

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Time:** 2.00pm – 3.40pm

**Present:** Councillors D Brown (Vice-Chairman), S Bywater, D Divine, P Downes, S Frost, D Harty, J Hipkin, G Kenney (substituting for P Brown), M Leeke, M Loynes, F Onasanya, Whitehead (Chairwoman) and J Wisson.

**Apologies:** Councillor P Brown and Mr P Rossi (Roman Catholic diocesan representative)

### **163. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **164. MINUTES 9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2016 AND ACTION LOG**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman.

The Action Log was noted.

With reference to minute 153, the Chairwoman confirmed that she had written to the organiser of the petition in respect of Fordham Primary School to outline the position in relation to expansion of the school and that a response had been received welcoming the positive update.

### **165. PETITIONS**

No petitions had been received.

### **166. CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH (CAMH)**

The Committee received a report which provided an update on Children's and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) waiting lists and progress made to reduce waiting times. The views of the Committee were sought on future plans to further improve emotional health and wellbeing services in Cambridgeshire, as outlined in the submitted report.

During discussion:

- Following comments by a Member noting the apparent uplift in the waiting list numbers in December 2015, it was reported that waiting list numbers were monitored and updated weekly and that there was currently a downward trend.
- With respect to the apparent reduction in waiting list numbers, a Member pointed out that waiting lists for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) had closed in July 2015 and that it was therefore to be expected that numbers would have fallen. In response, it was confirmed that the waiting lists had re-opened on 15 December 2015 and that whilst considerable work had taken place during the intervening period to provide early intervention

and support, there would have been an uplift in the figures after the waiting lists re-opened in December.

- Noting that the waiting list figures were updated weekly yet the data presented in the report only covered the period to 18 December 2015, it was requested that future reports provide more up to date performance information.
- It was noted that the original additional investment from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had been allocated primarily for core CAMH services. Additional investment of £340k had now been made available to reduce ADHD/ASD waiting list times.
- Following a question, further information was given about the ITHRIVE model which focused on early intervention and investment and aimed to ensure that children and young people thrived in their community and that parents and professionals got the right advice at the right time to address any emerging mental health needs. The model focused on needs rather than a structured tier system. It was suggested that the ITHRIVE model should be the subject of a presentation at a future Members' Seminar. **Action required.**
- Noting that the data in the report had not been presented in a consistent format, it was requested that one method of presenting the data be used in future such reports. In response, it was reported that some of the data was in the format required by the Department of Health but that officers would endeavour to present data in a more consistent way in future reports.
- The development of a combined single point of referral through the Advice and Co-ordination team, and the more holistic approach generally envisaged by the redesign and transformation of CAMHS, was welcomed.
- Following a question from a Member, reference was made to an enhanced model of care being adopted locally for eating disorders with the aim of delivering community based, family focused interventions and reducing the need for inpatient care.

At the end of the debate the Chairwoman summarised the apparent conclusion of the Committee that it welcomed the progress made in reducing waiting times and supported the direction of travel outlined in the Transformation plan.

It was resolved:

- (a) To note and comment on progress made to reduce waiting times and the re-opening of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) waiting lists, for diagnosis and clinical input.
- (b) To note and comment on Transformation plans for emotional health and well being services in Cambridgeshire and the ITHRIVE model of delivery.

## **167. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STRATEGY (BUILDING FAMILY RESILIENCE)**

The Committee received and considered a report which, in the light of the outcomes of a consultation exercise, presented the final draft of the Looked After Children Strategy 2015 - 2021 (Building Family Resilience), a copy of which was attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and the current version of the Looked After Children (LAC) Action Plan, a copy of which was attached at Appendix 2.

During discussion:

- Concern was expressed at the apparent limited opportunity for Members to review and monitor progress in implementing the LAC Strategy and achieving the challenging savings targets identified for the service. After further discussion, it was concluded that three update reports, highlighting progress against the Action Plan and delivery of savings, should be submitted to the Committee a year and that update reports should also be submitted to the Corporate Parenting Board. **Action required.**
- In response to a question, it was explained that the LAC Commissioning Board was a group of officers from Children, Families and Adults (CFA) which was charged with implementing the LAC Strategy and Action Plan. The CFA Performance Board was the monthly meeting of CFA Directors, chaired by the Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services, whose role included monitoring achievement of savings targets.
- Following comments from a Member, it was explained that the table in paragraph 4.2 of the report indicated the number of children becoming looked after and those ceasing to be looked after. Noting that the numbers of Looked After Children did not appear to add up correctly, it was acknowledged that further explanation on presentation of the figures would be helpful in future reports.
- It was noted that there had been a gradual increase in the number of Looked After Children over the last two years, including an increase in the cohort of unaccompanied asylum seeking children.
- The Chairwoman requested that the first update presented to the Committee should include information on the strategy for identifying families at the edge of care. **Action required.**

It was resolved:

To review and approve the final version of the Looked After Children (LAC) Strategy 2015 – 2021 (Building Family Resilience) and the current version of the LAC Action Plan.

