

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING, 31ST JANUARY, 2022

Present – Councillors Iqbal (Chairman), Grant (Vice-Chairman), Abdullah, Adia, Connor, Donaghy, Hartigan (as deputy for Councillor Taylor-Burke), Hill, McGeown, Radcliffe (as deputy for Councillor Finney), Rimmer and Sherrington (as deputy for Councillor Murray).

Co-opted Members

Reverend Canon Dr Bracegirdle – Church of England Diocese Representative

Also in attendance

Councillor Galloway	- Executive Cabinet Member – Children's Services
Ms B. Brown	- Director of Children's Services
Mr P. Rankin	- Deputy Director of Children's Services
Mr I. Walker	- Assistant Director Children's Social Care and Early Help
Ms S. Gilman	- Consultant in Public Health
Mr J. Cooke	- Head of Complex Safeguarding and Youth Justice
Chief Inspector Russell	- Greater Manchester Police
Mrs V. Ridge	- Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Finney, Hornby, Murray and Taylor-Burke.

Councillor Iqbal in the Chair.

23. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved - The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held on 6th December, 2021 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

24. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

The Borough Solicitor submitted the Committee Work Programme for 2021/22.

Resolved – That the 2021/22 Committee Work Programme be noted.

25. COUNCIL AND PARTNERS - PREVENTION RESPONSE TO YOUTH CRIME, DRUG USE AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE TOWN

Ms Brown gave a presentation on the work of the Youth Justice Service Targeted Prevention Team in Bolton.

The presentation provided an overview of Team and its main aims and objectives in terms of diverting children away from the criminal justice system.

The presentation provided definitions in terms of prevention and identified the following key phrases used by the Team:

- Prevention - support and intervention with children (and their parents / carers) who may be displaying behaviours which could indicate underlying needs or vulnerability;
- Youth Justice Prevention - aims to keep young people away from crime and the criminal justice system;
- 'Early' Prevention - support for children (no linked offence or arrests to address needs); and
- 'Targeted' Prevention - support for children who had had some contact with criminal justice services.

Members were informed that 70% of crimes where a child was named as a suspect were closed without obvious sign of referrals to Prevention Services.

Data from GMP suggested that as of 16th December, 2021 in Bolton, there were:

- 95 Children currently released and under investigation; and
- 21 Children on Police Bail.

Between 1st September and 1st December, 2021, 485 children had been released with no further action.

Youth Justice Service officers currently identified on average, one or two siblings of children on their caseloads who they were concerned about becoming involved in offending/anti-social behaviour.

The presentation went on to outline the plans for future working which involved:

- further refinement/analysis of the data;
- a prevention co-ordinator;
- focus of the justice service on referrals from Greater Manchester Police and Community Safety (Anti-Social Behaviour Pathway) to provide 'targeted' prevention;
- Early Help Service to focus on referrals from other agencies in respect of 'early' prevention and predictive ACEs;
- close working between YJS/IFD/EH to ensure all children/families who needed it received 'whole family' support;
- key focus on trauma and ACEs; and
- to build on existing resources – Safer Schools and Community Officer, Youth Diversion Support Worker, Team Around Schools, Early Help Targeted Support.

The presentation then went on to focus on the Let's End the Hurt Knife Crime Prevention Training. This was delivered as a

Partnership between Bolton Council, secondary heads and Greater Manchester Police and involved a one-day training programme (Phase 1) to raise awareness amongst young people of the growing incidence and implications of knife crime.

The training had been delivered to approximately 20,000 students in the Authority's 20 mainstream secondary schools in July, 2021.

The training also provided young people with strategies to prevent involvement in knife crime as either a perpetrator or victim and the serious implications of handling knives together with the medical Implications of being stabbed. It also aimed to debunk the "grassing" myth and encourage talking.

The Training Programme had been created and delivered by Bolton Police and delivered on each school site by Greater Manchester Police officers together with PCSOs using a training video created by GMP together with other resources and a facilitated question and answer opportunity for students. It also provided an informal opportunity for students to meet GMP officers and PCSOs.

With regards to future training, members were informed that a strategy meeting had been held in January, 2022, between GMP, Bolton Council and secondary special school headteachers. Delivery of the training to new Year 7 students had started in secondary schools and bespoke training programmes were being developed for each secondary special school for delivery by February half term 2022 in each school.

Following the presentation, representatives from the multi-disciplinary Team and GMP provided additional information and specific examples and answered members' questions and queries.

Following the presentation, members made various comments/observations:

- outcomes and indicators as to the effectiveness of the training – Ms Brown advised that it was too soon to

identify results, although early indicators were positive with 96% of children who had received the training stating that it had been beneficial;

- it was encouraging to see that knives had been surrendered following some of the training sessions;
- the purpose and use of dispersal orders;
- prevention and engagement to deter perpetrators travelling to the Bolton from other areas;
- the use of Borough wide statistics rather than individual Ward issues;
- making use of good practice from other organisations;
- identifying adverse childhood experiences as an important aspect of prevention;
- the difficulties in measuring outcomes of this nature; and
- building on the success of the training and extending it to other areas such as drug use.

Resolved – That Ms Brown and other representatives be thanked for their attendance at the meeting and their informative presentation.

26. MEMBERS BUSINESS

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

- Executive Cabinet Member for Children's Services held on 6th December, 2021 and 10th and 24th January, 2022.

(The meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 7.05pm)