apprenticeships offered by the Council.

The Interim Strategic Director of Children's Services spoke of recent visits she had undertaken to children's homes and raised concerns about the number of children she had seen on her visits during school hours. She suggested the Panel consider requesting information/regular updates about alternative education provision being provided to LAC to ensure they were receiving the right level of education.

Members were informed that the Virtual Head Teacher was a part-time post as funding had not been available to recruit to the post on a full time basis; however there was a lot of demand on the team as the virtual school was growing and it was not considered that a part-time Virtual Head Teacher would be feasible going forward. Members were informed that there were 902 LAC in education within the Bradford district and that Bradford had one of the biggest virtual schools in the country yet had one of the smallest teams. The Virtual Head Teacher stated that his team were finding that Head Teachers were making budgetary cuts to pastoral and therapeutic interventions to protect core teaching in their schools and whilst the way in which pupil premium for LAC was generally improving, it still varied across schools.

Members thanked the Virtual Head Teacher for his report.

#### **Resolved –**

**That the Virtual School Head Teacher and Head of Service Through Care and Resources be requested to submit a joint report to the Panel, within the 2019-20 municipal year, to outline the alternative education provision for Looked After Children and that the report include the types, location and level of education being provided.**

***ACTION: Virtual School Head Teacher/ Head of Service Through Care and Resources***

Chair

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