

Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee to be held on 27th February 2018

AE

Subject:

B Positive Pathways

Summary statement:

In January 2017 Bradford was awarded £3.2 million over 2 years from the DfE Innovation Fund. There are 3 elements to the award:

- 1) Reducing the number of children in care through stronger edge of care work.
- 2) Improving our ability to provide high levels of care within our residential homes through embedding a therapeutic "PACE" approach.
- 3) Setting up two "mockingbird" hubs to improve support to foster carers working with children with more complex needs.

After consultation with the Children in Care Council, the programme was named B Positive Pathways

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In January 2017, Bradford was awarded £3.2 million over 2 years from the DfE Innovation Fund, the second biggest award made by the DfE. There are 3 elements to the award. Reducing the number of children in care through stronger edge of care work. Improving our ability to provide high levels of care within our residential homes through embedding a therapeutic “PACE” approach. Setting up two “Mockingbird” hubs to provide support to foster carers working with children with more complex needs. After consultation with the Children in Care Council, the programme was named B Positive Pathways.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 B Positive Pathways Programme (BPP) is a £3.2m innovation funded project that scales the successful North Yorkshire ‘No Wrong Door’ innovation project to Bradford. No Wrong Door is a different approach to working with adolescents to prevent them entering the care system and to improve their long term outcomes. The model centres on a hub home with wrap around multi agency professionals working together. No Wrong Door has won several awards and has made a significant saving to the public purse in the approach that has been taken. A number of Local Authorities are looking to replicate this approach.
- The Department of Education evaluation of the No Wrong Door project in July 2017 stated that savings had been made through both ‘cashable’ and ‘cost avoidance’ NYCC saved £440,000 by reducing out of authority placements for adolescents (cashable).
 - Police saved £200,000 through reduction in missing episodes and offending behaviour (cashable).
 - NYCC saved £20,000 in costs incurred by placement moves through increased placement stability.
 - Estimated cost saving of CAMHS undertaking assessments and interventions through in house staff £316,000.
 - Estimated cost saving of SaLTs £300,000.
- 2.2 BPP is fully funded in the first two years (from the start date of 1st April 2017 we agreed with DfE) and by year three we will be aiming to show the significant savings that have been made to ensure that the programme is supported financially for years three and four. There will be a full academic review of the programme (including a cost benefit analysis) to show impact with our research partners led by the University of Oxford Rees Centre.
- 2.3 In October 2018 Robert Goodwill, Minister of State for Children and Families, officially launched BPP at a Conference in Bradford.
- 2.4 BPP has three key elements:
- 1) Hub Home & Specialist Children’s Homes;
 - 2) Mockingbird Fostering Model;
 - 3) Pace Model of Care.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 B Positive Pathway Hub Home & Specialist Children's Homes.

3.2 The BPP service is based out of one of our Local Authority Children's homes, The Willows. A manager has been identified to take on the Registered Manager role who will start full time in the coming month. Staff working at this base provide both a respite and outreach model. The team consists of residential staff and outreach workers, supported by dedicated Police Officers, Life coaches (psychologists), Speech & Language therapist and occupational therapists, close links with the Virtual School and Youth Service. All are now in post, with the exception of health staff who have been appointed but have yet to take up post.

3.3 The BPP service will work with children at the edge of care and respond proactively and innovatively to cases that at the moment quickly escalate to full time care. We envisage that there will be a significant caseload of families and young people accessing this service. We will expect outreach workers to support young people and families in their own homes responding at the time of crisis and to call on the wrap around support to enable families to work through their issues without statutory intervention. The outreach service will be offered 24/7. As of 2nd February 2018 the outreach staff held an active caseload of 48 "edge of care" adolescents and had already closed (without entering long term care) cases relating to 7 edge of care adolescents.

3.4 We have taken on the lease of Hollybank Road from Catholic Care where one of the homes will be sited, and the scheduled opening is early March 2018.

