

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of **Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Tuesday 7 November 2017 at 9.30 am**

#### **Present:**

**Councillor C Potts (Chairman)**

#### **Members of the Committee:**

Councillors D Bell, J Blakey, P Brookes, J Charlton, J Considine, R Crute, C Hampson, K Hopper, I Jewell, L Kennedy, L Mavin, A Patterson, A Reed, M Simmons, A Willis and M Wilson

#### **Co-opted Members:**

Mr J Conlon

#### **Also Present:**

Councillors L Maddison

#### **1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Bainbridge, N Grayson, H Smith and Mrs A Swift.

#### **2 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute members.

#### **3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on the 11 September and 28 September 2017 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**

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

## **6 Media Relations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to recent press articles relating to the remit of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The articles were:-

- More than 60 children a day calling Childline with suicidal thoughts;
- Children's door crush finger injuries 'can be life long';
- Over 4000,000 more children will live in poverty by 2021 due to benefit changes.

### **Resolved:**

That the presentation be noted.

## **7 School Funding Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources that provided details of the Council's proposals with regards to setting the funding formula for mainstream primary and secondary schools for 2018-19, taking into account the Government's announcements on the National Funding Formula for schools on 14 September 2017. The formula would apply to maintained schools from 1 April 2018 and academies from 1 September 2018 (for copy of report and slides, see file of minutes).

The Head of Finance and Transactional Services advised that three options were currently being consulted on. Members were given an overview of how the funding formula works, with members advised that the pupil led formula factors are basic unit per pupil (AWPU); deprivation; low prior attainment and English as an additional language (although this factor is not used in County Durham at the moment). It was highlighted that funding allocations to schools were sensitive to the number of pupils on the roll. School led funding factors includes the lump sum. Currently in County Durham the lump sum is - primary schools receive £160,000 per school and secondary schools receive £175,000. Under the NFF each school whether primary or secondary will receive £110,000. It was highlighted that under the NFF there was a sparsity factor within school led funding, that will only apply to schools in the limited examples and this funding was set at a maximum of £65,000 but tapered based on the size of the school. Premises led funding related to business rates and PFI costs, which are cost neutral for schools.

It was explained that the government had announced that the NFF would be implemented in 2020/21 but that Councils needed to set a local formula for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The DfE were encouraging all authorities to move towards the NFF based allocations prior to 2020/21. School funding formula changes year on year had been minor since 2013 and usually taken under a delegated decision but because of the NFF impacts changes the authority is consulting with schools forum and individual schools and taking a report back to Cabinet in December and formalised in January. The Council had modelled three options: initiate changes immediately from 2018/19; make incremental changes using a transition approach or do nothing until 2020/21. The impact on individual schools had been modelled and were attached to the report. The modelling was continuing to be refined.

The Head of Finance and Transactional Services provided members with a presentation that focused on:-

- Schools Local Formula Funding Arrangements and Regulations;
- National Formula Funding Announcements;
- Issues and Options arising from the National Formula Funding Announcements.

Councillor Brookes referred to the figures for Bluebell Meadow Primary School, which was shown on appendix 3 of the report and noted that this school would have a 5.2% increase in pupil numbers, yet funding had decreased under all scenarios. He highlighted that the National Funding Formula was the better option for that particular school, rather than the transition option, even though pupil numbers had increased. The Head of Finance and Transactional Services advised that some schools have historical allocations and were protected due to deprivation which would reduce over a period of time. He also highlighted that post that there were issues relating to the loss of lump sums following the merger. A breakdown of each individual school would have to be produced for a better understanding. He explained that if there was no change, Bluebell Meadow Primary School would lose £188,000 of funding, while under the NFF the loss would be a smaller amount. He added that a number of other schools would be in the opposite position and would be in a worse situation under the NFF. A breakdown to better explain the change for an individual school could be provided to members on request.

In response to a question from Councillor Blakey regarding how the NFF would apply to new schools and if any safeguarding was in place, the Head of Finance and Transactional Services explained that in terms of modelling, the NFF had been set based on the existing number of schools. Work would be carried out with individual schools to make sure they were factoring in resource impacts of the loss of lump sums upon amalgamation.

Councillor Jewell asked if individual schools that would have a negative impact had been identified and how that would be managed, particularly in light of the different amounts of reserves held by each school. The Head of Finance and Transactional Services advised that when determining the local formula the Council was not able to take into account any retained balances and individual schools and governors were required to consider resources during their MTFP planning. He added that the NFF formula was increasing the amount of funding allocated to the secondary phase and within the NFF increase the amount of funding distributed via Pupil Led factors so the more pupils on roll the greater the resources a school allocated. The government's aim was to reward high performing popular schools through attracting a greater proportion of the funding. This was one of the reasons why a report going to Cabinet on 15 November 2017 was seeking to launch a review of schools provision on an area by area basis.

