

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 10th November 2021.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark (Chair), Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice Chair), Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Clare Gamble, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Norma Stephenson (sub for Cllr Lauriane Povey), Cllr Sally Ann Watson

Officers: Martin Gray, Jon Doyle (CS), Haleem Ghafoor (Comms), Judy Trainer (DS)

Also in attendance: Karen Grundy, Neta Kaurbrown (Catalyst), James Graham (Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust)

Apologies: Cllr Lauriane Povey

1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021**

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **Scrutiny Review of Child Poverty**

Karen Grundy and Neta Kaurbrown (Catalyst) gave a presentation covering the following areas:

- The role of Catalyst and support they provide
- Stockton on Tees Food Power Network
- Holiday Enrichment Programme (HEP)
- Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

The key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- FSM children had been targeted for HAF programmes but wider publicity and improvements to the booking system should help reach more children in future. Over 6,500 thousand FSM children had not accessed the programmes but there had been spare places. Closer working with schools was also planned
- Government funding did not cover the half term holidays which is why Public Health and Catalyst bridged the gap with funding for half term holiday enrichment programmes
- The programmes were very prescriptive; with more flexibility the programmes could have been run very differently. For example, Government funding was for face-to-face provision – more flexibility to offer remote provision would be welcomed
- There was a DfE cap on administration so that the majority of the money went on food and activities. Members requested a breakdown of the funding of the schemes for the HAF programme which was a total of £909,850

allocated locally, split as £91,500 (20/21) and £818,350 (21/22)

- It was noted that needy children not on FSM might not be eligible for help. Although HEP was for low-income families, HAF was solely for FSM children and there was only a 15% leeway in applying this
- It was noted that some VCS support and support from business was also provided – a future piece of work to record a more accurate picture of provision was planned
- Members paid tribute to the valuable work that Catalyst and the Council were doing to provide much needed support

James Graham (Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust) gave a presentation covering the following areas:

- National Picture
 - One in six school age children has a mental health problem
 - Pupils with a mental health problem are more likely to be excluded from school
 - 75% of adults with a diagnosable mental health problem experience the first symptoms by the age of 24
 - About 1 in 20 5 – 19 year-olds have a behavioural disorder
 - Children from the poorest households are four times more likely to have serious mental health difficulties by the age of 11
 - Three quarters of children in care have a diagnosable mental health problem
- Impact of the pandemic
- Increased pressures on services and increasing waiting times
- Organisation and planning of services around the i-Thrive framework
- Planning response

The key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- Members were shocked by the increase in demand for services and waiting times and noted the impact on young people and also on their families; it was also concerning that waiting times locally compared favourably to the national picture
- Staffing and funding pressures were driving other approaches. A move away from the usual diagnostic led approach to a whole system approach was taking place with a greater emphasis on multi agency co-ordination and collaboration between agencies and partners
- Co-ordinated work was taking place in schools with positive early feedback. A focus on early help and intervention would help to free up specialist services for those that need it
- Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) were a new government initiative to help increase access to mental health support for children and young people. MHSTs were being currently being rolled out in Billingham Schools and there was a target that by the end of 2024, 40-50% of children would be attending a school with a MHST
- Better co-ordination of care with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) was also taking place with CAMHS practitioners being based in GP practices. A PCN had been selected in Ingleby Barwick as a pilot and if successful further

business cases would follow

4 Progress Update - Scrutiny Review of Domestic Abuse and its Impact on Children

The Select Committee considered a progress update following implementation of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Domestic Abuse and its Impact on Children.

With respect to Operation Encompass, Members concurred with school concerns that more context needed to be provided in relation to notified incidents.

It was noted that Councillor training would be provided in 2022 to tie in with the new Domestic Abuse Act.

AGREED that the Progress Update be noted and the assessments of progress be confirmed.

5 Select Committee Work Programme and Chair's Update

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.