## **168. BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

The Committee received a report regarding “Stronger Together – Cambridgeshire’s Strategy for Building Resilient Communities” and which sought Members’ views on the actions taking place in support of the strategy.

During discussion:-

- Following a question, further information was provided on work to review the use of the Council’s assets and to develop community hubs. It was anticipated that further proposals on this initiative would be available within the next two to three months.
- Clarification was sought on whether community hubs would also include public health services. In response, reference was made to the expectation that community hubs would provide information on accessing resources provided by other partners.
- Reference was made to the need for co-ordination between partners in developing the community hub initiative and determining which services would have a

presence in the community hub space. The Service Director: Enhanced and Preventative Services undertook to raise the need for co-ordinated engagement between partners in respect of community hubs at a forthcoming meeting of the Cambridgeshire Public Services Board. **Action required.**

- A Member reported on a village meeting he had organised to consider how the community could develop their own local activities to mitigate public service reductions, which had been followed up by circulation of a questionnaire. The public response had been very encouraging, with large numbers of volunteers coming forward, except in the area of working with young people, in view of concerns around child protection and safeguarding requirements. The Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services acknowledged that it was important that the Council developed its communications to explain that there was a proportionate approach to child protection and to provide guidance on how the community could provide support in this area.
- Reference was made to the resource pressures associated with organising and co-ordinating groups of volunteers. In response, reference was made to the role of Youth and Community Co-ordinators in working with Parish Councils, Members and local people to facilitate and co-ordinate local activity and to help build community capacity.
- Following a request, the Member concerned agreed to share a copy of the community questionnaire with other Members, on request.
- Reference was made to the need to acknowledge the increase in Councillor workload associated with the Community Connector role.

It was resolved:

To note and comment on the actions proposed to support the Community Resilience Strategy.

#### **169. APPOINTMENT OF AN ALTERNATIVE SPONSOR FOR THE NEW SECONDARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN LITTLEPORT**

The Committee received a report which informed the Committee of the anticipated withdrawal of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust (GDFT) as the sponsor of the new secondary and special schools in Littleport which were due to open in September 2017. As a consequence, the report also sought the Committee's endorsement of the Active Learning Trust (ALT) as the Council's preferred sponsor for both schools.

In introducing the report, officers explained that whilst the report indicated that GDFT had withdrawn its sponsorship, the Council had received a letter on 29th February 2016 advising that the Trust Board would not make a final decision on its withdrawal as the sponsor of these two schools until 18<sup>th</sup> March. However, withdrawal was being recommended to the Trust Board by the Chief Executive of the Trust.

The County Council in a letter to the Trust Chief Executive dated 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 had stated its intention to discuss the options available for seeking an alternative sponsor with the Regional Schools Commissioner and, given the timescales involved, to proceed based on his advice unless it heard anything further from GDFT. As nothing had been heard until 29<sup>th</sup> February, the Council had acted on its stated intention to proceed with the process for securing a new sponsor.

It was noted that the reason for GDFT's anticipated withdrawal from sponsorship of the schools was that it did not support proposals for leasing arrangements in respect of the

proposed leisure centre and associated sports facilities, as outlined in the report.

The Committee was informed that ALT had submitted an updated proposal on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2016, a copy of which was attached at Appendix 2 to the report. Officers were content that the updated submission had demonstrated the development of ALT as a sponsor and directly addressed comments made by the Council's assessment panel during the initial selection process, when it had been the close "runner up" to the GDFT. ALT was also comfortable with the proposed leasing arrangements for the leisure centre and sports facilities. On that basis, it was recommended that ALT be selected as the Council's preferred sponsor of the two new Littleport schools.

During discussion:

- The Members who had served on the original assessment panel indicated their support for selecting ALT as the preferred sponsor, noting that there had been little to choose between the two proposed sponsors during the initial selection process.
- Councillor Divine, as Local Member for Littleport, confirmed his support for the selection of ALT and it was reported that Councillor Bailey (Local Member for Ely South and West) and Councillor Rouse (Local Member for Ely North and East) also endorsed the proposed selection of ALT.
- It was acknowledged that the Council needed to be clearer in invitations for new school sponsors when there was an expectation that schools would be available for dual use.
- In response to reservations expressed about making a decision prior to receiving confirmation of the withdrawal of GDFT, it was reported that the recommendation of the Chief Executive of GDFT to the Trust Board was to withdraw as sponsor and that the officers fully expected the Board to approve the recommendation. Whilst there was perceived to be the minimum of risk that GDFT would not confirm its withdrawal as a sponsor, officers would review the situation should that scenario arise and ensure that due process was followed.
- Following a question, further information was provided about the reasons for GDFT's anticipated withdrawal as sponsor which related to its preference to be granted the lease of the leisure centre and community facilities so that it had greater control over use of the site.
- In response to a question, reference was made to the updated proposal from ALT indicating that it had sought to strengthen its expertise in respect of the implementation of the special school through developing partnerships with Highfields School in Ely and being advised by the former Head of Linton Village College, who had overseen the co-location of the Granta Special School on the site and the redevelopment of the Linton Community Sports Centre and adjacent facilities.
- With reference to paragraphs 1.4 – 1.5, it was clarified that the leisure facilities were currently situated on land in the ownership of the Parish Council, but that the new facilities would be built on land owned by the County Council.
- Given the concerns expressed by GDFT, an assurance was sought that it would be possible to safeguard pupils on site notwithstanding its dual use. In response it was confirmed that risks could be mitigated through design based on the extensive experience of dual use models operating throughout the County. ALT had also confirmed that it had no concerns about the ability to safeguard pupils.
- Noting that the school was due to open in September 2017, the need to appoint a preferred sponsor without further delay was acknowledged.
- It was agreed that Committee should be notified of the decision of the Trust Board of GDFT following its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016. **Action required.**

