

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: 12th February 2009

Report of: Margaret Asquith, Director Children's Services

Report No:

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Report Title: **Update report of the three Stay Safe Pathfinders :**

Disabled Children Short Break Pathfinder
Think Family and Young Carers Pathfinders
Development of Sexual Exploitation Team

**Confidential /
Non Confidential:**

(Non-Confidential) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose:

To update the Scrutiny Panel on the Pathfinders.

Recommendations:

To note contents of the report.

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

(for use on Exec Rep)

Signed:

Leader / Executive Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

Summary:

This reports outlines the current position of the three Stay Safe Pathfinders :

The Disabled Childrens Short Breaks pathfinder, emerging from the Government report 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' (May 2007)

The Think Family Pathfinder and Extended Pathfinder : Young Carers project, tasked with testing and informing the development and implementation of the 'think family' approach set out in Think Family: Improving the life chances of families at risk (July 2007)

The development of a multi-agency Sexual Exploitation Team, building on the work of Bolton Local Safeguarding Children Board to protect young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

All three initiatives are managed through one Head of Service reporting to John Daly, Assistant Director Stay Safe.

1. Disabled Childrens Short Breaks pathfinder

1.1 Background Information

In May 2007 the Government published Aiming High for Disabled Children : better support for families (AHDC), based on their review of services for disabled children. This report highlighted the difficulties disabled children and their families faced including those in accessing universal provision. The vision behind Aiming High for Disabled Children is for all families with a disabled child to be supported to live ordinary lives. Enabling families to do this challenges all service providers, town planners and transport departments to consider the way in which they deliver their service reflects the needs of disabled children and their families. Truly accessible services are more than DDA compliant. AHDC challenges us to enable disabled children, young people and adults to live ordinary lives. One of the recommended actions in Aiming High for Disabled Children, was to recognise the importance and significant benefits of short breaks both for the disabled child and their parents. AHDC sets out a *core offer* for short breaks which all areas will be expected to achieve. By April 2011, there will be a key Performance Indicator related to families perceptions of how well local services respond to their needs.

Bolton is one of 21 local areas financially supported until the end of March 2011, to pilot ways of transforming short breaks for disabled children.

1.2 Funding for the Disabled children short break pathfinder

Bolton was allocated the following funding:

Year	Revenue	Capital
2008/09	£282,500	£141,900
2009/10	£911,200	£331,200
2010/11	£911,200	£0

Funds are made available each year based on efficient and appropriate proposal for use. We are regularly monitored by the DCSF in regard to spend and increased short break provision, against the baseline data collated during the early stages of the pathfinder.

Revenue monies for last year helped pilot increased short breaks in the voluntary sector and within universal services, all of which have been evaluated with decisions currently being made regarding their sustainability and appropriateness for support during 2009. Capital spend of £100k was agreed to extend a carer's property to enable her to support young people with complex health needs as a contracted carer. This included £40k for fixtures and fittings including specialist bath and other essential equipment. It was also agreed to transfer £25k Capital into the joint loan store to purchase aids and equipment (and servicing) to carers and settings. The remaining capital was used to purchase sports wheelchairs which have been enthusiastically used by the local disabled young peoples football team.

A multi-agency Commissioning Group has been established to consider proposals for spend for 2009.

1.3 Developments to date - Disabled Childrens Short Breaks pathfinder

During this first year we have established an implementation structure reporting to a multi-disciplinary Disabled Childrens Steering Group and the Be Healthy sub group of the Childrens Trust.

During 2008 we have :

- Funded a number of new summer and out of school projects
- Employed workers to support :
 - an increase in direct payments
 - increased capacity in short breaks offered through Bolton Shared Care
 - guidance for new / potential providers of short breaks
- Held several events to raise awareness and seek opinions and ideas from parents, young people and potential providers
- Produced regular newsletters to keep parents and professionals up to date on progress

1.4 What we plan to do in the coming year – Disabled childrens pathfinder

- The Commissioning Group will meet to consider bids from potential providers of short breaks, including practical considerations e.g. the need for improved changing facilities across the borough for disabled children and adults.
- Develop a parents and carers council
- Develop a children and young peoples forum
- Join with local areas to pilot the 'Me Too' quality kite mark which will be led by disabled young people in Bolton

2. Think Family and Extended Pathfinder : Young Carers

2.1 Background Information

In June 2007 the Government launched the first part of the Families at Risk Review 'Reaching Out: Think Family'. The report looked at the most excluded 2% of families who have not been lifted by any rise in living standards and increased opportunity, and who remain in poverty with complex needs, multiple problems and low aspiration. The report outlined the dramatic impact that parent-based family circumstances have on the outcomes and life-chances of children. It demanded a more family-focused approach from agencies that work with adults and children.

Bolton is one of 15 Local Authorities supported by Government funding to develop and trial a 'think family' approach to the way we work by improving the co-ordination between Adult and Children's Services to support families at risk. This pilot is an important part of the development of more integrated working across the Borough.

The pathfinder will test out improved pathways and co-ordination of services including Adult Disability, Mental Health and Substance Misuse Services, alongside child care assessments and research based interventions to prevent family breakdown and promote better outcomes for families.

Bolton is also one of 6 Local Authorities granted funding for the Extended Pathfinder Young Carers project. The extended pathfinder will increase support for those young people identified as potential or actual carers of adults.

