

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1A/1B, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 25 February 2016 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor C Potts (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Armstrong, D Bell, C Hampson, J Hart, S Morrison, M Nicholls, L Pounder, M Simmons and H Smith

Co-opted Members:

Mr D Kinch

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Corrigan, K Dearden, O Gunn, D Hall, D Hicks, K Hopper, P Lawton, J Measor, M Stanton, P Stradling, W Stelling, Mr K Gilfillan, Mrs G Harrison and Mr R Patel (Parent Governor Representative)

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2016 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Chairman agreed that the minutes of the special meeting held on 2 December 2015 could be dealt with as an urgent item of business, and thus they were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record (for copy see file of Minutes).

4 Declarations of Interest, if any

There were no declarations on interest.

5 Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

6 Media Relations - Update on Press Coverage

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to recent press articles relating to the remit of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (for copy see file of minutes). The articles were:-

- Search for young people to be honoured with Council Medal – Northern Echo 4.2.16
Nominations for the Chairman's medal award sought for young people.
- Heads warn over pupils' untreated mental health issues – BBC 9.2.16
Links to item 7 of the agenda. Key concerns raised by the National Association of head teachers. Councillor J Armstrong asked where the statistics come from in relation to this and if there was any evidence. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer would investigate and report back.
- Taxi drivers in Durham trained to spot evidence of child exploitation – Evening Chronicle 10.2.16
Durham Police and partners are providing training to all taxi drivers. All DCC Hackney Carriage Licence holders had been fully CRB checked.
- Early language skills 'key to later success' – BBC 18.2.16
Study by Safer Children showed communication skills from when a child starts school were vital.

Resolved:

That the content of the presentation be noted.

7 Overview CAMHS Crisis & Liaison Pilot Service Evaluation

The Committee received a report of the Assistant Chief Executive that provided an overview of Children and Adults Mental Health Service Crisis and Liaison Pilot Service evaluation (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Chairman introduced the Service Development Manager, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services who gave a detailed presentation about the Durham and Darlington CAMHS Crisis and Liaison Team pilot scheme and future plans, including:-

- The rationale
- Prevalence
- Aims of the Service
- To provide high quality Nurse led mental health care
- What the service looks like
- Statistics including locality, referrer and waiting times
- Reduction in use of paediatric beds
- Increase in crisis assessments in the community
- Case examples
- Emerging outcomes/ benefits
- Training and development
- Post suicide support interventions
- Young people's feedback and participation

She added that one year on the service were winners of 4 awards and the runner up in another. Members were advised of future plans including 111 developments and training plans.

The Chairman said that this showed very positive steps forward despite the difficulties faced and the considerable increases in self harm.

Councillor M Nicholls thanked the Service Development Manager for an excellent report and for the tremendous amount of hard work taking place. He asked how young people were supported during the transition period when moving from under 18 care to adult care. He was advised that the situation was always a difficult one but members were assured that there was a policy in place. The transition period started when the young person turned 17 ½ if they had post 18 year old needs. Referrals were made and the young person and their family were approached to explain the changes. Families often struggled the most with the change as the young adult could decide to exclude their family from the process. Dates were agreed for the transition to make the process as seamless as possible.

Adding to that Councillor J Armstrong asked if 18 year olds were placed in an appropriate age setting if institutionalised. The Service Development Manager said that there was no age setting and that once 18 the young adult would be placed in an adult ward.

Councillor H Smith said that the Crisis and Liaison service was a positive development and that the team should be hugely congratulated. She suggested that the Committee write to the team to say that they approved of the work carried out. She asked if the Commissioners were on board with continuing to fund the project and asked if Darlington would make a financial contribution. The Service Development Manager advised that the Commissioners were very supportive and had confirmed their continued support financially, although nothing had been formally received at this stage. In relation to Darlington she expected that they would contribute but again no formal confirmation had been given.

Councillor Smith asked about the state of play in relation to resources from CAMHS, as patients could wait weeks and months to be seen. She was advised that there is a waiting list however, if a young person presented in crisis they would get an urgent slot for intervention. It was recognised that having to wait exacerbates the anxiety for a young person and as the number of referrals are very high, deadlines are breached. Members were advised that the Tees crisis team was recurrent and they had also invested into CAMHS, Durham and Darlington had invested into the crisis team but there would be no additional investment into the CAMHS service.

