

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2 - County Hall, Durham on **Monday 1 July 2019 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor H Smith (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors C Potts, D Bell, J Blakey, B Coult, R Crute, C Hampson, K Hopper, I Jewell, M Simmons and A Willis

Parent Governor Representative:

Mrs J Norman

Co-opted Members:

Ms R Evans and Mrs P Parkins

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Atkinson, B Bainbridge, A Batey, P Brookes, J Charlton, S Durham, L Kennedy, L Mavin, M Wilson, Mrs C Craig (Faith Rep) and Mrs C Johnston (Faith Rep)

2 Substitute Members

Councillor Maddison for Councillor Grayson

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

Ms Evans referred to Durham County Council's pledge earlier in the year to make the county Carbon Neutral and asked what the impact of this would be on children and young people. She suggested that an implication on the report appendix would be helpful.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer confirmed that this fell under the remit of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that they were monitoring it. This particular issue would be reported to a meeting of that committee on 12 July and all were welcome to attend. Councillor Crute added that full Council were expecting to receive an update at the next meeting on 17 July.

6 Media Relations

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented Members with recent press articles relating to the remit of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

- Children at risk of higher obesity because they don't get enough sleep
- Children aged five and under at risk of internet addiction
- One in five children living in poverty
- Childcare crisis hitting poor families hardest

Resolved:

That the presentation be noted.

7 Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements

The Committee considered a report of the Independent Chair of Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership that provided an update on the transition from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to the new statutory partnership arrangement known as the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Independent Chair referred to a copy of the plan that outlined the new safeguarding arrangements and he highlighted the vision of what the partnership were trying to achieve. He advised of the structure including the day to day functioning and the independent scrutiny arrangements.

The new structure of the DSCP is more streamlined to ensure that the right people are engaged to provide an immediate response when necessary. Members were advised that representatives from the three safeguarding partners of the CCGs, Durham Police and Durham County Council made up the Executive Group.

He went on to explain the DSCP would engage with the Criminal Justice Service, Education Sector, Health Service and the Voluntary and Community Sector who would help to shape the agenda for the Executive.

The Chair was pleased to receive this report and see a more streamlined and accountable approach. She asked how long it would take to bed these changes in. The Independent Chair explained that the Performance and Impact Group would expect to see changes from the first quarter. The Executive Group meets monthly and would be able to flag up any issues that can be actioned much more quickly. He would come back to a future meeting of the committee to report on the effectiveness.

With a multi-agency set-up and people having a different knowledge base and skills, Councillor Jewell asked how this was all brought together. The Independent Chair explained that there was a need to know about each others role and that the Executive Group would break down any barriers to be able to prioritise work. From the start the partnership had consulted with partners about how to engage and to be realistic in terms of their contribution to the partnership. For example, the Probation Service were informed of how to engage on a national level however some local partners would be more effective in the community setting. He went on to say that the common agenda for all was to keep children safe.

Councillor Crute asked for assurances in relation to the flow of data so that whole systems would work without any barriers. The Independent Chair explained that the partnership were aware of what data could be shared.

Referring to the Young Commissioner, Councillor Potts asked how they would be involved. The Independent Chair advised that service users and practitioners had been involved in the process and discussions would take place about how to include the Young Commissioner. They would engage with young people and coordinate a young people's annual report from feedback from agenda days and internal scrutiny panels.

Resolved:

- (i) That the content of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the update of the transition arrangements was received.
- (iii) That an annual update from the DSCP to ensure links were made between local child death issues and learning from regional reviews be agreed.
- (iv) That a report on the effectiveness of the changes come back to a meeting in 6-12 months time, be agreed.

8 County Durham Health and Wellbeing System Plan 2019/2020 - Part B Children

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Chief Officer, Durham and Durham Dales Easington & Sedgefield, and North Durham Clinical Commissioning Groups, and Chair of the County Durham Integrated Board that presented part B (Children and Young People) of the Durham Health and Wellbeing System Plan 2019/20 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery, North Durham and DDES CCG highlighted the key areas of the plan which had been developed under the leadership of the Integrated Steering Group for Children, which included:

- Children and Young People's Strategy
- The Integrated Steering Group for Children governance and work programme
- Integrated commissioning approach for children and the priorities linked to the inspection regimes in children's services
- Therapy services
- Development of place based 0-19 services

The Director of Commissioning Strategy and Delivery informed the committee of a joint development session that was held on 13 June with the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board that discussed the development of the longer term plan. Information from this session would be shared with this committee.

The committee were informed that there would be a focus on how services would work together to ensure that every child had the best start in life with a focus on:-

- Smoking in Pregnancy
- Healthy Weight

There would also be a focus on the transition to adult services and the need for improvements for:-

- Review of Looked After Children
- Review of SEND

Ms Evans commented on the inclusion of the community and voluntary sector and service users for the co-production of the plan. She asked how young people would independently access services in the Dales when out of hours services were being removed. The Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Development explained that the community and voluntary sector has been involved as a partner and they were helping to make improvements. Training in teams and working with partners would make the overall experience a better one for service users. With regards to delivering services at a local level she advised that not all services could be delivered in this way. She added that targeted work was being carried out for

out of hours services and that transport and outreach services were being looked at.

