

Report of the Interim Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of the Children's Overview & Scrutiny Committee to be held on 23rd January 2019

Subject:

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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 need for children to come into 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 (BPP)

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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 need for children to come into 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 (BPP).
- 1.2 In November 2018, DfE gave permission to re-profile funds from the initial 2 year timeframe into a third year in line with delays encountered through recruiting specialist practitioners.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 B Positive Pathways Programme (BPP) is a £3.2m innovation funded project that scales the successful North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) ‘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 Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs) £300,000.
- 2.2 BPP is fully funded for two years. There has been a staggered completion date for the two years in regard to partners. The Police partnership will be reviewed in March 2019 and the Health partnership will be reviewed in March 2020. By the third year for each partnership, 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 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. We currently have a Psychologist, Speech and language Therapist, and Occupational Therapist all seconded from Bradford Discrete Care Team (BDCT) based within the home. In addition to this we also have a Police Officer and Specialist Teacher based within the Willows Childrens Home.

3.3 In addition to The Willows, we have identified three specialist homes in Bradford. These are Newholme, Meadowlea and Hollybank Road. These homes have a greater level of staffing, have a reduced number of residents and have their own team of specialist roles inclusive of Psychologist, Speech and language Therapist and Police Officer. They share the same resource with the Willows for the role of Occupational Therapist. 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 care population, we have not seen a commensurate rise in external residential placements. We anticipate being able to demonstrate a cashable saving to the Local Authority in terms of less use of external residential and a reduction in costs associated with Social Worker travel time and contact,

3.4 The BPP service works with children at the edge of care and responds proactively and innovatively to cases that at the moment quickly escalate to full time care. There is a significant caseload of families and young people accessing this service. Our outreach workers support young people and families in their own homes responding at the time of crisis and they utilise the wrap around support to enable families to work through their issues without statutory intervention. As of 15th November 2018, the outreach staff held an active caseload of 88 "edge of care" adolescents and had already closed 102 cases in which 91.7% of those young people did not enter the care system. (Please see appendix 1).

3.5 We are exploring other areas of innovation within the service and looking to recruit a specialist foster carer to work in a capacity that allows children to transition from residential care into fostering. A project has been established named 'Friends of Meadowlea' as we will pilot this with just one children's home at first.

3.6 Mockingbird Fostering

3.7 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.

- 3.8 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
- 3.9 Our Mockingbird programme was launched on 10th February 2018. Both constellations (one for Family & Friends and for mainstream) are fully operating and anecdotal evidence suggest that foster carers welcome the support and children welcome the new friendships.
- 3.10 We currently have 26 young people in the Mockingbird model of and since February 2018 we have not encountered any breakdowns of stability within this cohort.
- 3.11 On Monday 17th December 2018, The Fostering Network (FN) will attend Bradford to review the progress made since February and help support plans for 2019. The focus Bradford would like to make is to look specifically at increasing sibling engagement where siblings are placed within separate foster families. Since February 2018, Bradford has passed two fidelity tests presented by Fostering Network.
- 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 throughout Childrens services. In total over 1300 courses have been completed inclusive of Signs of safety, PACE, Team Teach, Outcome Star and Foundations for Attachment. A further 178 courses are due to be attended by BPP staff and the fostering service.
- 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. The project set a target of having 200 social workers attend these specific courses, this target was reached in summer 2018.

3.18 Evaluation

- 3.19 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.
- 3.20 In addition to this we have a data analyst working specifically on the BPP data collection and working closely with the external evaluation team. We have now designed a recording tool for the project. We also have a police data analyst who is helping collate data around issues such as missing occurrences.

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 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.
- 4.2 We are now in a position to analyse the emerging cost savings for the Police partnership. In January 2019 the evaluation team will be able to produce some cost benefit analysis findings ahead of our discussions with police to identify the future vision of the partnership; our in house BPP data analyst has also been able to draw some data. The findings are inclusive of a £292,825 saving across LAC for missing, of which £144,425 is directly related to BPP. In addition to this, BPP has made a direct saving to police of £71,253 in its reduction of calls for service. (Please see Appendix 2,3 and 4).
- 4.3 At this current time we do not have enough data from our health partnership to be able to accurately analyse cost benefit analysis. We hope to obtain this within the next 6 months. We do however have some data relating to the Strengths and Difficulties questions (SDQ) which is the wellbeing indication tool. The results are encouraging and show that the health partnership is having positive impact. Please see Appendix 5.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

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

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

None.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

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.

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

This report is being presented to the Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel on 21st January 2019.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

None.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

None.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

11. APPENDICES

1. Outcomes of closed outreach cases
2. Bradford LAC missing (total Population)
3. Bradford LAC missing (BPP homes only)
4. Bradford Calls for Service (BPP homes x 2)
5. SDQ Score sample

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.