

# Children and Young People's Partnership

A meeting of Children and Young People's Partnership was held on Wednesday, 20th September, 2017.

**Present:** Martin Gray (Chairman)(SBC), Diane McConnell (SBC), Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (SBC), Sarah Bowman Abouna (SBC), Jen Milsom (CP), Joanne Ryan (Big Life), Steve Rose (Catalyst), Simon White (Secondary School Representative), Janet Mackie (NTHNFT)

**Officers:** Michael Henderson, James O'Donnell (SBC)

**Also in attendance:** Natalie Childs (CCG)

**Apologies:** Bev Bearne (SBC), Emma Champley (SBC) Rhona Bolland (SBC) Priti Butler (Big Life), Jo Heaney (CCG), Jane Barker (NTHNFT)

## 1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2017 were confirmed as a correct record.

## 3 **Looked After Children Strategy**

Members received a copy of the Council's current Looked After Children and Care leavers Strategy 2016-18.

It was explained that the Strategy was in the process of being updated and there would be a focus on delivery.

It was noted that there was an aim to raise the profile of the strategy.

Members were provided with a comprehensive overview of delivery and outcome priorities.

Particular reference was made to corporate parenting commitments, which was being enhanced and rebranded.

Discussion:

- Members felt that the term 'corporate parenting' was not ideal and consideration should be given to changing it. It was noted that within the Council the expression 'children in our care' was often used. Children were likely to be happy with any term where the obligations associated with the role were fulfilled.
- The strategy should be shared as much as possible and wording had to be engaging and provide a sense of belonging.
- The child's voice needed to come through.

- It was felt that the profile of learning within the strategy should be raised and the language in section 6 – ‘Get the best education and skills’ should be strengthened.

- A set of actions associated with the strategy existed and these would be developed as the strategy became embedded.

RESOLVED that the comments provided be noted and considered as part of the development

#### **4 Informing Strategic Planning**

Members received a presentation relating to Informing Strategic Planning,

It was noted that topics subject to the process would be reported to this forum for further consideration.

The presentation included an example of how the topic smoking might be dealt with. Members also undertook an interactive session, during which, members considered how the process would work for the 'childhood injuries' topic.

Members looked at :

- data and intelligence
- groups that were at risk
- consultation and engagement
- strategic issues
- evidence base
- what was being done and why?
- what needs were unmet?
- what needed to be done and why?
- what additional needs assessment is required?

Member supported the suggested process and felt it was streamlined and well structured.

Discussion/queries:

- it was up to the topic lead and group to agree the evidence base and the intelligence lead would provide advice in this regard.

- this Partnership would sign off topics, raise issues/concerns and could ask for further work if it thought there were gaps etc.

- it was important that there were strategic links between topics, for example, risk taking behaviour in young people and smoking.

- data was clearly a key element to the approach and it was agreed that public health/ this Partnership should consider where there were gaps and look to influence relevant agencies to collect data to fill those gaps.

- topic leads could provide indicative costs around the implementation of ‘what needs to be done?’ However, the process could only go so far and decisions on the implementation of findings would be made in other places.

- it was suggested that all 36 topics should include consideration of how any implemented findings might impact on children and young people.
- the process would help inform commissioning decisions.
- consideration should be given to outcome based accountability being embedded in the process
- JSNA needs to include examples of best practice.
- the planning process would inform the strategic evidence base for the refresh of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

RESOLVED that the presentation and discussion be noted actioned as appropriate and priority topics be identified at a future meeting.

## **5 Peer Researchers' findings**

Members considered a report that presented peer researcher findings, following their consultation with young people, on the use of digital technology, for the emotional wellbeing and mental health of young people.

Members noted that researchers had felt that there was not enough information available on mental health apps, but young people were not averse to using them, in addition to, or whilst waiting for, face to face support. They also felt that they should be involved in the design of any mental health app that may be commissioned.

Discussion:

- it was noted that the peer researchers had built up skills that would be helpful in other work associated with the Future in Mind transformation programme.
- apps were useful in some circumstances but, as one young person had pointed out, at a recent event, the key issues around isolation and loneliness would be exacerbated if young people were forced to only use technology.
- face to face counselling was offered by some schools and were very well attended.
- it was suggested that changes to curriculum and the 'ramping up' of examination questions had been an area of significant stress to young people and these changes were set to continue. The national curriculum did not help build resilience in children's mental health and activities needed to be put in place that were not so prescribed and allowed children to potentially fail and learn – 'It's ok to get things wrong'.
- reference was made to potential for introducing telephone help lines.
- it was noted that problems in early life, such as attachment, was proven to lead to mental health issues. It was therefore important to consider prevention work and it was suggested that a piece of work could come back to this

Partnership in this regard.

RESOLVED that the information and discussion be noted/actioned as appropriate.

## **6 Forward Plan**

Members noted the Forward Plan and it was explained that it would be further reviewed outside the meeting, by the Chair.

During discussion it was explained that Yacouba Traore, a former active member of the Let's Take Action Group had been identified as a finalist in the NE charity awards, for outstanding volunteering.