

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

MEETING, 10TH APRIL, 2019

Present – Councillors Shaikh (Chairman), Murray (Vice-Chairman), Bagnall, Flitcroft, Gillies, Ibrahim, Iqbal (as deputy for Councillor Ayub), Kirk-Robinson, Swarbrick, Warren and C. Wild.

Also in attendance

Councillor Cunliffe	- Executive Cabinet Member – Children
Mr T. Birch	- Assistant Director of People – Education and Learning
Mr P. Rankin	- Assistant Director of People – Performance, Planning and Resources
Ms J. Higham	- Head of Strategic Commissioning : Children and Young People, NHS Bolton CCG
Ms N. Lomax	- Bolton CCG
Mrs. S. Bailey	- Principal Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Ayub, Dean, Gibbon, Morris and Parkinson.

Councillor Shaikh in the Chair.

33. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved - The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held on 6th February, 2019 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

34. THE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which put forward the Work Programme for the Committee for the current Municipal Year which had been formulated following the workshop session that had taken place at the meeting in June, 2018.

Resolved – That the 2018/19 work programme, as now submitted, be approved.

35. PRIMARY, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH – PRIMARY AGED CHILDREN

Mr T. Birch gave a presentation on the social, emotional and mental health provision for primary school aged children in Bolton (SEMH).

The presentation outlined the current context and advised members that an increasing number of primary aged children were presenting with significantly challenging behaviour in mainstream schools. At present, Bolton were only able to provide short stay provisions for this cohort of children, mainly via Primary Youth Challenge, The Forward Centre and the Nurture Group at the Children's Opportunity Group.

The absence of long-term provision meant that Bolton children would have to be placed in out of Borough Special schools if a return to mainstream school was not suitable. It was noted that the number of primary aged children presenting with SEMH placed in out of Borough special schools had increased significantly from 22 to 66 over the last three years.

In this regard, the presentation outlined a proposed strategy for the development of longer term SEMH in Bolton. It was clear

that from visiting a range of other SEMH provisions, a multi-agency approach working across the provisions was essential for it to be as effective as possible.

The creation of a Multi-Agency Support Team would provide specialist diagnostic and therapeutic advice and support and included representatives from a range of provisions including occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, HLTA therapy, educational psychology, play therapy, counselling services and parenting support.

The presentation went on to identify a number of proposed proactive and preventative measures, primarily three Early Years/Key Stage 1 nurture group provisions with each accommodating six children and placed to meet geographical need. There was also much research/evidence and Ofsted reports that promoted the use of nurture groups as an intervention measure.

Members were also informed of proposals to create three long stay Key Stage 2 SEMH Resourced Provisions in each of the geographical areas, namely north, south and west.

These provisions would be based in mainstream schools with the school taking responsibility for the staffing and running of the provision and supported by the Local Authority. They would be targeted at those children, usually with an EHCP and in Years 2-4 who would struggle to access a mainstream environment/curriculum on a full - time basis but who over time, and with the right support and intervention, may be able to increase their ability to manage within a mainstream environment.

With regard to provision for Years 5 and 6, Mr Birch advised of plans to establish long stay specialist provision in Bolton for children in Years 5 and 6 to reduce the number of children presenting with SEMH being placed in out of Borough special schools. This provision would be for those children who were considered highly likely to require specialist provision at secondary school and who were likely to struggle to manage any integration within mainstream education.

With regard to discussions on the proposals, the presentation informed the Committee that extended consultations had taken place in the Autumn Term with primary schools and other partners. There was strong support and formal agreement for the approach being taken.

Following the comprehensive presentation, members made a number of comments/observations:

- members sought clarification on how the Key Stage 1 nurture group provision would work in practice – Mr Birch advised that there was a methodology for nurture groups whereby children would join a group for a short period of time and then be reintegrated into their mainstream school;
- whether there would be enough specialists within schools to deal with the needs – Mr Birch advised that schools had great expertise and were equipped to take on the delivery of the programme;
- whether the provision would be tailored to needs – Mr Birch advised that the nurture model was well defined with a prescribed format and established guidelines – however, there was flexibility on the length of stays depending on progress and readmissions where needed – the main aim was always reintegration into mainstream education as this was the best environment in which to learn;
- the reasons why young children were displaying such behaviour patterns – Mr Birch advised that this was a complex matter with a number of factors involved including parenting, social media, changes to family life and poverty;
- whether learning away from mainstream education was the most appropriate course of action – Mr Birch advised members that the teaching was provided in resourced provisions which were attached to mainstream schools and which allowed flexibility of attendance between the two, as needed.

Resolved – That Mr Birch be thanked for his informative presentation.

36. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Ms J. Higham gave a presentation on the Bolton Local Transformation Plan and how it related to the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

The presentation advised members that proposals contained within the Government's 2015 White Paper had been aligned to the Five-Year View for Mental Health. Additional money had also been secured from NHS England to CCGs to increase access to high quality mental health care. The 2019/20 Local Transformation Plan had now been published and had involved a large amount of work across Greater Manchester.

The Plan aimed to:

- increase public awareness and understanding about children and young people mental health and reduce the stigma attached to it;
- operate a system without tiers and focusing on the needs of children and young people and their families;
- improve care for children and young people in crisis;
- provide a better offer for the most vulnerable children and young people; and
- timely access to effective mental health support.

The presentation went on to outline the achievements and priorities delivered in 2018/19, as follows:

- securing new CAMHS provider and mobilised new service model;
- the continued roll out of the Thrive offer across the whole system;
- an enhanced 'getting advice' offer;
- development of Parent Infant and Perinatal Mental Health offer;
- redesigned autism and ADHD pathways;
- developed a new mental health in education offer;

- first in GM to implement all age Mental Health Liaison as part of Crisis Care Pathway;
- meaningful engagement with children and young people; and
- the development of a mental health anti-stigma campaign.