3.5 In addition to The Willows, we have identified three specialist homes in Bradford. These are Newholme, Meadowlea and Hollybank Road (see above). These homes will have a greater level of staffing, will have a reduced number of residents and will call on the specialist roles within the BPP hub. These homes have already contributed to our aim to return children from external homes to live in this provision and create resilient long term placements. It is predominately adolescents that are placed in external residential accommodation. Despite Bradford mirroring the national picture of a rising overall care population, our external residential placements have fallen by 8% these are adolescent young people and therefore in the target group for BPP. This is cash saving to the local authority of £378,000 and in addition saves on SW travel time and contact.

3.6 We will explore recruiting foster carers on casual contracts to work as part of the residential teams. If successful relationships are built there will be the possibility that young people can be fostered from the homes.

3.7 Mockingbird Fostering

3.8 Mockingbird is a fostering model first used in America. It uses the concept of a hub carer being at the centre of a constellation of foster families. The hub carer becomes the 'grandparent' figure and provides regular sleep overs to the young people in the constellation and arranges a regular get together of the whole constellation. The hub carer is supported by a liaison worker. A constellation is made up of between 6 – 8 foster families.

- 3.9 The model has been embedded in a number of Local Authorities as part of the first tranche of innovation and has resulted in greater placement stability and outcomes for the young people.
- 3.10 We have now successfully completed the six stage process to implement Mockingbird and have been supported through our partnership with the Fostering Network.
- 3.11 We had substantial interest from foster carers in becoming hub carers and have selected 2 who are now developing their Mockingbird constellations. One concentrates on supporting mainstream carers, the other on supporting family and friends carers. We plan to support these arrangements further by linking them to the BPP hub home. Mockingbird will be officially launched at an event with foster carers on 10th February 2018.
- 3.12 **Model of Care**
- 3.13 As a result of an external review of our residential provision in 2015, we developed a model for Looked After children in Bradford.
- 3.14 We aim for the basis of this model PACE to be our approach to working with children who have suffered early trauma and attachment in all placements.
- Attachment (PACE – playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy);
 - Resilience;
 - Team Teach;
 - Outcome Star;
 - Signs of Safety;
 - Building life skills for independence.
- 3.15 A Workforce Development Plan has been implemented to embed the approaches above within the staff teams. This will provide staff with the skills to fully support children and young people.
- 3.16 Training in the elements of the model is on-going. A total of 68 residential staff have commenced training and of these a total of 61 have completed Signs of Safety training, PACE training, Outcome Star training and Developing Resilience in Children training. This will be an on going rolling programme of training to meet the needs of the cohort and any new staff members that are employed.
- 3.17 All of the homes have PACE Champions and Signs of Safety Practice Leads. Additionally, some staff have had the opportunity to train in Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy – level 1 and level 2 – the therapy that incorporates PACE. Approximately 16 of these staff have done ‘training for trainers’ and are training all staff over 6 sessions in Foundations for Attachment, a more in depth attachment based programme informed by PACE.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 Evidence suggests that teenagers that enter carer often experience poor outcomes,

including disruptions in contact with families and disruptions in education. In addition risks of missing, offending, substance misuse and exploitation can be increased. Children who enter care as teenagers are disproportionately likely to be placed in residential care (as opposed to family settings), including out of authority placements. As well as being exceptionally expensive, out of authority placements can further disrupt family ties and educational outcomes. The DfE innovation Funded B Positive Pathways programme has the potential to contribute to our strategic priorities associated with Better health – Better Lives as well as Great Start – Good Schools by safely, and appropriately, reducing the number of children in care as well as reducing expenditure on high cost residential placements. (NOT A Its early days but we can demonstrate some costs savings (or cost avoidance) the BPP analyst is now in post and will ensure that the tracker that will be used to monitor impact is in place and will be reported monthly to the BPP Innovation board chaired by the DCS.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 None.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

None.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

None.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None.

7.6 TRADE UNION

None.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

None.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of this report and the progress of B Positive Pathways.

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.