In the light of the update presented by officers at the meeting, a revised recommendation (a) was tabled for the Committee's consideration as follows:-

- (a) That the Committee gives its endorsement to the Active Learning Trust (ALT) being named as the Council's preferred sponsor for the new secondary and special schools to be opened in Littleport in September 2017, having noted and taken into account:-
- the recommendation to be submitted to the Board by the Chief Executive of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust, at its meeting to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016, to withdraw as the sponsor of both schools.
  - The strength of the original ALT proposal which has been developed further in recent discussions between Council officers and ALT.

The Chairwoman sought and gained the support of the Committee to this amendment.

It was resolved, with one abstention:

- (a) That the Committee gives its endorsement to the Active Learning Trust (ALT) being named as the Council's preferred sponsor for the new secondary and special schools to be opened in Littleport in September 2017, having noted and taken into account:-
- the recommendation to be submitted to the Board by the Chief Executive of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust, at its meeting to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016, to withdraw as the sponsor of both schools.
  - The strength of the original ALT proposal which has been developed further in recent discussions between Council officers and ALT.
- (b) That the Secretary of State for Education as the decision maker in this case, be informed of this Committee's endorsement of the Active Learning Trust (ALT) as the sponsor with immediate effect.

## **170. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – JANUARY 2016**

The Committee considered the Finance and Performance report for Children, Families and Adults (CFA) outlining the financial and performance position as at the end of January 2016. The report was for the whole of CFA services and as such, not all the services were the responsibility of this Committee.

The Chairwoman remarked that the information in the report was always out of date by the time it was received by the Committee. Whilst this might be improved to some extent if meetings of the Committee were moved to the end of the month, this would not entirely overcome the reporting lag and therefore it would be necessary for the Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services to continue to provide verbal updates.

The Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services reported verbally that at the end of February 2016 there was a projected underspend of around £1.9m across the whole of CFA and outlined the main reasons for the increased underspend, including an

improvement in the Home to School Transport budget of £400k. He further reported on steps taken with a view to improving the accuracy of budget forecasting.

During discussion:

- The Chairwoman reported that the Total Transport Group was due to receive a report at its next meeting on the scope for more flexible use of the County Council's fleet of minibuses.
- Following comments regarding the increase in the budget for Looked After Children (LAC) Transport, the Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services explained that the actions in the LAC Strategy would seek to reduce expenditure in this area, with placements being the key consideration, although often it was in the child's best interest to remain at their existing school to maintain stability. The Executive Director undertook to check whether foster carers were offered a mileage allowance to transport foster children to their existing schools.  
**Action required.**
- With reference to page 175 and in response to a question, the Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services agreed to investigate and respond to the Member concerned on whether the two sums shown for slippage in respect of the Southern Fringe Secondary scheme were duplicated or should be added together.  
**Action required.**
- A Member commented on the positive broadcast on Radio Cambridgeshire involving the Fostering Marketing and Communications Manager.

It was resolved:

To review and comment on the report.

## **171. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN, APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRAINING PLAN**

The Committee received a report which:-

- (a) Presented the agenda plan for the Children and Young People Committee, as set out in Appendix A;
- (b) Invited reports back from representatives on outside bodies; and
- (c) Presented the updated Committee Training Plan, a copy of which was attached at Appendix B to the report.

Further to minute 167, it was agreed to add the Looked After Children Strategy progress updates to the agenda plan for the meetings of the Committee on 12 July 2016 and 8 November 2016. **Action required.**

In respect of attendances at Internal Advisory Groups and Outside Bodies, the Committee received updates from:-

- Councillor Bywater on his attendance at a meeting of the Child Poverty Champions Group;
- Councillor Kenneyin respect of the Virtual School Management Board; and
- Councillor Downes on his attendance at a meeting of the Cambridgeshire Music Hub.

In his update, Councillor Bywater reported that attendance at meetings of the Child Poverty Champions Group was proving disappointing and that he was discussing with the

Service Director: Enhanced and Preventative Services how to increase engagement of stakeholders and partners with the work of the group and the possible scope for joining up with work on adult poverty.

It was resolved:

1. To note the agenda plan, as set out at Appendix A.
2. To note the oral updates from representatives on outside bodies.
3. To note the Committee's Training Plan, as set out at Appendix B.

Chairwoman