

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12 November 2014 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Paschoud (Chair), Brenda Dacres (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Hilary Moore, Jacq Paschoud, Joan Reid, Luke Sorba, Alan Till, Sharon Archibald (Parent Governor Representative), Lisa Palin (Parent Governor Representative) Mark Saunders (Parent Governor Representative) and Nicholas Rothon (Church Representative)

APOLOGIES: Councillor David Britton

ALSO PRESENT: Mick Atkinson (Head of Commissioning, Place2Be), Wendy Geraghty (Lead Clinician, Lewisham CAMHS, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust), Andrew Hagger (Scrutiny Manager), Caroline Hirst (Commissioner for Children and Young People), Sid Hughes (14-19 Development Officer), Ruth Hutt (Public Health Consultant), Ian Smith (Director Children's Social Care), Frankie Sulke (Executive Director for Children and Young People), Sue Tipler (Head of Standards and Achievement for CYP) and Warwick Tomsett (Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning)

Reasons for lateness: The minutes have been sent late as the officer responsible has been on paternity and was unable to complete them ahead of the despatch date.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2014

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2014 were approved.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 There were none.

3. Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

3.1 Ian Smith (Director for Children's Social Care) introduced the report and highlighted the following key points:

- The Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory board with responsibilities that include developing local safeguarding policies and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements.
- The priorities of the LSCB are set at the start of each year, for 2012/13 these included; Reducing child abuse and neglect, Developing a coherent multi agency strategy to reduce the incidence of sexual exploitation and Reducing road traffic accidents involving children & young people.
- Three cases were highlighted showing safeguarding weaknesses in Lewisham Healthcare Trust with 2 serious case reviews that are due to be published soon.
- The LSCB received annual reports on Disclosure and Barring Systems (DBS), the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

- There were a number of task groups set up, including a Child Sexual Exploitation task group (CSE).
- Future priorities for the LSCB include; Neglect, Looked After Children (LAC) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

3.2 The Chair moved to suspend standing orders to the close of business, which the Committee agreed.

3.3 In response to questions from the Committee, Frankie Sulke (Executive Director for Children & Young People) and Ian Smith provided the following information:

- Lewisham is 3rd highest in London for domestic violence; however a lot of work has been done to publicise the issue so it is unclear whether this is because Lewisham has the 3rd highest rate or because Lewisham is the 3rd best at detecting it.
- Young people being used as couriers for drugs from Lewisham to other places was a priority for the LSCB in 2012/13. Lewisham Youth Offending Service (YOS) identified it and raised the issue with the police, including a Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meeting with police. A further report on the issue will be going to LSCB and secondary schools are being informed about looking out for warning signs. This is a cross-London problem and the police are taking a hard line with ringleaders by pressing trafficking charges.
- Senior management are going to all schools to raise some of the issues identified as priorities by the LSCB, including CSE, drugs, FGM and forced marriage. Management are making a time investment in raising issues that are specific to the school.
- The new virtual head should help improve the educational attainment of LAC and further information about this will be included in the Committee's next report on LAC.
- Faith groups and other voluntary sector organisations have representation on the LSCB and the relationship with the voluntary sector is good.
- LAC are recorded as missing if they have been absent for more than 24 hours. There is a distinction drawn between an unauthorised absence and being missing and social workers will try to identify regular absences to see what the issue is.
- A big challenge is the recruitment of foster carers, especially as a significant amount of savings are tied into providing more in-house fostering. Not only will it save money, but placements such as these are better for the children and can offer more stability. A company called NRS are carrying out the marketing and recruitment, with retention of foster carers a part of the performance monitoring of the contract. Publicising the financial support available about making sure potential carers are aware that they can be compensated for fostering and that they don't have to bear all the extra costs.
- The annual report shows an increase in Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs), although these have gone down now. Part of this has been because there has been encouragement for professionals to complete them, with the police now agreeing to do them. A CAF does not necessarily mean that a referral will happen and it is difficult to set a target for the appropriate number of CAFs there should be.
- The figures for parental attendance at Child Protection Conferences are not entirely accurate as they don't include those with parental responsibility. If they are then the figure is 80-85%.

- Officers deal with colleagues in highways around road traffic safety, including whether crossings need to be put in place at hotspots.
- Council officers will always look at all people who are significant in a child's life when looking at a serious case. Social workers are encouraged to be inquisitive about the backgrounds of those that are involved in a child's life.