The Deputy Director of Public Health advised that the Local Authority was further ahead in terms of planning and were working together with partners on how to include residents in the process. With regards to access she added that they were also looking at online support via social media, including access to counselling services. She also reminded members about the role of the pharmacy and the self support opportunities.

Councillor Jewell referred to cuts in services and thought there was a mis match in terms of the strategic vision and the operational side of services, referring in particular to Villa Real Special School.

The Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Development explained that there was a requirement to meet therapy needs of children however there had been challenges in terms of staffing. She assured members that the service had an obligation to meet the needs of the SEND population although it should be noted that the needs had increased and the service was stretched.

The Chair appreciated that the plans for transitions were difficult and that neurodisability and SEND required specialist teams that had no equivalent in adult care, resulting in the care being fragmented. She said that changes in service delivery needed to change to ensure that young people could continue their care.

In response the Associate Director of Operations, CDDFT said that provider organisations did recognise the issues around transitions and he highlighted a concern in paediatrics when young people were discharged at a certain age. Services were looking at how to deal on a case by case basis so that care could be managed in a better way. He informed the committee that discussions had been taking place with the current 0-19 provider, Harrogate and District NHS FT, about extending the service to 0-25 year olds. He added that this was about co-production and ensuring we moved forward with partners.

The Deputy Director of Public Health advised the committee that Head of Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children was leading on a transition group for 14-15 year olds, with a focus in particular on mental health and autism. An update would be given at a later date.

Further to a query from Councillor Crute about bringing Part A for Adults and Part B for Children together, the Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery explained that many services span age ranges including A&E and NEAS however she assured members that an individual or a groups needs were always met. She said that this would span both Adults, Wellbeing and Health and Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committees going forward.

Resolved:

- (i) That the report and plan were noted.
- (ii) That the approach to the development of the long term Durham System Health and Wellbeing Plan outlined in the report be noted.

9 Quarter Four 2018/19 Performance Management Report

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships which presented the progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the Council's Corporate Performance Framework for the Altogether Better for Children and Young People priority theme (for copy see file of minutes).

Referring to the 20 week timescale for completed Education Health and Care Plan's (EHCP), Councillor Coult asked how long the remainder of plans were taking to complete. The Corporate Equality and Strategy Manager explained that the threshold was at 20 weeks however a lot of EHCP's were completed in 20-28 weeks with very few slipping beyond that timescale. He went on to explain that there were many reasons for the delay including the capacity to complete the plan and making sure that the right placements were available. In Durham if there was not an agreed placement the plan could not be completed.

Councillor Crute referring to the DurhamWorks programme asked if the figure of 5,800 people could be broken down by education, employment and training. He also referred to the social work academy and the role scrutiny had played in recommending the reduced case loads for social workers. The Corporate Equality and Strategy Manager said that the investment into the academy would take time to see benefits however recruitment through the academy would see a lower case load within the first year that would gradually increase.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

10 Scoping Report: Elective Home Education

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships that provided scope for an in-depth review in to Elective Home Education (EHE) (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that since this review was agreed last July there was now an opportunity to comment and make changes to the terms of reference and project plan. She highlighted the four key lines of enquiry, the expected outcomes and asked that eight members express in interest in being part of the group.

Ms Evans would be interested in those families who had chosen home education due to a breakdown of relationship with the school.

Councillor Maddison referred to the interactive whiteboards used and asked if parents would have access to those resources. She was particularly concerned about looked after children and how this impacted on the deterioration of results.

The Head of Education and Skills advised that the methods used at home depended upon the individual circumstances of the parent as some were more technically enabled than others. This would be looked at as part of the review.

Councillor Jewell expressed his concerns about the lack of interaction and communication for those children being educated at home.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

11 Refresh of the Work Programme

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships that gave details of the updated work programme for 2019/20 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that included in the work programme were several items where members had requested further progress updates, there were also new areas of work for members to consider and members would receive a progress update on the recommendations from the Role of the Social Worker from a Child's Perspective review report.

Members were advised that in addition to the six diaried meetings an additional four special meetings had been arranged and there was a possibility of an additional special meeting as it was likely that could be an Ofsted Inspection of the Authority's Children's Services at some point during the municipal year.

As in previous years the Committee would hold a meeting at a school and this year it was to be Durham Johnston in March 2020. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer would meet with the Head Teacher closer to the time, but it was suggested that due to parking issues members should travel together in transport provided by the authority.

Members were reminded that any suggestions for in depth review could not be considered until completion of the Elective Home Education review activity.

Although a full programme, the Chair said that any further ideas would be welcome.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

12 Verbal update on Review of Children's Residential Care Homes

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer gave an update into the review of Children's Care Homes. The draft report had been compiled and evidence had been gathered so that the recommendations could be drafted. The report would come back to committee for approval before being reported to Cabinet.