

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 10 July 2018

Time: 2.00pm – 4.15pm

Venue: Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillors S Bywater (Chairman), S Hoy (Vice Chairwoman), A Bradnam, A Costello, P Downes, L Every, A Hay, S Taylor, J Whitehead and J Wisson

Apologies: Councillors D Wells (substituted by Cllr Costello), Flavio Vettese and Andrew Read

Also present: Councillor R Hickford

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

121. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Wells (Councillor Costello substituting), Flavio Vettese and Andrew Read.

122. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 22 MAY 2018

The minutes of the meeting on 22 May 2018 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman, with the following correction:

Item 119: second bullet point should read “The New Street Ragged School Trust ...”

123. ACTION LOG

The Action Log was reviewed and the following verbal updates noted:

Minute 101 – Educational Performance in Cambridgeshire in the 2016/17 Academic Year – The Service Director for Education advised that he would be presenting a new data set based on the comments raised, and this would include both the current year and the previous year’s performance.

Minute 32 – Education Outcomes: Provisional Results - in response to a question as to why this had been rescheduled again, the Service Director for Education explained that it was being delayed until September as the latest data sets would be available then.

124. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

DECISIONS

125. FREE SCHOOL PROPOSALS

The Service Director for Education reminded Members that at their last meeting, the Committee had considered a report on twelve Free School proposals, seven of which were in Cambridge. Wave 13 of the Free School programme had since commenced, which included criteria to target Free School applications to those areas where new schools were most needed. Expressions of interest needed to be submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) in July, with formal bids to be submitted by November. Officers were proactively supporting that process, and talking to providers, and would be reporting back to Committee in the Autumn. It was unlikely that any new schools would be agreed until March 2019 at the earliest.

In addition to Wave 13, the pre-consultation had been launched for a Wisbech secondary school, and that process would run until September. The aim of the pre-consultation was to identify what type of school the community wanted.

A number of Committee Members had received correspondence from residents regarding the Godmanchester Secondary Academy, which was one of the Wave 12 Free Schools that had been agreed. Although it had not been involved in the original decision making, the Council does have a role, and a meeting was planned for 16th July to share some of the thinking with Members about that school. It was confirmed that the Local Member had been engaged in that process.

It was resolved to:

note the update.

MONITORING AND INFORMATION ITEMS

With the Committee's agreement, the Chairman agreed to change the order of the agenda so that the following item could be considered next:

126. TRANSFORMING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN IN CARE – REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

The Service Director: Children's Services & Safeguarding presented a report on developments taking place to meet the requirements for all top tier local authorities to develop a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA).

Members noted the background to this government initiative to regionalise adoption agencies, which was aimed at delivering a system with a larger footprint, and minimising duplication. In practice, this was quite difficult, as often different authorities had very different practices, which made the alignment process challenging.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council were seeking to form a RAA, as although they had separately commissioned their adoption services from TACT Permanency Service and Coram respectively, there were fewer issues in aligning the

two authorities. The government had indicated that it was happy with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough proposal.

Arising from the report:

- a Member commented that the report appeared to suggest a “business as usual” approach and asked what was being done to differentiate the RAA. Officers advised that this was not the case and the intention was to create a truly regional adoption agency;
- a Member asked how regionalisation would improve adoption agencies. Officers explained that in theory, expanding the pools of adoptees and adopters should lead to be better matching, and there should also be opportunities to reduce costs and overheads;
- Members noted that the Regional Adoption Agency itself would not organise adoptions, but the RAA for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would jointly commission those functions on the authorities’ behalf. It was clarified that the government guidance was quite clear that more than one organisation could not run individual RAAs;
- Members noted the benefits of the RAA in terms of enhancing the pool of available adopters. It was also confirmed that children being adopted out of county was not an issue: indeed, in some cases, this could be preferable, as it could reduce the potential for unplanned contact in difficult cases.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1. note the content of the report

127. UPDATE ON PROGRESS MADE BY THE CHILDREN’S HEALTH JOINT COMMISSIONING UNIT ON THE INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES SERVICES AND THE PLAN FOR THE HEALTHY CHILD PROGRAMME (0-19)

An update was presented on the Children’s Health Joint Commissioning Unit (CHJCU). CHJCU includes senior commissioners from Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, plus a children’s public health specialist. Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, as Executive Director for People & Communities for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was the lead officer.

It was noted that a comprehensive Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Service (counselling service) had been established by pooling resources in January 2018. This Service was working well and responding to demand, especially by schools.