4. Young People's Mental Health Review

4.1 Caroline Hirst (Commissioner, Children & Young People) introduced the report and highlighted the following key points:

- 1 in 10 children will experience some form of mental health problem before they are 15.
- The HeadStart project is funded by Big Lottery and is a great opportunity to boost universal and targeted mental health and emotional well-being provision within Lewisham, particularly around resilience. The HeadStart project has a series of priorities and targets with a steering group made up of young people.
- Risk factors for mental health issues include poverty, being a Looked After Child (LAC), parental mental health, and those exposed to trauma.
- Mental health provision is divided into a number of tiers. Tiers 3 and 4 are statutory provision dealing with the most serious cases. Tiers 1 and 2 are universal and targeted provision.
- South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust are commissioned to provide specialist child and adolescent mental health (CAMH) provision at Tiers 3 and 4.
- Place2Be, a national charity, offer universal and targeted provision in 10 schools within the borough, 2 secondary and 8 primary. They provide a school based counselling service, which incorporates 1:1 appointments, group sessions and open access drop in sessions.

4.2 In response to questions from the Committee, Frankie Sulke (Executive Director for Children & Young People), Warwick Tomsett (Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning), Caroline Hirst, Mick Atkinson (Head of Commissioning, Place2Be), Wendy Geraghty (Lead Clinician, Lewisham Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and Ruth Hutt (Public Health Consultant) provided the following information:

- Suicide amongst young people is rare in Lewisham and is more common among young men than other groups. Self-harm is increasing and more common than suicide, whilst the suicide rate itself is static. There have been no suicides amongst children and young people in Lewisham since 2001. It is the intention of the HeadStart Programme, to build mechanisms of identification and increase opportunities for support, building resilience amongst the child population to reduce the likelihood of suicide.
- While waiting times could be shorter for CAMHS, Lewisham is under the 12 week national target for waiting times and do well in this area in comparison to other local authorities.
- CAMHS services work with young people with high levels of needs. Young people who self-harm cannot be discharged from hospital without being seen by CAMHS.
- Young people are directed to other family support services, if they don't meet the threshold for CAMHS.

- Nationally and locally there has been some debate regarding the 'tiered' approach to CAMH service. The Department of Health is reviewing the current language and there are proposals to change this to a 'system' approach to the delivery of CAMHS.
- Part of the HeadStart project is a pilot online counselling service that provides a direct interface to clinical support and this service allows young people to refer themselves.
- Lewisham CAMHS are fully engaged in the ongoing development of universal and targeted provision in the borough, offering strategic support and expertise to the HeadStart Lewisham programme.
- HeadStart Lewisham operates at three levels: universal provision in universal settings, to improve emotional literacy and identify vulnerable children; targeted provision for those identified as needing support; and intensive support for those with low levels of resilience, to prevent escalation of need.
- Within the HeadStart programme there is a focus on domestic violence as a risk factor, which comes under the wider banner of those 'exposed to trauma'.
- Many schools invest in pastoral care and people across the borough are passionate about the emotional wellbeing of young people. The school nurse expansion programme will support the key principles of HeadStart and Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust continue to play an integral role on the HeadStart Steering Group.
- Current provision at tiers 1 and 2 is limited and current resources are deliberately focused at tiers 3 and 4. HeadStart Lewisham will play an important role when building capacity amongst the workforce
- Those involved in HeadStart are aware that this is the first step, and efforts are being made to build on existing good practice, such as schools commissioning services from organisations such as Place2Be.
- As part of the 'test and learn' phase of HeadStart, Young Minds, the national charity, have been commissioned to deliver the 'Transition Curriculum' across two school collaboratives. This involves parents and carers, as well as those delivering services in schools to identify gaps in provision. Schools were identified in partnership with the School Improvement Team.
- Place2Be focuses on tier 1 and 2 preventative work, with the aim of improving emotional well-being. Place2Be is already operating in a number of schools in the borough and through HeadStart we intend to open this out to more secondary schools.
- We are also working with schools, the youth service and other providers when developing a youth led film, to support resilience in young people of this age group.
- The stage two phase of HeadStart will support the development of expertise and resources, which will be embedded in existing services should we be unsuccessful at stage three.
- There was a wellbeing survey offered out to all schools to provide a baseline of emotional needs for all 8-16 year olds. We intend to conduct a number of controlled trials to enable comparisons between schools not in HeadStart and those that are.
- It is important to get the information and approaches right for mental health issues such as eating disorders and to get it right early. NICE guidance is used as a good practice guide for all services in the community and in specialist units.

- Workforce development is a key focus so that professionals in partner organisations can identify issues earlier.
- The online resource kit is currently under development, we hope to tender in the new year. In the meantime the LBL Communications team have developed a page for Headstart on the Lewisham website.
- The cost/benefit analysis of Place2Be's work is difficult to estimate for Lewisham. Work has been done to produce a national cost-benefit analysis, which is a conservative calculation. Place2Be helps lots of young people that would never reach the specialist CAMHS threshold. The benefit is that it can build resilience into young adulthood. Issues can be identified early, so young people can manage through times of difficulty such as transition, exam pressure and family crises.