Councillor J Hart stated that this was a lifesaving service that was also relieving pressure from the NHS. He commended the report and asked if the team would be able to move to a 24/7 operation. The Service Development Manager explained that the service would need £100,000 to cover both the Darlington and Durham sites on a 24/7 basis. Staff would cover 12 hour shifts and there would always be 2 members of staff on duty. She felt that it would be an investment to save money and the outcomes for young people would be more beneficial.

In relation to a question from Councillor Nicholls about Police involvement when working with mental health problems for young people in custody, he was advised that if the young person had presented in crisis then the team would respond or a psychiatrist on call. Each situation would be dealt with on its own merits and the Youth Offending team may be involved.

The Chairman referred to a focused piece of work carried out by the Committee on self-harm, and said that a number of young people had not wanted to talk to professionals but preferred instead to talk to their peers. The Service Development Manager said that Investing in Children had also carried out a piece of work that links in to what young people wanted to see. The team had therefore offered drop in sessions in schools and youth centres and displayed useful information at these venues so that young people knew who to contact. She added that all schools had a link to a Primary Mental Health Worker.

Councillor Armstrong was advised that this report had been shared with CCGs.

Councillor Nicholls wished the team the best of luck in securing the funding for the service to continue and congratulated them on winning awards for the service they provided.

The Service Development Manager said that they were linked with NHS England and that case studies were available on their website. She advised that they had provided learning development for other areas and had led the way for Crisis in children and young people.

Councillor Armstrong suggested that the Committee write to both CCGs to commend the positive difference that the service had made. He asked that the Cabinet Portfolio be sent copies of the correspondence.

The Chairman thanked the Service Development Manager once again and asked that she return in a years' time to give a further update.

Resolved:

- (i) That the evaluation of the CAMHS Crisis and Liaison Service be noted.
- (ii) That a further update be brought back to Committee in the next 12 months.
- (iii) That the Committee write to the team to offer their congratulations and support.
- (iv) That the Committee write to both CCGs to commend the positive difference that the team had made.

8 Children's Services Update

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Adults Services which provided an update on the national and local developments in relation to Children's Services (for copy see file of minutes).

The Strategic Manager, First Contact and Intervention, Children and Adults Services presented the key messages from the report, including information on:-

- Single Inspection Framework
- Children's Centre Inspections
- Child Protection Taskforce
- Youth Justice

- Child Sexual Exploitation – regional and local context
- Training
- Regional Adoption Agencies
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
- Serious Case Reviews
- Local Inspection Activity
- Children’s Social care Innovation Programme
- Stronger Families
- Youth Offending Service
- Performance

Councillor Nichols asked if the committee could have an overview of the work of the ERASE team as part of their forthcoming work programme. The Strategic Manager agreed to this.

Councillor Hart congratulated the service on all of the good work ongoing, and he was pleased to note that the Atlee Home rating had improved. He asked why Durham was not included in the Regional Adoption Agency bids and the Strategic Manager said she would report back to him with this information.

Further to the information presented about serious case reviews, Councillor Smith informed the Committee that other reviews, set up in 2008, take place by a sub-committee and assess any child through multi-agency investigations where preventable factors were determined.

Councillor Nicholls asked about the position of adoptions in Durham as he was aware that figures had changed nationally. He was advised that numbers had reduced, which reflected the national picture, but was not to do with performance.

The Committee were informed that Phase 2 of the Stronger Families programme had been challenging with an increase of children who meet the criteria, following a question from the Chairman. The figures were expected to increase and the performance was expected to see improvements. A huge IT development was underway to ensure the right infrastructure was supported.

Councillor Hart suggested that the impact of initiatives were looked into with regards to increasing staff as the looked after children services were reformed. Councillor Armstrong advised that the Committee need to wait until the changes had bedded in before looking at the impact. The Strategic Manager advised that there was a strategic plan around recruitment and a group will look at recognising the importance of stability and retention of our own workforce. Developments were taking place with the website to show what was good and different about Durham. She added that this was a long term view and that the Head of Children’s Services would provide regular updates.

Resolved:

- (i) That the content of the report be noted and;
- (ii) That further updates on the transformation of Children’s Services be received on a 6 monthly basis.

9 Summary of Children and Family Partnership Minutes of 14 December 2015

The Committee considered the minutes of the Children and Families Partnership on 14 December 2015 (for copies see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.