

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 28 October 2013 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Horabin (Vice-Chairman), E. Cargill, Cassidy, P. Hignett, Logan, C. Plumpton Walsh and B. Woolfall and Ms E Lawler

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M. Bradshaw, Fraser and K. Loftus

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Clough, T. Coffey, D. Houghton, J. John, A. McIntyre, C. Myring, S. Nyakatawa and M. Simpson

Also in attendance: 4 members of the public

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CYP18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2013 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CYP19 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported that no public questions had been received.

CYP20 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board received a report which contained the minutes relating to the Children, Young People and Families portfolio, which had been considered by Executive Board since the last meeting of the PPB.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CYP21 SSP MINUTES

The Minutes of Halton Children's Trust meeting held on 3 September 2013 were submitted to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CYP22 CHILDREN & ENTERPRISE DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANNING 2014 - 17

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided the opportunity for Members to contribute to the development of Directorate Business Plans for the coming financial year.

Members were advised that each Directorate of the Council was required to develop a medium-term business plan, in parallel with the budget, that was subject to annual review and refresh. The process of developing such plans for the period 2014 – 2017 was just beginning.

The Board was further advised that at this stage Members were invited to identify a small number of priorities for development or improvement (possibly 3-5) that they would like to see reflected within those plans. It was reported that a meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 19 November at 6:00pm in Runcorn Town Hall to identify the proposals.

It was reported that Strategic Directors would then develop plans which would be available for consideration by Policy and Performance Boards early in the new year.

The report further set out the timeframe for plan preparation, development and endorsement.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The content of the report be noted;
- 2) The meeting of 19 November at 6.00pm to identify proposals of priority areas for service development and improvement over the next 3 years, be noted.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

CYP23 HALTON CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN ANNUAL REVIEW 2013

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which sought endorsement of the 2013 Annual Review of the Halton Children & Young People's Plan 2011-14. This Review was formally approved by Halton Children's Trust Board in July 2013.

Members were advised that the Halton Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP) was the agreed joint strategy of the partners within Halton Children's Trust, detailing how they would co-operate to improve children's wellbeing. It was further noted that the Plan represented Halton's local vision and aspirations for children and young people in the Borough and provided strategic direction and determined how the Children's Trust Board would work together to commission services to address locally identified needs and better integrate provision.

The Board was informed that although the Coalition Government removed the statutory footing for Children's Trusts in July 2010, it did reconfirm its commitment to working in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people through locally agreed partnerships. Following the announcement of the reforms, the future of Halton Children's Trust was discussed at both the Children's Trust Board and Executive Group and there was a universal agreement from all partners to continue in its current format.

Following extensive consultation, the priorities for Halton Children's Trust for the period 2011-14 were agreed as follows:

- improve outcomes for children and young people through embedding integrated processes to deliver early help and support;
- improve outcomes for children and young people through effective joint commissioning; and
- improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people by targeting services effectively.

Appended to the report for consideration was the Annual Review, which was a short summary document that acted as a supplement to the CYPP. The report further set out details of what the review contained and provided an opportunity to celebrate the successes.

Arising from consideration of the report, Members discussed feedback from young people regarding the Plan and booklet and requested that the information around feedback be circulated to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the content of the report; and
- 2) endorse the Annual Review Document.

CYP24 INSPIRING FAMILIES UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update on the development of the Inspiring Families programme.

Clare Myring, Children & Families Commissioner, Bethany Kilbane, Early Help Worker – Family Work Service and Nicki Garmston, Family Liaison Officer, Cheshire Police, addressed the Board and provided details of a current case study. As front line officers within the service the officers advised Members of the issues surrounding the family and the successful outcomes achieved so far.

It was reported that the Troubled Families Unit provided national criteria for identifying 'troubled families' and local authorities could identify local measures. In Halton for 2012/13 these were domestic abuse and alcohol. For 2013/14 the measures had been increased to include drug misuse, NEET and a child under the age of 5.

Members were advised that there was a strategic group in place chaired by the Operational Director Children's Organisational and Provision. The membership and terms of reference of this group had recently been reviewed and revised. In addition the task and finish groups, established to progress the programme, had now been replaced by an operational group which would meet bi-monthly and would report into the strategic group.

The report set out the delivery and it was noted that 145 families had been identified for the first year and work was being carried out with partners and agencies to identify where families were up to with regard to interventions, engagement and assessing to determine if the whole families' needs were being met. Numbers had been confirmed for year 2 and 3, details of which were outlined in the report for information.

The report set out the performance and included a table that summarised the number of families who were issued leads from Year 1, their status in relation to Payment by Results (PBR) claims in January and July 2013, and those estimated for October. It was further noted that 66% of 145 families from year 1 had achieved targets set.