Councillor Brookes challenged the rationale of driving schools to become bigger. He referred to the list of primary schools and noted that Bluebell Meadow would be the biggest loser in the county even though they had become a bigger school by amalgamating two schools. The Head of Finance and Transactional Services explained that it was possible that the 17/18 funding figures were distorted by the split site allowances and the base funding may have doubled lump sums. He advised that he would confirm the position with the school and forward the information to Councillor Brookes.

Mr Josh Conlon asked if a small school was to close would the funding go with the pupil. The Head of Finance and Transactional Services advised that the funding would follow the child definitely in the following year and as a transition if the child left midway through.

The Head of Finance and Transactional Services added that all members and governors were being asked to consider the proposals and subject to consultation, the consensus from responses so far was that the transitional option was fair to everyone in that every school would change.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Finance and Transactional Services for the detailed presentation.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the information contained in the report and the consultation currently underway via the Schools Forum and will all Primary and Secondary Schools across the county be noted;
- (ii) That progress towards implementation of the NFF in 2020-21 continue to be monitored.

## **8 Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services - Crisis, Liaison and Intensive Home Treatment Service**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Service, CAMHS Durham and Darlington that provided an overview of the Children and Young People Mental Health Crisis, Liaison and Intensive Home Treatment Services. The Project Manager, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust provided members with a presentation detailing the current provision and future developments (for copy of report and slides, see file of minutes).

The CAMHS Crisis and Liaison service ran an open referral system that meant that in some cases young people could refer themselves. Members were advised that a crisis was defined as whatever it was to a young person. The service was both flexible and responsive and was provided to children and young people up to the age of 18 years. The aim of the service was to reduce the waiting times for psychiatric assessment for when young people faced a crisis; to reduce the impact on accident and emergency services and paediatric beds and to reduce emergency admissions to CAMHS in-patient beds by supporting children and young people and their families in their homes in the community.

The Project Manager informed members that patients, carers and families receiving a 24/7 dedicated contact resulted in immediate de-escalation of emotional difficulties. The new service had resulted in a reduction on the pressure within CAMHS community services, greater working relationships within teams, there had also been a reduction on the pressures within emergency departments, and there was a stronger working relationship with external stakeholders.

Members learned that the Crisis, Liaison and Intensive Home Treatments service had won several awards and were shortlisted for more since they began three and half years ago. The Project Manager advised that Durham was leading the way and was being used as a national benchmark. The service was also helping to set up provision in other areas.

Councillor Kennedy asked if young people would be signposted and transferred to Adult Services when they turn 18. The Project Manager explained that from a wider county perspective a transition policy was in place. Many go back to community based services such as GPs and not all transition to Adult Services. She added that the transition should be as seamless as possible and there were many good examples of young people that have transitioned to adults who have had multiple complex needs.

In response to a question regarding telephone assessments and how to judge if that young person requires follow up without any face to face assessment, the Project Manager advised that the telephone assessment would include talking to family and carers as well as the young person before making any decision. From a crisis perspective, the motto is 'if in doubt go out.' Anyone that phones with concerns has a reason for calling therefore the team would do a face to face assessment with the young person and their parent/carers for their perspective.

Responding to Councillor Kennedy's query regarding assessment times, the Project Manager advised that for non-urgent calls, every young person would have their first assessment within 4 weeks and a second assessment within 9 weeks which was on target. Regarding a crisis perspective, the target to start assessment was within 4 hours which would also include a safety plan and was 92% on target, the remaining 8% was in some cases the patients or family's choice not to compete within the 4 hours.

Councillor Hopper asked if there were any issues in recruiting or retaining staff to maintain service delivery. The Project Manager advised that the crisis and liaison team have a low turnover of staff and currently retain 80% of the workforce and the remaining 20% had left due to promotion.

Councillor Blakey queried the time scales for referrals to the CAMHS team. The Project Manager clarified that the first appointment by open referral would take place within 4 weeks and would receive an assessment by telephone or face to face. The target for a second appointment was within 9 weeks in total and in some cases they may have had 4 or 5 appointments within that timeframe.

Referring to key issues and the need for a non-medical place of safety, Councillor Patterson asked if there was any scope to use community hospitals. The Project Manager explained that some young people end up in medical beds that actually require a safe place with support rather than treatment. She highlighted that some buildings have restrictions as to what they could be used for.

Councillor Maddison referred to the recent publicity around the general shortage of psychiatrists and asked what the position was in County Durham. The Project Manager advised that she was not aware of any vacant posts currently across the County, however a couple of retirements were coming up that were being planned for. She added that the Crisis Service was a nurse-led service which also helps with cost efficiencies as well as making sure they remain connected to the locality psychiatrist.