Another key area services for Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). There had been a massive increase in referrals from GPs to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) for ASD, but only around 20% of those assessed received an Autistic Spectrum diagnosis. CHJCU had jointly commissioned parenting programmes in the community, which provided early help and was not reliant on an ASD diagnosis. This

was having a positive impact, not only on communities, but also on CAMHS waiting lists.

Other initiatives being commissioned were noted, along with the context of the national and local budget pressures too.

Arising from the report:

- it was noted that the ASD positive diagnoses were low because the children concerned were not meeting the criteria for autism, for example sometimes they were general/other discipline and behaviour issues. There was a discussion around how some parents sought an ASD diagnosis to secure additional support. Members were pleased to note the value of offering parenting programmes upfront, and not being reliant on specific diagnoses;
- a Member commented that Looked After Children had indicated that they were not getting the support they would like, particularly in terms of mental health services. The Executive Director responded that she would be happy to ask Lee Miller (Head of Transformation and Commissioning (Children and maternity)) to provide a report to the Committee. **Action required.** Officers were in the very early stages of developing a specialist service across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough focussed on the emotional and wellbeing needs of Looked After Children, especially around attachment issues;
- a Member asked what support children and schools were receiving for self-harming. Officers advised that there was a range of severity of self-harming behaviours, some which may need specialist services. Members noted that some schools commissioned their own services;
- in response to a Member question, it was confirmed that dyslexia diagnosis was not age dependent;
- discussing the 'Think Family' whole family approach, it was noted that this holistic approach came from the Troubled Families initiative, where the focus was about supporting the child, family and community. A key criticism had been that service users often had to tell their story multiple times.

It was resolved unanimously to :

- a) note the work done to date and what the Children's Health Joint Commissioning Unit.

128. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES SUFFICIENCY AND SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH REVIEW

Dr Helen Phelan, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Service (0-25 years) presented a report on the work completed to date for the Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Review, and the SEND Sufficiency/Needs analysis. This included the next steps that had been identified to co-design an improved model of support and provision that would provide a clear graduated response to needs and target funding to meet special educational needs early and locally.

Members were reminded that the Children and Families Act 2014 required local authorities to keep the provision for children with SEND under review, including its sufficiency of provision. This must be done with parents, young people and providers. External support was commissioned in 2017 to undertake a review of provision for children and young people with a primary need of SEMH in Cambridgeshire. In addition, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had also commissioned external support to undertake an analysis of current and projected needs and SEND sufficiency.

Arising from the report:

- a Member observed the gradual increase of children and young people with a statement being home educated;
- a number of Members commented that the issue was not just about SEND sufficiency but also about choice, in the same way that choice applies at mainstream level. Officers advised that this would be reflected in the Strategy;
- a Member commented on the almost intractable tension between having SEND schools, with the benefits they bring, against the difficulties resulting from travelling, sometimes long distances. The advantages of smaller SEND units attached to mainstream secondary schools was discussed, and the risk of creating need if that model was extended too far. Therefore graduated provision, involving units strategically placed around the county may be the best approach;
- a Member requested that future reports provide consistency of data, preferably using percentages rather than absolute numbers, for example for fixed term exclusions. **Action required.**

Noting the destinations post-16, a Member raised the importance of continuity for 16-18 year olds, and asked what the mechanism was to support young people who were having issues, for example due to the journey. Officers advised that there was an additional needs team which tried to engage and tailor provision depending on the young person's needs and interests, and that team had had significant successes, but it was acknowledged that a small number of young people did drop out, although the team worked hard to keep in touch with them. Sometimes other opportunities needed to be considered such as supported internships or other bespoke provision. The Member suggested that some young people were not being picked up by the data because they were not making those choices post-16. Officers responded that this came back to ensuring that tracking arrangements were in place and strengthened for individual young people. Another Member raised the issue of individual young people with SEND being 'lost' when they failed to transfer to post-16 provision, using an example from her Division, and stressed the importance of communications and information.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) be aware of work done to date and what the Children's Health Joint Commissioning Unit (CHJCU) is trying to achieve.

129. JOINT CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

A report was presented to the Committee on the Joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Youth Justice Plan 2017-18. Members were reminded that it was a statutory requirement under the 1998 Crime & Disorder Act for local authorities and the wider partnership to have a Youth Justice Management Board and strategic Youth Justice Plan.

Through 2017-18, Youth Offending services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had become much more closely aligned, and in addition to having a joint Head of Service, the services were undertaking joint commissioning and looking to unify practice where possible. Changes to the inspection regime were noted: the Cambridgeshire Youth Offending team were subject to a full inspection 18 months ago, whereas Peterborough has not had an inspection for some time.