The presentation also highlighted the Thrive System – a system without tiers – getting advice, getting help, getting more help and getting risk support.

Members were then informed of the role and work of the Bolton's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and advised that since April, 2018, it had been delivered by Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with North West Boroughs.

The initial focus had been on:

- development of workforce plan;
- improving access and reducing waiting times; and
- development of hub and spoke delivery model.

Plans for further enhancement of holistic offer including;

- evening appointments;
- no wrong door approach;
- self-referral; and
- children and young people informed Care Planning.

Funding from the Local Transformation Plan investment had been used to commission a pilot scheme known as 'KOOOTH' for a two-year period from February, 2018 in order to provide a 24/7 early intervention offer which utilised technologies to provide direct routes into online text-based counselling, self-help resources and moderated safe chat room facilities. It involved a blended delivery model included an integration officer to ensure 'KOOOTH' was fully integrated with Bolton's local emotional health and wellbeing offer including CAMHS, Social Care, Schools, Safeguarding and the Voluntary Sector.

Feedback had been extremely positive and uptake of the 'KOOOTH' offer had exceeded expected activity levels.

The presentation also advised that from April, 2018, Bolton had become the first locality in Greater Manchester to commission an All Age Mental Health Liaison Service (a Five Year Forward View for Mental Health national mandate) which provided a rapid assessment to children and young people who presented at A&E in mental health crisis. Outcomes achieved included a reduction in admission to a paediatric ward and improved timely mental health assessment and support to onward crisis care planning for children and young people.

Members were also informed of the development of a Borough-wide mental health anti-stigma campaign which had been funded by Local Transformation Fund monies allocated by Bolton CCG. The campaign and its content had been driven by children and young people and supported through a creative design agency and Bolton CCGs communication team. There would be a call to action where children and young people would be signposted to additional support and self-help.

Priorities for 2019/20 included:

- further improvements to access target and reduce waiting times;
- further embed Thrive and access GM i-Thrive training including early identification and help;
- emotional health and wellbeing offer across Education;
- further development and implementation of the Perinatal and parent-infant mental health offer (including dads); and
- children's workforce development including awareness of suicidal ideation self-harm and impact of trauma.

Following the comprehensive presentation, members made a number of comments/observations:

- engagement with parents of pre-school children – Ms Higham advised that work was ongoing to build on the Tameside Parenting Infant Mental Health offer which

involved building early attachments and offering wider parent support through pregnancy and beyond – this is due to be launched around August, 2019;

- concerns about mental health beds being outsourced – Ms Higham confirmed that there were currently no mental health beds in Bolton however, there was a wholesale review being planned by the Greater Manchester Partnership to examine the issue of mental health beds across the whole of Greater Manchester with a view to the adoption of an alternative model for bed provision;
- concerns about the length of time taken for children to be prescribed medication following a diagnosis, particularly autism and ADHD – Ms Higham assured members that this had been recognised and measures were being put in place to reduce the time taken to receive medications;
- issues associated with the provision of services during the transitional period from child to adulthood – Ms Higham advised that much work was ongoing to improve this area and that the Local Transformation Plan specifically addressed the development of cross/seamless pathways and how this was going to be achieved.

Resolved – That Ms Higham be thanked for her informative presentation.

37. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER THREE 2018/19

The Interim Director of People and the Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which provided information relating to the financial position for the Department of People as at Quarter Three of the 2018/19 Financial Year.

With regard to revenue expenditure, the report advised that the position for the Local Authority Block was expected to be in line with budget following use of reserves of £4.933m.

Revenue expenditure for the Dedicated Schools Grant was projected to be £0.812m greater than the grant available.

In relation to Capital Expenditure, the report advised that the original Capital Programme was approved at the Council meeting in February, 2018 which totalled £38.3m. The programme had now decreased to £17.8m due to likely slippage into 2019/20 as the phasing of projects took place. Expenditure at Quarter Three was £13m.

Reserves were expected to be £48m at 31st March, 2019 which was a decrease of £9.6m due to the use of school's balances, funding of the current years Capital Programme and the estimated revenue position being offset by Schools Capital in year allocations. Of the £48m reserves, £29.3m related to capital monies held for future work on schools and £6.1m related to school's balances and other Dedicated Schools Grant reserves.

With regard to the Capital Programme, the report recommended that the Director of People be authorised to procure for schemes under the limit of £300k via the Council's Corporate Procurement Team either through under any available frameworks or via open tender procurement process to enable the capital programmes to progress.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

38. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT – QUARTER THREE 2018/19

The Interim Director of Place submitted a report which provided an update on the performance of the People Services Department as at Quarter Three of 2018/19.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

39. STRATEGIC BUDGET REPORT 2019/20

A joint report of the Director of Corporate Resources and the Interim Director of People was submitted which put forward the revenue and capital budgets for 2019/20 for the Children's Section of the People Department.

The report advised that the proposed revenue budget for the Children's Services – LA block amounted to £49,821,700.

The Capital Programme amounted to £22,898,500.

This was the first year of a two - year savings programme which amounted to £13.803m. Budgets would be amended during the year when reviews were realised.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

40. MEMBERS BUSINESS

The Committee received the extracts of minutes of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:-

- the Executive Cabinet Member – Children's Portfolio held on 11th February and 11th March, 2019
- the joint meeting of the Adults and Children's PDG held on 25th March, 2019

Resolved – That the minutes of the various meetings be noted.

(The meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 6.50pm)

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