

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 24th October, 2018.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark(Chairman), Cllr Barbara Inman(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Sally Ann Watson,

Officers: Martin Gray, Maria Murrell, Dave Willingham, Jackie Ward (CS), Vanessa Housley (EIC), Nicola Childs (NHS) Peter Mennear, Marianne Sleeman (DCE)

Also in attendance: Katie Slack, Young people from Lets Take Action

Apologies: Cllr Di Hewitt, Mrs Neelam un Kabir

CYP 41/18 Evacuation Procedure

The Evacuation Procedures were noted.

CYP 42/18 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared

CYP 43/18 Minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2018

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2018.

AGREED: That the minutes from the meeting held on 11th July 2018 were declared as an accurate recording and signed by the Chair.

CYP 44/18 Scrutiny Review of the Child's Journey

Members received information regarding the Scrutiny Review of a Child's Journey which included presentations given by:

Let's Take Action Group – Children in Care Council (LTA).
Education Improvement Service (EIS)
Peer researchers working with NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Presentations included:

LTA – Lets Take Action Group

- An outline of involvement the young people in care have within the Borough and all the services open to them, and the opportunity to influence them
- The various opportunities LTA were involved in throughout the year.
- The work of the Young Inspectors

In discussion it was noted:

- Arriva and Stagecoach attended an event where discussions were held around reduced tickets for young people who live out of Borough. This would also apply to young people who have left care.

- Arc and Blue Cabin offer more cultural, creative projects for Foster Carers and young people.
- LTA were involved in the interview process in the recruitment of new social workers. The young people confirmed they felt their opinions were taken into consideration as part of their work with LTA but they recognised that some improvements took time to deliver.
- Following a survey of care leavers by the Children in Care Council, 95% of care leavers had stated that they had felt listened to.
- It was noted there was innovative working between the Virtual School and London Institute of Banking and Finance to develop budgeting qualifications. Further feedback from the Virtual Head on this if required.

Members thanked the young people for the presentation and insight into LTA.

EIC – Education Improvement Service

High priority given to pupil voice by the Service and a range of work had been developed to inform the Future in Mind programme. The presentation covered the following elements:

- The Growing Up in Stockton survey funded by Public Health and undertaken by, Schools Health Unit Exeter (SHUE) focusing on Year 8 and Year 10
- Primary Schools were invited to participate in a second survey commencing summer term 2018; Kidscreen-52.
- The outcomes from the surveys
- How the EIS used Pupil Voice in school evaluation

It was noted that children enjoy providing feedback on feeling safe, behaviour, and being looked after, and pupil voice had been used to improve services.

All Academies had engaged with the Service to develop action plans following the SHEU Survey.

Members highlighted that school leadership teams should consider the impact of behaviour policies on emotional mental health.

Members queried how the surveys were undertaken within schools, and to see a copy of the blank surveys. It was noted that in Primary Schools this was approached sensitively and pupils did not have to complete them. The surveys were based on internationally adopted approaches.

It was noted that the new Ofsted Framework would give greater consideration to all subject areas, and a cross curricular approach to emotional and mental health.

Members noted the schools usually highlighted their exam results but not the

emotional health and happiness of their pupils. Some schools adopted measures to do this, and Billingham South Primary had undertaken a range of activity to promote being a 'happy school'. The People Select Committee had recently highlighted a range of issues on this agenda.

Peer researchers working with NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The CCG highlighted how they had used young people in Stockton and Hartlepool to act as peer researchers to look into the use of digital technology for young people the age of 12 and 15.

- A questionnaire was created focussing on a digital app around mental health and wellbeing including exam stress.
- Majority of people surveyed had not used an app; 50% said they would look for advice around mental health and wellbeing on the internet.
- It was identified schools were best placed to make young people aware how to access advice on the internet, that young people wanted to be involved in the development of any apps, that the peer researchers felt pleased to be involved, and that schools and parents needed more support in this area.

Since this work, a Building Resilience Programme in Schools was being developed, and the Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust Recovery College online resource for adults was being adopted for use by children and young people.

It was noted that future meetings would consider cases studies of how children were involved at the individual level.

AGREED:

- a) The information be noted
- b) Copies of surveys from secondary and primary schools to be sent to the Committee.

CYP 45/18 Children In Need - Reporting-in Review

Members were presented with an overview of Children In Need (CIN) as part of the baseline report for this Reporting In Review. A further report highlighted progress and next steps would be brought to Committee in January.

The key issues for the service were the volume and pressure of work, and how new services and ways of working could be developed to tackle this. It was highlighted that emerging issues were as follows:

- An increase in number of CIN referrals which affects recruitment and retention.
- An identified need to understand how social work could positively impact on a case, and where it possible to safely step down cases to Early Help, or close them. Some cases were remaining open for too long, reflecting a risk averse approach, when risks could actually be safely managed elsewhere.
- In the first quarter there was an increase in case closures and step down

to early help which reflected some impact of new ways of working

- A meeting had taken place with Social Services, National Probation Service (NPS) and CRC around automatic notification systems to ensure social workers were aware of any involvement of people associated with the justice system.
- Recruitment within the Assessment Team to give additional support to families.
- Family Group Conference team has been an effective service, families feel empowered to find solutions.
- As more bespoke packages of care were needed, therapeutic interventions would be looked at under different models.

In discussion, Members queried the use of the Signs of Safety tool and its scoring mechanism, and were reassured that this was a basis to prompt discussion amongst different agencies and justify the reasons for their score, in order to come to a common view.

It was agreed that changing perceptions of social work intervention was key, and restorative practice and Family Group Conferences had assisted in this regard. Family Group Conferences were positively regarded by families, courts and social workers.

AGREED:

That the information be noted and a further update be received in January.

**CYP
46/18** **Work Programme**

Consideration was given to the Work Programme.

AGREED: That the Work Programme be noted.

**CYP
47/18** **Chair's Update**

The Chair informed Members a visit to Eastern Ravens would be arranged to gain insight into children who are carers in order to inform the Child's Journey review.