The report further detailed current case studies, cost benefit analysis, and other implications.

The Board wished to place on record its thanks to the Inspiring Families Team for the work carried out to date.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the developments in the Troubled Families Programme; and
- 2) support the Troubled Families approach in Halton.

CYP25 CHILDREN IN CARE & CHILDREN OF OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES (CHICOLA)

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which:

- highlighted any risks and concerns regarding fragmented commissioning and quality assurance of the vulnerable cohort;
- established senior management and partnership support for this priority area and addressed concerns appropriately; and
- provided an update report on the current numbers of Children in Care of Other Local Authorities (CICOLA's) and the possible impact on services within Halton.

It was reported that the Commissioning Partnership had highlighted Children in Care as a priority within the new Commissioning Framework. There was currently a health action plan for children in care that had been completed by Bridgewater and there was a local authority plan for Children in Care. Furthermore, there were some cross cutting themes such as the notification process that were duplicated within both plans.

Members were advised that the Children in Care strategy was required to be refreshed to ensure local and national political changes were reflected and outcomes appropriately achieved. Cheshire West and Chester and Halton were developing a joint Children in Care Participation Service which would allow young people in care to reflect their views within the action plan. They would also be able to support the development of the strategy / action plan and the changes with the board structure through the children in care participation service.

It was further noted that the CCG had recently been working with Bridgewater to audit current practice to help

improve standards. Concerns were raised with certain areas which were set out in the report for information.

The report further set out details of the notification process, the CICOLA profile including who was the main referrer into the Borough, details of age range and graphs showing residential versus foster care.

Arising from discussion of the information, Members noted the reduction in children placed in care from other local authorities and queried how many of our children were cared for out of the Borough. In response it was noted that this information would be circulated. Members noted that it was the responsibility of other local authorities to notify Halton when they placed a child in care in the Borough and the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise had written to other local authorities to reinforce the message. It was further noted that partnership working was helping to identify children who were placed in care from other Boroughs.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the progress made on notification and ask for a further report be presented in six months.

CYP26 CHILDREN MISSING FROM HOME, MISSING FROM CARE AND CHILD SEX EXPLOITATION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update on the development of the Missing from Home and Care service and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) activity.

It was reported that since 2008 Halton had commissioned a Missing from Home and Care service in order to fulfil its statutory responsibilities. During 2010 and 2011 the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB's) of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington in conjunction with Cheshire Constabulary, had collaborated to produce a Pan Cheshire Joint Protocol for Children and Young People who ran away or went Missing from Home or Care. It was noted that the joint protocol sought to identify and manage the risks and ensured a consistency in approach across borders and agencies.

Members were advised of the structures put in place around missing from home and care, including better reporting mechanisms and operational groups and there were excellent links between Merseyside and Cheshire police. It was noted that across all the four areas in Cheshire there was a lot more added value and information sharing.

In relation to CSE, the government had identified CSE as a key focus of its policy with regards to children and young people, publishing the Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan. A Pan-Cheshire CSE Strategic Group had been established by the Police and the group had produced a Pan-Cheshire CSE Strategy and Protocol which each LSCB had approved. The Group had also produced an Action Plan that reflected the areas to be addressed which were set out in the report for information.

It was further reported that Halton had been really proactive in determining what the local issues were and it was noted that there was no evidence to suggest groups and gangs operated in Halton. However work was being carried out with regards to social media and making young females aware of what was not appropriate to share. The police had implemented additional resources and work was being carried out with schools and parents to reinforce key messages.

Arising from discussion of the information Members requested that an update be brought to a meeting in 6 months time.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the positive developments in the Missing from Home and Care service be noted and the proactive response to Child sexual exploitation be noted;
- 2) a progress update be brought to the Board in 6 months time.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

CYP27 PLEDGE TO CHILDREN IN CARE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which presented and sought approval of the revised Pledge to Children in Care.

It was reported that the Government's Green Paper "Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Young People in Care" and the subsequent White Paper "Care Matters: Time for Change", identified steps that needed to be taken to improve outcomes for children and young people in care.

Members were advised that one of the key aims was to improve the role of the corporate parent, as part of children's trusts. The corporate parent had responsibility and accountability for the wellbeing and future prospects of

children in care and care leavers. It was further noted that it was equally important that children had a chance to shape and influence the parenting they received.

The report set out the Government's expectations for improving the role of the corporate parent and it was reported that work on the Pledge commenced in October 2008 and concluded with young people accepting the final version in March 2009.

The Pledge was reviewed with children and care leavers in July 2013 and it was noted that young people felt that much of the previous Pledge remained relevant and that they would prefer to see the commitments presented in a fuller and more self-explanatory way. The result of their work was appended to the report for information and set out 12 points that children and care leavers had indicated were key to improving outcomes for them.

