

Children and Young People Looked After: Emotional Health and Wellbeing

To: **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee**

Meeting Date: **20 March 2019**

From: **Pamela Parker
Professional Lead for Psychology**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Purpose: **To provide an update on multi-agency work.**

Recommendation: **The Sub-Committee is recommended to review the progress to date on multi-agency work regarding the emotional health and well being of children and young people looked after.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contact:</i>	
Name:	Pam Parker	Names:	Councillor Lis Every
Post:	Professional Lead for Psychology	Role:	Chairman, Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee
Email:	Pamela.Parker@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	Lis.Every@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 728180	Tel:	(office) 01223 706398

Summary:

The Assistant Director for Children's Services and the Professional Lead for Psychology were asked to convene a multi-agency Task and Finish Group to address concerns regarding services to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people who are looked after by Cambridgeshire County Council. This followed agreement by the Sub-Committee to use the Expert Working Group Report "Improving mental health support for our children and young people" as a benchmark to assess local services.

It has taken time to establish membership of the group and commitment across agencies. The first full meeting took place on 28.02.2019.

The following aims were established:

1. Develop shared clarity within the group regarding the current offer from universal and specialist services
2. Review national best practice guidance and use this as a benchmark for services in Cambridgeshire
3. Identify key improvements that can be implemented within the services represented
4. Identify gaps in provision and/or issues with service delivery across all local universal and specialist services, and form clear recommendations in relation to these
5. Develop a clear action plan to present the recommendations to relevant decision makers across health, education, social care and the third sector.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Although there is a lack of recent national robust data, it is well established and accepted that the level of emotional distress and mental health difficulty experienced by children and young people in care is unacceptably high. Feedback from children and young people in care who engage with participation groups indicates there is scope to significantly improve local service by reducing fragmentation, reducing waiting times, clarifying pathways and increasing accessibility. There is also a clear theme in local and national feedback from young people regarding the importance of consistent relationships and compassionate services.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The multi-agency task and finish group has membership across services to address adult mental health, child and adolescent mental health, special educational needs, emotional health and wellbeing service for schools, social care, health services for children looked after and commissioning. This is

currently the only local multi-agency forum dedicated to the topic under consideration.

2.2 Priority actions for the group include the following:

Ascertaining what data is held by health, education and social care regarding the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people looked after by Cambridgeshire Local Authority.

Clarify what is the current offer for this group of children and young people from existing services and seek to identify gaps either in provision or specialist knowledge through case examples.

Compare the service offer identified through the above process with national best practice guidance and statutory requirements.

The next meeting is to take place on 03.04.2019.

2.3 The following actions have been taken by the corporate parenting clinical team since the Sub-Committee meeting on November 21 2018 in response to the Expert Working Group report and service wide restructure.

- When Initial Health Assessments (IHA) or Review Health Assessments (RHA) identify concerns regarding emotional health and wellbeing, the health summary and data is shared with the Corporate Parenting clinical team for advice and/or consultation. This will ensure that specialist clinical oversight is available to ensure children and young people's needs are well understood and addressed in a timely manner. This process also allows for an additional route for children and young people to access clinical input if needed.
- A six week evidence based intervention group for foster parents will commence in April 2019 to enhance the current offer supporting carers to provide therapeutic parenting for children and young people who have experienced developmental trauma. The group has been proven to reduce externalising behaviours of children, whilst also providing additional expertise and support for carers. The group will be carefully evaluated and if successful in our local context form part of the routine offer for carers countywide. This will support the service aim to offer high quality local placements for children
- Investment has been made in specialist training to address developmental trauma and symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder. The clinical team continues to provide direct, evidence based therapeutic work for children and their carers, consultation to professional colleagues, support with the assessment and intervention for reunification work, training for foster carers and specialist assessment. Although capacity is currently limited we continue to seek opportunities to extend this work and use the clinical resource as effectively as possible.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

The report above sets out the implications for this priority in paragraph 1.1

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

N/A

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

The report above sets out the implications for this priority in paragraph 1.1

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

n/a

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

n/a

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

n/a

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

n/a

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

n/a

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

n/a

4.7 Public Health Implications

n/a

Source Documents	Location
Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee reports and minutes November 21 2018	https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/960/Committee/46/Default.aspx