4.3 The Committee then discussed the timeframe of the bid for the next round of HeadStart funding, the need for further comparator data on CAMHS waiting times and the need for more detail on a 'Plan B' if the HeadStart bid is unsuccessful.

Resolved:

The Committee asked that the following information be provided for inclusion in the final review report:

- Further comparator data on waiting times for CAMHS.
- Information on what will happen to embed learning from the HeadStart project so far if the bid for further funding does not succeed.

5. Raising the Participation Age

5.1 Sue Tipler (Head of Standards and Achievement) introduced the report:

- There have been significant implications in raising the participation age (RPA) to 18.
- RPA is not only about numbers participating it is about the quality of the engagement in education and training and the impact it has on achievement and progression.
- Officers are talking to primary school heads about those that need support, so that work can be done earlier.
- Officers are also looking at alternative provisions post-16 and the different pathways open to young people.

5.2 Sid Hughes (14-19 lead) then spoke to the Committee, highlighting the following key points:

- There have been a series of curriculum and assessment changes, with RPA as one part of this rapidly changing landscape.
- Nationally there has been a 2-3% rise in young people staying on in education, which means that 81-82% do so nationally. Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) levels are at their lowest since 1994. In Lewisham a high number are choosing to continue in education, the 3rd highest in London.
- Increasing RPA to 17 was the easiest part, the increase to 18 will be more challenging. Challenges come partly from issues around continuity and accounting for all young people. The requirement is to monitor all young people resident in the borough, rather than those participating within the borough. Therefore obtaining tracking information on young people who went to or

continue to go to school outside the borough can be difficult. Also UCAS don't comply with data sharing on time, although there is a lot of pressure on them to do this better. There is a small team tasked with tracking young people and there can be seasonal peaks where tracking information comes through which creates pressure for the team. Lewisham is doing well with NEET numbers below the national and East London average.

- The number of unknowns varies throughout the year as information comes in from different sources. It is not possible to make assumptions, if someone is unreported it doesn't necessarily mean they are NEET.
- There could be more work done to reach young people earlier on. If they are vulnerable to becoming NEET at 16, they are probably vulnerable at a younger age too and targeting them here could be effective.
- A survey on advice and guidance providers is being carried out to establish what is available and what young people want. Advice and guidance does need to be stronger and more young person centred. There are examples of good practice throughout the borough and it is generally better where there is a leader with advice and guidance as part of their remit. The leader could either be a staff member or a governor. Sharing this best practice can lead to improvement and events such as the annual Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Forum can bring people together to share best practice.
- The student tracker showed a surprisingly high number of young people were still studying for a level 3 qualification after 3 years. While a certain amount of churn and change of course is to be expected, the number is high.

5.3 In response to questions from the Committee, Sue Tipler and Sid Hughes provided the following information:

- Funding for 18 year olds has now been reduced, so there is no advantage in having students staying in college for a 3rd year. Performance will change, as the key performance measurement will be in the success of the student in achieving the qualification they started.
- The new technical baccalaureate will give significance to technical qualifications post-16 and put vocational qualifications on a par with A levels. It will also make this more attractive to providers and LeSoCo is considering providing this.
- There is more to be done to improve choices for post-16 participation for SEN young people. Officers are working on transition plans with LeSoCo and it is possible to commission where there is provision.
- Work is being done with schools and providers to see how the curriculum can help young people stay engaged in learning. Year 10 and 11 learning doesn't encourage all young people and there should be opportunities to do work experience and learning. This should be collaborative and based around young people and what their plan is.
- Traineeships have not been promoted enough and can be seen as having secondary status. This will change with the new curriculum offer and high level apprenticeships.
- Officers are looking at indicators that could show if someone will be successful in completing their course. High quality teaching and learning are key.
- There has been increased pressure on getting a grade A-C at GCSE in English and Maths, with a requirement for 6th form providers to run courses to make sure young people have these qualifications.

- There is no evidence that the removal of the EMA grant has had an impact on young people staying on.

Resolved:

The Committee resolved to refer the following comments to Mayor & Cabinet:

- The Committee highlighted information in the report that showed that raising the participation age has significantly increased the scope of the responsibilities that rest with the local authority, with the expectation that it will be delivered within existing resources. The Committee were concerned that this represents an extra cost pressure for the Council at a time of severely restricted resources.
- The Committee raised concerns about the risks to delivering activities around increasing the participation of young people in education, employment or training that could arise from changes to the youth service, including the restructure of the way the service is delivered and budget reductions. The Committee sought reassurance that these risks had been identified and that proposed changes would not impact on the capability of the Council in delivering its statutory duties around the participation of young people in education, employment or training.

6. Select Committee work programme

6.1 The Committee discussed the work programme.

Resolved:

The Committee agreed the work programme.

7. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

Resolved:

The Committee agreed to refer the comments agreed under item 5.

The meeting ended at 10.20 pm

Chair:

Date:
