

People Select Committee

A meeting of People Select Committee was held on Monday, 19th March, 2018.

Present: Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell (Chairman), Cllr Sonia Bailey, Cllr Gillian Corr, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E (Sub for Cllr Di Hewitt),

Officers: Melanie Douglas, Tanya Evans, Mandie Morris, Rob White (CHS), Jane Smith (A&H); Gary Woods, Annette Sotheby (DCE)

Also in attendance: Ann Baxter (TSAB)

Apologies: Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Stefan Houghton

**PEO
59/17** **Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

**PEO
60/17** **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**PEO
61/17** **Minutes of the meeting held on 18th December 2017 - For Approval/Signature**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meetings held on 18th December 2017.

AGREED that the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**PEO
62/17** **Scrutiny Review of Mental Health and Wellbeing including Suicide and Self-Harm**

Members received information regarding Children's Services roles and responsibilities in this area, and the key issues / challenges around young people's mental health and wellbeing. The Council's Future in Mind Transformation Lead and Early Help Assessment Team Manager gave a presentation, the main points of which included:

- What are our concerns: importance of emotional health and well-being highlighted in the Children's Services Strategy 2017-2020.
- Associated factors: 'psychological', 'social family', 'social school' and 'social community' risk factors and protective factors outlined.
- Early Help Assessments (previously CAF): data shown regarding completed assessments with a breakdown of those demonstrating emotional health and wellbeing concerns.
- Work undertaken in 2017/18: including 'Future in Mind' pilot to increase mental health awareness and knowledge across 10 secondary schools (key findings and recommendations for schools, local authorities and NHS Commissioners also shared).
- Children's Commissioner report on NHS mental health spend: imbalance of NHS children's mental health spend and the need for a change of investment to focus on early intervention highlighted.

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- Can be difficult for parents to make the link that their child's behaviour is a mental health issue rather than just being naughty – this can be even harder to judge if they have one child (no siblings to compare behaviours with).
- Some schools have a different approach to inclusion which could be seen to not fully take into account existing student mental health issues and / or affect the future mental health of students.
- How do we monitor those schools not under Local Authority control (i.e. academies) when it comes to student mental health? It was noted that Ofsted are increasingly looking at student mental health when inspecting; Early Help Support Officers (EHSOs) are allocated a cluster of schools and develop relationships with these.
- Member training suggested to identify Member Mental Health Champions.
- Counsellors in secondary schools (someone children can talk too) crucial, however, there is often a lack of appropriate rooms to have confidential conversations in.
- Secondary schools being exam / outcome-focused – schools part of the problem for putting pressure on their children.
- Who do children go to when outside school – is there a gap?

Members received further information from Children's Social Care representatives who outlined some of the risk factors that affect children's emotional health and wellbeing, and the work done in conjunction with Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board to address these challenges:

- Certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others – one group of particularly vulnerable children are those generally aged between 13-17 years who have experienced bereavement or loss, have low self-esteem or self-confidence, are a young carer, or lack a strong positive peer group and who may have experienced abuse / neglect.
- Increasing prevalence of social media use and its potentially negative affect on mental health and wellbeing – Social Workers, Senior Family Workers and Family Workers undertake direct work with children and their families around online safety using a variety of resources. All young people referred to the Youth Offending Team (YOT) undertake an Online Safety Initial Assessment with their parents / carers.
- Signs of Safety (SoS) model launched in Stockton – supports increased focus on the family themselves identifying problems through restorative practice techniques, building on relationships to encourage open and frank discussions. It is hoped that this model will promote early intervention.
- Looking at a number of options to support Social Workers in achieving better outcomes, including a specific post or resource from CAMHS to act as a consultant to support decision-making, and the development of a tool for Social Workers which will assist in the understanding of presenting mental health problems and result in a more effective and appropriate response.

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- A lot of young people seek support online, but can also suffer online.

- Targeted Support teams a new concept – part of a comprehensive offer for young people who are struggling. Three out of the four case workers are male. Attachment issues and trauma-based work on the horizon.
- If we cannot affect change at home, our efforts will not affect the child.

Members received evidence from the Chair of the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) in relation to its roles and responsibilities around the mental health and wellbeing of young adults, which included:

- TSAB is a strong local partnership which focuses on how member agencies work together. The Board have not previously initiated a structured / specific look at young adults' mental health, but those 18-25 year-olds who have a range of issues probably developed these during adolescence.
- 10 different types of abuse in safeguarding adults (wider than in children's safeguarding), including three new categories (domestic abuse, modern slavery and self-neglect).
- Issue of 'capacity' – people having the right to make decisions themselves, even if they choose a 'risky' lifestyle. Sometimes people move between having capacity and not having capacity when under the influence of alcohol / drugs. Agencies can only intervene if an individual is deemed a danger to themselves or others.
- TSAB undertake Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR) / Learning Lessons Reviews for more serious cases – one such high-profile case raised the issue of 'adolescent neglect' – parents asking for help, but problems were made out to be the fault of the young people (services put in were to help parents, not the children).

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- Resources key – need to invest to save – this is a growing, not shrinking, need. Need to pressure politicians as problems can spread across other services (e.g. Police, Council LAC numbers).
- SBC doing a review of all mental health services (led by Public Health) – feed into this if relevant.
- Hear anecdotal evidence that people trying to convince GPs that they need help. Are mental health check-ups as well as physical check-ups required?
- Lots of focus on parents, but less on their children.

The Committee requested the following further information:

- Additional breakdown of the data in relation to Early Help Assessment form analysis.
- Future in Mind school pilot evaluation report and the names of schools who took part.

AGREED: 1) that the information be noted.
2) that a further breakdown of the completed Early Help Assessment data be provided, as well as the Future in Mind evaluation report and names of the participating schools.

**PEO
63/17** **Work Programme 2017-2018**

Consideration was given to the Committee's Work Programme 2017-2018.

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

**PEO
64/17** **Work Programme 2018-2019**

Consideration was given to the Committee's Work Programme 2018-2019.
The next meeting is on the 16th April 2018.

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

**PEO
65/17** **Chair's Update**

The Chair had nothing further to report.