Councillor Wilson asked if work had been carried out with schools to publicise the service and get the information out to parents and children. The Project Manager advised that school resilience nurses, the crisis team and wider service all publicise for each other and

they were promoting whichever service was approached, they would be signposted to the relevant service. She assured that the information was out there, however, they were conscious that many families were still not aware of the service.

Mr Conlon referred to media updates regarding the increase of children calling Childline with suicidal thoughts and asked if the crisis team had experienced a similar increase. The Project Manager explained the lethality challenge the service was facing in that there had been a change from overdosing, injecting and cutting which have a period of time to seek help, support and treatment, to an increase in the use of substances and methods that have a more immediate impact. She recalled a number of cases where young people who had attempted to use those methods had all been regretful. The Project Manager also explained that many young people act impulsively which was not always driven by mental illness but by environmental factors. The impulsivity as an adolescent presents a risk that requires creative thinking to educate young people, manage and contain the risk through positive risk management and helping young people and families to understand the triggers.

The Chairman thanked the Project Manager for Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust for her presentation and commended the team for the positive impact the service has provided to young people in County Durham.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

## **9 Growing Healthy 0-19 in County Durham**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health that provided an update on the 0-19 Growing Healthy service (0 – 5 Health visitor and 5 – 19 school nursing) (for copy see file of minutes).

The Public Health Portfolio Lead reported on the Service Developments, Performance and Training over the last 12 months ensuring the workforce remain skilled competent practitioners who deliver an evidence-based service.

Members were advised that the contract with HDFT was coming to an end in April 2019 so work would be starting to look at future contracts.

Councillor Brookes commented on the progress being made and suggested that it would be helpful if statistics on the numbers of nurses, health visitors and children contacted were included in the report. He noted many positives within the report and felt it would be useful to include the issues and challenges the service was experiencing. The Head of Children's Public Health Nursing County Durham advised that extensive robust performance data was produced which could be made available to members. She gave a brief overview and highlighted challenges the service was facing which included improvements to the model structure by looking at the SEN school nursing service to introduce a skill mix team within the next 3 months and the issues of recruiting school nurses, which was a national problem.

Councillor Patterson referred to appendix 2 of the report and asked if in future a list of abbreviations used could be included. The Portfolio Lead apologised and agreed that this would be included.

The Chairman thanked the Public Health Portfolio Lead and Head of Children's Public Health Nursing County Durham for presenting the update.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

**10 Revision of Framework for the Prevention of Unintentional Injuries in Children and Young People (0-19 years) in County Durham 2017-2020**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health detailing the revised delivery framework for the prevention of unintentional injuries in children and young people (0-19 years) in County Durham 2014-2017, which now requires further consultation and approval (for copy see file of minutes).

The Consultant in Public Health reported that a workshop to assess progress in implementing the strategy was held in November 2016, which included partners representing different sectors involved in delivering the plan. Following a review to see if the strategy was still fit for purpose, the refreshed strategy had now been developed as a delivery framework, reflecting the various delivery strands, along with a forward plan to represent key actions and outcomes to be addressed during 2017 to 2020.

Councillor Crute welcomed the centralisation with the Children and Families Partnership Board and was pleased the strategy had been developed as a delivery framework as his main concern was how to deal with the separate issues internally through the individual scrutiny committees.

Councillor Brookes asked about the relationship between unintentional injuries and the issue of neglect where a child has had multiple admissions to hospital for unintentional injuries. The Consultant in Public Health advised that all practitioners use a home environment tool and have training to identify triggers that are linked with the early help work in make sure the information is shared.

The Head of Early Help, Assess and Safeguarding added that practitioners and accident and emergency teams were well-versed with non-accidental injury issues. It was explained that when a child was seen with injuries, they have to decide if the explanation given was plausible. If the explanation given does not add up then the safeguarding referral would be reported.

It was noted that the home environment tool was used universally to make an assessment on whether the environment was a risk to the child. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board were looking at regular patterns, capturing information such as missed GP and Dental appointments.

The Head of Early Help, Assess and Safeguarding agreed that deprivation would have an impact and advised that an analysis of child poverty was being produced to show the

impact of inequality between areas of the County resulting in circumstances in which a child was born into that would impact on education attainment and mental health issues.

Councillor Patterson referred to depravation, childcare arrangements and universal credit implications and commented on the figures and proportions moving forward.

Councillor Crute added that the impact of the Welfare Reform and the Economy in County Durham requires considering the framework had implications for the remit of many of the scrutiny committees especially the impact of Universal Credit on County Durham communities.

The Consultant in Public Health advised that she would be happy to give a presentation to each individual scrutiny committee.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

The Chairman informed the committee that co-opted member Mrs Andrea Swift would be resigning from the Committee in December 2017 to take up a new post in Stockton. On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Andrea for her valuable contribution and commitment to the Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committee and wished her luck for the future.

The Chairman reminded members that a special meeting had been arranged for Tuesday 21 November 2017 at 9.30am.