

## **Report of the Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 25 April 2018**

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**Subject: Progress Report on 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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Jim Hopkinson  
Deputy Director  
(Children's Social Care)

**Portfolio:**

**Children's Services**

Report Contact: Jim Hopkinson  
Phone: (01274) 432904  
E-mail: [jim.hopkinson@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:jim.hopkinson@bradford.gov.uk)

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

**Children's Services**

## 1. SUMMARY

1.1 In January 2017, Bradford was awarded £3.2 million over 2 years from the Department for Education (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’. North Yorkshire County Council (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 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (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 1<sup>st</sup> 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, the then 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 Hub is based at the Willows which is one of Bradford's children's homes. Since the last update to the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) in November 2017, a Registered Manager has been appointed to lead the BPP programme. In addition, a Psychologist (Life Coach) seconded from Bradford District Care Team (BDCT) has joined the team as have two dedicated Police Officers, a Policy Analyst. A further Psychologist and two Speech and Language Therapists have been appointed with start dates over the next couple of months. An advert for an Occupational Therapist to join the team is scheduled.
- 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Hollybank Road (our new children's home leased from Catholic Care) opened in March 2018. At the time of writing one child has returned from an out of authority placement and another child who was expected to go to an out of authority placement has instead gone to this home.
- 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 Social Worker 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. We are also looking at fostering assessments for our residential staff so they can maintain children in a home environment on a crisis basis.

### 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 Our Mockingbird programme was launched on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Both constellations (one for Family & Friends and for mainstream) are fully operating and anecdotal evidence suggests that foster carers welcome the support and children welcome the new friendships. In the summer, some of these householders will jointly attend an activity weekend funded by the Fostering Network.

### 3.11 **Model of Care**

3.12 As a result of an external review of our residential provision in 2015, we developed a model for Looked After children in Bradford.

3.13 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.

3.14 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.

3.15 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.

3.16 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.

### **3.17 Evaluation**

- 3.18 The evaluation framework of BPP has been agreed. Our evaluation partners are the Rees Centre, University of Oxford in conjunction with University of York. As Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy (PACE) and Signs of Safety (SoS) elements are well researched, the evaluators will concentrate on the impact of the hub homes, the outreach team and the Mockingbird constellations. The evaluation will be both quantitative and qualitative and have a cost benefit extraction for Bradford. Emerging findings will be shared through interim reports. We will use the findings to inform future investment asks. At the time of the bid, Health and Police colleagues agreed to consider continued funding for the model if there is a clear investment proposition.

## **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 Evidence suggests that teenagers that enter care 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 Department for Education (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. (Note: It's 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 Strategic Director, Children's Services).

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

- 5.1 That the Corporate Parenting Panel note the content of this report and the progress of B Positive Pathways.

## **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.

**7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS  
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

None.

**8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

**9. OPTIONS**

None.

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 That the Corporate Parenting Panel note the content of this report and the progress of B Positive Pathways.

**11. APPENDICES**

None.

**12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.