Interventions to divert young people in the first instance, as well as preventing reoffending, were one of the service priorities. Gangs were a particular focus, as was stopping young people being used as drug mules.

Arising from the report:

- Members congratulated the Service on its work, and acknowledged the importance of interventions to stop young people reoffending, and from offending in the first place;
- a Member queried the “payment in kind” columns included in the table showing financial contributions to the pooled budget in 2016-17, and asked if there was potential to lose that funding going forward. Officers outlined how this was being addressed;
- a Member noted expenditure of £80,050 for remands in custody, and asked what these costs entailed. Officers explained if a young person was sentenced, the Prison Service effectively picked up costs, but this was not the case with remands, and there was very little scope to manage those costs;
- the key elements of the Improvement Plan, implemented following the Full Joint Inspection, were noted. Officers were confident that if an audit was now carried out, they would meet standards across the board;
- discussed how the team was working strategically together with the young people, post-16;
- agreed that the joint training strategy would be circulated to Members. **Action required;**
- discussed the apparent increase in reoffending rates. Officers advised that the latest data demonstrated that reoffending rates were now reducing, and the reasons for this were outlined; for example, Peterborough had been doing more work on preventing young people getting Cautions. Community Resolution Clusters enabled the service to work more closely with young people, and the impact of that was expected to feed through;
- noted that the figures for NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) included in the Youth Justice Service Objectives were just those for young people involved in the criminal justice system, not for young people across Cambridgeshire as a whole;

- discussed the benefits of keeping young people out of custody, and how to reduce the risk of those young people reoffending in their communities, such as through the use of tags;
- noted that whilst the number of young people coming through the service had reduced, the complexity of their needs had increased.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note and comment on the Joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Youth Justice Plan 2017-18.

130. UPDATE ON DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE WORK IN CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SERVICES

The Committee considered an update on domestic abuse and sexual violence work in children and education services across Cambridgeshire.

Areas of work that had been undertaken in the last twelve months, in Children's Services, Early Help, Education Services, Youth Support Services And in the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership (Specialist Services) was noted.

Arising from the report:

- a Member asked why the 'Embrace Child Victims of Crime' work was limited to young people aged 13-19. Officers confirmed that this was terms and conditions of the Home Office grant, however, the Service covered young people up to the age of 25;
- discussed the grant of £700,000 to support the domestic abuse accommodation linked services, noting the difficulties with identifying future funding sources to continue this work;
- a Member asked if the sexual violence toward children reflected the higher proportion of Looked After Children within the county. Officers advised that there does not appear to be a pattern with regard to Looked After Children, and such cases would always be reported to Child Protection services;
- discussed how children at risk were identified by front line services, and agreed that it would be helpful for the Committee to receive an information report on that in future, possibly through the Safeguarding Board. **Action required.** It was also noted that there were 211 trained domestic abuse leads in the County's schools.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note and comment on the progress being made in Cambridgeshire to support children and families affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

131. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT: MAY 2018

The Group Accountant reported that at the end of May there was a forecast overspend of £1.1M. The main overspends were Looked After Children placements (£0.7M), Adoption Allowances (£248K) and the School Partnership Service (£120K). The Capital variance of £165K was not significant. Performance data was not yet available.

Based on current forecasts as at mid-June, including the delivery of some additional funnel savings, an overall £2M shortfall was projected for People & Communities.

Members noted an update on the service closure of the Cambridgeshire Race Equality & Diversity Services (CREDS). The consultation had closed and the provision was being wound up, as the service was being combined with that provided by Peterborough City Council.

There was a discussion around the pressures on services, particularly Looked After Children placements. The county had approximately 100 more children in care compared to its statistical neighbours. Officers would be reporting on that issue at the next meeting.

Members asked for consistency in the way information was presented, for example some information was presented in percentage terms, some in absolute figures. It was agreed that this information would be fed back to the performance team. **Action required.**

It was resolved to:

review and comment on the report.

132. AGENDA PLAN, TRAINING PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS

The Committee considered the agenda plan, training plan and appointments to outside bodies.

The Committee noted that the Chairman was stepping down from the Cambridgeshire Cultural Steering Group because of a clash of commitments. Councillors Joseph and Kavanagh were the other Members on this Committee. It was agreed that other Members would be emailed to see who was interested. **Action required.**

Members noted that:

It was resolved to:

- a) note the following changes to the published agenda plan:
- b) review and comment on the Committee training plan.

133. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee is due to meet next on Tuesday 11 September 2018.

(Chairman)