

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held remotely on Monday, 2 November 2020

Commenced 4.35 pm
Concluded 6.45 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP
Thirkill Farley Tait	Pollard	Knox

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Chair of Children in Care Council

Apologies: Jude MacDonald

Councillor Thirkill in the Chair

58. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

59. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 be signed as a correct record.

ACTION: City Solicitor

60. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

61. HEAD OF QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) AND SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL

REPORT INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO)/CHILD PROTECTION (CP)/AUDIT

The report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services (**Document "N"**) provided an overview of the Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit performance from October 2019 to end of September 2020. The main points were highlighted and responses given to members questions as follows:

- The additional Independent Reviewing Manager, Child Protection Co-ordinators Manager and Service Manager were all substantive posts.
- No Child Protection Plan would be stepped down unless there were satisfactory arrangements in place for the child.
- With regard to Child Protection conferences, a breakdown would be provided in a future report to the Panel where the ethnicity was recorded as unknown.
- The desirable national caseload for Independent Reviewing Officers was 70% and it was noted that the average caseload in the district was higher. Children in the system were being looked at to see where they could be prioritised to move through the system and stepped down to more appropriate levels of support.
- With reference to the statement "Actions of social workers focused predominantly on process rather than quality" it was noted that quality was not an issue but rather the recording that was an issue.
- The new templates for plans had been launched in September and October and practice guidance introduced. A review would be undertaken on their use in practice.
- Mandatory induction training had been improved and would apply to all ages.
- In developing a thematic work stream it had become evident that different services were engaging with children in different ways and using different tools which could be cascaded and shared throughout the service.
- The response of staff to the changes had been positive and very positive relationships had been built with Child Protection Co-ordinators, Independent Reviewing Officers and locality services.
- All Child Protection Co-ordinators had Webex accounts, new laptops were being rolled out and they were being provided with tablets in the interim.

Resolved –

- (1) **That the Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit ensure that the voice of the child is central to the work that is undertaken and captured as part of the Quality Assurance arrangements.**
- (2) **That a further report be presented to the Panel in 12 months time.**

ACTION: Strategic Director of Children's Services

62. DEPARTMENT OF CORPORATE RESOURCES CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT

The Department of Corporate Resources provided support and activities for Looked After Children and young people across a wide range of services. The report of the Director of Corporate Resources (**Document "O"**) provided information on this work to inform panel members.

In response to a member question the Director of Human Resources agreed to provide members of the Panel with figures regarding grant funding in respect of "B" Positive Pathways programme, Social Work Teaching Partnership.

It was noted that a commitment had been made that unless Wi-Fi connectivity was provided, placements for over 16 year olds would not be commissioned. This was in the action plan for the placement co-ordination team.

Resolved –

That the Panel note the range of activities and actions outlined in paragraph 2 of Document "O" and the areas for further development.

ACTION: Strategic Director Corporate Resources

63. CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH - UPDATE

The report of the Joint Mental Health Commissioner NHS (**Document "P"**) provided an update on progress to improve mental health support for children and young people since the last report in February 2020.

The Panel was asked to note the outcomes of the system wide review and subsequent work undertaken to improve mental health support in Bradford.

The Joint Mental Health Commissioner NHS summarised the main points of the report.

The Children and Families Portfolio Holder expressed concern that young people's mental health provision in the district was too fragmented in terms of partners and providers and stressed the importance of early intervention which was crucial to achieve successful outcomes for young people. He emphasised that a significant amount of work was required. He was concerned about the

impact on the mental health of young people of the Covid19 pandemic and referred to young people being out of school and facing challenges in their families. He emphasised the need to take control of the issue of young people's mental health and move forward stressing that early intervention was the key to preventing more complex issues over time and investing to save in the future.

In response the Joint Mental Health Commissioner NHS noted that support for young people's mental health was provided by a number of services such as Children's Social Care, CAMHS, schools and hospitals that were all working better together to provide support for young people.

Answers were given to members questions as follows:

- A multi pronged approach had been adopted to reach children during the Covid19 pandemic such as bulletins from the Deputy Director of Education's team, through Trailblazers and getting information out into communities.
- It was highlighted that at £48 the spend per head in the district for children and young people's mental health was significantly below the national average of £59. In response it was noted that the Health and Wellbeing Board had identified that spend on children and young people's mental health was £1.8 short of what it should be and were looking at how the money was being released into the system to ensure that it was coming to children and young people's mental health services.
- None of the BAME young people asked said home would be the best place to receive support with their mental health and this may be to do with stigma around mental health, that they lived in households where privacy and accessing appropriate support tools was difficult. Looking to provide more support and working within the council and care trust to ensure that the ethnicity of staff was more reflective of communities.
- The issue that 72% of parents responded that accessing support in a mental health crisis was very difficult or difficult needed to be addressed urgently.
- There was a work stream looking into the figure that 32% of appointments were being cancelled by Bradford District Care Trust and whether referrals were being made to the right service.
- Feedback received from parents and young people had identified that because early intervention was not in place they were not being seen in the right part of the service. A script of questions to be asked before a first appointment, was being devised in consultation with parents and young people. It would include such things as how they would travel to the appointment and whether there was anything that could be put in place to make the appointment accessible for them.
- With the introduction of the One Trusted pathway a multi disciplinary team would be in place to guide children and young people to the correct

service. It would allow for an understanding of what support they needed and who should provide it. It was stressed that services should be wrapping around a child or young person rather than leaving them to navigate their way through the services.

Resolved –

- (1) The Panel noted the action plan, highlighted areas for consideration and attention and supported the System Review currently underway.**
- (2) That a further report be presented to the Panel in 6 months specifically looking at pathways and referrals and identifying obstacles that had resulted in missed appointments in the light of the cost of such missed appointments.**

ACTION: Joint Mental Health Commissioner NHS

64. WORK PLAN 2020/21

Resolved –

That the members be provided with an update on Citizenship and Passport Brexit planning with particular emphasis on applications for Settled Status, either outside the formal Committee process or at the March/April 2021 meeting to be agreed by the Chair.

ACTION: Strategic Director of Children's Services
Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel

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