

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, 11 November 2019 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chair), Logan (Vice-Chair), M. Bradshaw, Carlin, Cassidy, P. Hignett, P. Lloyd Jones, Teeling and Whitley

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Leck and J. Stockton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. McIntyre, A. Jones, T. Coffey and J. Farrell

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CYP16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2019 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CYP17 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.

CYP18 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes relating to the Children, Education and Social Care Portfolio, that had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix 1 for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes are noted.

CYP19 CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

The Board received a video presentation from the Operational Director Children's Services, which provided an overview of contextual safeguarding and what it meant for Halton. It was noted that this information was requested

following the *Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of Multi-Agency Response to Child Exploitation in Halton* Report, which was on the September agenda and where contextual safeguarding was referred to.

Members were advised that contextual safeguarding was an approach to safeguarding that responded to peoples experiences of harm outside of the home. It expanded the remit of traditional child and family child protection models to social settings such as peer groups, schools and neighbourhoods; also known as contexts. Over the years a number of people had developed other ways of working to reduce crime and create safety in public and social settings, such as safer by design; situational crime prevention; or community safety. These were all important and contextual safeguarding built on these to ask how our child protection systems, as well as criminal justice and community safety, could address the harm that young people faced beyond their families.

It was commented that contextual safeguarding was not just about working in contexts, it was about how the child protection system recognised and addressed the risks that young people faced beyond the control of their parents and that happened beyond the front door.

The Board was advised that there were four component parts to contextual safeguarding: Target; Legislative Framework; Partnerships and Outcomes Measurements; these were explained in detail in the video presentation. It was explained that in order for something to be considered contextual safeguarding, a local authority or child protection service would need to have, or be working towards having these four parts in place.

An example of all four component parts happening at once was provided to Members as follows:

Take a park where sexual assaults were known to have taken place, the target of the assessment and intervention would be the park itself. A social worker would co-ordinate an assessment and plan involving practitioners who would reach into the park to consider ways of making the park safer, through interventions such as increased lighting, youth work or cutting back bushes. This might mean the social worker has to work with new partners such as the local youth club, the neighbourhood police officer, park wardens or the local newsagent, to conduct their assessment, build and deliver their plan. The outcomes or success would then be monitored contextually, such as

monitoring reports of sexual assault or harassment in the park.

Officers advised that in response to contextual safeguarding Halton was adjusting its approach to safeguarding and now had many additional groups of people involved in the Operational Group. Members discussed the information provided and additional information was provided by Officers in response to Members queries around children who went missing, child sexual and criminal exploitation and the profiles of Runcorn and Widnes in relation to organised crime. It was acknowledged that the work around safeguarding was extremely challenging and that early identification and prevention was crucial.

In addition Board Members queried:

How Ward Councillors could help if they suspected a safeguarding issue?

iCART (the integrated contact and referral team) is the point of contact.

Was this a proactive or reactive approach?

Proactive, if someone suspected a child was in danger they can report this and raise the alarm. Preventative work was also taking place to raise awareness amongst children and young people, such as showing them videos of dangers. These messages could also be delivered in schools.

Will this result in more work for agencies and was it sustainable?

Yes it would but it has to be done. It was hoped that increased partnership working within the contextual safeguarding approach would help to identify and help more children at risk.

Was there liaison with schools and the Police when a child goes missing from school?

Yes, if a child is missing from school this is reported to the Police who would conduct case planning meetings about them. Where a child was excluded from school or placed on a reduced timetable, the Education Welfare Services would be advised by the school using a pro forma.

Members were advised of a workshop that would be taking place in January for the agencies and groups involved in safeguarding and an invitation to this was extended to them. The Chair requested a follow up report is received by the Board at a future meeting. He also requested that the contextual safeguarding information be disseminated to all

school governors.

Director of
Children's
Services

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

CYP20 EARLY OUTCOMES FUND

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, People, which outlined the progress regarding Halton's successful bid in receiving part of a share of the Early Outcomes Fund.

It was reported that the TALK Halton project came into being as a result of a successful bid to the DfE as part of the Early Outcomes Fund in January 2019. Money from the DfE was awarded through the Early Outcomes Fund to:

- Reduce the proportion of children not reaching expected levels in Communication Language and Literacy in reception by 2028;
- Close the 'word gap' in areas of social disadvantage; and
- Ensure children who experience disadvantage were given the support they needed to succeed.

The report provided an update of the progress of the TALK Halton project presented to the Board in June, and summarised the context of the bid, evidenced the progress towards project aims and highlighted some of the challenges.

Members were pleased to receive the update and welcomed the progress made.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) supports the drive of the TALK Halton project to improve children's speech, language and communication skills as a core priority; and
- 2) receives a further update report on the progress of the project at the February 2020 meeting.

CYP21 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS 2019/20 - QUARTER 2

The Board received the Performance Management reports for quarter 2 of 2019-20 (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019). Members were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

It was noted that the key priorities for development or improvement in 2019-20 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan, for the various functional areas reported to the Board as follows:

- Education, Inclusion and Provision Services; and
- Children and Families Services.

The reports detailed progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

Following presentation of the report the following comments were made/noted by Members:

- The Reading Strategy should include encouraging reading for pleasure with adults as well as children targeted;
- Attendance at schools was discussed, in particular regular persistent absences and the need to incentivise parents in certain situations;
- A pro forma was used by schools to document behavioural problems, which was sent to the LA so that if any additional support was needed this could be considered;
- It was accepted that some children often had issues in their lives that they struggled with and resulted in them going missing from school;
- An independent review on absence from school was offered by the Council to secondary schools in the Borough; they declined however, preferring to share data with the LA and between themselves;
- Page 28 PED0102 – the missing target figure would be checked and sent to Members;
- The children's safeguarding partnership had now been launched;
- Cost pressures around residential placements for children still existed; and
- Further to the Inclusion Conference – it was confirmed that the Powerpoint slides had been sent to Schools following this. Feedback on the Charter would be included on the Spring Term Chair of Governor's meeting agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management reports for quarter 2 of 2019/20 be received.

Operational
Director
Education,
Inclusion
and
Provision

CYP22 CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT REVIEW
AUTUMN 2019-20

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, People, which provided a summary of the revised Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) Review; this was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

It was noted that Sections 6 and 7 of *The Childcare Act (2006)* and the associated statutory guidance: *Early Education and Childcare – Statutory guidance for local authorities (March 2018)*, required all local authorities in England to undertake and provide an annual childcare sufficiency report to elected Council Members on how they were meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and to make it available to the public. In accordance with this, Halton's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment had been reviewed and updated; this was attached to the report.

The report detailed achievements since the last review and outlined Halton's current position. It also highlighted any gaps in provision and explained how these were being addressed. The Board welcomed and approved the revised Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the revised Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

Meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.