

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 FEBRUARY 2022

PRESENT

Councillor D. Western (in the Chair).

Councillors Mrs. P. Young (Vice-Chair), J. Bennett, Miss L. Blackburn, J. Dillon, S. Maitland and A. New.

In attendance

Jill McGregor	Corporate Director of Children's Services
Pamela Wharton	Director for Social Care and Early Support
Karen Samples	Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance
Andy Zilkha	Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service
Sally Smith	SEN Advisory Service (SENAS) Service Manager and Advisor for Inclusion
Colin Reynolds	Interim Service Manager of the Community Learning Disability Team
Jaqueline Coulton	Chief Nurse, Trafford CCG
Alexander Murray	Governance Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Carey, S. J. Haughey, S. Longden, A.M. Whyte and D. Acton.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dillon declared an interest as her child was in the preparing for adulthood system and in relation to her role as a Governor responsible for looked after children at a school in Trafford.

22. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions were received.

23. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held 5th October 2022 be agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

24. PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance delivered a presentation to the Committee, which provided an overview of the report with support from the Interim Service Manager of the Community Learning Disability Team, the SEN Advisory Service (SENAS) Service Manager and Advisor for Inclusion, and the Chief Nurse for Trafford CCG. The slides were to be shared with the Committee after the meeting. The presentation covered the data dashboard which was utilised to track the services key performance indicators

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(KPIs). The dashboard enabled comparisons with national, local, and statistical neighbours.

The Committee were shown the outcomes for Children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities. The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance explained where Trafford Were doing well and areas for improvement. The Committee were shown the agreed priorities for the service and the Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance provided details on work being done to meet those priorities. The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance detailed the findings from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and mapped out which priorities addressed those needs.

The SENAS Service Manager and Advisor for Inclusion informed the Committee of the work the Council were doing to address their duties for children and young people on EHC Plans throughout their school lives and when they transition into adulthood. The Interim Service Manager of the Community Learning Disability Team went through the three pathways Trafford had in place for young people with different levels of need to ensure they received the right support for them.

The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance went through the feedback received from the recent LGA peer review, which had identified several areas where Trafford were doing well and provided a set of recommendations for improvement. The recommendations were captured within an action plan and linked into ambition 4 within the improvement plan. The Committee were informed of the positive impact the impact the Council's kickstart apprentices had had within the service. The presentation concluded with a list of next steps for the service.

Following the presentation Councillor Maitland asked whether parents and young people could access the Council's Liquid Logic system. The SENAS Service Manager and Advisor for Inclusion responded that they were not currently able to, but work was ongoing in the creation of a portal that would increase accessibility and might provide access to parents. The Corporate Director for Children's Services added that Liquid Logic was the database used by the service and work was ongoing to increase accessibility. The key aspect regarding parents and young people was ensuring all relevant information was accurately captured and stored to aid in the delivery of support.

Councillor Maitland noted that some of the contact information for volunteering was wrong and asked who was responsible for updating the information on the Trafford directory. The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance responded that there was a dedicated officer, but providers needed to inform the Council if their contact information had changed.

Councillor Maitland then asked how smooth the transition from school into adulthood was. The Interim Service Manager of the Community Learning Disability Team responded that the experience varied depending on which pathway someone was on, but the service was working to make the transition as smooth as possible for all pathways. The Corporate Director for Children's Services added that a key element in the Council's approach was working with the parent

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experience panels, which were made up of parents who had experienced the transition.

Councillor Maitland followed up her question by asking where those who were not satisfied with the service needed to contact. The SENAS Service Manager and Advisor for Inclusion answered that it depended upon the setting. If the young person was still in school, then they would inform the schools SENCO and the EHC coordinators were key contacts for all young people with EHC Plans. The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance added that they could also go to the Trafford SEND Information, Advice, and Support Service (SENDIASS) and the Trafford Parents Forum.

Councillor Maitland's final question was whether the Board had been established and how many cases they had dealt with so far. The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance responded that the Board had been established, although they had not heard any cases as they were dealt with directly or through the EHC coordinator.

