

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 JANUARY 2020

PRESENT

Councillor D. Western (in the Chair).

Councillors T. Carey (Vice-Chair), J. Bennett, Miss L. Blackburn, J. Dillon, S. Longden, A. New, S.B. Procter, D. Acton (ex-Officio) and Dr. K. Barclay (ex-Officio)

In attendance

Sara Butters	Head of Early Years, School Places and Access, Trafford Council
Ged Rowney	Interim Director of Children's Services, Trafford Council
Tim Rhodes	Principal Solicitor and Interim Statutory Officer
Karen Harris	Principal Educational Psychologist and Head of Inclusion Children and Families Directorate, Trafford Council
Richard Johnson	Service Manager Complex Needs (Children Social Care), Trafford Council
Paula Lee	Operations Manager, Children's Services, Trafford Council
Claire Ball	Specialist Commissioner - Children's Clinical and Public Health, Trafford Council
Fabiola Fuschi	Governance Officer, Trafford Council

Also Present

Councillor Hynes, Executive Member for Children's Social Care
Councillor Carter, Lead Member for Education

42. ATTENDANCES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Holden and Mrs. Khan.

Prior to the commencement of the formal meeting of the Committee, Members received a presentation from the Parental Engagement Network (PEN). The social enterprise based in Trafford worked with schools and other educational settings to engage all families to support their children's learning. PEN provided training, information and networking opportunities for staff and parents and developed creative, sustainable resources, and linked with other organisations to spread effective practice. 89% of parents whose children were in Reception completed the programme. The feedback from schools was very positive.

The Committee welcome the representative from PEN and thanked her for the presentation. The Committee asked questions about the sustainability of the programme, whether it was offered to children with English as additional language and strategies in place to target potential users. The Committee agreed that school governors should be the ambassadors of this scheme in their schools.

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor New declared a general interest in so far as any matter related to her employment.

44. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)

There were no items of urgent business received.

45. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no public questions received.

46. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee gave consideration to the minutes of the meeting held on 8th October 2020. Councillor Bennett noted that her apologies had not been recorded and asked for the minutes to be amended accordingly.

RESOLVED that subject to the amendments agreed above, the minutes of the meeting held on 8th October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

47. MINUTES OF THE START WELL BOARD

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Start Well board meeting held on 7th November 2019 be noted.

48. SCHOOL READINESS

The Committee received a report of the Interim Director for Education Standards, Quality and Performance which outlined the trend data for Trafford regarding pupils who were school ready. The Head of Early Years, School Places and Access accompanied by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care and the Non-Executive Portfolio Holder for Education attended the meeting to present the information and addressed the enquiries of the Committee.

Data demonstrated high performance in the overall outcomes at the end of Early Year Foundation Stage, with attainment above both national and North West comparative data. The performance of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) groups were now in line with the national comparative data and above the regional performance. This was consequential to investments in speech, language and communication which reflected the national picture.

Members commended the positive results achieved on school readiness, especially with regard to SEND groups and asked whether would be possible to extend good practice in other areas of Trafford which appeared to perform below national and Greater Manchester level. Officers explained that the figures were compromised as the cohort of children entitled to free school meals was very low in the south of borough. Members also queried the statistics concerning access to Early Years settings of children with English as additional language. Officers

explained that many initiatives were in place to encourage families to use educational settings for their children before Reception and the Family Information service targeted priority. Many initiatives were ongoing in Early Years to address the areas that required attention and collaboration with Public Health for fact and data findings was ongoing.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

49. UPDATE ON OFSTED REPORT MAY 2019 - INSPECTION OF CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

The Committee received a presentation of the Interim Corporate Director of Children's Services which provided the latest developments on the Children's Improvement Programme. The programme had been devised following the outcome of the Ofsted inspection in May 2019 to respond to the regulator's recommendations.

The Interim Director of Children's Services informed the Committee that the Improvement Board which led on the delivery of the programme to implement Ofsted recommendations had met earlier that morning to discuss a review of the plan. The Board had also received a presentation concerning the Voice of the Child and young people had explained that they often felt that they were "talked about". Consequently, the Board agreed to implement a "listen and do" process to strengthen the Voice of the Child. Another work stream of the Board concerned the accessibility of web-site, data and trends and how the Council could evaluate the impact of its actions. The First Response Team and, within it, the Early Help Offer had been reviewed and they were currently being monitored and evaluated. Officers highlighted the challenges linked to the programme and the capacity necessary to manage Early Help cases as this was a relatively new service. The next step in the improvement plan would be to drive forward recruitment and retention of staff.

The Committee sought and received clarification on staffing levels and turnover. Officers explained that £1.5M was available to tackle this issue. Work was ongoing with HR to ensure that the benefit offer in Trafford was visible to attract and retain staff. Members also queried about performance indicators in connection with the risk heat map.

RESOLVED:

1. That the content of the presentation be noted;
2. That further information be provided on performance indicator and risk heat map.

The Chair informed the Committee that the Interim Director of Children's Services had concluded his term in Trafford. The Committee thanked Ged Rooney for his work and dedication to the service he had led throughout this period of time.

50. PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD (PFA) PROTOCOL

The Committee gave consideration to a report of the Principal Educational Psychologist and Head of Inclusion which set out the process to implement a new Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) Protocol to replace the old Transition Protocol.

The author of the report, accompanied by the Service Manager for Complex Needs, the Operations Manager, the Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care and the Non-Executive Portfolio Holder for Education attended the meeting to present the information and addressed the enquiries of the Committee.

Officers explained that this was a multi-agency piece of work to support the achievements and aspirations of young people. The Parents Forum was also involved in this development. The key driver of the process was represented by the Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) which, in Year 9, focused on employment / work placement, inclusion in local communities, health and accommodations. Essentially the protocol planned for young people's landmarks, involving different agencies and making resources easily accessible for professionals and families through a single point of access. The protocol would be implemented from next month.

Members enquired about the eligibility criteria to access the pathway. Officers explained that children and young people with an EHCP could automatically access the pathway. There was a monitoring group that met bimonthly analysing the cohort moving to adulthood and receiving assurance from the operational team that decisions were made in a timely manner. Members asked about children who received home education; Officers explained that they would be entitled to the same statutory process. EHCP did not extend into higher education. The Committee also enquired about housing needs of young people who turned 18 and could no longer leave with their families; Officers explained that, in these instances, Adult Services would intervene to look at these young people's housing needs. Members asked how outcomes were measured through EHCP. Officers explained that success was benchmarked through the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Board and the PFA network and accountability framework.

RESOLVED that the information in the report be noted.

51. COMMUNITY PAEDIATRICS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Interim Specialist Children's Clinical Commissioner which provided an overview of the community paediatrician offer, its performance and associated risks and actions taken to date to address them.

The author of the report attended the meeting to present the information and addressed the enquiries of the Committee. The main issue was currently represented by an unprecedented level of sickness absence in the service. There was also a national issue with recruiting paediatricians. The report author explained service provision and demand and the difficulty with planning around a demand which was very variable. Furthermore, the number of Did Not Attend (DNA) was very high. Additional capacity had been agreed. Work was also

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ongoing to simplify GP referrals as the service was receiving several inappropriate referrals.

The Committee sought clarification on the difficulties to fill the community paediatrician role. Officers explained that this was a wider national issue concerning the low number of medical professionals. In order to address the difficulties in filling the post, some tasks, where possible, were covered by nurses. A new development pathway had been devised where Paediatric Nurses who were able to prescribe medications, under the supervision of a consultant, would address the needs of young patients. Members also queried the causes of DNAs. These laid with the nature of the pathology, the fact that parents could also be affected by it and patients having multiple appointments for the same day. There were measures that could address these issues such as introducing a texting system but a cost was associated with it.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

52. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD UPDATE

The next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board would be led by Children in Care. A further update would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

53. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

The Committee gave consideration to the work programme. The Chair informed the group of the progress with the work of Task and Finish Groups.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

54. EXCLUSION RESOLUTION

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 8.40 pm