Arising from discussion of the report the Board discussed scrutiny of work carried out to ensure the 12 key points were met, the possibility of Members attending meetings with young people to hear their views and requested that an update be brought to the Board in 12 months.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) endorse the Pledge and actions to promote the Pledge to the Council, Children's Trust and other partners;
- 2) identify actions to support the commitments to Children in Care; and
- 3) receive an update report in 12 months.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

CYP28 UPDATE ON SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUP - INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS

The Board received an report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update on the work undertaken on the Independent Living Skills scrutiny topic.

It was reported that the scrutiny topic group was established to undertake a review of how to develop the effectiveness of the independent living skills taught to children and young people with ASD in Halton schools.

The aim of the topic group was to:-

- collect information of the experience of staff, children and young people;
- identify good practice in the delivery of independent living skills in a variety of settings; and
- identify further opportunities to develop effective independent living skills for children and young people with ASD in schools, utilising the existing skills and resources available.

It was noted that the group agreed that they needed to adopt an approach that focussed attention on what was valued most in the existing system and generate curiosity of what the future would look like if those values were further developed.

Members were advised that the first meeting of the group had been established to scope the task and agree an outline of plans to visit a variety of settings both in and outside of the Borough. It was further noted that visits had already taken place in a number of settings, details of which were outlined in the report for information.

The report further set out the next steps and outlined recurring themes raised during the visits which were provided in the report for information. The most desired suggestions were independent travel training, and residential experiences that could offer life skills training in a more domestic environment. It was agreed that once the recommendations from the scrutiny group were finalised, they would be forwarded to the Executive Board for approval. The Board agreed to allow the Chairman, Vice Chair and Lead Officers to finalise the recommendations in conjunction with the task group.

The Chairman wished to place on record its thanks to the Inclusion Team for the work carried out so far.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the update be noted; and
- 2) agreement be given to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Lead Officers to finalise the recommendations to be presented to the Executive Board for approval.

CYP29 UPDATE ON SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUP - UPDATE REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SERVICES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update regarding the Children's Emotional and Mental Health and Wellbeing Review.

It was reported that the Commissioning Partnership had agreed to prioritise children's emotional health and mental wellbeing. The CCG, Public Health and the Local Authority were working together to help develop a comprehensive emotional health and mental wellbeing provision across the Borough.

Members were advised that a children's emotional health and mental wellbeing event was held on the 10 July in Widnes, where a wide number of stake holders had attended including parents, professionals and Members. The findings from the event that the stakeholders identified as areas for development were appended to the report for information and covered areas such as barriers and opportunities and identified themes such as what could be done better in terms of schools, parental support and transition.

The Board was advised that additional work would be carried out around awareness and making the information available. In addition it was noted that a draft terms of reference had been developed and was awaiting approval from the first Partnership meeting. It was further noted that a Young Person's Focus Group had been established an initial consultation event had been completed where young people were able to feedback their issues and concerns with the current system.

Arising from discussion of the information, Members asked if the list of "quick wins" from the outcomes of the wellbeing event were on schedule. In response it was noted that these would be ready on time and a copy of the "quick wins" that had been achieved would be circulated to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That a comprehensive CAMHS Partnership Board is established which is chaired by a Senior Member of the CCG.

CYP30 ACADEMY CONVERSION UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided information on the latest position of schools converting to sponsored Academy status in Halton and provide information on the policy and financial implications of schools graded "inadequate" by Ofsted who were converting to sponsored Academies.

It was noted that members had previously received a briefing on Academies which provided information on background, Academy conversion routes, policy implications, the role of the Local Authority, Secretary of State's powers of intervention and the current position in Halton.

Members were advised that there were four schools in the process of converting to Academy status in Halton, three of which had chosen the 'sponsored' route because they had been judged inadequate in recent Ofsted inspections. The fourth school had chosen to convert to academy status and an Academy Order was issued in June 2013.

The report further set out the Secretary of State's Powers of Intervention, financial and other implications.

Arising from discussion of the information Members queried whether a 'strong sponsor' could be a school rated as outstanding from either within Halton or from a neighbouring authority. In response it was noted that Halton had no say in determining which schools could be a 'strong sponsor'. The Board also raised concerns that the Local authority would have no impact with Academy schools. They also acknowledged there would no longer be any democratic accountability for Academy schools.

It was further noted that Officers were providing advice to schools regarding all aspects of Academy conversion. The Board was further advised that as of the 15 October 2013, any schools who decided to convert to academy status would incur a charge of £5,000.

RESOLVED: The Board

- 1) note the implications of the Academies Act 2011 and its implications for schools in the local area; and

- 2) support the actions being taken to minimise the risk of schools going into inadequate Ofsted categories.

Meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.