Councillor Acton welcomed the inclusion of KPIs within the report as it provided context to aid the Committee in understanding the performance of the service. The Councillor noted that the plans were very good, but the focus now had to be on the delivery of those plans. Councillor Acton welcomed the introduction of the Parent Experience Panels and the challenge they would bring. The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance thanked Councillor Acton for his comments and informed the Committee of the governance arrangements in place for monitoring the delivery and performance of the plans, which included the SEND Strategic Board and the Start Well Board.

Councillor Bennet asked about the three pathways and how much input young people had as to which pathway they would be directed to. The Interim Service Manager for the Community Learning Disability Team responded that young people were very involved in selecting the pathway they were on. He explained how the pathway linked in with the golden thread of the young person's voice that ran through all work within the service. The Committee were informed of the reviews and contacts with young people and the Council's approach, which ensured young people felt safe in expressing their views.

Councillor Dillon asked how the parents for the Parent Experience Panels were selected. The Councillor spoke about the barriers she had faced in receiving Health Care for a young person over 16 and asked what support was available to help with issues such as needle phobic. The Councillor also noted the reference to an Adult Care Transition Assessment and asked for an explanation as to what they involved.

Councillor Dillon's final question was to the nature of the pathways within the report, whether they were virtual pathways, and how they appeared from a young person's perspective. The Director of Education Standards, Quality and Performance responded that the Communication and Engagement group, which included representatives of the Trafford Parents' Forum, were working on the selection of parents for the Parent Experience Panels. With regards to needle

phobia, GP practice nurses were able to provide support. The Corporate Director for Children's Services added that case studies would be included within future reports to aid in understanding what pathways were and how they worked.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report and presentation be noted.
- 2) That further reports on pathways are to include case studies.

25. YOUTH PROVISION

The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service went through the slides circulated with the agenda. The presentation covered the vision of the service, the street talk service, how street talk fed into the rest of the services, locality projects delivered in 2020/21, Youth Provision case studies, feedback from young people and parents, partnerships and the wider youth offer, Serious Youth Violence, Gaps and Issues within the Service, Objectives of the service and timescales for achieving them, and the final section covered some of the successes the service had achieved. The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service provided additional details and depth to each slide as he went through the presentation. Following the conclusion of the slides the Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service informed the Committee that the Council had passed their major accreditation for information advice and guidance, which included the street talk service.

Councillor New asked whether it would be possible to have some focused information about the work being done within the localities especially around county lines. Councillor New also asked whether there was a qualification people could work towards. The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service responded that more detailed information was available through the monthly monitoring, which he would be happy to supply to ward Councillors.

The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service informed the Committee that the service was aware some of the young people they worked with were being exploited across county lines and the service picked this up by linking with the Youth Justice and community safety teams. The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service asked which park knives had been found and stated he would pass the information onto the community safety team.

The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service informed the Committee that he was currently in discussion with Trafford College with a view to possibly offering a qualification. The Corporate Director of Children's Services added that the Youth Justice Service, the missing service, and the specialist complex safeguarding team were being brought together into a vulnerable adolescent's service. The Council were providing a series of programmes and support within schools around violence reduction, which was being led by the violence reduction coordinator.

Councillor Maitland asked about nitrous oxide cannisters and whether any work was ongoing around the dangers of nitrous oxide. The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service responded that all the staff in the service were trained

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in discussing drug and alcohol misuse with young people and were passing on messages about the risks to young people. The Council had a joint approach with Early Break and could refer young people into that service.

Councillor Bennett raised concerns about the lack of work being done within Sale Moor and asked what work was planned to be done in the area. The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service agreed that not enough work had been done within Sale Moor and assured Councillor Bennet that it was an area they were looking to address. The Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service expressed that the service did not have very strong links within the Sale Moor community and asked that Councillor Bennet share any contacts she was aware of.

Councillor Blackburn asked whether the youth services were linking in with Amey and the police to share information about where the hotspots for nitrous oxide use were. The Corporate Director of Children's Services responded that the service shared data and mapping with the police along with regular meetings and panels with Council and Police representation.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the update be noted.
- 2) That monthly monitoring data be shared with ward Councillors who requested it.
- 3) That the Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service pass the information from Councillor New onto the Community Safety Team.
- 4) That Councillor Bennet pass on any contacts for the Sale Moor area to the Service Manager of the Youth Engagement Service.

26. OFSTED IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Director for Social Care and Early Support gave a brief overview of the report which had been circulated as part of the agenda. The Committee had last received an update in October following the last Ofsted visit and had not been able to share the full outcomes of that visit until they were published on the 2nd of November, which had been included within the pack. Overall Ofsted had found that children's situations were improving due to the interventions Trafford were putting in place, but workforce instability and weaknesses in first line management were impacting on the quality of relationships and decision making for children. Performance management along with Corporate and Political Leadership were all seen to be very strong.

Following the visit Trafford had reviewed the improvement plan. The 8 Ambitions remained but 3 overarching priorities had been added of workforce stability, leadership and management, and the quality of practice. Workforce instability had continued with turnover being higher than desired. 14 new social workers had been recruited within the last 6 months and the DfE had recognised that Trafford had put all the correct things in place to improve the situation. The Committee were informed that since the visit Trafford had introduced a management

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restructure, supervision frameworks had been revised, the Leadership Forum had been established, and the quality assurance framework had been implemented.

The Director for Social Care and Early Support spoke of the services first “Practice Fortnight” with sessions attended by 750 practitioners and managers, which included a session from a headteacher explaining what it was like to run a school. In the next year it was planned to have a “Year of Practice” with learning and development opportunities available for all of the workforce. In addition, a strengthening practice programme had been commissioned, which was a three-year investment in practitioners. A programme for managers and leaders was also under development, which would enable them to provide additional support and leadership to staff.

Feedback from the DfE review, held the previous week, stated that everyone they spoke to within Trafford’s Children’s Services was passionate about making a difference for children, which was unusual to see with an authority under improvement. The Director for Social Care and Early Support concluded their overview by stating that Trafford still had a long way to go on the improvement journey with variability in practice still being an issue, but that addressing this was a priority going forward.

Following the overview, the Chair noted the ongoing issues with management oversight and asked what steps could be put in place to reach a level where the Committee could be assured it was robust. The Corporate Director for Children’s Services responded that the Leadership Forum brought together all the Heads of Service and Practice Managers and gave them the opportunity to review what was going well and identify areas to be strengthened. The Forum was integral in building consistency across services and turning shared expectations into tangible decisions. The Forum met every two weeks and looked at audit information along with examples of good and bad practice. In addition, the supervision framework had been redeveloped in partnership with practitioners and managers which ensured supervision, advice, and guidance were helpful and consistent across services. The Leadership Forum, Supervision Framework, and formal external programme were all key platforms which would enable the service to have confidence in everything managers do.

Councillor Maitland asked whether this work linked into what Jan Haworth was doing. The Corporate Director of Children’s Services responded that Jan Haworth was an expert in child protection and planning and had been commissioned to work with Child Protection Conference Chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers, who were responsible for reviewing children’s plans. That piece of work would look at whether Trafford were effective in progressing those plans. Jan Haworth had also been asked to conduct a piece of work talking to children and families to identify whether plans were meaningful and helpful.

Councillor Maitland asked about the 4P approach and why there had only been limited progress so far. The Corporate Director of Children’s Services responded that the approach linked to safeguarding and youth justice. The approach had been developed in other areas and was shown to be effective when working with

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police. The progress had been limited so far as it required a full system change and the change journey had been delayed by the pandemic.

Councillor Blackburn asked whether the rate of turnover had impacted the audits of practice and when it was expected that the requires improvement rating would move to being good. The Corporate Director of Children's Services responded that improvement was being seen with more audits being rated as good. The service was also seeing an increase in the number of compliments being received. The Corporate Director of Children's Services was confident that when the service was reinspected Ofsted would validate the improvements the service had made.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and finished at 8.38 p.m.