2.2 Funding for Think Family and Extended Pathfinder : Young Carers

The Think Family pathfinder has been supported by the DCSF, Area Based Grant and Schools Forum, as follows :

2008/09	£180k (DCSF) £100k (ABG) £100k (SF)	£92.500k
2009/10	£300k £200k (ABG)	£146k
2010/11	£300k £200k (ABG)	£161k

2.3 Developments to date – Think Family

Bolton has chosen to use the Government grant to establish a multi-disciplinary team consisting of professionals from both Children and Adult Services. There will be a 'core team' with other services encouraged to work flexibly to better co-ordinate interventions and improve outcomes for families. The team will work intensely with 50 of the most vulnerable families where adult difficulties are negatively impacting on the needs of their children. The team will rely on the skills and knowledge from various Adult and Children's providers to ensure a holistic assessment and timely access to services to meet the needs of the whole family.

Work over the last year has included :

- Established a multi-agency Steering Group for Think Family approach
- Decisions regarding cohort of families made, referrals now agreed
- Risk and Resilience tool developed for use with referrals
- Decisions made regarding core team establishment and negotiations required
- Recruitment of 'core team' nearing completion.
- Team members in place from 5th Jan 09
- Training and induction programme to begin 19th Jan 09
- Stakeholder event held to negotiate services beyond the core team
- Launch of Think Family Team planned for 18th Feb 09

2.4 Developments to date – Extended Pathfinder : Young Carers

Bolton Local Authority already commissions services for young carers through Barnardo's. It was decided therefore that the additional funds would be used to target those young people identified as *at risk* of becoming a young carer. Bolton Lads and Girls Club have been commissioned to develop services for this group, who may have parents with a physical disability, mental health problem or may be heavily reliant on substances. The club will offer three levels of engagement depending on the individual young person and will ensure that each young person is linked to appropriate activities within the BLCG site or in their local community. Barnardo's contract has been altered and currently offers a complimentary short term service to young carers. The two services will work closely with each other and ourselves.

2.5 What we plan to do in the coming year – Think Family

- The core team currently active with families referred
- Contracts of agreement with each family to be pursued regarding intervention and use of data for monitoring purposes
- Further negotiations to take place regarding input to the core team and to work more flexibly when required from Adult providers, in particular, Mental Health and Substance Misuse

- Further negotiations to take place regarding support and agreements to work flexibly with Housing, Schools, CAMHS, Health etc.
- Launch the Think Family approach
- Work closely with DCSF regarding progress and monitoring

2.6 What we plan to do in the coming year - Extended Pathfinder : Young Carers

- Improve number of young people identified as potential / actual young carers
- Ensure service is offered to young carers
- Develop improved services to young carers
- Monitor closely the contracts with Barnardo's and BLGC for benefits to young people
- Work with DCSF to identify areas of good practice both locally and nationally.

3. Development of Sexual Exploitation Team

3.1 Background Information – Sexual Exploitation Team

Providing services to young people at risk of sexual exploitation is a developing area of work. Awareness is being raised nationally of the risk to young people posed by the trafficking, internet abuse and on street prostitution. Government guidance and legislation such as The Children Act 2004, Working Together 2006 and the Prostitution Strategy 2006 outline how the Government requires Local Authorities to provide services to those at risk.

Some Local Authorities have successfully brought together key professionals into dedicated teams.

Dedicated integrated teams are supported by research indicating interagency approaches offering local outreach and drop-in support aimed at protecting young people from exploitation, in conjunction with robust disruption of abuser activity, seem to be the most effective. Bolton is well placed to consider improved service delivery, having since 2000 proactively sought out information highlighting young people at risk in the borough and benefiting from an established multi-agency forum tasked with monitoring and ensuring a response to need. A dedicated team brings additional benefits to young people aimed at providing a holistic response to the three key issues needing to be addressed; those of prevention, protection and prosecution.

In April '08 a proposal on behalf of the Sexual Exploitation Steering Group was accepted and agreed by Children's Services Director Margaret Asquith.

3.2 Funding for the development of a Sexual Exploitation Team

No new funds were found for this development so services were asked to contribute staffing and resources.

3.3 Developments to date

Social Care made available one Senior Social Work vacancy to establish a Manager post and moved three staff across into the team. Bolton PCT have contributed one full time Adolescent Health Worker. Urban Outreach will support the team by offering staff from their RUrNA project to work closely with the core team. This will include links with the Police Officer working with the project. 360 will also work closely ensuring a co-coordinated response to any substance misuse problems. Bolton's Housing Department have offered mediation support from Time to Talk. Grantham Close has been secured as a venue for the team.

Work over the last year has included :

- Decisions made regarding contributions to the core team
- Venue for team agreed as Grantham Close (previously Childrens Home)
- Risk and Resilience tool developed and piloted
- Recruitment of 'core team' nearing completion
- Team members in place from 5th Jan 09
- Training and induction programme to begin 19th Jan 09
- Team now named the EXIT team, identifying their primary goal to divert young people from exploitative lifestyles. The logo will have an underscore "diverting children and young people from exploitation"

3.4 What we plan to do in the coming year

Over the next year we intend to :

- Hold a launch and stakeholder event to negotiate services beyond the core team
- Continue to work with young people identified as at risk of exploitation
- Complete team role and responsibilities in agreement with the Steering Group
- Develop working agreements with key services including the Police regarding use of appropriate law enforcement to support safeguarding
- Further negotiate the role of the team and others in addressing the 3 key issues of prevention, protection and prosecution.
- Complete multi-agency protocols related to the work of the team